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THEOLOGY

**INSTITUTES OF THE
CHRISTIAN RELIGION
VOL. 1**

Translated by Ford Lewis Battles

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JOHN CALVIN:

INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

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GENERAL EDITORS' PREFACE

The Christian Church possesses in its literature an abundant and incomparable treasure. But it is an inheritance that must be reclaimed by each generation. THE LIBRARY OF CHRISTIAN CLASSICS is designed to present in the English language, and in twenty-six volumes of convenient size, a selection of the most indispensable Christian treatises written prior to the end of the sixteenth century.

The practice of giving circulation to writings selected for superior worth or special interest was adopted at the beginning of Christian history. The canonical Scriptures were themselves a selection from a much wider literature. In the patristic era there began to appear a class of works of compilation (often designed for ready reference in controversy) of the opinions of well-reputed predecessors, and in the Middle Ages many such works were produced. These medieval anthologies actually preserve some noteworthy materials from works otherwise lost.

In modern times, with the increasing inability even of those trained in universities and theological colleges to read Latin and Greek texts with ease and familiarity, the translation of selected portions of earlier Christian literature into modern languages has become more necessary than ever; while the wide range of distinguished books written in vernaculars such as English makes selection there also needful. The efforts that have been made to meet this need are too numerous to be noted here, but none of these collections serves the purpose of the reader who desires a library of representative treatises spanning the Christian centuries as a whole. Most of them embrace only the age of the church fathers, and some of them have long been out of print. A fresh translation of a work already translated may shed much new light upon its meaning. This is true even of Bible translations despite the work of many experts through the centuries. In some instances old translations have been adopted in this series, but wherever necessary or desirable, new ones have been made. Notes have been supplied where these were needed to explain the author's meaning. The introductions provided for the several treatises and extracts will, we believe, furnish welcome guidance.

John Baillie, John T. McNeill, Henry P. Van Dusen

CONTENTS

Editor's Preface

Translator's Note

Abbreviations And Symbols

Introduction

John Calvin To The Reader, 1559

Subject Matter Of The Present Work

Prefatory Address To King Francis I Of France

BOOK 1.

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE CREATOR

CHAPTER 1. The Knowledge of God and That of Ourselves Are Connected. How They Are Interrelated

CHAPTER 2. What It Is to Know God, and to What Purpose the Knowledge of Him Tends

CHAPTER 3. The Knowledge of God Has Been Naturally Implanted in the Minds of Men

CHAPTER 4. This Knowledge Is Either Smothered or Corrupted, Partly by Ignorance, Partly by Malice

CHAPTER 5. The Knowledge of God Shines Forth in the Fashioning of the Universe and the Continuing Government of It .

CHAPTER 6. Scripture Is Needed as Guide and Teacher for Anyone Who Would Come to God the Creator.

CHAPTER 7. Scripture Must Be Confirmed by the Witness of the Spirit. Thus May Its Authority Be Established as Certain; and It Is a Wicked Falsehood that Its Credibility Depends on the Judgment of the Church.

- CHAPTER 8.** So Far as Human Reason Goes, Sufficiently Firm Proofs Are at Hand to Establish the Credibility of Scripture
- CHAPTER 9.** Fanatics, Abandoning Scripture and Flying Over to Revelation, Cast Down All the Principles of Godliness .
- CHAPTER 10.** Scripture, to Correct All Superstition, Has Set the True God Alone Over Against All the Gods of the Heathen
- CHAPTER 11.** It Is Unlawful to Attribute a Visible Form to God, and Generally Whoever Sets Up Idols Revolts Against the True God.
- CHAPTER 12.** How God Is to Be So Distinguished from Idols that Perfect Honor May Be Given to Him Alone.
- CHAPTER 13.** In Scripture, from the Creation Onward, We Are Taught One Essence of God, Which Contains Three Persons
- CHAPTER 14.** Even in the Creation of the Universe and of All Things, Scripture by Unmistakable Marks Distinguishes the True God from False Gods .
- CHAPTER 15.** Discussion of Human Nature as Created, of the Faculties of the Soul, of the Image of God, of Free Will, and of the Original Integrity of Man's Nature
- CHAPTER 16.** God by His Power Nourishes and Maintains the World Created by Him, and Rules Its Several Parts by His Providence.
- CHAPTER 17.** How We May Apply This Doctrine to Our Greatest Benefit .
- CHAPTER 18.** God So Uses the Works of the Ungodly, and So Bends Their Minds to Carry Out His Judgments, that He Remains Pure from Every Stain.

BOOK 2

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THE REDEEMER IN CHRIST, FIRST DISCLOSED TO THE FATHERS UNDER THE LAW, AND THEN TO US IN THE GOSPEL

- CHAPTER 1.** By the Fall and Revolt of Adam the Whole Human Race Was Delivered to the Curse, and Degenerated from Its Original Condition; the Doctrine of Original Sin
- CHAPTER 2.** Man Has Now Been Deprived of Freedom of Choice and Bound Over to Miserable Servitude
- CHAPTER 3.** Only Damnable Things Come Forth from Man's Corrupt Nature
- CHAPTER 4.** How God Works in Men's Hearts
- CHAPTER 5.** Refutation of the Objections Commonly Put Forward in Defense of Free Will.
- CHAPTER 6.** Fallen Man Ought to Seek Redemption in Christ.
- CHAPTER 7.** The Law Was Given, Not to Restrain the Folk of the Old Covenant Under Itself, but to Foster Hope of Salvation in Christ Until His Coming
- CHAPTER 8.** Explanation of the Moral Law (the Ten Commandments)
- CHAPTER 9.** Christ, Although He Was Known to the Jews Under the Law, Was at Length Clearly Revealed Only in the Gospel
- CHAPTER 10.** The Similarity of the Old and New Testaments
- CHAPTER 11.** The Difference Between the Two Testaments
- CHAPTER 12.** Christ Had to Become Man in Order to Fulfill the Office of Mediator
- CHAPTER 13.** Christ Assumed the True Substance of Human Flesh
- CHAPTER 14.** How the Two Natures of the Mediator Make One Person
- CHAPTER 15.** To Know the Purpose for Which Christ Was Sent by the Father, and What He Conferred Upon Us, We Must Look Above All at Three Things in Him: the Prophetic Office, Kingship, and Priesthood.

CHAPTER 16. How Christ Has Fulfilled the Function of Redeemer to Acquire Salvation for Us. Here, Also, His Death and Resurrection Are Discussed, as Well as His Ascent Into Heaven

CHAPTER 17. Christ Rightly and Properly Said to Have Merited God's Grace and Salvation for Us . . .

BOOK 3

**THE WAY IN WHICH WE RECEIVE THE GRACE OF CHRIST:
WHAT BENEFITS COME TO US FROM IT, AND WHAT EFFECTS
FOLLOW .**

CHAPTER 1. The Things Spoken Concerning Christ Profit Us by the Secret Working of the Spirit

CHAPTER 2. Faith: Its Definition Set Forth, and Its Properties Explained .

CHAPTER 3. Our Regeneration by Faith: Repentance

CHAPTER 4. How Far from the Purity of the Gospel Is All That the Sophists in Their Schools Prate About Repentance; Discussion of Confession and Satisfaction

CHAPTER 5. The Supplements That They Add to Satisfaction, Namely, Indulgences and Purgatory

CHAPTER 6. The Life of the Christian Man; and First, by What Arguments Scripture Urges Us to It

CHAPTER 7. The Sum of the Christian Life: The Denial of Ourselves

CHAPTER 8. Bearing the Cross, a Part of Self-denial

CHAPTER 9. Meditation on the Future Life.

CHAPTER 10. How We Must Use the Present Life and Its Helps

CHAPTER 11. Justification by Faith: First the Definition of the Word and of the Matter

CHAPTER 12. We Must Lift Up Our Minds to God's Judgment Seat that We May Be Firmly Convinced of His Free Justification..

CHAPTER 13. Two Things to Be Noted in Free Justification

CHAPTER 14. The Beginning of Justification and Its Continual Progress

CHAPTER 15. Boasting About the Merits of Works Destroys Our Praise of God for Having Bestowed Righteousness, as Well as Our Assurance of Salvation

CHAPTER 16. Refutation of the False Accusations by Which the Papists Try to Cast Odium Upon This Doctrine

CHAPTER 17. The Agreement of the Promises of the Law and of the Gospel.

CHAPTER 18. Works Righteousness Is Wrongly Inferred from Reward.

CHAPTER 19. Christian Freedom.

CHAPTER 20. Prayer, Which Is the ‘Chief’ Exercise of Faith, and by Which We Daily Receive God’s Benefits.

CHAPTER 21. Eternal Election, by Which God Has Predestined Some to Salvation, Others to Destruction

CHAPTER 22. Confirmation of This Doctrine from Scriptural Testimonies

CHAPTER 23. Refutation of the False Accusations with Which This Doctrine Has Always Been Unjustly burdened

CHAPTER 24. Election Is Confirmed by God’s Call; Moreover, the Wicked Bring Upon Themselves the Just Destruction to Which They Are Destined.

CHAPTER 25. The Final Resurrection

BOOK 4

THE EXTERNAL MEANS OR AIDS BY WHICH GOD INVITES US INTO THE SOCIETY OF CHRIST AND HOLDS US THEREIN

CHAPTER 1. The True Church with Which as Mother of All the Godly We Must Keep Unity

CHAPTER 2. A Comparison of the False and the True Church

CHAPTER 3. The Doctors and Ministers of the Church, Their Election and Office

CHAPTER 4. The Condition of the Ancient Church, and the Kind of Government in Use Before the Papacy

CHAPTER 5. The Ancient Form of Government Was Completely Overthrown by the Tyranny of the Papacy

CHAPTER 6. The Primacy of the Roman See

CHAPTER 7. The Origin and Growth of the Roman Papacy Until It Raised Itself to Such a Height that the Freedom of the Church Was Oppressed, and all Restraint Overthrown

CHAPTER 8. The Power of the Church with Respect to Articles of Faith; and How in the Papacy, with Unbridled License, the Church Has Been Led to Corrupt All Purity of Doctrine

CHAPTER 9. Councils and Their Authority.

CHAPTER 10. The Power of Making Laws, in Which the Pope, with His Supporters, Has Exercised Upon Souls the Most Savage Tyranny and Butchery

CHAPTER 11. The Jurisdiction of the Church and Its Abuse as Seen in the Papacy.

CHAPTER 12. The Discipline of the Church: Its Chief Use in Censures and Excommunication

CHAPTER 13. Vows; and How Everyone Rashly Taking Them Has Miserably Entangled Himself

CHAPTER 14. The Sacraments

CHAPTER 15. Baptism

CHAPTER 16. Infant Baptism Best Accords with Christ's Institution and the Nature of the Sign

CHAPTER 17. The Sacred Supper of Christ, and What It Brings to Us

CHAPTER 18. The Papal Mass, a Sacrilege by Which Christ's Supper Was Not Only Profaned but Annihilated.

CHAPTER 19. The Five Other Ceremonies, Falsely Termed Sacraments; Although Commonly Considered Sacraments Hitherto, They Are Proved Not to Be Such, and Their Real Nature Is Shown

CHAPTER 20. Civil Government

Bibliographies

EDITOR'S PREFACE

To bring to English readers this work of magnitude and importance, unimpaired in its energy and power, was a task to be approached with fear and trembling. It was felt that, to assure a satisfactory result, more than a translator and an editor were needed. Accordingly a corps of expert Latinists and Calvin scholars was enlisted to read and criticize the translation as it was being prepared. Those who have been associated with the work in this way are: Dr. Albert Billheimer, Professor Emeritus of Classics, New York University; Dr. John S. Burleigh, Principal of New College, Edinburgh; Dr. Allen Cabaniss, Professor of History, University of Mississippi; Dr. Edward A. Dowey, Jr., Professor of the History of Christian Doctrine, Princeton Theological Seminary; Dr. George E. McCracken, Professor of Classics, Drake University; Dr. M. Eugene Osterhaven, Professor of Systematic Theology, Western Theological Seminary; Dr. Matthew Spinka, Professor Emeritus of Church History, Hartford Theological Seminary, and Dr. Leonard J. Trinterud, Professor of Church History, McCormick Theological Seminary. With a generous expenditure of time and thought, these scholars have compared, in whole or in part, the draft of the translation with the Latin text, and have offered specific criticisms which have been gratefully utilized in the subsequent process of revision. None of these valued associates is in any degree responsible for the wording finally adopted. As editor I have been closely in touch with the work of translation at all stages.

The translation is furnished with headings of two sorts. (a) The chapters, excepting only a few very short ones, are subdivided into several parts with headings (here original) supplied. (b) Subordinate to these are headings for each of the sections separately numbered in the 1559 edition. Most of these section headings are translated from those provided in the German edition of Otto Weber. They are here employed by kind permission of Professor Weber and his publishers, Verlag der Buchhandlung des Erziehungsvereins, Neukirchen Kreis Moers. Where, as is not infrequently the case, Dr. Weber has not given a heading for a numbered section, one is supplied. In rare cases, a heading given by him has been shortened or otherwise altered, and in a few instances, the editor

has substituted a heading of his own. The section headings here marked with an asterisk (*) are freshly inserted; those marked with a dagger (†) are Weber's with some variation; those unmarked are taken over simply from him, mainly in Dr. Battles' translation.

With regard to the footnotes, indebtedness is gratefully acknowledged to Professor Dowey, who, following an early arrangement, provided materials that have been incorporated in numerous theological notes in Books 1 and 2, and to the translator, who has spotted a number of hitherto unnoticed classical and patristic references, and supplied other data. Valued, if incidental, contributions have also been made by a number of scholars in conversation and correspondence. All such contributed materials have of necessity been so merged with my own comments that I alone must take responsibility for the form and content of the notes as they now appear, and be charged with all their errors and defects.

The work of European editors of the *Institutes* has been freely utilized. Among these there is a primary indebtedness to the *Institutio Christianae religionis*, 1559, edited by Peter Barth and Wilhelm Niesel, which comprises Volumes 3, 4, and 5 of their five-volume series *Joannis Calvini Opera Selecta*. These editors furnish copious notes in Latin, which are arranged in two classes, cited, respectively, by the use of letters and Arabic numerals. The former record variations in the texts published in Calvin's lifetime; the latter consist in part of the annotations found in the earlier successive Latin editions with many needed corrections, and in part of citations, never previously made, of passages to which Calvin alludes without identification. To identify accurately the vast number of such hidden references is perhaps not humanly possible, but Barth and Niesel have made an impressive attempt to do this. They provide, however, in general, citations only, bearing no explicit information on the content, or the context, of the passage referred to. The present editor has in nearly all instances gone to the original passage, and where it seemed useful toward the explanation of Calvin's argument, has offered a word of interpretation, or a short quotation or paraphrase. Detailed recognition of the debt to Barth and Niesel would have been absurdly cumbrous: it can be discovered on almost every page by anyone who cares to make a comparison. But there has been no hesitation in disregarding some of their citations where the matter concerned seemed possibly unoriginal in the source given, or of

a trivial nature, or where the identification seemed questionable. In a very few instances comparison will disclose the correction of an inaccurate citation. For the convenience of the reader, English translations of the sources noted have been cited wherever possible, along with editions of the original texts.

In the case of the notes supplied by the editors of French editions of the work, dependence has not been so constant, and in general has been acknowledged in detail except when quite secondary. The edition of the 1541 French text by J. Pannier and others has yielded a good deal of needed material. J.D. Benoit's critical edition of the French text of 1560, so far as published (Books 1-3), has also been an indispensable aid. Frequent use has been made also of notes in J. Cadier's modernized version of the 1560 text. While the notes in these editions are naturally concerned primarily with matters of text and language, they also furnish a good deal of direction in the historical and theological interpretation of the work.

Many of the footnotes will be found to be independent of the work of previous editors. This is generally the case in references to historical events and historical studies, and to theological writings of the centuries between Calvin's and our own. The citations of Calvin's predecessors, classical and ecclesiastical, extend somewhat beyond those previously given. New also are a few relevant allusions in the field of *belles lettres*. In a work of such range as the *Institutes* the possibility of annotation is limitless. The purpose held in view has been simply to clarify the work for the modern reader, and, by a selected minimum of serviceable information and interpretative comment, to give an impression of its theological and historical depth and range.

It would be tedious to name all the libraries in which materials for the notes have been obtained. Most of the labor was done in the Harvard Andover and Widener Libraries, the Folger Shakespeare Library, the Library of Congress, the Library of Union Theological Seminary, and the New York Public Library. Books and films have been made available through these libraries from many others. The courteous and efficient help of many librarians has been highly appreciated. The difficult task of typing the notes has been done by Mrs. Robert C. Douglas; and the consistency and accuracy of the citations have been greatly enhanced

through the patient labor of the staff of The Westminster Press, especially by Mrs. Mildred G. Lehr, Mrs. Marian Noecker, and Miss Lucille Wolfe.

The editor is extremely grateful to the Trustees of the Folger Shakespeare Library for having appointed him to a fellowship to pursue the work. He is also deeply indebted to the Simon Guggenheim Foundation for the award of a fellowship which at a later stage relieved the financial burden of research. The interest and encouragement of Dr. Paul L. Meacham of The Westminster Press have been a constant support. Special thanks are also due to Dr. Baillie and Dr. Van Dusen, editors of the series, and to Professor Osterhaven, for their critical reading of the Introduction in draft form; the two last named have also helpfully examined a draft of most of the footnotes.

J. T. M.

TRANSLATOR'S NOTE

The translation of John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* here offered has been newly made from the 1559 Latin Text [VL] as edited by Barth and Niesel, collated, however, with the earlier editions of that text and also with the 1536, 1539, 1543, 1545, 1550, 1553, and 1554 versions. The French versions [VG] of 1560 (CR and Benoit) and of 1541 (Pannier) have been consulted: where a rendering has been adopted from the French, the fact is duly noted. Occasional recourse has been had to the Dutch of A. Sizoo and the German of O. Weber.

Behind the present English version lie extensive studies of Calvin's vocabulary and investigations of his Scriptural usage. These have been entered on thousands of slips which have also served as the basis of full indexes published in this edition. Particular attention has been paid to the nuances of Calvin's synonyms: e.g., *amor/charitas/dilectio*, *deitas/divinitas/numen*, *foedus/pactio/pactum/testamentum*, *tessera/symbolum/signum*, *constringere / obdurare / obfirmare / indurare / roborare / aggravare*, etc. The aim has been to achieve a reasonably consistent rendering of Calvin's meaning in modern English.

In attempting to transmit something of the directness and color of Calvin's Latin, the translator has broken up many long sentences, so foreign to current English prose, and has avoided wherever possible the aridities of a heavily Latinate theological language — while at the same time honoring the precise distinctions of Calvin's thought. And he has not softened the vivid and sometimes harsh language of the text. In recasting an ancient work in modern idiom there is always a dilemma: how to balance faithfulness to the original over against due attention to the current ways of English speech.

A word of explanation needs to be said about the handling of Calvin's Scriptural usage in the present translation. At the outset, it became obvious that Calvin more often quotes Scripture *ad sensum* than *ad litteram* and that even when he is quoting directly very often no known Scriptural version is followed verbatim. As a consequence, there has been frequent collation of Scriptural passages with Calvin's Commentaries

[Comm.], with the Vulgate [Vg.], the Septuagint [LXX], and the Hebrew. Erasmus has also been consulted, and in a few instances (in Proverbs, where no commentary of Calvin exists) parallels with the Geneva Bible have been noted. Even in the same section two different renderings of a verse may be found. When Scripture has been cast in *oratio obliqua*, pronouns shifted, or other slight alteration made by Calvin, the citation has been marked with a “p” and carried in quotation marks. While no attempt has been made to exhaust Calvin’s Scriptural usage, many new citations have been added, and previous inaccuracies have been silently corrected. Where comparative studies of the *Institutes*, Commentaries, and Biblical text have shed light (as in the instance of the hardening of Pharaoh’s heart, 1. 18. 2; 2. 4. 4; etc.), Calvin’s citations of Scripture have been closely inspected and altered wherever necessary.

The reader will observe certain superscript letters in the text of the translation. These indicate five main editorial strata and three lesser ones, as follows: a-1536, b-1539, c-1543, d-1550, e-1559. The editions of 1545, 1553, and 1554 are signaled by “x” with a footnote indicating which edition is involved. Of necessity, this device cannot indicate the more minute textual alterations (for these the reader is referred to Barth and Niesel’s *Opera Selecta*), but the primary editorial blocs are indicated. Capitalization conforms to the practice of The Westminster Press; pronouns referring to the Deity are capitalized only to avoid necessary ambiguity.

The translator wishes here to acknowledge the aid of the board of critics mentioned and a personal debt to Professor Goodwin Beach of Trinity College, Hartford, Connecticut. He is indebted to the libraries of the Hartford Seminary Foundation, of McCormick Seminary, and of the Library of the Seminary of the Eglise Libre du Canton de Vaud (Lausanne, Switzerland) for their assistance. Lastly, he acknowledges the help of many students, of his typist, Mrs. C. Freeman Reynolds, and of his wife, who read the whole work in its various drafts.

F. L. B.

ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

ACW — Ancient Christian Writers.

ANF — The Ante-Nicene Fathers.

Aquinas, Summa Theol. — Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica.

Augustine, Psalms—Augustine, Enarrationes in Psalmos. Augustine, John's Gospel—Augustine, In Joannis evangelium tractatus.

Ayer, Source Book — Ayer, J. C., A Source Book of Ancient Church History.

Benoit, Institution — Benoit, J.-D., Jean Calvin: Institution de la Religion Chrestienne, livres 1-3.

Cadier, Institution — Cadier, J. and Marcel, P., Jean Calvin: Institution de la Religion Chretienne.

Calvin, Letters — Letters of John Calvin, ed. J. Bonnet.

Calvin, Tracts — Calvin's Tracts.

CC — Corpus Catholicorum. Werke catholischer Schriftsteller im Zeitalter der Glaubens-spaltung.

CCL — Corpus Christianorum, series Latina.

Comm. — Commentary, in the text designates a Scripture passage conforming to translation given, in the notes indicates a statement made in the appropriate commentary of Calvin.

CR — Corpus Reformatorum: Johannis Calvini Opera quae super-sunt omnia.

CR Melanchthon — Corpus Reformatorum: Philippi Melanchthonis Opera quae supersunt omnia.

CK Zwingli — Corpus Reformatorum: Huldreich Zwinglis sammtliche Werke.

CSEL — Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum.

Doumergue, Calvin — Doumergue, E., Jean Calvin — Les hommes et les choses de son temps.

Du Cange, Glossarium — C. du F. Du Cange, Glossarium ad scriptores mediae et infimae latinitatis.

FC — Fathers of the Church.

Friedberg—Friedberg, E. (ed.), Corpus iuris canonici.

HDRE—Hastings, J. (ed.), Dictionary of Religion and Ethics.

Hefele-Leclercq — Hefele, C. J., ed. Leclercq, H., Histoire des conciles d'après les documents originaux.

Heppe RD — Heppe, H., Reformed Dogmatics. Tr. G. T. Thomson.

Herminjard, Correspondance — Herminjard, A.-L., Correspondance des Reformateurs dans les pays de langue française.

GCS — Die griechischen Christlichen Schriftsteller der ersten drei Jahrhunderte.

LCC — The Library of Christian Classics.

LCL — The Loeb Classical Library.

LF — A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church.

Lombard, Sentences — Peter Lombard, Libri quatuor sententiarum.

Luther, Werke WA — Martin Luthers Werke. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Weimar.

LXX — The Septuagint: Greek version of the Old Testament.

Mansi — Mansi, J. D., Sacrorum conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio.

MGH — Monumenta Germaniae Historica.

MPG — Migne, J.P., Patrologiae cursus completus, series Graeca.

MPL — Migne, J.P., Patrologiae cursus completus, series Latina.

NPNF — A Select Library of the Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, first series.

NPNF — 2 ser. — Second series of the above.

OS — Barth, P. and Niesel, W., Calvini Opera Selecta.

p. — paraphrase, designates a Scripture quotation or near-quotation, not conforming fully to any as yet ascertainable source; many of these are in oratio obliqua.

Pannier, Institution — Pannier, J., and others, Oeuvres complètes de Calvin: Institution de la Religion Chrestienne.

par. — paragraph.

Schaff, Creeds — Schaff, P., The Creeds of Christendom.

sec. — section, especially one of the numbered sections of chapters in the Institutes.

Smits — Smits, L., Saint Augustine dans l'oeuvre de Jean Calvin.

Vg. — Vulgate version of the Bible.

VG — Versio Gallica. French text of the Institutes.

Wendel, Calvin — Wendel, F., Calvin: Sources et evolution de sa pensee religieuse.

SYMBOLS

a — edition of 1536

b — edition of 1539

c — edition of 1543

d — edition of 1550

e — edition of 1559

e(b) — edition of 1539 as altered in 1559

e/b — of mixed origin

x — with a footnote indicates editions of 1545, 1553, 1554

***** — following a section title indicates that the title has been supplied by the present editor.

† — indicates that the section title is taken from the German translation of the Institutes by Otto Weber, but with modification.

INTRODUCTION

THE CELEBRATED TREATISE HERE PRESENTED IN A NEW ENGLISH translation holds a place in the short list of books that have notably affected the course of history, molding the beliefs and behavior of generations of mankind. Perhaps no other theological work has so consistently retained for four centuries a place on the reading list of studious Christians. In a wider circle, its title has been familiar, and vague ideas of its content have been in circulation. It has, from time to time, called forth an extensive literature of controversy. It has been assailed as presenting a harsh, austere, intolerant Christianity and so perverting the gospel of Christ, and it has been admired and defended as an incomparable exposition of Scriptural truth and a bulwark of evangelical faith. Even in times when it was least esteemed, its influence remained potent in the life of active churches and in the habits of men. To many Christians whose worship was proscribed under hostile governments, this book has supplied the courage to endure. Wherever in the crises of history social foundations are shaken and men's hearts quail, the pages of this classic are searched with fresh respect. In our generation, when most theological writers are schooled in the use of methods, and of a terminology, widely differing from those employed by Calvin, this masterpiece continues to challenge intensive study, and contributes a reviving impulse to thinking in the areas of Christian doctrine and social duty.

1

The Christianae religionis institutio (to cite the first form of Calvin's title) sprang from the vivid experience of a gifted young man amid the revival of Scriptural Christianity that marked the Protestant Reformation. We have every reason to believe that Calvin's convictions were born of struggle and anguish, though we cannot be certain of the stages through which he came or of the date of what he calls his "sudden conversion." From a boyhood in the cathedral city of Noyon he went early to the University of Paris and later studied law in Orleans and Bourges, but turned from the legal profession to give his attention to classical literature. During the decade of

these activities (1523-1533) he must have been increasingly aware of the religious crisis of the age that was now manifesting itself in France in Biblical studies, evangelical fervor, persecution, and martyrdom.

When his friend Nicolas Cop^{f1} became rector of the University, Calvin was in some way implicated in the rectorial address he delivered, November 1, 1533. This discourse has been too hastily regarded as a definitely Protestant utterance. Rather, it reflects the Biblical humanism of the party of Marguerite d'Angoulême, inspired by the influential but now very aged scholar, Jacques Lefevre of Etaples (Faber Stapulensis), who had translated the Bible into French. Some acquaintance with Luther is also evident in the address, but it does not bear proof of having been written by one who had espoused Reformation doctrines. Nevertheless, its boldness alarmed the authorities, and because of his association with it Calvin was in flight and hiding through most of the following year. In the spring, after a visit to Lefevre at Nerac, he went to Noyon to act on a new decision. There May 4, 1534, he resigned the clerical benefices that had been provided for him during his childhood, and thus broke off relations with the unreformed church and clergy.^{f2} It is possible that the talks with Lefevre, the spent leader of the non-Protestant Biblical movement, formed the occasion of his "conversion," which set him definitely within the Protestant ranks.

A new stage now began. He would never cease thereafter from tireless activity in the cause of evangelical faith. Later in that year he wrote two ardent prefaces that were to appear at the beginning of the Old Testament and of the new Testament in the French Bible prepared by his cousin, Pierre Robert Olivetan, the Waldenses of Piedmont. When this book was published, in June, 1535, Calvin was in Basel and his manuscript of the *Institutes of the Christian Religion*^{f3} was undoubtedly at an advanced stage. A beginning of the work may have been made in 1534 while he was still in France. The Du Tillet family had then given him shelter and "a quiet nest" at Claix in Angoulême. To say the least, the extensive library to which he there had access may have furnished materials later to be incorporated in the book.

In France, the situation became more and more precarious for all marked leaders of the new movement. For this reason, and because he was surrounded by inquirers wherever he went, Calvin decided to seek abroad a

safe retreat for study. About the beginning of January, 1535, he left France and made his way to Basel. Many Protestants were at that time taking flight from the growingly intense persecution. The king, Francis I,^{f4} had been incensed by the incident of the Placards, October 18, 1534, when copies of a handbill containing crude attacks on the Mass were in the night attached to public buildings and even thrust into the royal bedchamber. Many suspects were imprisoned and burnings took place from day to day.

It is principally in the Preface to his Commentary on the Psalms,^{f5} published in 1558, that Calvin informs us of this crucial period in his life. With simple eloquence he tells how, after he left his native land to seek “a quiet hiding place” for his studies, reports reached him of the many burnings taking place in France and the perverse explanations given for these. While Calvin “was hidden unknown at Basel,” false statements emanating from the French court were being circulated in German circles to allay the severe anti-French reaction to which the persecutions had given rise. These statements, as Calvin says, represented the sufferers as consisting of “Anabaptists and seditious men.” Such a manifesto, supposedly from the hand of Guillaume du Bellay, brother of the bishop of Paris and negotiator for the king with the German governments and theologians, is known to have been issued at the beginning of February.^{f6} Convinced that such declarations were intended to excuse greater bloodshed to come, Calvin decided that silence on his part would entail a just charge of cowardice and treachery. He could not be silent while those who had suffered death for their faith, and whom he regarded as faithful and “holy martyrs,” were so grossly misrepresented, and while many still living were similarly imperiled. Some of the sufferers were his personal friends, notably the Paris merchant, Etienne de la Forge, a Waldensian from Piedmont, who was burned February 15, 1535. He felt bound, as he says, to “vindicate from undeserved insult my brethren whose death was precious in the sight of the Lord,” and, by moving foreign peoples, to help the cause of others exposed to the same sufferings. Under the impact of these events the book took shape. Whatever his previous intentions regarding his work may have been, he now made speed to prepare it for publication.

While he labored at his book from January to August, 1535, he continued to learn of grave events in France. The attempt of the king to suppress all

printing failed, but the persecution was intensified at the end of January and was little abated until July, when the death of the aged Cardinal Duprat, credited with the direction of the king's religious policy, brought a lull. Negotiations with the German Lutherans, begun by the French court two years earlier but interrupted, were now resumed. A pressing invitation was conveyed to Melanchthon and Bucer to come to Paris for consultation on church reform, and this project was not abandoned until August 28, a few days after Calvin completed his manuscript of the *Institutio*.¹⁷ The fact that the king seemed inconsistent and irresolute in all this probably led many Protestants to hope for a favorable change. In the same period, Calvin had reason to fear that the Protestant cause in Europe would be discredited by the revolutionary Anabaptist movement centering in Munster, whose adherents were after a long siege ruthlessly crushed at the end of June, 1535. Calvin may have hoped to have his book appear at the Frankfurt autumn fair in 1535, but the manuscript was not completed until August 23 of that year, the date that he appends with his name to the Prefatory Address to Francis I, which precedes the treatise. The Basel printers, Thomas Platter and Balthasar Lasius, with the editorial co-operation of Jean Oporin, proceeding without haste, issued it in March, 1536. The Latin title of this first edition may be translated as follows:

The Institute of the Christian Religion, Containing almost the Whole Sum of Piety and Whatever It is Necessary to Know in the Doctrine of Salvation. A Work Very Well Worth Reading by All Persons Zealous for Piety, and Lately Published. A Preface to the Most Christian King of France, in Which this Book is Presented to Him as a Confession of Faith. Author, John Calvin, of Noyon. Basel, MDXXXVI.

2

Both parts of the title have significance. The word *institutio* itself was familiar in the sense of “instruction” or “education.” The work was designed both as a compendium of the doctrines of the Christian religion and as a confession offered to a persecuting king in behalf of the author's fellow believers. Not only the Prefatory Address, a powerful and direct plea to the king, but at many points the work itself is alive with realization

of the historic crisis amid which it was written. Themes of fundamental concern for the religious mind, grandly conceived and luminously expounded, are freely linked with the issues of Calvin's age and the struggle of the Reformed church for existence and survival. It is characteristic of his method that the Address to King Francis was retained by Calvin in his later editions of the *Institutio* both before and after the death of the king. Though written with intense realization of contemporary affairs, it is in fact a perpetually cogent defense of persecuted adherents of Scriptural faith. The body of the treatise of 1536 consists of six chapters. Four on topics familiar in the history of Christian instruction and then recently employed in Luther's Catechisms: the Law, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. The fifth consists of a denunciatory argument against recognition as sacraments of five rites so regarded in the medieval church (confirmation, penance, extreme unction, priestly orders, and matrimony), and the sixth is a challenging discussion of Christian liberty, involving some elements of political and social teaching. The volume contains (including the short index) 520 octavo pages of about 6 1/8 by 4 inches, and is about the length of the New Testament to the end of Ephesians. It was to be subjected to repeated expansions by the author until it reached its final form in 1559,¹⁸ when it was about equal in size to the Old Testament plus the Synoptic Gospels. Half a year after the book's appearance, Calvin began his work in Geneva. Within a year from its publication the edition was exhausted and he was asked to furnish a revised text. Amid trying labors he undertook this, but completed the revision only in 1538 during his stay in Basel. After some delay, involving a change of printers, it was published in Strasbourg by Wendelin Rihel in August, 1539.

The title was now altered to read: *Institutio Christianae Religionis*, perhaps to differentiate the edition as much as possible from the former one. The curious phrase that follows, "at length truly corresponding to its title," seems to disparage the large assumptions of the former full title, and certainly conveys a sense of the superiority of the new edition. Calvin had reason to congratulate himself on the changes embodied in it. Instead of six chapters there are now seventeen of similar length. The academic weight of the work is much enhanced by the inclusion of many references to Augustine, Origen, and other church fathers, to Plato, Aristotle, Cicero,

and Seneca, and to some then recent scholarly works. The citations of Scripture are also multiplied. Among the added chapters several are on themes of recognized importance in the structure of Calvin's thought, such as the knowledge of God, the similarities and differences of the Old and New Testaments, predestination and providence, and the Christian life. A brief epistle to the reader, dated August 1, 1539, speaks of the author's surprise at the favorable response to the first edition, defective though it was, and states the purpose of his revision. He now sees it as a textbook to be used in "the preparation of candidates in theology for the reading of the divine Word." In accordance with this idea, the format of the volume is one adapted for desk use. The pages, allowing for errors in their numbering, 346 in all, are 13 by 8 inches and have wide margins for student's notes. In a part of the edition to be circulated in France the letters of Calvin's name were transposed to read "Alcuinus."

The question has been raised whether a French rendering of the first edition was, shortly after its appearance, prepared and published by Calvin. In a letter to Francis Daniel, written October 13, 1536, reporting his settlement in Geneva and subsequent illness, Calvin says he has been continually occupied on the French version of his "little book" (*libellus*). The assumption that the "little book" was the *Institutio* is plausible but not conclusive. It may be questioned whether at this stage Calvin would speak of the treatise as a "*libellus*"; the word he uses for the 1536 edition in the 1539 preface is *opus*. About the time of his letter to Daniel, written just after the Disputation of Lausanne, Calvin apparently busied himself with the preparation of his Instruction and *Confession of Faith*^{f9} for the use of the Geneva church. The French edition of this appeared early in 1537, the Latin at Basel a year later. But the editors of the *Corpus Reformatorum* edition of Calvin's works have shown reason to think that the French is mainly a translation of a Latin original virtually identical with that of 1538.^{f10} This is a simply and vigorously written summary of essential arguments of the *Institutio*. It is truly a "little book," yet its composition in Latin and translation into French would for a few weeks fully occupy the hours Calvin could spare from his new work of church reorganization. Calvin's pressing tasks that autumn can hardly have permitted him to translate a work of the length of the *Institutio*. At any rate, no trace has survived of a French edition of 1536 or 1537. The first of

which we have knowledge is the celebrated edition of 1541, Calvin's own translation from the Latin of 1539.

3

This French edition was from the press of Jean Girard (or Gerard) in Geneva, and forms a compact volume of 822 pages, 7 _ by 4 _ inches, rather inexpertly printed in small type. The book was readily portable and was designed for the lay reader who could not use the Latin work. Since there was little hope of its being permitted in France, the number of copies made was apparently restricted, with a French-speaking Swiss public chiefly in view. In the "Argument" prefaced to it, no reference is made to its academic use. Its purpose is described in the phrase: "to help those who desire to be instructed in the doctrines of salvation." Nevertheless, save for one change in the order of chapters, it is simply the 1539 edition in French dress. By students of the evolution of French prose, including many quite out of accord with Galvin's opinions, it has been very warmly praised for its style.^{f11} It is also undeniably the earliest work in which the French language is used as a medium for the expression of sustained and serious thought. It is remarkable that a book so creative in giving character to the language of the French nation should have been itself a translation made by an author who had from boyhood habitually thought in Latin. Every effort was made to prevent its circulation in France and, amid other measures of repression, in July, 1542, and again in February, 1544, copies were piled and burned in front of Notre Dame, Paris.

All the apologetic elements of the first edition were of course retained as the work grew, but the new prefaces and the added materials indicate that instruction, whether of theological students or of a lay public, is increasingly the author's conscious aim. In the third Latin edition, 1543 (the second printed by Rihel in Strasbourg), four new chapters are inserted, bringing the number to twenty-one. This edition was reissued in 1545, and in that year the expanded work appeared in French from Girard's press in Geneva. The Latin edition of 1550, also by Girard, shows only minor changes from that of 1543. A notable improvement introduced in the 1550 edition is the numbering of the paragraph divisions. In the twenty-one chapters are found, in all, 1,217 of these. Two indexes

are appended, the first of the topics treated, the second of Scripture passages and works cited by the author. One of the greatest of Renaissance printers came to Geneva from Paris in 1550 and resumed there, in close association with the Geneva ministers, his lifework in the production of Bibles and religious texts that he had found it impossible to continue in France. This was Robert Estienne (Robertus Stephanus), a distinguished member of the great Estienne family of scholar printers to whom the New Learning and the Reformation owed a measureless debt.^{f12} In February, 1553, he brought out the finest edition of the *Institutio* that Calvin had yet seen, a folio volume 13_ by 8 _ inches, almost faultlessly printed in handsome type. It contains 441 pages, exclusive of the Address to the King and the indexes. In content, however, it makes no advance from the edition of 1550. The brothers Adam and Jean Rivery printed the work again in Geneva in 1554, in small octavo format, without change of text but with an improved index.

There are modern readers who would be well content with the first edition, and many who express a preference for that of 1539 or its French version of 1541 over the more expanded work of 1559 that is translated in these volumes. At the earlier stage, they say, the book was less laborious, less controversial, sufficiently comprehensive, and more pleasing to read. It is not necessary, and may not be possible, to refute these opinions. Without question, republication of the earlier editions is legitimate and desirable. But it would be inept to ignore the author's own evaluation of the editions, and to obliterate the fruits of the labor undertaken and pursued through trying days, in which he remade the work to match his own long-cherished ideal. The Latin edition of 1559 must always be held to bear Calvin's most indisputable imprint of authority. Here, in his opening address to the reader, he speaks of the previous revisions by which the work has been enriched, and adds: "Although I did not regret the labor spent, I was never satisfied until the work had been arranged in the order now set forth." He claims that in laboring at the revision through a time of illness with a quartan fever he has furnished clear evidence of the zeal that moved him "to carry out this task for the God's church." The sense of achievement reflected in these words was so far respected by later editors that for the Latin text it was this final edition which, until 1863, was exclusively reprinted, and from which translations and abridgments were made. There is another reason why we cannot escape this definitive

edition. Recent decades have witnessed a rising interest in, and respect for, Calvin's theology, and the effort to understand and interpret his teachings has become a marked feature of theological writing. Naturally it is to the *Institutio* that inquiry has been primarily directed, and in modern studies normally the citations of passages from the work are to the 1559 edition. The numerals that mark out its sections and facilitate reference are to be regarded (like those of the *Summa* of Thomas Aquinas) as almost a part of the common language of theological discussion. The work is about 80 percent larger than the edition it superseded. It has been so long habitually in use in all countries that there is now no practical possibility of returning to an earlier edition for purposes of scholarly intercourse.

It was printed in Geneva and came from the press of Robert Estienne, August 16, 1559. Calvin's signature to the address to the reader (quoted above) is dated August 1. The eminent printer and productive scholar, Estienne, died three weeks later, and thus the *Institutio* in its final form is the last product of his technical skill. It bears the title:

Institutio Christianae religionis, in libris quatuor nunc primum digesta, certisque distincta capitibus, ad aptissimam methodum: aucta etiam tam magna accessione ut propemodum opus novum haberi possit.

Institute of the Christian Religion, now first arranged in four books and divided by definite headings in a very convenient way: also enlarged by so much added matter that it can almost be regarded as a new work.

The name of the author follows, below it the name of the printer with his well-known emblem of the olive branch, and at the foot:
GENEVAE/M.D.LIX.

4

Calvin made no further revision of the Latin *Institutio*. A French translation of the enlarged work from the press of Jean Crespin in Geneva appeared in 1560. It is the opinion of most recent scholars that Calvin himself prepared or closely supervised this translation.^{f13} Both in Latin

and in French the work was at in wide demand and was frequently reprinted, even before Calvin's death (1564). There were two new printings of the Latin in 1561, one an attractive folio volume apparently by Calvin's Strasbourg printer Rihel, the other a 980-page octavo by Antoine Reboul (Antonius Rebulius) in Geneva. Reboul explains that he is responding to the request of many readers when he inserts at the end an alphabetic index of topics, with citations to book, chapter, and section. This rather ample index, extending to 59 (unnumbered) pages, was printed with many later editions in French and Latin, in some instances along with the two indexes of Marlorat mentioned below. Reboul's volume is in a readable small type, with the Scripture references neatly set in the margins. Of the later Latin editions, two are especially important for their editorial matter. These are the celebrated folio volume printed by the Elzevir house, renowned printers of Leiden, in 1654, and the one that constitutes Volume IX of the *Opera Calvini* published by J. J. Schipper of Amsterdam in 1667.

The French text of 1560 was reprinted in Geneva twice in 1561. In 1562 there were four printings of this text, one at Geneva, one at Caen, and two without indication of place or printer. There were printings at Lyons in 1563 and at Geneva in 1564. The octavo edition issued by the Geneva printer Jaques Bourgeois in 1562 was the first to incorporate the two indexes prepared by Augustin Marlorat,^{f14} a scholarly minister and minor theological writer whose life ended at the hands of persecutors in Rouen in the same year. The first of these is an index of the principal matters contained in the work; the second is of the Bible passages quoted or referred to in it. Marlorat has an interesting preface in which he indicates that he had found the Bible references of earlier editions seriously inaccurate. He gives the verses of Scripture in full, even where Calvin uses only an identifying phrase. A Latin version of these serviceable indexes appeared with the next subsequent printing of the Latin *Institutes*, that of Francis Perrin, Geneva, 1568, and numerous later editions in Latin, French, English, and Dutch made use of them.

Translations into other languages than French had already begun. The 1536 text probably was rendered into Spanish in 1540 by Francisco Enzinas (Dryander) of Burgos, friend of Melancthon, protege of Cranmer, correspondent of Calvin, and eminent New Testament scholar and

translator.^{f14a} If the first Spanish version actually preceded Calvin's own French rendering, the first Italian version depended on a later French edition. It was in 1557 that Giulio Cesare Pascali, a young Italian poet and religious refugee in Geneva, produced there his Italian translation. Pascali made primary use of the French text, which had been revised in 1551 and reprinted in 1553 and 1554. It was dedicated to the most eminent member of the Italian refugee church in Geneva, Galleazzo Caraccioli, Marquis of Vico, to whom Calvin a year earlier had dedicated his Commentary on First Corinthians.

The numerous translations that followed were from the completed work. As early as December 5, 1560, a Dutch version was issued, apparently at Emden and Dort simultaneously. The translator reveals his name only by the initials "I. D." The initials stand for Johannes Dyrkinus (d. 1592), a minister and writer of some distinction, then at Emden.^{f15} In 1572, the first German translation was brought out at Heidelberg, prepared by members of the theological faculty there and with an expository introduction.^{f16} This version was republished in 1582 at Heidelberg, and at Hanau in 1597. In that year also the work appeared in a Spanish translation. This was the work of a Spanish refugee, Cipriano de Valera, who, after a stay in Geneva, had spent many years in England and held a master's degree from Cambridge.^{f17} A Czech version by Jirik Strejc (Georg Vetter), who died in 1599, remained only partially published: Books I and II appeared in 1617. The Hungarian translation by Albert Molnar (d. 1634), eminent minister, scholar, and poet of the Hungarian Reformed Church, was published at Hanau in 1624.^{f18} It has been supposed by qualified scholars, but never verified, that an Arabic version was made by the Zurich Orientalist, John Henry Hottinger (d. 1667).

The editions of the *Institutes* by A. Tholuck (Latin, 1834, 1846, 1872), by F. Baumgartner (1560 French, 1888), and by A. Sizoo (Dutch translation from the Latin, 1931, 1949) have value as texts only. O. Weber's German translation from the Latin (one-volume edition, 1955) and J. Cadier's modernization of the 1560 French (four volumes, 1955-1958) are provided with analytical headings and classified indexes. A Japanese translation from the Latin, by Masaki Nakayama, was published in Tokyo in 1934 and was reprinted in 1949.

Readers of the present translation will welcome somewhat fuller reference to the first English form of the *Institutes*. The Latin editions prior to that of 1559 had been circulated in England and Scotland, but only the chapters on the Christian life (Book 3, chapters 4-10, in the final order of the work) had been put into English.^{f19} The whole work now appeared in a handsome black-letter folio edition under the following title:

The Institution of Christian Religion, wrytten in Latine by maister Jhon Calvin, and translated into Englysh according to the authors last edition. Seen and allowed according to the order appointed in the Quenes Maiesties instructions.

The printer's emblem, a brazen serpent coiled on a wooden cross upheld by clasped hands, is followed by the colophon: "Imprinted at London by Reinolde Wolfe & Richarde Harison, anno 1561."

On the final page of the book the place is given more exactly as "in Paules Churcheyard," and the date as "1561. The 6 day of Maye." Thus the translation was printed in London less than twenty-one months after the Latin edition left the press of Stephanus in Geneva. Yet the printers insert on the back of the title page a somewhat cryptic paragraph bearing their excuse for the delay in its appearance. The task had been assigned to "John Dawes," and he had presented a manuscript "more than a twelvemonth past," but for "diuerse necessarie causes" they had been "constrayned to entreat another frende to translate it whole agayn."^{f20} The initials "T. N." are set at the end of the text, after which six pages are devoted to the list of chapter headings and a short index. In the second edition, 1562, the translator inserts a short preface to which he appends his initials. Only in the improved third edition is the name "Thomas Norton" spelled out on the title page.

Thomas Norton (1532-1584) was about twenty-nine years old when the work appeared. He had already attained some fame as a writer. On Twelfth-night, 1561, *The Tragedy of Gorboduc*, the joint work of Norton and his fellow student at law, Thomas Sackville, had its first performance, and two weeks later it was played by command before the queen. This gory but still impressive drama in blank verse stands at the beginning of

the modern development of English tragedy and is the work by which Norton is best known. But his earlier poems in Latin and English, and his less successful versifications of some of the psalms, were familiar to his contemporaries, together with a variety of translations of religious works and other prose pieces dealing controversially with ecclesiastical issues. He had been a very precocious amanuensis to the Duke of Somerset at a time when the Duke was in correspondence with Calvin. When, after Somerset's death, Calvin wrote to inquire about his children, it was Norton who was deputed to reply. In 1555, he married a daughter of Thomas Cranmer, and he later gave publicity to important manuscripts left by the archbishop. A convinced Calvinist, he was also an advocate of Puritan measures of reform in the church and was at one time imprisoned for criticism of the bishops. Norton became a member of Parliament in 1558 and was frequently thereafter prominent in parliamentary debates and committees. He participated in trials of Roman Catholics, especially those implicated in the Rebellion of 1569, and exhibited in that connection a harsh and blameworthy zeal. Though scholarly, talented, and versatile, Norton never played a major role either in literature or in affairs; but his gifts were such that Calvin was fortunate in his English translator.^[21]

In the third edition of Norton's version, 1574, the original preface, "The Translator to the Reader," is revised and expanded so as to indicate precisely the circumstances in which his work of translation was done. Norton had been asked to undertake it by two well-known printers to the queen. One of these was Edward Whitchurch, who, with Richard Grafton, had published the Great Bible, 1539, and *The Book of Common Prayer*, 1549. The other was Reginald (or Reinolde) Wolfe, a native of Strasbourg who had become an important figure in the English book trade. It was in the house of Whitchurch in Greyfriars that the translator's task was done. Norton does not mention the fact that the wife of Whitchurch was Cranmer's widow and his own wife's mother.^[22] Writing after Whitchurch's death, which took place late in 1561, Norton refers to him as "an ancient zealous Gospeller, as plaine and true a frend as euer I knew living." He also expresses gratitude for the critical advice of numerous "learned men," naming especially David Whitehead who, he states, compared every sentence with the Latin text. Whitehead was a former Marian exile who had been associated with the party favoring the Edwardian *Prayer Book* in the strife at Frankfurt, 1555. An eminent

clergyman of recognized (though privately acquired) learning, he had declined the see of Armagh and possibly also the see of Canterbury.

In 1845, Henry Beveridge, while admitting that “Norton on the whole executed his task with great fidelity,” criticized him sharply for an “overscrupulous” preservation of the Latin forms of speech to the serious injury of the English style. Norton himself explains that because of the “great hardness” of the book from its being “interlaced with Schoolmen’s controversies,” fearing to miss Calvin’s meaning, he had decided “to follow the words so neare as the phrase of the Englysh tongue would suffer.” It is true that this method sometimes produces a strained effect; but to say with Beveridge that Norton gives us only “English words in a Latin idiom” is surely misleading. The translation is not far from typical, plain, early Elizabethan prose, which was then still, as one authority has remarked, “largely the work of churchmen and translators” and had none of the affectations and embellishments that mark the writing of the next generation.¹²³ In his third edition, Norton was happy to be able to rid the book of its many printer’s errors. These he attributes to “the evill manner of my scribbling hand, the enterlining of my Copies, and some other causes well-knownen” to printers. He indicates that some three hundred errors had been corrected in the second edition, and believes the third to be virtually free from such faults. The translation is now for the first time provided not only with a version of the index of A. Reboul (“Table of Matters Entreated Of”) but also with the two indexes of Marlorat, preceded by the latter’s preface. After this revision of 1574, Norton’s book was reprinted with slight alterations in 1578, 1582, 1587, 1599, 1611, and 1634. These editions, especially the last mentioned, show an effort to keep abreast of language changes. Thus, in 1634, “Jhon Calvin” has become “John Calvin,” “truthe” is written “truth,” “glorie” becomes “glory,” “geuen” is changed to “given,” and the abbreviations used in the first edition have disappeared. The attempt to modernize the work was carried further in the Glasgow edition of 1762, which not only uses the then current spelling but freely alters many Latinized or archaic phrases.

From that date Norton's version was not republished. The next English translation of the entire work was that of John Allen (1771-1839):

Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin, translated from the Latin and collated with the author's last edition in French.
London: J. Walker, 1813.

Allen was a layman who had become head of a Dissenting Academy at Hackney. His other writings included an earlier controversial work entitled *The Fathers, the Reformers, and the Public Formularies of England in Harmony with Calvin* . . (1811), and a treatise on modern Judaism (1816). The greater part of Allen's translation was made from the Latin and revised with consultation of the French version; for the remainder he used both versions alike. Although he dismisses Norton's translation as "long antiquated, uncouth, and obscure," his principle of translation differs little from that of Norton. He states that he has "aimed at a medium between servility and looseness and endeavored to follow the style of the original as far as the respective idioms of the Latin and English would admit." The result is a conscientious though not a distinguished translation, marked by a reserved rendering of Calvin's vehement passages and vivid metaphors, but with very few errors seriously affecting the sense of the original. Allen's version has had a continuous circulation especially in America, where it was thirty times republished to 1936. In the edition of 1909, commemorating the four hundredth anniversary of Calvin's birth, B. B. Warfield's valuable essay, "On the Literary History of Calvin's *Institutes*,"^{f24} was inserted; and in the 1936 edition (timed with reference to the four hundred years since Calvin's first edition), Thomas C. Pears, Jr., added "An account of the American Editions." Allen's text has undergone several minor revisions at the hands of American editors, notably that of Joseph Paterson Engles in 1841.

Allen's version was not long without competition. In 1845 appeared *The Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin. A New Translation by Henry Beveridge*. The work was published in Edinburgh under the auspices of the Calvin Translation Society.^{f25} Beveridge (1799-1863) had intended to enter the ministry; he later trained for the law, but made

writing his chief employment. His translations for the Calvin Society included a collection of Calvin's *Tracts Relating to the Reformation*, three volumes, 1844. He later turned to other studies and produced *A Comprehensive History of India*. His edition of the *Institutes* came out in three volumes, and contained in the introductory matter items that have been, not without loss, dropped out of later printings in both America and Britain. One is the "Catalogue Raisonne of the Earlier Editions," prepared by Robert Pitcairn, secretary of the Society. This was a useful description of most of the editions we have referred to above, a good number of which Pitcairn had carefully examined; but certain omissions and other defects make his catalog an unsafe guide. In his list three abridgments of the work are included, one of which is mistaken for a full text, and his information on the early Dutch and German translations is far from comprehensive. Another feature of Beveridge's introduction is the well-chosen series of facsimiles of title pages from early editions available to him and his collaborators. These are from the Latin editions of 1536, 1539 (the Alcuin variant), 1545, 1559, 1561, the French of 1545, the Italian of 1557, and the Spanish of 1597. In the last two instances the translator's prefaces as originally printed are also reproduced.^{f26}

Beveridge's low opinion of the work of Norton has been noted. Strangely enough, he does not even mention Allen. His own translation is of uneven quality. In parts his early Victorian vocabulary seems more distant from our present usage than does that of Allen's earlier work. There are passages that may well prompt the criticism he himself hurls at Norton: "English words in Latin idiom." He is rather less accurate than either of his predecessors, and is chargeable with numerous minor omissions and a few clearly erroneous renderings. Yet many sections are admirably done, and in the finer passages Beveridge manifestly feels Calvin's rhetorical power and succeeds in conveying much of it to the reader.

7

The cumbrous bulk of the *Institutes*, and the interest aroused in it, led to the early appearance of numerous abridgments. These, like the work itself, were generally first published in Latin and later in vernacular translations. One of the earliest was that compiled by Edmund Bunney (Bunnie) (1540-

1619), a popular itinerant preacher of Calvinist doctrines in England, with the title *Institutionis Christianae Religionis . . . Compendium* (London, 1576). It was translated by Edward May as *The Institutions of Christian Religion* ...compendiously abridged by Edmund Bunnie, bachelor of divinity... (London, 1580). The book is not a set of extracts but a condensed abridgment mainly in Bunney's words. It was soon surpassed by the painstaking volume of William Delaune (Laneus, Launeus, Lawne): *Institutionis Christianae Religionis ...Epitome* (London, 1583). Delaune (d. 1610) was a Huguenot refugee, and his printer was his fellow religionist Thomas Vautrollier (d. 1587)^{f27} who, in 1576, had produced the only Latin edition of the *Institutes* to appear in England.^{f28} The *Epitome* is an excellent example of the digest that retains as far as possible the author's language. It contains 371 octavo pages of material from the *Institutes*, following closely and proportionately the arrangement of 1559. Where Calvin reports and confutes the views of his opponents, the text takes the form of objection and reply in the manner of a dialogue. At the beginning, twenty-one unnumbered pages are filled with a "General Table" of the course of argument in the work, presented in an elaborate structure of bracketed divisions and subdivisions.^{f29} In his *Epistola Nuncupatoria*, or address of dedication to Richard Martin, Master of the Mint, Delaune speaks of his book as "a nosegay from the pleasant garden of divinity." The margins are utilized for carefully prepared analytical notes. The text is followed by a twenty-five page index. The book appeared in a translation, complete in all details, by Christopher Fetherstone (Edinburgh, 1585), whose admirable translation of Calvin's Commentary on Acts appeared in the same year. As a presentation of the *Institutes* in brief, it must have been a godsend to the hard-pressed student or the eager reader with limited time. There was a Dutch edition of Delaune in 1650, and the English version was reprinted in 1837.

Another widely circulated Latin abridgment was made by John Piscator (Fischer) (1546-1625), a prominent Reformed theologian and Biblical scholar of the Academy of Herborn in Nassau. Piscator was the associate and successor of Caspar Olevianus,^{f30} and he utilized an "epitome" arranged by the latter (1586) for classroom use. *His Aphorismi doctrinae Christianae maximam partem ex Institutione Calvinii excerpti sive loci communes theologici* (Herborn, 1589) was also compiled for convenience in student discussions, and was soon in such demand that by 1615 it was

in its eighth edition. It appeared also in English in a translation by Henry Holland made from the third edition: *Aphorismes of Christian Religion in a verie compendious abridgment of M. J. Calvin's Institutions*, printed by Richard Field, London, 1596. In accordance with Piscator's subtitle, the text is divided into twenty-eight *loci*. Each of these main sections contains a numbered series of "aphorisms," the numbers varying from eight to thirty-four. The length of the aphorisms ranges from a sentence to several pages. Piscator explains that he has chosen the word *aphorismi* in preference to *theses* since the latter term would suggest debatable uncertainties, and the statements given are not open to doubt or debate.

There soon followed another abridgment of the *Institutes*, the *Analysis paraphrastica Institutionurn theologicarum Johannis Calvini* (Leiden, 1628) by Daniel Colonius (Van Ceulen), regent of the Walloon College at Leiden. Colonius was a son-in-law of the head of the Elzevir printing firm, and a year after the compiler's death a duodecimo edition very neatly printed in minute type was issued by Elzevir (Leiden, 1636). Colonius divides his book into forty-one "disputations," but keeps references to the sections of the original and in the main uses Calvin's language. The *Analysis paraphrastica* is rated highly as a student's manual by Dr. Warfield, but, unlike Delaune's book, it is without marginal headings and index. The 950 small pages contain approximately one third of the *Institutes* — rather too much for a handy abridgment.¹³¹

8

The great treatise of Calvin is justly regarded as a classical statement of Protestant theology. The work expanded under his hand until the range of its subject matter amounted to the whole field of Christian theology. If in its comprehensiveness it surpasses other theological treatises of its century, its superiority is still greater with respect to the order and symmetry with which it is composed, and the substantial consistency of its detailed judgments. The completed work bears few traces of the fact that it had been subjected to repeated enlargements and much rearrangement of its parts. Orderliness is not, however, gained at the expense of persuasiveness and force. It is a living, challenging book that makes personal claims upon the reader. This is because it presents, with

eloquent insistence, that which has laid hold upon the author himself. Looking back at his conversion, Calvin wrote, “God subdued my heart to teachableness.”^{f32} As a consequence of that profound and lasting inward change, he lived and wrote as a man constantly aware of God. At the beginning of the *Institutes* he deals impressively with the theme: How God is known. The whole work is suffused with an awed sense of God’s ineffable majesty, sovereign power, and immediate presence with us men.

This awareness of God is for him neither a product of speculative thinking nor an incentive to it. He rejects the intellectual indulgence of detached speculation. If he had any talent for this, it was deliberately checked. He never adopts the attitude of the impersonal inquirer. It is not what God is in Himself—a theme in his view beyond human capacity—that concerns his mind, but what God is in relation to His world and to us.^{f33} God is not known by those who propose to search him out by their proud but feeble reason; rather, he makes himself known to those who in worship, love, and obedience consent to learn his will from his Holy Word.

One who takes up Calvin’s masterpiece with the preconception that its author’s mind is a kind of efficient factory turning out and assembling the parts of a neatly jointed structure of dogmatic logic will quickly find this assumption challenged and shattered. The discerning reader soon realizes that not the author’s intellect alone but his whole spiritual and emotional being is enlisted in his work. Calvin might well have used the phrase later finely composed by Sir Philip Sidney, “Look in thy heart, and write.” He well exemplifies the ancient adage, “The heart makes the theologian.” He was not, we may say, a theologian by profession, but a deeply religious man who possessed a genius for orderly thinking and obeyed the impulse to write out the implications of his faith. He calls his book not a *summa theologiae* but a *summa pietatis*. The secret of his mental energy lies in his piety; its product is his theology, which is his piety described at length. His task is to expound (in the language of his original title) “the whole sum of piety and whatever it is necessary to know in the doctrine of salvation.” Quite naturally, in the preface to his last Latin edition he affirms that in the labor of preparing it his sole object has been “to benefit the church by maintaining the pure doctrine of godliness.”

For him, piety is unavoidably associated with doctrine, and all experience a challenge to thought. But he knows experiences that lie beyond his

powers of thought, and sometimes brings us to the frontier where thinking fails and the mystery is impenetrable to his mental powers. At this point he can only bid us go reverently on if we are able. He would not, he says, have the sublime mystery of the Eucharist measured by his insufficiency — “by the little measure of my childishness”;^{f34} but he exhorts his readers not to confine their comprehension of it by his limitations, but to strive upward far higher than he can lead them.^{f35} Within that recognized frontier, however, he writes with great clarity and conviction.

To the modern mind the word “piety” has lost its historic implications and status. It has become suspect, as bearing suggestions of ineffectual religious sentimentality or canting pretense. For Calvin and his contemporaries, as for ancient pagan and Christian writers, *pietas* was an honest word, free from any unsavory connotation. It was a praiseworthy dutifulness or faithful devotion to one’s family, country, or God. Calvin insistently affirms that piety is a prerequisite for any sound knowledge of God. At the first mention of this principle he briefly describes piety as “that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces.” It exists when men “recognize that they owe everything to God, that they are nourished by his fatherly care, that he is the Author of their every good.”^{f36} The word *pietas* occurs with great frequency in Calvin’s writings, and in the *Institutes* it keeps recurring like the ringing of a bell to call us back from the allurements of a secular intellectualism. “For Calvin,” says Emile Doumergue, “religion and piety are one and the same thing.”^{f37} “Piety,” says A. Mitchell Hunter, “was the keynote of his character. He was a God-possessed soul. Theology was no concern to him as a study in itself; he devoted himself to it as a framework for the support of all that religion meant to him.”^{f38} Gratitude, love, and obedience are involved in this religious attitude which is the indispensable condition of a sound theology. Since we “owe everything to God,” in Calvin’s pages we are everywhere confronting God, not toying with ideas or balancing opinions about him. As a result of this, regardless of detailed agreement with the author, the reader finds him the companion of his own religious struggles. He is indeed a peculiarly articulate and intelligible reporter of religious insights and spiritual promptings that come at least vaguely to consciousness whenever men strive to frame thoughts of the God with whom they have to do.

Calvin's clarity of expression may at first lead the reader to suppose that his thought is easy to grasp. Actually, he lays heavy demands upon the mind, and some of those best versed in his writings have confessed the difficulty of explaining some elements of his thought. Interpretations of his theology have often clashed, and in our day a persistent debate over important aspects of his teaching in the *Institutes* has been a salient feature of Protestant theological discussion. This is the common fate of a classic treatise. It is an arsenal for later thinkers, and when it has become a means of bringing to expression their nascent ideas the temptation is strong to think of it as a testimonial to the new formulation rather than to allow it to make its own fresh impression. Calvin's treatment of the natural in relation to his doctrine of grace has been much controverted.^{f39}

Unquestionably, he earnestly affirmed on the one hand that a sense of deity is so indelibly engraved on the human heart that even the worst of men cannot rid themselves of it, and on the other, stressed the evidence of God's handiwork that meets our senses in the beauty and order of the world and in the marvels of man's thought and skill. He does not doubt that the objective world bears ample intimation that God exists, and that he is almighty, just, and wise and exercises a "fatherly kindness" toward his creatures. Yet men are so damaged by the heritage of sin entailed by Adam's fall that they miss this testimony of creation to the Creator, and grope blindfold in this bright theater of the universe with only erroneous and unworthy notions of the God who made it.^{f40}

9

But God has not abandoned man in this plight. Since we fail to find Him in his works, he has revealed himself in his Word. Usually when Calvin speaks of God's Word, he does not differentiate it from the canonical Scriptures. Yet if forced to define it, he would not simply point to the words spelled out on the sacred page. It is "the everlasting Wisdom, residing with God, from which both all oracles and all prophecies go forth." By "the everlasting Wisdom" in this context, he intends a reference to Christ, by whose Spirit, he says, the ancient prophets spoke.^{f41} Thus Christ, the Word, by whom all things were created (<430101> John 1:1), is the Author of the written Word, by which the eternal Word is known. Holy

Scripture, thus understood, assumes for Calvin unquestionable and infallible authority and is made his constant reliance and resource. His readiness in bringing Scripture passages to bear upon each point of argument is astonishing, and has perhaps never been surpassed. But in his case, familiarity with the text rarely if ever results in a disorderly excess of quotations. Where his quotations seem unduly abundant, it will usually be found that he is meeting an opponent's use of the same texts. With rare exceptions, he does not attempt to force the passages used to yield more of doctrine than they actually contain. Nor does he adduce texts that from the standpoint of Biblical science in his time are alien to his argument, and then (as others do) try to justify their use by capricious allegorical exegesis. He is always alert to expose such "trifling with the Scriptures." In general, he holds faithfully to his principle of simple and literal interpretation. He disdains the use of allegory to confirm dogmas and cites Scripture only as authenticating what it directly says.^{f42} The authority of the Bible as God's Word and the source of indisputable truth is never called in question by Calvin, and he assumes that his readers share this assurance. Yet he is not concerned to assert what in later controversy has been spoken of as "verbal inerrancy." His whole emphasis is thrown on the message or content of Scripture rather than on the words. It began in the oracles and visions that God imparted to the patriarchs, whose minds were so impressed with their truth that they passed them down orally to their descendants, until at length God brought it about that the revelations were recorded for the use of later generations.^{f43}

The human writers are not automatons but persons whose minds and hearts have embraced the truth of what they write. Even when he is stressing the point of the authority of the sacred writings, he usually appears to have in mind the writer, and he seeks to expound the message itself, not merely the words that convey it. Thus in the oft-quoted description of the apostolic writers as "sure and genuine scribes" (in the French text, "sworn notaries") of the Holy Spirit,^{f44} the context does not bear upon the Scripture words as such but refers rather to the inspired teaching they express. He has, in fact, no systematic treatment of the manner of inspiration. If there are passages in his writings in which he seems to associate the inspiration with the words themselves, his prevailing concern is nevertheless to carry the reader beyond the words to the message. To evaluate his position on this, we should need to search the

Commentaries as well as the *Institutes*. It was less a problem to him than to some moderns. Doubtless he would have liked to assert without qualification the complete accuracy of Scripture, but he is frank to recognize that some passages do not admit of the claim of inerrancy on the verbal level. Thus he discusses an inaccuracy in Paul's quotation of ^{<195104>}Psalm 51:4 in ^{<450304>}Romans 3:4, and is led to generalize thus: "For we know that in repeating the words of Scripture the apostles were often pretty free [*liberiores*], since they held it sufficient if they cited them in accordance with the matter; for this reason, they did not make the words a point of conscience [*quare non tantum illis fuit verborum religio*]." ^{f45} The expression here used, *verborum religio*, occurs in the *Institutes* ^{f46} in a scornful characterization of opponents who wrangle on the basis of an artificially scrupulous insistence on each several word of a passage under interpretation. Calvin's keen sense of style is freely applied to the Bible writers. "John, thundering from the heights" is contrasted with the other Evangelists who use "a humble and lowly style," but this involves no divergence in the message. ^{f47} The "elegance" of Isaiah and the "rudeness" of Amos are alike employed to express the "majesty" of the Holy Spirit. ^{f48}

The divine authority of Holy Scripture is not derived from any declaration by the church; rather, it is upon Scripture that the church is built. ^{f49} That God is the Author of Scripture is capable of rational demonstration, but this would be wholly ineffectual to build up a sound faith. Its authority is self-authenticating to those who yield to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The testimony of the Holy Spirit is more excellent than all reason. Certainty of its divine truth such as piety requires is ours only when the Spirit who spoke by the prophets enters our hearts. Then we realize that the Scripture has come to us "from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men." ^{f50} The Spirit too is its interpreter, and seals its teaching upon the reader's heart. Thus for Calvin the Bible is the believer's infallible book of truth when it is read under the direction of the Spirit. Furthermore, Holy Scripture has its organizing principle in the revelation of Christ, and has its chief office in enabling us to appropriate the life-giving grace of Christ. "The Scriptures are to be read," says Calvin in his Commentary on John's Gospel, "with the purpose of finding Christ there." ^{f51} It is important to realize that the focal point of the *Institutes* is not found in God's sovereignty, or in predestination, or in insistence on

obedience to God's Word itself, apart from constant reference to Jesus Christ, whom the written Word makes known.^{f52}

In the Bible he identifies the principles that should guide the organization and discipline of the church and govern its public worship. This means that all innovations in these matters since the apostles are subjected to the judgment of Scripture. The Scriptures amply supplied Calvin with munitions by which to assail the superstition that he saw prevalent in the pre-Reformation decline of the church. He also castigates those of his contemporaries who present what he regards as hasty, irresponsible, and slanted interpretations of Scripture passages. In this connection, the treatment of ^{<402626>}Matthew 26:26 ("This is my body") in his discussion of the Lord's Supper offers a brief description of his own method:

"But as for us, we study with no less obedience than care to obtain a sound understanding of this passage, as we do in the whole of Scripture. And we do not with perverted ardor and without discrimination rashly seize upon what first springs to our minds. Rather, after diligently meditating upon it, we embrace the meaning which the Spirit of God offers. Relying upon it, we look down from a height at whatever of earthly wisdom is set against it. Indeed, we hold our minds captive, that they dare not raise even one little word of protest; and humble them that they dare not rebel against it."^{f53}

10

Throughout the *Institutes* Calvin's self-confessed debt to Augustine is constantly apparent. Amid the general adoption by the Scholastics of a semi-Pelagian view of man's powers, the age before Calvin had seen the rise of a new affirmation of the teaching of Augustine that man is morally helpless in himself and wholly dependent on divine grace. After Gottschalk of Orbais, who was condemned for heresy in 849, the first eminent representative of an unqualified Augustinianism was the scholarly theologian and ecclesiastic, Thomas Bradwardine, called Doctor Profundus, who died immediately after his consecration as archbishop of Canterbury in 1349. In his long *treatise De causa Dei contra Pelagium*,

Bradwardine tells us that in his early foolishness and vanity he had imbibed the Pelagian notions that prevailed about him, but that he had been “visited” by the conviction of God’s initiative “as by a beam of grace.” Habitually citing Augustine and the Bible, he argues that “grace is given *gratis*,” not on condition of previous works, and that predestination is “according to the free [*gratuitam*] will of God,” without reference to works.^{f54} Similar views were held by Gregory of Rimini,^{f55} who died as general of the Augustinian Hermits in 1358. In this area of doctrine, Wycliffe was a disciple of Augustine, and John Hus, though less a Wycliffite than his accusers supposed, was hardly less than Wycliffe an Augustinian.^{f56}

It has been said that “the Reformation, inwardly considered, was just the ultimate triumph of Augustine’s doctrine of grace over Augustine’s doctrine of the church.”^{f57} The measure of dependence of Luther and Calvin upon Augustine cannot easily be stated, but certainly both Reformers were frank to recognize their debt to him, without in the least exempting his opinions from the test of Scripture. Calvin may be said to stand at the culmination of the later Augustinianism.^{f58} He actually incorporates in his treatment of man and of salvation so many typical passages from Augustine that his doctrine seems here entirely continuous with that of his great African predecessor. Yet his occasional dissent from Augustine on minor points marks him as a not uncritical disciple.^{f59} Calvin goes beyond Augustine in his explicit assertion of double predestination, in which the reprobation of those not elected is a specific determination of God’s inscrutable will. Apparently, the statement of this became a constituent element in Calvin’s theology through his never relaxed conviction, borne out by his reading of Scripture and reflection on his own experience, of the unconditioned sovereignty of God. He feels under obligation to close the door to the notion that anything happens otherwise than under the control of the divine will. Man is wholly unable to contribute to his own salvation; nor is election conditioned by divine foreknowledge of a man’s faith or goodness.

That some men are eternally damned was a traditionally orthodox and almost uncontested belief. Like some Augustinians before him, but with greater insistence and exactness, Calvin linked this damnation of some with the operation of God’s sovereign will. What is to become of every man in

the hereafter has been determined by God's eternal decree; and some are ordained to everlasting woe. In this he may be said to have welded together two theological commonplaces. The result, however, was shocking even to his own mind and has proved unacceptable or distressing to many of his readers. Dreadful (*horribile*) to contemplate though this decree is with respect to the damned, it is not to be denied or evaded.^{f60} Calvin states and reiterates this doctrine of reprobation with the greatest precision. He is not content to confine the function of God's will to his having "passed by" the nonelect in bestowing his saving grace: the action of his will is not "preterition" but "reprobation." If Paul says, "Whom he will he hardens" (<450918>Romans 9:18), Calvin makes the similarly laconic assertion, "Whom God passes by, he reprobates."^{f61}

Calvin shudders at this conclusion even while expounding and defending it, and he knows well the moral difficulty it involves. He is very impatient with those who hold it to imply that God is the author of sin. God is always both loving and just, though here in ways that escape our feeble understanding. Calvin's prolonged attention to predestination is partly explicable by the fact that he is appalled before the mystery of it. Accordingly, he asks for great caution in the mention of the topic.^{f62} Anxiety about our own election he regarded as "a temptation of Satan." Yet he would have mature minds reflect upon "this high and incomprehensible mystery" in thinking of which "we should be sober and humble." The fruits of election are in no respect visible in any outward advantage or prosperity enjoyed in this life, where impiety prospers and the pious are forced to bear a cross. The blessing of the elect lies rather in their assurance of God's sufficiency and unfailing protection amid their afflictions, and in the happy anticipation of the life to come.

11

Calvin stresses that transformation of the soul which is called regeneration. It is attended by sincere repentance which involves "mortification of the flesh and vivification of the spirit." As we participate in Christ's death our old nature is crucified, and as we share in his resurrection we are renewed in the image of God.^{f63} We enlist, so to speak, in a new spiritual enterprise, the progressive approach to a perfection that in this life is never fully

attained. This incompleteness is not in the least a counsel of despair; it is associated rather with a glowing sense of the reality of the life to come, toward which our thoughts aspire.^{f64}

While this world is not our home, it is to be taken seriously as our place of pilgrimage and probation, and Calvin will have no morose rejection either of its duties or of its boons. In five chapters,^{f65} he gives a brief directory for the Christian life that is balanced, penetrating, and practical. God is our Father, and his image is being restored in us. He adopts us as his children on the implied condition that we “represent Christ” in our lives. This involves self-denial and charitable service of others, in whom, however intractable they seem, we must recognize the image of God inviting us to love them.^{f66} Very impressive in the light of current discussion of eschatology is the treatment of “meditation on the future life,” and not less so the discussion of our use and enjoyment of God’s gifts as aids in the present life.^{f67}

Sanctification is for Calvin the process of our advance in piety through the course of our life and in the pursuit of our vocation. In his treatment of faith,^{f68} repentance, and justification he deals in his distinctive way with these doctrines so much discussed in the Reformation. Faith is more than an assurance of God’s veracity in the Scripture; it is also a full persuasion of God’s mercy and of his favor toward us. It stands clear of works and of the law, since it has for its primary object Christ and is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit. Calvin denounces certain Scholastic treatments of faith in which it is severed from piety and love.^{f69} Although with Luther he uses the phrase “justified by faith alone,”^{f70} he is careful to say too that faith does not of itself effect justification, but embraces Christ by whose grace we are justified.

12

Book 4 contains a large amount of new material ingeniously integrated with sections drawn from various parts of the previous edition, so as virtually to constitute a well-ordered treatise in itself. Calvin’s title for this book is: “The External Means or Aids by Which God Invites Us Into the Society of Christ and Holds Us Therein.” *The Christi societas* is the Holy

Catholic Church. This great theme, highly congenial to Calvin's mind, engages all his power and skill.

He follows Luther in the view that in the Creed, "catholic church" and "communion of saints" are terms that refer to the same entity, in which all Christians are members. The invisible church of the elect, whose membership is known to God alone, is differentiated but not dissevered from the organized church visible on earth, whose members are known to each other. Calvin warmly accepts Cyprian's figure of the church as the mother of believers: as such, she conceives, bears, nourishes, and instructs her children, who, indeed, may never leave her school.^{f71} Though we know that there are "many hypocrites" in the visible church, it is our duty by a "charitable judgment" to recognize as members "those who, by confession of faith, by example of life, and by partaking of the sacraments, profess the same God and Christ."

A true church is recognizable by the marks of the true preaching and faithful hearing of the Word, the right administration of the sacraments, and, subordinate to these yet essential, a functioning discipline to guard the sanctity of communion. The peril of departing from such a church is viewed with the utmost gravity. Since all of us have faults and suffer from "the mists of ignorance," we should not renounce communion with others on slight grounds. Much is made here of the fact that the church is the one society in which it is recognized that forgiveness of sins is constantly required. The visible church is holy, in the sense not of its attainment but of its progress and its goal.^{f72} Only when the ministry of the Word and sacraments has been perverted and discipline has failed are Christians justified in leaving the organization. This condition Calvin finds in the church adhering to the papacy, although some vestiges of a true church remain within it.^{f73} A high doctrine of the ministry, its offices and functions, is amply set forth on the basis of New Testament evidence; and the development and deterioration of the ministry are traced through the patristic age.^{f74} Calvin's very considerable knowledge of church history is used in an animated polemic against Roman assertions of Peter's authority in Rome and the rising claim and exercise of papal power in the Middle Ages. If the too abundant invective were removed from these chapters, there would remain a rather impressive body of historical data germane to

the issue; but he views historical changes with too little sense of the complexity of the forces involved.

Since his doctrine of the ministry does not allow a separate order of bishops distinct from presbyters, it is notable that he shows much respect for the ancient hierarchy in their functions of government and discipline. For Calvin, the great defection sets in with the proud claims put forth in the era after Gregory the Great, when Boniface III was allowed to assert the papal headship over all churches, and especially after the pact formed between Pope Zachary and the Frankish ruler Pippin, which he regards as an alliance to seize and divide power. Although he wrote these pages before the appearance of the *Magdeburg Centuries* (1559-1574)^{f75} in which the ninth-century Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals were first effectively exposed, Calvin scoffs at those fraudulent documents. He has read Lorenzo Valla's exposure of the Donation of Constantine^{f76} and hence regards that eighth-century document also as a forgery. He charges Hildebrand with the unwarranted assertion of a papal imperial authority, which is one of the marks of Antichrist, and he brings Bernard to testify to the growing corruption that ensued. This has continued through the later centuries until the condition under the papacy is one "directly contrary to church order."^{f77} Authority, which ought to reside in the Word of God, has been assumed by the decadent church and its councils without respect to the Word. He vehemently attacks the many abuses of jurisdiction that have arisen while the papacy, armed with forged documents, pursues its secular ends.^{f78}

Calvin employs historical data also in his constructive treatment of discipline and the sacraments. The modern reader, whose experience of church discipline has little in common with that of early Reformed practice, may be startled by the degree of church and pastoral authority assumed here. He will also be impressed by the careful discrimination, moderation, and hopeful patience expected of those charged with the exercise of discipline. Discipline is a very real and a very necessary thing: it is for the church as the ligaments that hold the body together, or as a bridle for restraint, or as a father's chastising rod.^{f79} No rank or station exempts anyone from its procedures, and these are conducted with such religious gravity as to leave no doubt that "Christ presides in his tribunal." The ends in view in the discipline are three: that the church be not

dishonored, the good not corrupted, and offenders brought to repentance.

^{f80} Discipline, then, should be firm and yet kindly. Calvin dwells upon examples of the brotherly considerateness of Paul, Cyprian, Augustine, and Chrysostom in dealing with offenders. We are not to despair of those whose stubbornness necessitates their excommunication, nor to cease to pray for such persons or “consign them to destruction.” ^{f81}

13

These topics are so treated by Calvin as to exhibit very convincingly his sense of the corporate nature of the church. Five ample chapters are devoted to the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, and another to the five rites, “falsely termed sacraments,” confirmation, penance, extreme unction, priestly orders, and marriage. ^{f82} Augustine’s characterization of a sacrament as “a visible form of an invisible grace” is approved, but for greater clarity Calvin prefers to say that it is “a testimony of divine grace toward us, confirmed by an outward sign, with mutual attestation of our piety toward him.” By various metaphors he creates a clear impression of the relation of Word and sacraments, in which the latter are seals of the divine promises, pledges exchanged between God and the believer, and tokens before men of our discipleship. But these are void and fruitless without faith and the invisible grace ministered by the Holy Spirit. The treatment of baptism is remarkable as a defense of the baptism of infants. In this connection stress is laid on the role of circumcision as a valid Old Testament sacrament of initiation. Calvin also makes the most possible of the New Testament evidence. Since Christ called the little ones to his embrace and said, “Of such is the Kingdom of Heaven” (^{<401913>}Matthew 19:13-14), it is very sinful to deny to the children of believers access to Christ. ^{f83} This is especially objectionable in those who teach, as do the Anabaptists, that there is no salvation for the unbaptized. This erroneous opinion is held also by the Romanists. The latter authorize the baptism by lay men and women of those about to die, and in these circumstances allow it to be hastily and crudely administered. This, Calvin regards as a travesty of the sacrament, arising from the false assumption that those who have missed the opportunity of baptism are therefore damned. “God,” he says, “declares that he adopts our babies as

his own before they are born.” Thus baptism, profoundly important as it is in the economy of salvation, is not a saving rite. He does not say, as Zwingli does, that all who die in infancy are saved, but he points out that Christ is not said to have condemned anyone who was not yet baptized. While discarding the traditional doctrine of baptismal regeneration, Calvin holds that in the covenantal relationship a secret influence operates in the mind of the child as he progressively learns the implications of his acceptance by, and initiation into, the church and comes under its care and teaching. Thus “infants are baptized into future repentance and faith.”^{f84}

In the discussion of the Lord’s Supper he labors to show the real presence of Christ’s body and blood, but rejects the localization of these in the elements, along with the related doctrine, developed in Lutheranism, of the ubiquity of Christ’s resurrected body. On the analogy of other passages, the words “This is my body” must be taken not literally but as a metonymy. The body of Christ was seen taken up to heaven: it remains in heaven and cannot be enclosed in bread and wine.^{f85} Instead, the communicant is spiritually lifted up to heaven to partake of the body. This doctrine of a spiritual partaking of Christ’s true body and blood is distinctive of the Calvinist churches.^{f86} The mere expression “spiritual presence” is inadequate as an index to Calvin’s Eucharistic doctrine. His position is difficult for the modern mind to grasp in its entirety. He has to confess here, as in predestination, that he is confronted by a mystery which he has no words to explain. He can only say, “I rather experience than understand it.”^{f87} In some way incomprehensible to reason, our communion in Christ’s body is made possible through the secret operation of the Holy Spirit. No writer has gone beyond Calvin in his estimate of the importance of this sacrament in the corporate life of the church. He urges its frequent use, fervently depicts the religious experience of the devout communicant, and stresses “the bond of love” created by participation, with its implications of social duty.^{f88} The Roman doctrine of the Mass is assailed, especially with respect to the claim that it is an act of satisfaction for sin. This he regards as a negation of Christ’s all-sufficient atonement and of the very institution of the Supper. Calvin similarly, with unnecessary vituperation, attacks the arguments used in support of the other five alleged sacraments, rejecting claims that they have the authority of Scripture and of usage in the early church.^{f89}

The final chapter, “Civil Government,”^{f90} is one of the most impressive parts of the work. Like the Prefatory Address to Francis I at the outset, this chapter illustrates the vital contact of Calvin’s thought with the world of political action. In the Address, the young scholar ventures to admonish a proud monarch against the evil advice of those who have suggested his policy of persecuting good Christians. Francis is asked to acknowledge the rule of Christ, to whom all earthly kings should bow. In a passage that reflects Augustine’s celebrated “mirror of princes,” in which those emperors are called happy who “make their power the handmaid of God’s majesty,”^{f91} Calvin declares that it is “true royalty” in a king to acknowledge himself “the minister of God,” and that it is his duty to rule according to God’s Holy Word. We may here recall also the chapter on “Christian Freedom” (3.19) at the close of which the topic of political government is introduced, only to be postponed. From the point of view of high theology it might have been expected that the *Institutes* would close on another note than this. In the editions of 1539 to 1554 this section was given the third, and then the second, position from the end; but in 1559 it returned to the place it held in the 1536 edition, at the conclusion of the work. Why did Calvin choose to accord this position of emphasis to the theme of the political society? The answer is found in the chapter itself and in Calvin’s other writings bearing on political affairs.^{f92} His treatment of politics, like that of Thomas Aquinas and of other Scholastics, makes that topic a province of theology. The chapter abounds in quotations from the Bible, which here as elsewhere is his primary guide. But the subject has pressing importance for Calvin from the fact that he is always deeply aware of the way in which the fluctuating policies of rulers affect the reform of the church and the lot of those who commit themselves to the Reformation. The final chapter is indeed only slightly expanded from that of the first edition. It was mainly written during the excitements of the Munster episode, when the Reformation was being characterized by its opponents as a movement of political subversion. Calvin undoubtedly continued to feel the importance of stating a positive conception of politics as a part of his apologetic for the Reformation, and as a practical defense of the doctrines asserted throughout the treatise. As is well

known, his correspondence is replete with evidence of his interest in those political issues which could affect the course of evangelical religion.

Although it is true that for Calvin the chief issue involved is the service of the political society to the church of Christ, it is nevertheless a little misleading to say, with Wilhelm Niesel, that “he is not concerned about the state as such, nor even about the Christian state.”¹⁹³ He vehemently rejects the view of those “fanatics” who in their espousal of a spiritual Christianity loftily withdraw from political interests and obligations. The thought of the extermination of the political state is both repulsive and absurd to him. “Its function among men is no less than that of bread, water, sun, and air; indeed, its place of honor is far more excellent.”¹⁹⁴ It serves the purpose of maintaining man’s corporate life, and this has an importance far from negligible. But the state renders its highest service in the assertion of a moral order in the affairs of men, and in the protection of a public form of the Christian religion. The church, for Calvin, is free from the control of the state, but should be able to rely on its favor and support. Calvin is interested not only in the duties of those who govern but also in the forms of government. In his Commentaries he has praise for the few pious kings of the Old Testament, but his references to kings, ancient and modern, are prevailingly unfavorable; and this cannot be dissociated from the implication of a disapproval of kingship itself. Yet he broadly accepts the contemporary variety of governments and asks for co-operation with them where they obey God, and patience where they are oppressive. No one is more anxious than he to discountenance violent revolution. He would like to avoid disputation about the forms of government, but quietly declares his decided preference for “aristocracy, or a system compounded of aristocracy and democracy.” This well-known statement was first made in the edition of 1543, and in 1559 he inserted after it a characteristic explanation. Kings are very rarely good and competent, and the defects of men render it best that a number (*plures*) hold sway so that they may help and admonish each other and restrain anyone who wants to domineer.¹⁹⁵ These principles of plural government and mutual fraternal correction run through the units of organization of church and state. They are illustrated in routine practice in the meetings both of ministers and of magistrates in Calvin’s Geneva.¹⁹⁶

The eloquent paragraphs with which the work is ended stand unchanged, except for a reinforcing insertion, from the 1536 edition. They include the brief, startling passage which became a commonplace of political treatises, in which Calvin with a delusive gentleness proposes that the “three estates” of contemporary nations take up the functions of the ancient ephors, tribunes, and demarchs as constitutional defenders of the people’s liberty against the oppression of kings. This is not presented as an incitement to revolt but as an appeal to an existing magistracy to fulfill its legitimate functions. It would have been superfluous to refer to the fact that the ancient magistrates mentioned were elected by the people. Calvin’s closing sections are charged with power, and reflection on them will help to make possible an appreciation of the impact of his teaching on world history. But at the end he banishes any suggestion of reliance upon political action or advantage. Though we are menaced by the wrath of kings, we whom Christ has redeemed at priceless cost must obey God and endure all things rather than compromise piety or become slaves to the depraved desires of men.

15

The wide circulation and acceptance of Calvin’s *Institutes*, as of his other writings, cannot be dissociated from the qualities of his style.^{f97} When this is discussed it is often his style in French that is held chiefly in view,^{f98} but many scholars in his own time and later have also celebrated his success as a writer of Latin.^{f99} Calvin’s Strasbourg friend, John Sturm, in a commendation that appears on the title page of the 1543 Latin edition of the *Institutes*, aptly characterized the work and its author when he said: “John Calvin has been endowed with a most acute judgment, the highest gift of teaching, and an exceptional memory. As a writer he is diversified, copious, and pure.” The prodigiously learned Joseph Scaliger (d. 1609) wrote shrewdly that “his style has greater purity and elegance than is suitable to [*deceat*] a theologian.” It is unquestionable that few theologians have wielded so felicitous a pen.

His mastery of Latin grew out of the advantage of his education. In mature years he paid a handsome tribute to Mathurin Cordier, his first Latin teacher at the University of Paris, for having so opened to him the gates of

learning as to make possible all that he had later achieved.^{f100} Thus in his fourteenth year he had been initiated into the beauties of Latin and had begun to realize its resources for communication and persuasion. His later classical studies provided him with a Latin vocabulary of exceptional range. Q. Breen speaks of “the precipitate of humanism” carried over into his theology,^{f101} and F. Wendel observes that “he remained always more or less the humanist he was in 1532.”^{f102} These writers are thinking of more than style, but they are aware that the stylistic influence of the Latin classics was never shaken off. “A certain elegance,” says Breen, “lies upon all that he wrote, the light of classical clearness.”^{f103} One has an impression in reading him that when he is unusually eloquent, or sarcastic, he is apt to show a reminiscence of Cicero. Yet Calvin never “played the sedulous ape” to any preceding writer. Cicero and Quintilian would have been pained by the freedom of his divergence from classic models. Attention has been called by A. Veerman to the pronounced influence on his style from postclassical Christian Latin, especially in the extensive use of abstract terms and of vulgarisms, or elements from common speech, by which his vocabulary was extended. Veerman also shows that his sequence of words is shifted at will for emphasis, and that the verb tends to fall in the middle of the sentence rather than at the end. In the *Institutes* he habitually uses long periodic sentences, but these differ from Cicero’s in that they lack the latter’s artificial, rhythmical structure. Calvin, however, obtains a rhythmical effect by the use of parallel and triple constructions, paired synonyms, and more complicated devices. A concern for the effect upon the ear is further shown in a limited and judicious use of alliteration, assonance, verbal repetition, punning, and similar endings in adjacent clauses.^{f104} Calvin clearly discerns the variations of style among the Scripture writers. While he takes delight in Scripture passages of marked elegance and beauty, he insists on the point that a divine quality no less inheres in those portions of Scripture which use rude and unadorned language. The Scripture, indeed, has a “force of truth” independent of rhetoric, while it shows, in parts, a surpassing eloquence.^{f105} That his admiration for the Bible as written discourse was an influence balancing the classical tradition in the shaping of Calvin’s style cannot be denied; but this appears more in his popular sermons than in his treatises, where the influence of the patristic writers is more in evidence. Very frequently, however, he commends the Biblical writers in general for their clarity,

simplicity, and brevity, qualities that he especially prized and sought to attain. He is not in fact concerned for style as such, but only to write in such a way as to communicate his whole thought clearly and with no waste of words.

Brevity is a quality often praised by him, and in many instances he indicates how this principle excludes some elaboration that he is tempted to practice. He has no patience with prolix writers, especially where the urgent issues of religion are discussed. He even criticizes on this ground his admired friends and associates, Bucer^{f106} and Farel. In a letter to Farel he gently but firmly disapproves of the latter's "involved and elaborate" style, points to the difference between it and his own, and involves Augustine himself in the same censure. "You know," Calvin remarks, "how reverently I feel toward Augustine, yet I do not conceal the fact that his prolixity is displeasing to me. Still, it may be that my brevity is too concise."^{f107}

His claim to have achieved brevity will not escape question. Can we credit with brevity the author of so long a treatise? There are, in fact, many passages in the *Institutes* that must seem to us tediously extended. Something should be allowed here for certain theological interests of his time to which little emphasis is given today. The real test of brevity as a quality of style has no direct bearing upon the length of a work planned with such a vastness and variety of subject matter as the *Institutes*. It is well remarked by Emile Faguet that although the claim of brevity may seem laughable to modern readers, it is justified in the fact that his phrases are "not overloaded" and that "though he has his wearisome passages, he has no verbiage."^{f108} With few exceptions his sentences and paragraphs are packed with thought and have all the condensation possible without sacrifice of constituent matter. Calvin's deep convictions bring to his writing a quality of urgency which in some passages takes on an oratorical character. It is much less by formal logic than by enlisting the emotions that he has power to persuade. Habitually, as Breen has pointed out, his arguments are not formally syllogistic. It is perhaps due to his desire for brevity that where logical sequence is featured he prefers the clipped syllogism, or enthymeme, which leaves one premise to be supplied by the reader,^{f109} but this tends to lessen the importance of logic, while the reader is the more rapidly carried on to the point of persuasion.

If there is any habitual violation of the principle of brevity, it consists in the abundance of adjectives and adverbs of emotional content often employed in commendation or condemnation of a position discussed. On occasion, Calvin shows a typically humanist mastery of the language of disparagement and vituperation. His horror of abuses led him at times to use epithets of abuse, and he sometimes resorts to this in assailing the legitimate views of an opponent. This is a deplorable feature by which in parts Calvin's work is marred for the sensitive reader, but it is not so prevalent as some critics have charged; and in his case invective is not a substitute for argument but a misconceived attempt to enhance its force.

It is not upon his antagonisms and negations that Calvin's power and persuasiveness depend, but upon the intensity of his positive convictions and the rich resources of his mind. This work is his greatest legacy to later ages; and even the new interests that captivate our generation do not lessen the relevance and worth of its message. "Today," Calvin once wrote, "all sorts of subjects are eagerly pursued; but the knowledge of God is neglected Yet to know God is man's chief end, and justifies his existence. Even if a hundred lives were ours, this one aim would be sufficient for them all."¹¹⁰

INSTITUTES OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

JOHN CALVIN TO THE READER

1559

^bIn the first edition of this work of ours I did not in the least expect that success which, out of his infinite goodness, the Lord has given. Thus, for the most part I treated the subject summarily, as is usually done in small works. But when I realized that it was received by almost all godly men with a favor for which I never would have ventured to wish, much less to hope, I deeply felt that I was much more favored than I deserved.

Consequently I thought that I should be showing extreme ingratitude not to try at least, to the best of my slender ability, to respond to this warm appreciation for me, an appreciation that demanded my further diligence.

^{e(b)}Not only did I attempt this in the second edition, but each time the work has been reprinted since then, it has been enriched with some additions. Although I did not regret the labor spent, I was never satisfied until the work had been arranged in the order now set forth. Now I trust that I have provided something that all of you will approve.

In any event, I can furnish a very clear testimony of my great zeal and effort to carry out this task for God's church. Last winter when I thought the quartan fever^{f11} was summoning me to my death, the more the disease pressed upon me the less I spared myself, until I could leave a book behind me that might, in some measure, repay the generous invitation of godly men. Indeed I should have preferred to do it sooner,^b but it is done soon enough if it is done well enough.^{f12} Moreover, I shall think my work has appeared at an opportune time as soon as I perceive that it has borne some richer fruit for the church of God than heretofore. ^eThis is my only prayer. Unless I remained content with the approbation of God alone and despised both the foolish and perverse judgments of ignorant men and the wrong and malicious ones of the wicked, things would go ill with me. God

has filled my mind with zeal to spread his Kingdom and to further the public good. I am also duly clear in my own conscience, and have God and the angels to witness, that since I undertook the office of teacher in the church, I have had no other purpose than to benefit the church by maintaining the pure doctrine of godliness. Yet I think that there is no one who is assailed, bitten, and wounded by more false accusations than I.

When this epistle was in press, I ascertained that at Augsburg, where the assembly of the Estates of the Empire was meeting, a rumor had been spread abroad of my defection to the papacy and that it was more eagerly received in the courts of the princes than was fitting.^{f113} Such indeed is the gratitude of those to whom the very many evidences of my constancy are certainly not hidden! These evidences repel so base a calumny, and should also have protected me from it before all fair and humane judges. But the devil with his whole troop is deceived if, in overwhelming me with foul lies, he thinks that this indignity will make me more feeble or more pliant. For I trust that God out of his infinite goodness will permit me to persevere with unwavering patience in the path of his holy calling. In this edition I set forth new proof of this fact for godly readers.

^bMoreover, it has been my purpose in this labor to prepare and instruct candidates in sacred theology for the reading of the divine Word, in order that they may be able both to have easy access to it and to advance in it without stumbling. For I believe I have so embraced the sum of religion in all its parts, and have arranged it in such an order, that if anyone rightly grasps it, it will not be difficult for him to determine what he ought especially to seek in Scripture, and to what end he ought to relate its contents. If, after this road has, as it were, been paved, I shall publish any interpretations of Scripture,^{f114} I shall always condense them, because I shall have no need to undertake long doctrinal discussions, and to digress into commonplaces. In this way the godly reader will be spared great annoyance and boredom, provided he approach Scripture armed with a knowledge of the present work, as a necessary tool. But because the program of this instruction is clearly mirrored in all my commentaries,^{f115} I prefer to let the book itself declare its purpose rather than to describe it in words.

Farewell, kindly reader, and if you benefit at all from my labors, help me with your prayers before God our Father.

Geneva, 1st August 1559

*^e'Tis those whose cause my former booklet pled
Whose zeal to learn has wrought this tome instead.^{f116}*

^cAUGUSTINE, EPISTLE 7

*“I count myself one of the number of those who write
as they learn and learn as they write.”^{f117}*

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE PRESENT WORK

FROM THE FRENCH EDITION OF 1560

In order that my readers may better profit from this present work, I should like to indicate briefly the benefit they may derive from it. For, in doing this, I shall show them the purpose to which they ought to bend and direct their intention while reading it. Although Holy Scripture contains a perfect doctrine, to which one can add nothing, since in it our Lord has meant to display the infinite treasures of his wisdom, yet a person who has not much practice in it has good reason for some guidance and direction, to know what he ought to look for in it, in order not to wander hither and thither, but to hold to a sure path, that he may always be pressing toward the end to which the Holy Spirit calls him. Perhaps the duty of those who have received from God fuller light than others is to help simple folk at this point, and as it were to lend them a hand, in order to guide them and help them to find the sum of what God meant to teach us in his Word. Now, that cannot be better done through the Scriptures than to treat the chief and weightiest matters comprised in the Christian philosophy.^{f118} For he who knows these things will be prepared to profit more in God's school in one day than another in three months — particularly as he knows fairly well to what he must refer each sentence, and has this rule to embrace all that is presented to him.

It is very necessary to help in this way those who desire to be instructed in the doctrine of salvation. Consequently, I was constrained, according to the ability that the Lord gave me, to undertake this task. Such was my purpose in composing the present book. First of all I put it into Latin so as to serve all men of learning, to whatever nation they belonged; then afterward, desiring to communicate what could bear fruit for our French nation, I have also translated it into our tongue. I dare not render too favorable testimony concerning it, nor yet declare how profitable the reading of it could be, for I would shrink from seeming to appraise my work too highly. Nevertheless, I can at least promise that it can be a key to open a way for all children of God into a good and right understanding of Holy Scripture. Thus, if henceforth our Lord gives me the means and opportunity of writing some commentaries,^{f119} I shall use the greatest

possible brevity, because there will be no need for long digressions, seeing that I have here treated at length almost all the articles pertaining to Christianity. Since we must recognize that all truth and sound doctrine proceed from God, I shall in all simplicity dare fearlessly to protest what I think of this work; I shall recognize that it is God's more than mine. And, in truth, any praise for it must be rendered to him.

Thus, I exhort all those who have reverence for the Lord's Word, to read it, and to impress it diligently upon their memory, if they wish to have, first, a sum of Christian doctrine, and, secondly, a way to benefit greatly from reading the Old as well as the New Testament. When they will have done this they will recognize, by experience, that I have not at all meant to misuse words. If anyone cannot understand all the contents, he must not therefore despair, but must ever press onward, hoping that one passage will give him a more familiar explanation of another. Above all, I must urge him to have recourse to Scripture in order to weigh the testimonies that I adduce from it.^{f120}

PREFATORY ADDRESS TO KING FRANCIS I OF FRANCE

“For the Most Mighty and Illustrious Monarch, Francis, Most Christian King of the French, His Sovereign, John Calvin Craves Peace and Salvation in Christ.

1. CIRCUMSTANCES IN WHICH THE BOOK WAS FIRST WRITTEN

When I first set my hand to this work, nothing was farther from my mind, most glorious King, than to write something that might afterward be offered to Your Majesty. My purpose was solely to transmit certain rudiments by which those who are touched with any zeal for religion might be shaped to true godliness. And I undertook this labor especially for our French countrymen, very many of whom I knew to be hungering and thirsting for Christ; but I saw very few who had been duly imbued with even a slight knowledge of him. The book itself witnesses that this was my intention, adapted as it is to a simple and, you may say, elementary form of teaching.

But I perceived that the fury of certain wicked persons has prevailed so far in your realm that there is no place in it for sound doctrine. Consequently, it seemed to me that I should be doing something worthwhile if I both gave instruction to them and made confession before you with the same work. From this you may learn the nature of the doctrine against which those madmen burn with rage who today disturb your realm with fire and sword. And indeed I shall not fear to confess that here is contained almost the sum of that very doctrine which they shout must be punished by prison, exile, proscription, and fire, and be exterminated on land and sea. Indeed, I know with what horrible reports they have filled your ears and mind, to render our cause hateful as possible to you.^{f121} But, as fits your clemency, you ought to weigh the fact that if it is sufficient merely to make accusation, then no innocence will remain either in words or in deeds.

Suppose anyone, to arouse hatred, pretends that this doctrine, an account of which I am trying to render to you, has long since been condemned both by the verdict of all estates and by many judgments of the courts. This will surely be saying nothing other than that it has in part been violently rejected by the partisanship and power of its opponents, and in part insidiously and fraudulently oppressed by their falsehoods, subtleties, and slanders. It is sheer violence that bloody sentences are meted out against this doctrine without a hearing; it is fraud that it is undeservedly charged with treason and villainy. So that no one may think we are wrongly complaining of these things, you can be our witness, most noble King, with how many lying slanders it is daily traduced in your presence. It is as if this doctrine looked to no other end than to wrest the scepters from the hands of kings, to cast down all courts and judgments, to subvert all orders and civil governments, to disrupt the peace and quiet of the people, to abolish all laws, to scatter all lordships and possessions—in short, to turn everything upside down! And yet you hear only a very small part of the accusation, for dreadful reports are being spread abroad among the people. If these were true, the whole world would rightly judge this doctrine and its authors worthy of a thousand fires and crosses. Who now can wonder that public hatred is aroused against it, when these most wicked accusations are believed? This is why all classes with one accord conspire to condemn us and our doctrine. Those who sit in judgment, seized with this feeling, pronounce as sentences the prejudices which they have brought from home. And they think they have duly discharged their office if they order to be brought to punishment no one not convicted either by his own confession or by sure testimony. But of what crime? Of this condemned doctrine, they say.

But with what right has it been condemned? Now, the very stronghold of their defense was not to disavow this very doctrine but to uphold it as true. Here even the right to whisper is cut off.

2. PLEA FOR THE PERSECUTED EVANGELICALS

^aFor this reason, most invincible King, I not unjustly ask you to undertake a full inquiry into this case, which until now has been handled — we may even say, tossed about — with no order of law and with violent heat rather than judicial gravity. And do not think that I am here preparing my

own personal defense, thereby to return safely to my native land. Even though I regard my country with as much natural affection as becomes me, as things now stand I do not much regret being excluded. Rather, I embrace the common cause of all believers, that of Christ himself — a cause completely torn and trampled in your realm today, lying, as it were, utterly forlorn, more through the tyranny of certain Pharisees than with your approval.

But here is not the place to tell how it has come about: certainly our cause lies afflicted. For ungodly men have so far prevailed that Christ's truth, even if it is not driven away scattered and destroyed, still lies hidden, buried and inglorious. The poor little church has either been wasted with cruel slaughter or banished into exile, or so overwhelmed by threats and fears that it dare not even open its mouth. And yet, with their usual rage and madness, the ungodly continue to batter a wall already toppling and to complete the ruin toward which they have been striving. Meanwhile no one comes forward to defend the church against such furies. But any who wish to appear as greatly favoring truth feel that they should pardon the error and imprudence of ignorant men. For so speak moderate men, calling error and imprudence what they know is the most certain truth of God; calling untutored men those whose intelligence was not so despicable to Christ as to prevent him for bestowing upon them the mysteries of his heavenly wisdom! So ashamed are they all of the gospel!

It will then be for you, most serene King, not to close your ears or your mind to such just defense, especially when a very great question is at stake: how God's glory may be kept safe on earth, how God's truth may retain its place of honor, how Christ's Kingdom may be kept in good repair among us.^{f122} Worthy indeed is this matter of your hearing, worthy of your cognizance, worthy of your royal throne! Indeed, this consideration makes a true king: to recognize himself a minister of God in governing his kingdom. Now, that king who in ruling over his realm does not serve God's glory exercises not kingly rule but brigandage.^{f123} Furthermore, he is deceived who looks for enduring prosperity in his kingdom when it is not ruled by God's scepter, that is, his Holy Word; for the heavenly oracle that proclaims that "where prophecy fails the people are scattered" [^{<202918>}Proverbs 29:18] cannot lie. And contempt for our lowliness ought not to dissuade you from this endeavor. Indeed, we are

quite aware of what mean and lowly little men we are. Before God, of course, we are miserable sinners; in men's eyes most despised — if you will, the offscouring and refuse [cf. ^{<460413>}1 Corinthians 4:13] of the world, or anything viler that can be named. Thus, before God nothing remains for us to boast of, save his mercy [cf. ^{<471017>}2 Corinthians 10:17-18], whereby we have been received into hope of eternal salvation through no merit of our own [cf. ^{<560305>}Titus 3:5]; and before men nothing but our weakness [cf. ^{<471130>}2 Corinthians 11:30; 12:5, 9], which even to admit by a nod is to them the greatest dishonor. But our doctrine must tower unvanquished above all the glory and above all the might of the world, for it is not of us, but of the living God and his Christ whom the Father has appointed King to “rule from sea to sea, and from the rivers even to the ends of the earth” [^{<197208>}Psalms 72:8; 72:7, Vg.]. And he is so to rule as to smite the whole earth with its iron and brazen strength, with its gold and silver brilliance, shattering it with the rod of his mouth as an earthen vessel, just as the prophets have prophesied concerning the magnificence of his reign [^{<270232>}Daniel 2:32-35; ^{<231104>}Isaiah 11:4; ^{<190209>}Psalms 2:9, conflated]. Indeed, our adversaries cry out that we falsely make the Word of God our pretext, and wickedly corrupt it. ^{f124} By reading our confession you can judge according to your prudence not only how malicious a calumny but also what utter effrontery this is.

Yet we must say something here to arouse your zeal and attention, or at least to prepare the way for you to read our confession. When Paul wished all prophecy to be made to accord with the analogy of faith [^{<451206>}Romans 12:6], ^{f125} he set forth a very clear rule to test all interpretation of Scripture. Now, if our interpretation be measured by this rule of faith, victory is in our hands. For what is more consonant with faith than to recognize that we are naked of all virtue, in order to be clothed by God? That we are empty of all good, to be filled by him? That we are slaves of sin, to be freed by him? Blind, to be illumined by him? Lame, to be made straight by him? Weak, to be sustained by him? To take away from us all occasion for glorying, that he alone may stand forth gloriously and we glory in him [cf. ^{<460131>}1 Corinthians 1:31; ^{<471017>}2 Corinthians 10:17]? When we say these and like things our adversaries interrupt and complain, that in this way we shall subvert some blind light of nature, imaginary preparations, free will, and works that merit eternal salvation, even with their supererogations. ^{f126} For they cannot bear that the

whole praise and glory of all goodness, virtue, righteousness, and wisdom should rest with God. But we do not read of anyone being blamed for drinking too deeply of the fountain of living water [^{<430414>}John 4:14]. On the contrary, those have been harshly rebuked who “have dug for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water” [^{<240213>}Jeremiah 2:13]. Besides, what is better and closer to faith than to feel assured that God will be a propitious Father where Christ is recognized as brother and propitiator? Than confidently to look for all happy and prosperous things from Him whose unspeakable love toward us went so far that “he ... did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all” [^{<450832>}Romans 8:32]? Than to repose in certain expectation of salvation and eternal life, when we meditate upon Christ, given by the Father, in whom such treasures are hidden? Here they seize upon us, and cry out that such certainty of trust is not free from arrogance and presumption. But as we ought to presume nothing of ourselves, so ought we to presume all things of God; nor are we stripped of vainglory for any other reason than to learn to glory in the Lord [cf. ^{<471017>}2 Corinthians 10:17; ^{<460131>}1 Corinthians 1:31; ^{<240923>}Jeremiah 9:23-24].

What further? Examine briefly, most mighty King, all the parts of our case, and think us the most wicked of wicked men, unless you clearly find that “we toil and suffer reproach because we have our hope set on the living God” [^{<540410>}1 Timothy 4:10]; because we believe that “this is eternal life: to know the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent” [^{<431703>}John 17:3 p.]. For the sake of this hope some of us are shackled with irons, some beaten with rods, some led about as laughingstocks, some proscribed, some most savagely tortured, some forced to flee. All of us are oppressed by poverty, cursed with dire execrations, wounded by slanders, and treated in most shameful ways.

Now look at our adversaries (I speak of the order of priests, at whose nod and will the others are hostile toward us), and consider with me for a moment what zeal motivates them. They readily allow themselves and others to ignore, neglect, and despise the true religion, which has been handed down in the Scriptures, and which ought to have had a recognized place among all men. They think it of no concern what belief anyone holds or does not hold regarding God and Christ, if only he submit his mind with implicit faith^{f127} (as they call it) to the judgment of the church. The sight of

God's glory defiled with manifest blasphemies does not much trouble them, ^b provided no one raises a finger against the primacy of the Apostolic See and against the authority of Holy Mother Church. ^aWhy, therefore, do they fight with such ferocity and bitterness for the Mass, purgatory, pilgrimages, and trifles of that sort, denying that there can be true godliness without a most explicit faith, so to speak, in such things, even though they prove nothing of them from God's Word? Why? unless for them "their God is the belly" [^{<500319>}Philippians 3:19]; their kitchen their religion! If these are taken away, they believe that they will not be Christians, not even men! For, even though some glut themselves sumptuously while others gnaw upon meager crusts, still all live out of the same pot, a pot that without this fuel would not only grow cold but freeze through and through. Consequently, the one most concerned about his belly proves the sharpest contender for his faith. In fine, all men strive to one goal: to keep either their rule intact or their belly full. No one gives the slightest indication of sincere zeal.

3. CHARGES OF ANTAGONISTS REFUTED: NEWNESS, UNCERTAINTY; THE VALUE OF MIRACLES

^aDespite this, they do not cease to assail our doctrine and to reproach and defame it with names that render it hated or suspect. They call it "new" and "of recent birth." They reproach it as "doubtful and uncertain." They ask what miracles have confirmed it. They inquire whether it is right for it to prevail against the agreement of so many holy fathers and against most ancient custom. They urge us to acknowledge that it is schismatic because it wages war against the church, or that the church was lifeless during the many centuries in which no such thing was heard. Finally, they say that there is no need of many arguments, for one can judge by its fruits what it is, seeing that it has engendered such a heap of sects, so many seditious tumults, such great licentiousness. ^{f128} Indeed, it is very easy for them to revile a forsaken cause before the credulous and ignorant multitude. But if we too might speak in our turn, this bitterness which they licentiously and with impunity spew at us from swollen cheeks would subside.

First, by calling it "new" they do great wrong to God, whose Sacred Word does not deserve to be accused of novelty. Indeed, I do not at all doubt that it is new to them, since to them both Christ himself and his gospel are

new. But he who knows that this preaching of Paul is ancient, that “Jesus Christ died for our sins and rose again for our justification” [^{<450425>}Romans 4:25 p.], will find nothing new among us.

That it has lain long unknown and buried is the fault of man’s impiety. Now when it is restored to us by God’s goodness, its claim to antiquity ought to be admitted at least by right of recovery. ^{f129}

The same ignorance leads them to regard it as doubtful and uncertain. This is precisely what the Lord complains of through his prophet, that “the ox knew its owner, and the ass its master’s crib; but his own people did not know him” [^{<230103>}Isaiah 1:3 p.]. But however they may jest about its uncertainty, if they had to seal their doctrine in their own blood, and at the expense of their own life, one could see how much it would mean to them. Quite the opposite is our assurance, which fears neither the terrors of death nor even God’s judgment seat.

In demanding miracles of us, they act dishonestly. For we are not forging some new gospel, but are retaining that very gospel whose truth all the miracles that Jesus Christ and his disciples ever wrought serve to confirm. But, compared with us, they have a strange power: even to this day they can confirm their faith by continual miracles! Instead they allege miracles which can disturb a mind otherwise at rest — they are so foolish and ridiculous, so vain and false! And yet, even if these were marvelous prodigies, they ought not to be of any moment against God’s truth, for God’s name ought to be always and everywhere hallowed, whether by miracles or by the natural order of things.

^bPerhaps this false hue could have been more dazzling if Scripture had not warned us concerning the legitimate purpose and use of miracles. For Mark teaches that those signs which attended the apostles’ preaching were set forth to confirm it [^{<411620>}Mark 16:20]. In like manner, Luke relates that our “Lord ... bore witness to the word of his grace,” when these signs and wonders were done by the apostles’ hands [^{<441403>}Acts 14:3 p.]. Very much like this is that word of the apostle: that the salvation proclaimed by the gospel has been confirmed in the fact that “the Lord has attested it by signs and wonders and various mighty works [^{<580204>}Hebrews 2:4 p.; cf. ^{<451518>}Romans 15:18-19]. When we hear that these are the seals of the gospel, shall we turn them to the destruction of faith in the gospel? When

we hear that they were appointed only to seal the truth, shall we employ them to confirm falsehoods? In the first place, it is right to investigate and examine that doctrine which, as the Evangelist says, is superior to miracles. Then, if it is approved, it may rightly be confirmed from miracles. Yet, if one does not tend to seek men's glory but God's [^{<430718>}John 7:18; 8:50], this is a mark of true doctrine, as Christ says. Since Christ affirms this test of doctrine, miracles are wrongly valued that are applied to any other purpose than to glorify the name of the one God [^{<051302>}Deuteronomy 13:2 ff.]. ^a And we may also fitly remember that Satan has his miracles, which, though they are deceitful tricks rather than true powers, are of such sort as to mislead the simple-minded and untutored [cf. ^{<530209>}2 Thessalonians 2:9-10]. Magicians and enchanters have always been noted for miracles. Idolatry has been nourished by wonderful miracles, yet these are not sufficient to sanction for us the superstition either of magicians or of idolaters.

The Donatists of old overwhelmed the simplicity of the multitude with this battering-ram: that they were mighty in miracles. We, therefore, now answer our adversaries as Augustine then answered the Donatists: the Lord made us wary of these miracle workers when he predicted that false prophets with lying signs and prodigies would come to draw even the elect (if possible) into error [^{<402424>}Matthew 24:24], ^{f130} And Paul warned that the reign of Antichrist would be "with all power, and signs and lying wonders" [^{<530209>}2 Thessalonians 2:9]. But these miracles, they say, are done neither by idols, nor by magicians, nor by false prophets, but by the saints. As if we did not understand that to "disguise himself as an angel of light" [^{<471114>}2 Corinthians 11:14] is the craft of Satan! The Egyptians of old worshiped Jeremiah, who was buried in their land, rendering to him sacrifices and divine honors. ^{f131} Did they not misuse the holy prophet of God for idolatrous purposes? And yet, they thought that the curing of snake bite was a just reward for such veneration of his tomb. What shall we say except that it has always been, and ever will be, a very just punishment of God to "send to those" who have not received the love of truth "a strong delusion to make them believe a lie" [^{<530211>}2 Thessalonians 2:11]?

Well, we are not entirely lacking in miracles, and these very certain and not subject to mockery. On the contrary, those "miracles" which our

adversaries point to in their own support are sheer delusions of Satan, for they draw the people away from the true worship of their God to vanity [cf. ^{<051302>}Deuteronomy 13:2 ff.].

4. MISLEADING CLAIM THAT THE CHURCH FATHERS OPPOSE THE REFORMATION TEACHING

^aMoreover, they unjustly set the ancient fathers against us ^{f132} (I mean the ancient writers of a better age of the church) as if in them they had supporters of their own impiety. If the contest were to be determined by patristic authority, the tide of victory — to put it very modestly — would turn to our side. Now, these fathers have written many wise and excellent things. Still, what commonly happens to men has befallen them too, in some instances. For these so-called pious children of theirs, with all their sharpness of wit and judgment and spirit, worship only the faults and errors of the fathers. The good things that these fathers have written they either do not notice, or misrepresent or pervert. You might say that their only care is to gather dung amid gold. ^{f133} Then, with a frightful to-do, they overwhelm us as despisers and adversaries of the fathers! But we do not despise them; in fact, if it were to our present purpose, I could with no trouble at all prove that the greater part of what we are saying today meets their approval. Yet we are so versed in their writings as to remember always that all things are ours [^{<460321>}1 Corinthians 3:21-22], to serve us, not to lord it over us [^{<42224>}Luke 22:24-25], and that we all belong to the one Christ [^{<460323>}1 Corinthians 3:23], whom we must obey in all things without exception [cf. ^{<510320>}Colossians 3:20]. He who does not observe this distinction will have nothing certain in religion, inasmuch as these holy men were ignorant of many things, often disagreed among themselves, and sometimes even contradicted themselves. It is not without cause, they say, that Solomon bids us not to transgress the limits set by our fathers [^{<202228>}Proverbs 22:28]. But the same rule does not apply to boundaries of fields, and to obedience of faith, which must be so disposed that “it forgets its people and its father’s house” [^{<194510>}Psalm 45:10 p.]. But if they love to allegorize so much, why do they not accept the apostles (rather than anyone else) as the “fathers” who have set the landmarks that it is unlawful to remove [^{<202228>}Proverbs 22:28]? Thus has Jerome interpreted this verse, and they have written his words into their canons. ^{f134} But if our opponents want to preserve the limits set by the fathers

according to their understanding of them, why do they themselves transgress them so willfully as often as it suits them?

It was one of the fathers who said that our God neither drinks nor eats, and therefore has no need of plates or cups.^{f135} Another, that sacred rites do not require gold, and those things not bought with gold do not please with gold.^{f136} They therefore transgress this limit when in their ceremonies they take so much delight in gold, silver, ivory, marble, precious stones, and silks; and think that God is not rightly worshiped unless everything swims with untoward splendor, or, rather, mad excess.

It was a father who said that he freely ate meat on the day others abstained from it, because he was a Christian.^{f137} They transgress the limits, therefore, when they execrate any person who has tasted of meat in Lent.

There were two fathers, one of whom said that a monk who does not labor with his hands must be considered equal to a thug, or (if you prefer) a brigand,^{f138} the second, that it is not lawful for monks to live off the goods of others, even though they be assiduous in contemplation, in prayer, and in study.^{f139} They have also transgressed this limit when they have put the lazy, wine-cask bellies of monks in these stews and brothels to be crammed with substance of others.

It was a father who termed it a dreadful abomination to see an image either of Christ or of some saint painted in the churches of Christians.^{f140 c} “What is revered is not to be depicted upon walls” was not the mere declaration of one man but the decree of an ecclesiastical council.^{f141 a} They are far from remaining within these limits when they leave not a corner free of images. Another father counseled that, after having exercised in burial the office of humanity toward the dead, we should let them rest.^{f142} They break these limits when they stir up perpetual solicitude for the dead.

It was one of the fathers, ^{c(a)}who testified that in the Eucharist the substance of bread and wine remained and did not cease to be, just as in Christ the Lord the substance and nature of man remained, joined to the divine nature.^{f143} Therefore, they overstep the bounds in pretending that when the Lord’s words are repeated the substance of bread and wine ceases and is transubstantiated into body and blood.^{f144}

^cThey were fathers who, as they set forth only one Eucharist for the whole church and consequently excluded wicked and criminal persons, most gravely condemned all those who though present did not receive it.

^{f145} How far have they removed the boundaries when they fill not only churches but also private houses with their Masses, admitting anyone at all to observe them, each one the more willingly the more he pays, however impure and wicked he may be! They invite no one to faith in Christ and believing communion of the sacraments; rather, they put their work on sale, as the grace and merit of Christ.

^aThere were two fathers, one of whom decreed that those content with participation in one kind, but abstaining from the other, were to be excluded entirely from participation in the Sacred Supper of Christ; ^{f146} the other strongly contends that one must not deny the blood of their Lord to Christian folk, who, in confessing him, are bidden to shed their own blood.

^{f147} They have removed these landmarks when they have commanded by an inviolable law the very thing that the former father punished by excommunication and the latter reprovved with a valid reason. ^{f148}

It was a father who affirmed it rashness, when judging of some obscure matter, to take one side or another without clear and evident witness of Scripture. ^{f149} They forgot this limit when they established so many constitutions, canons, and doctrinal decisions, without any word of God. It was a father who reproached Montanus for, among other heresies, being the first to impose laws of fasting. ^{f150} They also passed far beyond those limits when they ordained fasts by very strict law. ^{f151}

It was a father who denied that marriage should be forbidden to the ministers of the church, and declared cohabitation with one's wife to be chastity. And other fathers agreed with his opinion. ^{f152} By severely enjoining celibacy for their priests, they have gone beyond this limit. ^{f153} It was a father who deemed that one must listen to Christ alone, for Scripture says, "Hear him" [^{<401705>}Matthew 17:5]; and that we need not be concerned about what others before us either said or did, but only about what Christ, who is the first of all, commanded. ^{f154} When they set over themselves and others any masters but Christ, they neither abode by this boundary nor permitted others to keep it. ^cIt was a father who contended that the church ought not to set itself above Christ, for he always judges truthfully, but ecclesiastical judges, like other men, are often mistaken. ^{f155}

When this boundary is also broken through, they do not hesitate to declare that the whole authority of Scripture depends entirely upon the judgment of the church.^{f156}

^aAll the fathers with one heart have abhorred and with one voice have detested the fact that God's Holy Word has been contaminated by the subtleties of sophists and involved in the squabbles of dialecticians.^{f157} When they attempt nothing in life but to enshroud and obscure the simplicity of Scripture with endless contentions and worse than sophistic brawls, do they keep themselves within these borders? Why, if the fathers were now brought back to life, and heard such brawling art as these persons call speculative theology, there is nothing they would less suppose than that these folk were disputing about God! But my discourse would overflow its proper limit if I chose to review how wantonly they reject the yoke of the fathers, whose obedient children they wish to seem. Indeed, months and even years would not suffice me! Nevertheless they are of such craven and depraved impudence as to dare reproach us for not hesitating to pass beyond the ancient boundaries.

5. THE APPEAL TO "CUSTOM" AGAINST TRUTH

^aEven in their appeal to "custom" they accomplish nothing. To constrain us to yield to custom would be to treat us most unjustly. Indeed, if men's judgments were right, custom should have been sought of good men. But it often happens far otherwise: what is seen being done by the many soon obtains the force of custom; while the affairs of men have scarcely ever been so well regulated that the better things pleased the majority. Therefore, the private vices of the many have often caused public error, or rather a general agreement on vices, which these good men now want to make law. Those with eyes can perceive it is not one sea of evils that has flooded the earth, but many dangerous plagues have invaded it, and everything is rushing headlong. Hence, one must either completely despair of human affairs or grapple with these great evils — or rather, forcibly quell them. And this remedy is rejected for no other reason save that we have long been accustomed to such evils. But, granting public error a place in the society of men, still in the Kingdom of God his eternal truth must alone be listened to and observed, a truth that cannot be dictated to by length of time, by long-standing custom, or by the conspiracy of men. In

such manner Isaiah of old instructed God's elect not to "call conspiracy all that this people call conspiracy," "not" to "fear what they fear, nor be in dread" thereof, but rather to "hallow the Lord of Hosts and let him be their fear and dread" [^{<230812>}Isaiah 8:12-13].

Now, then, let our adversaries throw at us as many examples as they wish, both of past and present ages. If we hallow the Lord of Hosts, we shall not be greatly afraid. Even though many ages may have agreed in like impiety, the Lord is strong to wreak vengeance, even to the third and fourth generation [^{<041418>}Numbers 14:18; cf. ^{<022004>}Exodus 20:4]. Even though the whole world may conspire in the same wickedness, he has taught us by experience what is the end of those who sin with the multitude. This he did when he destroyed all mankind by the Flood, but kept Noah with his little family; and Noah by his faith, the faith of one man, condemned the whole world [^{<010701>}Genesis 7:1; ^{<581107>}Hebrews 11:7]. To sum up, evil custom is nothing but a kind of public pestilence in which men do not perish the less though they fall with the multitude. ^cMoreover, our opponents ought to have pondered what Cyprian somewhere says: that those who sin out of ignorance, even though they cannot clear themselves of all blame, may still seem somehow excusable; but they who stubbornly reject the truth offered them by God's goodness have nothing to plead as an excuse. ^{f158}

6. ERRORS ABOUT THE NATURE OF THE CHURCH

^aBy their double-horned argument they do not press us so hard that we are forced to admit either that the church has been lifeless for some time or that we are now in conflict with it. Surely the church of Christ has lived and will live so long as Christ reigns at the right hand of his Father. It is sustained by his hand; defended by his protection; and is kept safe through his power. For he will surely accomplish what he once promised: that he will be present with his own even to the end of the world [^{<402820>}Matthew 28:20]. ^{f159} Against this church we now have no quarrel. For, of one accord with all believing folk, we worship and adore one God, and Christ the Lord [^{<460806>}1 Corinthians 8:6], as he has always been adored by all godly men. But they stray very far from the truth when they do not recognize the church unless they see it with their very eyes, and try to keep it within limits to which it cannot at all be confined.

Our controversy turns on these hinges: first, they contend that the form of the church is always apparent and observable. Secondly, they set this form in the see of the Roman Church and its hierarchy.^{f160} We, on the contrary, affirm that the church can exist without any visible appearance, and that its appearance is not contained within that outward magnificence which they foolishly admire. Rather, it has quite another mark: namely, the pure preaching of God's Word and the lawful administration of the sacraments.^{f161} They rage if the church cannot always be pointed to with the finger. But among the Jewish people how often was it so deformed that no semblance of it remained? What form do we think it displayed when Elijah complained that he alone was left [^{<111910>}1 Kings 19:10, or 14]? How long after Christ's coming was it hidden without form? How often has it since that time been so oppressed by wars, seditions, and heresies that it did not shine forth at all? If they had lived at that time, would they have believed that any church existed? But Elijah heard that there still remained seven thousand men who had not bowed the knee before Baal.^{f162} And we must not doubt that Christ has reigned on earth ever since he ascended into heaven. But if believers had then required some visible form, would they not have straightway lost courage? ^bIndeed, Hilary considered it a great vice in his day that, being occupied with foolish reverence for the episcopal dignity, men did not realize what a deadly hydra lurked under such a mask. For he speaks in this way: "One thing I admonish you, beware of Antichrist. It is wrong that a love of walls has seized you; wrong that you venerate the church of God in roofs and buildings; wrong that beneath these you introduce the name of peace. Is there any doubt that Antichrist will have his seat in them? To my mind, mountains, woods, lakes, prisons, and chasms are safer. For, either abiding in or cast into them, the prophets prophesied."^{f163}

Yet what does the world today venerate in its horned bishops^{f164} but to imagine those whom it sees presiding over renowned cities to be holy prelates of religion? Away, therefore, with such a foolish appraisal! Rather, ^asince the Lord alone "knows who are his" [^{<550219>}2 Timothy 2:19], let us leave to him the fact that he sometimes removes from men's sight the external signs by which the church is known. That is, I confess, a dreadful visitation of God upon the earth. But if men's impiety deserves it, why do we strive to oppose God's just vengeance? In such a way the Lord of old punished men's ingratitude. For, because they had refused to

obey his truth and had extinguished his light, he allowed their blinded senses to be both deluded by foolish lies and plunged into profound darkness, so that no form of the true church remained. Meanwhile, he preserved his own children from extinction, though they are scattered and hidden in the midst of these errors and darkness. And this is no marvel: for he knew how to preserve them in the confusion of Babylon, and in the flame of the fiery furnace [^{<270301>}Daniel, ch. 3].

Now I shall point out how dangerous is their desire to have the form of the church judged by some sort of vain pomp. This I shall sketch rather than explain at length lest I endlessly prolong my discourse. The pontiff of Rome, they say, who occupies the Apostolic See, and those who have been anointed and consecrated bishops by him, provided they are distinguished by miters and crosiers, represent the church, and must be taken for the church; therefore they cannot err. Why so? Because, they reply, they are pastors of the church and have been consecrated by the Lord. Were not Aaron and the other leaders of the people of Israel also pastors? Indeed, Aaron and his sons, though designated priests, still erred when they fashioned the calf [^{<023204>}Exodus 32:4]. Why, according to this reasoning, would not those four hundred prophets who deceived Ahab [^{<112212>}1 Kings 22:12] have represented the church? But the church was on the side of Micaiah, a single contemptible man, yet one who spoke the truth. Did not the prophets who rose up against Jeremiah, boasting that “the law could not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet” [^{<241818>}Jeremiah 18:18 p.], bear the name and face of the church? Against the whole tribe of the prophets, Jeremiah alone is sent from the Lord to announce that “the law was going to perish from the priest, counsel from the wise, the word from the prophet” [^{<241818>}Jeremiah 18:18; cf. ch. 4:9]. Was not such pomp manifested in that council where the priests, scribes, and Pharisees assembled to deliberate concerning the execution of Christ [^{<431147>}John 11:47 if.]? Now let them go and cling to this outward mask — making Christ and all the prophets of God schismatics; Satan’s ministers, conversely, the organs of the Holy Spirit!

But if they speak from the heart, let them answer me in good faith: in what region or among what people do they think the church resided after Eugenius, by decree of the Council of Basel, was deposed from the

pontificate and replaced by Amadeus? If they were to burst, they could not deny that the council was lawful as to its outward arrangements, and was summoned not only by one pope but by two. Eugenius was there condemned for schism, rebellion, and obstinacy, with the whole company of cardinals and bishops who had plotted the dissolution of the council with him. Nevertheless, subsequently supported by the favor of princes, he recovered his papal office unscathed. That election of Amadeus, duly solemnized by the authority of a general and holy council, went up in smoke, except that the aforesaid Amadeus was appeased by a cardinal's hat, as a barking dog by a morsel.^{f165} From these rebellious and obstinate heretics have come forth all future popes, cardinals, bishops, abbots, and priests. Here they must be stopped and held fast. For on which side will they bestow the name of church? Will they deny that the council was general, which lacked nothing of outward majesty, was solemnly convoked by two bulls, consecrated by the presiding legate of the Roman see, well ordered in every respect, and preserving the same dignity to the end? Will they admit that Eugenius and all his company, by whom they were consecrated, were schismatic? Let them, therefore, either define the form of the church in other terms, or we will adjudge them — however numerous they are — who knowingly and willingly have been ordained by heretics, to be schismatic. But if it had never been discovered before, they who under that fine title “church” have for so long superciliously hawked themselves to the world, even though they have been deadly plagues upon the church, can furnish us with abundant proof that the church is not bound up with outward pomp. I speak not concerning their morals and tragic misdeeds, with which their whole life swarms, since they speak of themselves as the Pharisees, who are to be heard but not imitated [^{<402303>}Matthew 23:3].^{f166} If you will devote a little of your leisure to the reading of our words, you will unmistakably recognize that this, this very doctrine itself whereby they claim to be the church, is a deadly butchery of souls, a firebrand, a ruin, and a destruction of the church.

7. TUMULTS ALLEGED TO RESULT FROM REFORMATION PRECHING

Lastly, they do not act with sufficient candor when they invidiously recount how many disturbances, tumults, and contentions the preaching of our doctrine has drawn along with it, and what fruits it now produces

among many. The blame for these evils is unjustly laid upon it, when this ought to have been imputed to Satan's malice. Here is, as it were, a certain characteristic of the divine Word, that it never comes forth while Satan is at rest and sleeping. This is the surest and most trustworthy mark to distinguish it from lying doctrines, which readily present themselves, are received with attentive ears by all, and are listened to by an applauding world. Thus for some centuries during which everything was submerged in deep darkness, almost all mortals were the sport and jest of this lord of the world, and, not unlike some Sardanapalus,^{f167} Satan lay idle and luxuriated in deep repose. For what else had he to do but jest and sport, in tranquil and peaceable possession of his kingdom? Yet when the light shining from on high in a measure shattered his darkness, when that "strong man" had troubled and assailed his kingdom [cf. ^{<421122>}Luke 11:22], he began to shake off his accustomed drowsiness and to take up arms. And first, indeed, he stirred up men to action that thereby he might violently oppress the dawning truth.^{f168} And when this profited him nothing, he turned to stratagems: he aroused disagreements and dogmatic contentions through his catabaptists^{f169} and other monstrous rascals in order to obscure and at last extinguish the truth. And now he persists in besieging it with both engines. With the violent hands of men he tries to uproot that true seed, and seeks (as much as lies in his power) to choke it with his weeds, to prevent it from growing and bearing fruit. But all that is in vain, if we heed the Lord our monitor, who long since laid open Satan's wiles before us, that he might not catch us unawares; and armed us with defenses firm enough against all his devices. Furthermore, how great is the malice that would ascribe to the very word of God itself the odium either of seditions, which wicked and rebellious men stir up against it, or of sects, which impostors excite, both of them in opposition to its teaching! Yet this is no new example. Elijah was asked if it was not he who was troubling Israel [^{<111817>}1 Kings 18:17]. To the Jews, Christ was seditious [^{<422305>}Luke 23:5; ^{<431907>}John 19:7 ff.]. The charge of stirring up the people was laid against the apostles [^{<442405>}Acts 24:5 ff.]. What else are they doing who blame us today for all the disturbances, tumults, and contentions that boil up against us? Elijah taught us what we ought to reply to such charges: it is not we who either spread errors abroad or incite tumults; but it is they who contend against God's power [^{<111818>}1 Kings 18:18].

But as that one answer is enough to check their rashness, it is also sufficient to meet the foolishness of others who often happen to be moved by such scandals and, thus perturbed, to waver. In order not to give way under this perturbation and be driven from their ground, let them, however, know that the apostles in their day experienced the same things that are now happening to us. There were unlearned and unstable men who, to their own destruction, distorted things that had been divinely written by Paul, as Peter says [^{<610316>}2 Peter 3:16]. They were despisers of God who, when they heard that sin abounded that grace might more abound, immediately concluded: We shall remain in sin, that grace may abound” [cf. ^{<450601>}Romans 6:1]. When they heard that believers were not under the law, straightway they chirped: “We shall sin because we are not under the law, but under grace” [cf. ^{<450615>}Romans 6:15]. There were people who accused Paul of being a persuader to evil. Many false apostles were intruding themselves to destroy the churches that he had built [^{<460110>}1 Corinthians 1:10 ff.; ^{<470203>}2 Corinthians 2:3 ff.; ^{<480106>}Galatians 1:6 ff.]. “Some preached the gospel out of envy and strife” [^{<500115>}Philippians 1:15 p.], “not sincerely,” even maliciously, “thinking thereby to lay further weight upon his bonds” [^{<500117>}Philippians 1:17 p.]. Elsewhere the gospel made little headway. “They all sought their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ” [^{<506221>}Philippians 2:21]. Others returned to themselves, as “dogs... to their vomit, and swine... to their wallowing in the mire” [^{<610222>}2 Peter 2:22 p.]. Many degraded the freedom of the Spirit to the license of the flesh [^{<610218>}2 Peter 2:18-19]. Many brethren crept in by whom the godly were exposed to dangers [^{<471103>}2 Corinthians 11:3 ff.]. Among these very brethren various contentions broke out [Acts, chs. 6; 11: 15]. What were the apostles to do here? Ought they not to have dissembled for a time, or, rather, laid aside that gospel and deserted it because they saw that it was the seedbed of so many quarrels, the source of so many dangers, the occasion of so many scandals? Yet in tribulations of this sort they were helped by the thought that Christ is “a rock of offense, a stone of stumbling” [^{<450933>}Romans 9:33; cf. ^{<600208>}1 Peter 2:8; ^{<230814>}Isaiah 8:14], “set for the fall and rising of many... and for a sign that is spoken against” [^{<420234>}Luke 2:34]. Armed with this assurance, they boldly advanced through all the dangers of tumults and offenses. It is fitting that we too be sustained by the same consideration, inasmuch as Paul testifies to this eternal character of the gospel, that “it may be a fragrance of death unto

death” [^{<470215>}2 Corinthians 2:15] for those who perish; yet for us it was destined to this use: “to be a fragrance from life to life” [^{<470216>}2 Corinthians 2:16], “and the power of God unto the salvation of believers” [^{<450116>}Romans 1:16]. “This very thing we should certainly experience, if by our ungratefulness we did not corrupt this singular blessing of God and pervert to our ruin what ought for us to have been a unique assurance of salvation.

8. LET THE KING BEWARE OF ACTING ON FALSE CHARGES: THE INNOCENT AWAIT DIVINE VINDICATION

^aBut I return to you, O King. May you be not at all moved by those vain accusations with which our adversaries are trying to inspire terror in you: that by this new gospel (for so they call it) men strive and seek only after the opportunity for seditions and impunity for all crimes. “For our God is not author of division, but of peace” [^{<461433>}1 Corinthians 14:33 p.]; and the Son of God is not “the minister of sin” [^{<480217>}Galatians 2:17], for he has come to “destroy the devil’s works” [^{<620308>}1 John 3:8].

And we are unjustly charged, too, with intentions of such a sort that we have never given the least suspicion of them. We are, I suppose, contriving the overthrow of kingdoms — we, from whom not one seditious word was ever heard; we, whose life when we lived under you was always acknowledged to be quiet and simple; we, who do not cease to pray for the full prosperity of yourself and your kingdom, although we are now fugitives from home! We are, I suppose, wildly chasing after wanton vices! Even though in our moral actions many things are blameworthy, nothing deserves such great reproach as this. And we have not, by God’s grace, profited so little by the gospel that our life may not be for these disparagers an example of chastity, generosity, mercy, continence, patience, modesty, and all other virtues. It is perfectly clear that we fear and worship God in very truth since we seek, not only in our life but in our death, that his name be hallowed [cf. ^{<500120>}Philippians 1:20]. And hatred itself has been compelled to bear witness to the innocence and civic uprightness of some of us upon whom the punishment of death was inflicted for that one thing which ought to have occasioned extraordinary praise. But if any persons raise a tumult under the pretext of the gospel ^{f170} — hitherto no such persons have been found in your realm — if any deck

out the license of their own vices as the liberty of God's grace — I have known very many of this sort — there are laws and legal penalties by which they may be severely restrained according to their deserts. Only let not the gospel of God be blasphemed in the meantime because of the wickedness of infamous men.

The wicked poison of our calumniators has, O King, in its many details, been sufficiently disclosed that you may not incline an ear credulous beyond measure to their slanders. I fear even that too many details have been included, since this preface has already grown almost to the size of a full-scale apology. In it I have not tried to formulate a defense, but merely to dispose your mind to give a hearing to the actual presentation of our case. Your mind is now indeed turned away and estranged from us, even inflamed, I may add, against us; but we trust that we can regain your favor, if in a quiet, composed mood you will once read this our confession, which we intend in lieu of a defense before Your Majesty. Suppose, however, the whisperings of the malevolent so fill your ears that the accused have no chance to speak for themselves, but those savage furies, while you connive at them, ever rage against us with imprisonings, scourgings, rackings, maimings, and burnings [cf. ^{<581136>}Hebrews 11:36-37]. Then we will be reduced to the last extremity even as sheep destined for the slaughter [^{<235307>}Isaiah 53:7-8; ^{<440833>}Acts 8:33]. Yet this will so happen that “in our patience we may possess our souls” [^{<422119>}Luke 21:19 p.]; and may await the strong hand of the Lord, which will surely appear in due season, coming forth armed to deliver the poor from their affliction and also to punish their despisers, who now exult with such great assurance.

May the Lord, the King of Kings, establish your throne in righteousness [cf. ^{<202505>}Proverbs 25:5], and your dominion in equity, most illustrious King.

*At Basel, on the 1st August, in the year 1536.*¹⁷¹

BOOK ONE

The Knowledge^{f172} of God the Creator

^cCHAPTER 1

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD AND THAT OF OURSELVES ARE CONNECTED. HOW THEY ARE INTERRELATED ^{F173}

1. WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF SELF THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

^{b(a)}Nearly all the wisdom we possess, that is to say, true and sound wisdom, consists of two parts: the knowledge of God and of ourselves. ^{f174}

^eBut, while joined by many bonds, ^bwhich one precedes and brings forth the other is not easy to discern. ^eIn the first place, no one can look upon himself without immediately turning his thoughts to the contemplation of God, in whom he “lives and moves” [^{<441728>}Acts 17:28]. For, quite clearly, the mighty gifts with which we are endowed are hardly from ourselves; indeed, our very being is nothing but subsistence in the one God. Then, by these benefits shed like dew from heaven upon us, we are led as by rivulets to the spring itself. Indeed, our very poverty better discloses the infinitude of benefits reposing in God. The miserable ruin, into which the rebellion of the first man cast us, especially compels us to look upward. Thus, not only will we, in fasting and hungering, seek thence what we lack; but, in being aroused by fear, we shall learn humility. ^{f175} ^bFor, as a veritable world of miseries is to be found in mankind, ^{e(b)}and we are thereby despoiled of divine raiment, our shameful nakedness exposes a teeming horde of infamies. Each of us must, then, be so stung by the consciousness of his own unhappiness as to attain at least some knowledge of God.

^bThus, from the feeling of our own ignorance, vanity, poverty, infirmity, and — what is more — depravity and corruption, we recognize that the

true light of wisdom, sound virtue, full abundance of every good, and purity of righteousness rest in the Lord alone. To this extent we are prompted by our own ills to contemplate the good things of God; and we cannot seriously aspire to him before we begin to become displeased with ourselves. For what man in all the world would not gladly remain as he is — what man does not remain as he is — so long as he does not know himself, that is, while content with his own gifts, and either ignorant or unmindful of his own misery? Accordingly, the knowledge of ourselves not only arouses us to seek God, but also, as it were, leads us by the hand to find him.

2. WITHOUT KNOWLEDGE OF GOD THERE IS NO KNOWLEDGE OF SELF

^bAgain, it is certain that man never achieves a clear knowledge of himself^{f176} unless he has first looked upon God's face, and then descends from contemplating him to scrutinize himself.^{f177} For we always seem to ourselves righteous and upright and wise and holy — this pride is innate in all of us — unless by clear proofs we stand convinced of our own unrighteousness, foulness, folly, and impurity. Moreover, we are not thus convinced if we look merely to ourselves and not also to the Lord, who is the sole standard by which this judgment must be measured. For, because all of us are inclined by nature to hypocrisy,^{f178} a kind of empty image of righteousness in place of righteousness itself abundantly satisfies us. And because nothing appears within or around us that has not been contaminated by great immorality, what is a little less vile pleases us as a thing most pure — so long as we confine our minds within the limits of human corruption. Just so, an eye to which nothing is shown but black objects judges something dirty white or even rather darkly mottled to be whiteness itself. Indeed, we can discern still more clearly from the bodily senses how much we are deluded in estimating the powers of the soul. For if in broad daylight we either look down upon the ground or survey whatever meets our view round about, we seem to ourselves endowed with the strongest and keenest sight; yet when we look up to the sun and gaze straight at it, that power of sight which was particularly strong on earth is at once blunted and confused by a great brilliance, and thus we are compelled to admit that our keenness in looking upon things earthly is sheer dullness when it comes to the sun. So it happens in estimating our

spiritual goods. As long as we do not look beyond the earth, being quite content with our own righteousness, wisdom, and virtue, we flatter ourselves most sweetly, and fancy ourselves all but demigods. Suppose we but once begin to raise our thoughts to God, and to ponder his nature, and how completely perfect are his righteousness, wisdom, and power — the straightedge to which we must be shaped. Then, what masquerading earlier as righteousness was pleasing in us will soon grow filthy in its consummate wickedness. What wonderfully impressed us under the name of wisdom will stink in its very foolishness. What wore the face of power will prove itself the most miserable weakness. That is, what in us seems perfection itself corresponds ill to the purity of God.

3. MAN BEFORE GOD'S MAJESTY

^bHence that dread and wonder^{f179} with which Scripture commonly represents the saints as stricken and overcome whenever they felt the presence of God. Thus it comes about that we see men who in his absence normally remained firm and constant, but who, when he manifests his glory, are so shaken and struck dumb as to be laid low by the dread of death — are in fact overwhelmed by it and almost annihilated. As a consequence, we must infer that man is never sufficiently touched and affected by the awareness of his lowly state until he has compared himself with God's majesty. Moreover, we have numerous examples of this consternation both in The Book of Judges and in the Prophets. So frequent was it that this expression was common among God's people: "We shall die, for the Lord has appeared to us" [^{<071322>}Judges 13:22; ^{<230605>}Isaiah 6:5; ^{<260201>}Ezekiel 2:1; 1:28; ^{<070622>}Judges 6:22-23; and elsewhere]. The story of Job, in its description of God's wisdom, power, and purity, always expresses a powerful argument that overwhelms men with the realization of their own stupidity, impotence, and corruption [cf. ^{<183801>}Job 38:1 ff.]. And not without cause: for we see how Abraham recognizes more clearly that he is earth and dust [^{<011827>}Genesis 18:27] when once he had come nearer to beholding God's glory; and how Elijah, with uncovered face, cannot bear to await his approach, such is the awesomeness of his appearance [^{<111913>}1 Kings 19:13]. And what can man do, who is rottenness itself [^{<181328>}Job 13:28] and a worm [^{<180705>}Job 7:5; ^{<192206>}Psalms 22:6], when even the very cherubim must veil their faces out of fear [^{<230602>}Isaiah 6:2]? It is this indeed of which the prophet Isaiah speaks: "The sun will blush

and the moon be confounded when the Lord of Hosts shall reign”

[^{<232423>}Isaiah 24:23]; that is, when he shall bring forth his splendor and cause it to draw nearer, the brightest thing will become darkness before it [^{<230210>}Isaiah 2:10, 19 p.].

Yet, however the knowledge of God and of ourselves may be mutually connected, the order of right teaching requires that we discuss the former first, then proceed afterward to treat the latter.

CHAPTER 2

WHAT IT IS TO KNOW GOD, AND TO WHAT PURPOSE THE KNOWLEDGE OF HIM TENDS

1. PIETY IS REQUISITE FOR THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD*

^{e(c/a)}Now, the knowledge of God, as I understand it, is that by which we not only conceive that there is a God ^ebut also grasp what befits us and is proper to his glory, in fine, what is to our advantage to know of him. Indeed, we shall not say that, properly speaking, God is known where there is no religion or piety. ^{f180} Here I do not yet touch upon the sort of knowledge with which men, in themselves lost and accursed, apprehend God the Redeemer in Christ the Mediator; but I speak only of the primal and simple knowledge to which the very order of nature would have led us if Adam had remained upright. ^{f181} In this ruin of mankind no one now experiences God either as Father or as Author of salvation, or favorable in any way, until Christ the Mediator comes forward to reconcile him to us. Nevertheless, it is one thing to feel that God as our Maker supports us by his power, governs us by his providence, nourishes us by his goodness, and attends us with all sorts of blessings — and another thing to embrace the grace of reconciliation offered to us in Christ. First, as much in the fashioning of the universe as in the general teaching of Scripture the Lord shows himself to be simply the Creator. Then in the face of Christ [cf. ^{<470406>}2 Corinthians 4:6] he shows himself the Redeemer. Of the resulting twofold knowledge of God ^{f182} we shall now discuss the first aspect; the second will be dealt with in its proper place. ^{f183}

Moreover, although our mind cannot apprehend God without rendering some honor to him, it will not suffice simply to hold ^{e(b/a)}that there is One whom all ought to honor and adore, unless we are also persuaded that he is the fountain of every good, and that we must seek nothing elsewhere than in him. This I take to mean that not only does he sustain this universe (as he once founded it) by his boundless might, regulate it by his wisdom, preserve it by his goodness, and especially rule mankind by his

righteousness and judgment, bear with it in his mercy, watch over it by his protection; but also that no drop will be found either of wisdom and light, or of righteousness or power or rectitude, or of genuine truth, which does not flow from him, and of which he is not the cause, ^{e(b)} Thus we may learn to await and seek all these things from him, and thankfully to ascribe them, once received, to him. ^eFor this sense of the powers of God ^{f184} is for us a fit teacher of piety, from which religion is born. I call “piety” that reverence joined with love of God which the knowledge of his benefits induces. For until men recognize that they owe everything to God, that they are nourished by his fatherly care, that he is the Author of their every good, that they should seek nothing beyond him — they will never yield him willing service. Nay, unless they establish their complete happiness in him, they will never give themselves truly and sincerely to him.

2. KNOWLEDGE OF GOD INVOLVES TRUST AND REVERENCE*

^eWhat is God? Men who pose this question are merely toying with idle speculations. It is more important for us to know of what sort he is and what is consistent with his nature. ^{f185} What good is it to profess with Epicurus some sort of God who has cast aside the care of the world only to amuse himself in idleness? ^{f186} What help is it, in short, to know a God with whom we have nothing to do? ^{e(b)} Rather, our knowledge should serve first to teach us fear and reverence; secondly, with it as our guide and teacher, we should learn to seek every good from him, and, having received it, to credit it to his account, ^bFor how can the thought of God penetrate your mind without your realizing immediately that, since you are his handiwork, you have been made over and bound to his command by right of creation, that you owe your life to him? — that whatever you undertake, whatever you do, ought to be ascribed to him? If this be so, it now assuredly follows that your life is wickedly corrupt unless it be disposed to his service, seeing that his will ought for us to be the law by which we live. Again, you cannot behold him clearly unless you acknowledge him to be the fountainhead and source of every good. From this too would arise the desire to cleave to him and trust in him, but for the fact that man’s depravity seduces his mind from rightly seeking him.

For, to begin with, the pious mind does not dream up for itself any god it pleases, but contemplates the one and only true God. And it does not

attach to him whatever it pleases, but is content to hold him to be as he manifests himself; furthermore, the mind always exercises the utmost diligence and care not to wander astray, or rashly and boldly to go beyond his will. It thus recognizes God because it knows that he governs all things; and trusts that he is its guide and protector, therefore giving itself over completely to trust in him. ^{e(b)} Because it understands him to be the Author of every good, if anything oppresses, if anything is lacking, immediately it betakes itself to his protection, waiting for help from him. Because it is persuaded that he is good and merciful, it reposes in him with perfect trust, and doubts not that in his loving-kindness a remedy will be provided for all its ills. Because it acknowledges him as Lord and Father, the pious mind also deems it meet and right to observe his authority in all things, reverence his majesty, take care to advance his glory, and obey his commandments. Because it sees him to be a righteous judge, armed with severity to punish wickedness, it ever holds his judgment seat before its gaze, and through fear of him restrains itself

from provoking his anger. ^b And yet it is not so terrified by the awareness of his judgment as to wish to withdraw, even if some way of escape were open. But it embraces him no less as punisher of the wicked than as benefactor of the pious. For the pious mind realizes that the punishment of the impious and wicked and the reward of life eternal for the righteous equally pertain to God's glory. Besides, this mind restrains itself from sinning, not out of dread of punishment alone; but, because it loves and reveres God as Father, it worships and adores him as Lord. Even if there were no hell, it would still shudder at offending him alone.

Here indeed is pure and real religion: faith so joined with an earnest fear of God ^{f187 e(b)} that this fear also embraces willing reverence, and carries with it such legitimate worship as is prescribed in the law. ^e And we ought to note this fact even more diligently: all men have a vague general veneration for God, but very few really reverence him; and wherever there is great ostentation in ceremonies, sincerity of heart is rare indeed.

CHAPTER 3

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD HAS BEEN NATURALLY IMPLANTED IN THE MINDS OF MEN^{f188}

1. THE CHARACTER OF THIS NATURAL ENDOWMENT

^bThere is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. ^{f189} This we take to be beyond controversy. To prevent anyone from taking refuge in the pretense of ignorance, God himself has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty. ^eEver renewing its memory, he repeatedly ^bsheds ^efresh drops. ^{f190} ^bSince, therefore, men one and all perceive that there is a God and that he is their Maker, they are condemned by their own testimony because they have failed to honor him and to consecrate their lives to his will. If ignorance of God is to be looked for anywhere, surely one is most likely to find an example of it among the more backward folk and those more remote from civilization. Yet there is, as the eminent pagan says, no nation so barbarous, no people so savage, that they have not a deep-seated conviction that there is a God. ^{f191} And they who in other aspects of life seem least to differ from brutes still continue to retain some seed of religion. So deeply does the common conception occupy the minds of all, so tenaciously does it inhere in the hearts of all! Therefore, since from the beginning of the world there has been no region, no city, in short, no household, that could do without religion, there lies in this a tacit confession of a sense of deity inscribed in the hearts of all.

Indeed, even idolatry is ample proof of this conception. We know how man does not willingly humble himself so as to place other creatures over himself. Since, then, he prefers to worship wood and stone rather than to be thought of as having no God, clearly this is a most vivid impression of a divine being. So impossible is it to blot this from man's mind that natural disposition would be more easily altered, as altered indeed it is when man voluntarily sinks from his natural haughtiness to the very depths in order to honor God!

2. RELIGION IS NO ARBITRARY INVENTION

^bTherefore it is utterly vain for some men to say that religion was invented by the subtlety and craft of a few to hold the simple folk in thrall by this device and that those very persons who originated the worship of God for others did not in the least believe that any God existed. ^{f192} I confess, indeed, that in order to hold men's minds in greater subjection, clever men have devised very many things in religion by which to inspire the common folk with reverence and to strike them with terror. But they would never have achieved this if men's minds had not already been imbued with a firm conviction about God, from which the inclination toward religion springs as from a seed. And indeed it is not credible that those who craftily imposed upon the ruder folk under pretense of religion were entirely devoid of the knowledge of God. If, indeed, there were some in the past, and today not a few appear, who deny that God exists, yet willy-nilly they from time to time feel an inkling of what they desire not to believe. One reads of no one who burst forth into bolder or more unbridled contempt of deity than Gaius Caligula; ^{f193} yet no one trembled more miserably when any sign of God's wrath manifested itself; thus — albeit unwillingly — he shuddered at the God whom he professedly sought to despise. You may see now and again how this also happens to those like him; how he who is the boldest despiser of God is of all men the most startled at the rustle of a falling leaf [cf. ^{<032636>}Leviticus 26:36]. Whence does this arise but from the vengeance of divine majesty, which strikes their consciences all the more violently the more they try to flee from it? Indeed, they seek out every subterfuge to hide themselves from the Lord's presence, and to efface it again from their minds. But in spite of themselves they are always entrapped. Although it may sometimes seem to vanish for a moment, it returns at once and rushes in with new force. If for these there is any respite from anxiety of conscience, it is not much different from the sleep of drunken or frenzied persons, who do not rest peacefully even while sleeping because they are continually troubled with dire and dreadful dreams. The impious themselves therefore exemplify the fact that some conception of God is ever alive in all men's minds.

3. ACTUAL GODLESSNESS IS IMPOSSIBLE

^eMen of sound judgment will always be sure that a sense of divinity which can never be effaced is engraved upon men's minds. Indeed, the perversity of the impious, who though they struggle furiously are unable to extricate themselves from the fear of God, is abundant testimony that this conviction, namely, that there is some God, is naturally inborn in all, and is fixed deep within, as it were in the very marrow. Although Diagoras ^{f194} and his like may jest at whatever has been believed in every age concerning religion, and Dionysius ^{f195} may mock the heavenly judgment, this is sardonic laughter, ^{f196} for the worm of conscience, sharper than any cauterizing iron, gnaws away within. I do not say, as Cicero did, that errors disappear with the lapse of time, and that religion grows and becomes better each day. ^{f197} For the world (something will have to be said of this a little later) ^{f198} tries as far as it is able to cast away all knowledge of God, and by every means to corrupt the worship of him. I only say that though the stupid hardness in their minds, which the impious eagerly conjure up to reject God, wastes away, yet the sense of divinity, which they greatly wished to have extinguished, thrives and presently burgeons. From this we conclude that it is not a doctrine that must first be learned in school, but one of which each of us is master from his mother's womb and which nature itself permits no one to forget, although many strive with every nerve to this end.

^bBesides, if all men are born and live to the end that they may know God, and yet if knowledge of God is unstable and fleeting unless it progresses to this degree, it is clear that all those who do not direct every thought and action in their lives to this goal degenerate from the law of their creation. This was not unknown to the philosophers. Plato meant nothing but this when he often taught that the highest good of the soul is likeness to God, where, when the soul has grasped the knowledge of God, it is wholly transformed into his likeness. ^{f199} In the same manner also Gryllus, in the writings of Plutarch, reasons very skillfully, affirming that, if once religion is absent from their life, men are in no wise superior to brute beasts, but are in many respects far more miserable. Subject, then, to so many forms of wickedness, they drag out their lives in ceaseless tumult and disquiet. ^{f200} Therefore, it is worship of God alone that renders men higher than the brutes, and through it alone they aspire to immortality. ^{f201}

CHAPTER 4

THIS KNOWLEDGE IS EITHER SMOTHERED OR CORRUPTED, PARTLY BY IGNORANCE, PARTLY BY MALICE

1. SUPERSTITION

^eAs experience shows, God has sown a seed of religion in all men. But scarcely one man in a hundred is met with who fosters it, once received, in his heart, and none in whom it ripens — much less shows fruit in season [cf. ^{<190103>}Psalm 1:3]. Besides while some may evaporate in their own superstitions and others deliberately and wickedly desert God, yet all degenerate from the true knowledge of him. And so it happens that no real piety remains in the world. But as to my statement that some erroneously slip into superstition, I do not mean by this that their ingenuousness should free them from blame. For the blindness under which they labor is almost always mixed with proud vanity and obstinacy. Indeed, vanity joined with pride can be detected in the fact ^{e(b)}that, in seeking God, miserable men do not rise above themselves as they should, but measure him by the yardstick of their own carnal stupidity, and neglect sound investigation; thus out of curiosity they fly off into empty speculations. They do not therefore apprehend God as he offers himself, but imagine him as they have fashioned him in their own presumption. When this gulf opens, in whatever direction they move their feet, they cannot but plunge headlong into ruin. Indeed, whatever they afterward attempt by way of worship or service of God, they cannot bring as tribute to him, for they are worshipping not God but a figment and a dream of their own heart. ^{f202}

^ePaul eloquently notes this wickedness: “Striving to be wise, they make fools of themselves” [^{<450122>}Romans 1:22 p.]. He had said before that “they became futile in their thinking” [^{<450121>}Romans 1:21]. In order, however, that no one might excuse their guilt, he adds that they are justly blinded. For not content with sobriety but claiming for themselves more than is right, they wantonly bring darkness upon themselves — in fact, they

become fools in their empty and perverse haughtiness. From this it follows that their stupidity is not excusable, since it is caused not only by vain curiosity but by an inordinate desire to know more than is fitting, joined with a false confidence.

2. CONSCIOUS TURNING AWAY FROM GOD

^eDavid's statement that ungodly men and fools feel in their hearts that there is no God [^{<191401>}Psalms 14:1; ^{<195301>}53:1] must first, as we shall see again a little later, be limited to those who, by extinguishing the light of nature, deliberately befuddle themselves. Accordingly, we see that many, after they have become hardened in insolent and habitual sinning, furiously repel all remembrance of God, although this is freely suggested to them inwardly from the feeling of nature. But to render their madness more detestable, David represents them as flatly denying God's existence; not that they deprive him of his being, but because, in despoiling him of his judgment and providence, they shut him up idle in heaven.^{f203} Now there is nothing less in accord with God's nature than for him to cast off the government of the universe and abandon it to fortune, and to be blind to the wicked deeds of men, so that they may lust unpunished. Accordingly, whoever heedlessly indulges himself, his fear of heavenly judgment extinguished, denies that there is a God.^{f204} And it is God's just punishment of the wicked that fatness envelops their hearts, so that after they have closed their eyes, in seeing they see not [^{<401314>}Matthew 13:14-15; cf. ^{<230609>}Isaiah 6:9-10 and ^{<191710>}Psalms 17:10]. And David is the best interpreter of his thought when in another place he says that "the fear of God is not before the eyes of the ungodly" [^{<193601>}Psalms 36:1 p.]. Likewise, because they persuade themselves that God does not see, they proudly applaud their own wrongdoing [^{<191011>}Psalms 10:11].

Even though they are compelled to recognize some god, they strip him of glory by taking away his power. For, as Paul affirms, just as "God cannot deny himself," because "he remains" forever like himself [^{<540213>}2 Timothy 2:13], so they, by fashioning a dead and empty idol, are truly said to deny God. At this point we ought to note that, however much they struggle against their own senses, and wish not only to drive God thence but also to destroy him in heaven, their stupidity never increases to the point where God does not at times bring them back to his judgment seat. But

because no fear restrains them from rushing violently against God, it is certain that so long as this blind urge grips them, their own oafish forgetfulness of God will hold sway over them.

3. WE ARE NOT TO FASHION GOD ACCORDING TO OUR OWN WHIM†

^bThus is overthrown that vain defense with which many are wont to gloss over their superstition. For they think that any zeal for religion, however preposterous, is sufficient. But they do not realize that true religion ought to be conformed to God's will as to a universal rule; that God ever remains like himself, and is not a specter or phantasm to be transformed according to anyone's whim. One can clearly see, too, how superstition mocks God with pretenses while it tries to please him. For, seizing almost solely upon what God has testified to be of no concern to himself, superstition either holds in contempt or else openly rejects that which he prescribes and enjoins as pleasing to himself. Thus all who set up their own false rites to God worship and adore their own ravings. Unless they had first fashioned a God to match the absurdity of their trifling, ^{f205} they would by no means have dared trifle with God in this way. The apostle accordingly characterizes that vague and erroneous opinion of the divine as ignorance of God. "When you did not know God," he says, "you were in bondage to beings that by nature were no gods" [Galatians 4: 8 p.]. And elsewhere he teaches that the Ephesians were "without God" at the time they were straying away from the right knowledge of the one God [^{<490212>}Ephesians 2:12]. Nor is it of much concern, at least in this circumstance, whether you conceive of one God or several; for you continually depart from the true God and forsake him, and, having left him, you have nothing left except an accursed idol. Therefore it remains for us to assert with Lactantius that no religion is genuine unless it be joined with truth. ^{f206}

4. HYPOCRISY

^{e(b)}A second sin arises, that they never consider God at all unless compelled to; and they do not come nigh until they are dragged there despite their resistance. And not even then are they impressed with the voluntary fear that arises out of reverence for the divine majesty, but merely with a slavish, forced fear, which God's judgment extorts from them. ^bThis, since

they cannot escape it, they dread even to the point of loathing. That saying of Statius' that fear first made gods in the world^{f207} corresponds well to this kind of irreligion, and to this alone. Those who are of a mind alien to God's righteousness know that his judgment seat stands ready to punish transgressions against him, yet they greatly desire its overthrow. Feeling so, they wage war against the Lord, who cannot be without judgment. But while they know that his inescapable power hangs over them because they can neither do away with it nor flee from it, they recoil from it in dread. And so, lest they should everywhere seem to despise him whose majesty weighs upon them, they perform some semblance of religion. Meanwhile they do not desist from polluting themselves with every sort of vice, and from joining wickedness to wickedness, until in every respect they violate the holy law of the Lord and dissipate all his righteousness. Or at least they are not so restrained by that pretended fear of God from wallowing blithely in their own sins and flattering themselves, and preferring to indulge their fleshly intemperance rather than restrain it by the bridle of the Holy Spirit.

This, however, is but a vain and false shadow of religion, scarcely even worth being called a shadow.^{e(b)} From it one may easily grasp anew how much this confused knowledge of God differs from the piety from which religion takes its source,^{f208} which is instilled in the breasts of believers only.^c And yet hypocrites would tread these twisting paths so as to seem to approach the God from whom they flee.^b For where they ought to have remained consistently obedient throughout life, they boldly rebel against him in almost all their deeds, and are zealous to placate him merely with a few paltry sacrifices. Where they ought to serve him in sanctity of life and integrity of heart, they trump up frivolous trifles and worthless little observances with which to win his favor.^c Nay, more, with greater license they sluggishly lie in their own filth, because they are confident that they can perform their duty toward him by ridiculous acts of expiation.^{e(b)} Then while their trust ought to have been placed in him, they neglect him and rely upon themselves, his creatures though they be. Finally, they entangle themselves in such a huge mass of errors that blind wickedness stifles and finally extinguishes those sparks which once flashed forth to show them God's glory,^b yet that seed remains which can in no wise be uprooted: that there is some sort of divinity; but this seed is so corrupted that by itself it produces only the worst fruits.

^eFrom this, my present contention is brought out with greater certainty, that a sense of divinity is by nature engraven on human hearts. For necessity forces from the reprobate themselves a confession of it. In tranquil times they wittily joke about God, indeed are facetious and garrulous in belittling his power. If any occasion for despair presses upon them, it goads them to seek him and impels their perfunctory prayers. From this it is clear that they have not been utterly ignorant of God, but that what should have come forth sooner was held back by stubbornness.

CHAPTER 5

THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD SHINES FORTH IN THE FASHIONING OF THE UNIVERSE AND THE CONTINUING GOVERNMENT OF IT

(God manifested in his created works, 1-10)

1. THE CLARITY OF GOD'S SELF-DISCLOSURE STRIPS US OF EVERY EXCUSE

^{e(b)}The final goal of the blessed life, moreover, rests in the knowledge of God [cf. ^{<431703>}John 17:3]. ^{f209}Lest anyone, then, be excluded from access to happiness, ^{f210}he not only sowed in men's minds that seed of religion of which we have spoken but revealed himself and daily discloses himself in the whole workmanship of the universe. As a consequence, men cannot open their eyes without being compelled to see him. Indeed, his essence is incomprehensible; ^{f211}hence, his divineness far escapes all human perception. But upon his individual works he has engraved unmistakable marks of his glory, so clear and so prominent that even unlettered and stupid folk cannot plead the excuse of ignorance. ^eTherefore the prophet very aptly exclaims that he is "clad with light as with a garment" [^{<19A402>}Psalms 104:2 p.]. It is as if he said: Thereafter the Lord began to show himself in the visible splendor of his apparel, ever since in the creation of the universe he brought forth those insignia whereby he shows his glory to us, whenever and wherever we cast our gaze. Likewise, the same prophet skillfully compares the heavens, as they are stretched out, to his royal tent and says that he has laid the beams of his chambers on the waters, has made the clouds his chariot, rides on the wings of the wind, and that the winds and lightning bolts are his swift messengers. [^{<19A402>}Psalms 104:2-4.] And since the glory of his power and wisdom shine more brightly above, heaven is often called his palace [^{<191104>}Psalms 11:4]. ^bYet, in the first place, wherever you cast your eyes, there is no spot in the universe wherein you cannot discern at least some sparks of his glory. You cannot in one glance survey this most vast and beautiful system of

the universe, in its wide expanse, without being completely overwhelmed by the boundless force of its brightness.^{f212} The reason why the author of The Letter to the Hebrews elegantly calls the universe the appearance of things invisible [^{<581103>}Hebrews 11:3] is that this skillful ordering of the universe is for us a sort of mirror in which we can contemplate God, who is otherwise invisible. The reason why the prophet attributes to the heavenly creatures a language known to every nation [^{<191902>}Psalm 19:2 ff.] is that therein lies an attestation of divinity so apparent that it ought not to escape the gaze of even the most stupid tribe. The apostle declares this more clearly: What men need to know concerning God has been disclosed to them for one and all gaze upon his invisible nature, known from the creation of the world, even unto his eternal power and divinity” [^{<450119>}Romans 1:19-20 p.].

2. THE DIVINE WISDOM DISPLAYED FOR ALL TO SEE†

^bThere are innumerable evidences both in heaven and on earth that declare his wonderful wisdom; not only those more recondite matters for the closer observation of which astronomy, medicine, and all natural science are intended, but also those which thrust themselves upon the sight of even the most untutored and ignorant persons, so that they cannot open their eyes without being compelled to witness them.^{f213} Indeed, men who have either quaffed or even tasted the liberal arts penetrate with their aid far more deeply into the secrets of the divine wisdom.^{f214} Yet ignorance of them prevents no one from seeing more than enough of God’s workmanship in his creation to lead him to break forth in admiration of the Artificer. To be sure, there is need of art and of more exacting toil in order to investigate the motion of the stars, to determine their assigned stations, to measure their intervals, to note their properties. As God’s providence shows itself more explicitly when one observes these, so the mind must rise to a somewhat higher level to look upon his glory. Even the common folk and the most untutored, who have been taught only by the aid of the eyes, cannot be unaware of the excellence of divine art, for it reveals itself in this innumerable and yet distinct and well ordered variety of the heavenly host. It is, accordingly, clear that there is no one to whom the Lord does not abundantly show his wisdom. Likewise, in regard to the structure of the human body^{f215} one must have the greatest keenness in order to weigh, with Galen’s skill,^{f216} its articulation; symmetry, beauty,

and use. But yet, as all acknowledge, the human body shows itself to be a composition so ingenious that its Artificer is rightly judged a wonder-worker.

3. MAN AS THE LOFTIEST PROOF OF DIVINE WISDOM

^eCertain philosophers, accordingly, long ago not ineptly called man a microcosm^{f217} because he is a rare example of God's power, goodness, and wisdom, and contains within himself enough miracles to occupy our minds, if only we are not irked at paying attention to them. Paul, having stated that the blind can find God by feeling after him, immediately adds that he ought not to be sought afar off [^{<441727>}Acts 17:27].^{f218} For each one undoubtedly feels within the heavenly grace that quickens him. Indeed, if there is no need to go outside ourselves to comprehend God, what pardon will the indolence of that man deserve who is loath to descend within himself^{f219} to find God? For the same reason, David, when he has briefly praised the admirable name and glory of God, which shine everywhere, immediately exclaims: "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" [^{<190804>}Psalms 8:4]. Likewise, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast established strength." [^{<190802>}Psalms 8:2.] Indeed, he not only declares that a clear mirror of God's works is in humankind, but that infants, while they nurse at their mothers' breasts, have tongues so eloquent to preach his glory that there is no need at all of other orators. Consequently, also, he does not hesitate to bring their infant speech into the debate, as if they were thoroughly instructed, to refute the madness of those who might desire to extinguish God's name in favor of their own devilish pride. Consequently, too, there comes in that which Paul quotes from Aratus, that we are God's offspring [^{<441728>}Acts 17:28], because by adorning us with such great excellence he testifies that he is our Father. In the same way the secular poets, out of a common feeling and, as it were, at the dictation of experience, called him "the Father of men."^{f220} Indeed, no one gives himself freely and willingly to God's service unless, having tasted his fatherly love, he is drawn to love and worship him in return.

4. BUT MAN TURNS UNGRATEFULLY AGAINST GOD

^eHere, however, the foul ungratefulness of men is disclosed. They have within themselves a workshop graced with God's unnumbered works and,

at the same time, a storehouse overflowing with inestimable riches. They ought, then, to break forth into praises of him but are actually puffed up and swollen with all the more pride. They feel in many wonderful ways that God works in them; they are also taught, by the very use of these things, what a great variety of gifts they possess from his liberality. They are compelled to know — whether they will or not — that these are the signs of divinity; yet they conceal them within. Indeed, there is no need to go outside themselves, provided they do not, by claiming for themselves what has been given them from heaven, bury in the earth that which enlightens their minds to see God clearly.

Even today the earth sustains many monstrous spirits who, to destroy God's name, do not hesitate to misdirect all the seed of divinity spread abroad in human nature. How detestable, I ask you, is this madness: that man, finding God in his body and soul a hundred times, on this very pretense of excellence denies that there is a God? They will not say it is by chance that they are distinct from brute creatures. Yet they set God aside, the while using "nature," which for them is the artificer of all things, as a cloak. They see such exquisite workmanship in their individual members, from mouth and eyes even to their very toenails. Here also they substitute nature for God.^{f221} But such agile motions of the soul, such excellent faculties, such rare gifts, especially bear upon the face of them a divinity that does not allow itself readily to be hidden — unless the Epicureans, like the Cyclopes^{f222} should from this height all the more shamelessly wage war against God. Do all the treasures of heavenly wisdom concur in ruling a five-foot worm while the whole universe lacks this privilege? First, to establish that there is something organic in the soul that should correspond to its several parts in no way obscures God's glory, but rather illumines it. Let Epicurus answer what concourse of atoms cooks food and drink, turns part of it into excrement, part into blood, and begets such industry in the several members to carry out their tasks, as if so many souls ruled one body by common counsel!

5. THE CONFUSION OF CREATURE WITH CREATOR

^eBut now I have no concern with that pigsty;^{f223} rather, I take to task those given to fanciful subtleties who willingly drag forth in oblique fashion that frigid statement of Aristotle^{f224} both to destroy the immortality of the soul

and to deprive God of his right. For, since the soul has organic faculties, they by this pretext bind the soul to the body so that it may not subsist without it, and by praising nature they suppress God's name as far as they can ^{f225} Yet the powers of the soul are far from being confined to functions that serve the body. Of what concern is it to the body that you measure the heavens, gather the number of the stars, determine the magnitude of each, know what space lies between them, with what swiftness or slowness they complete their courses, how many degrees this way or that they decline? I confess, indeed, that astronomy has some use; but I am only showing that in this deepest investigation of heavenly things there is no organic symmetry, but here is an activity of the soul distinct from the body. I have put forth one example, from which it will be easy for my readers to derive the rest. Manifold indeed is the nimbleness of the soul with which it surveys heaven and earth, joins past to future, retains in memory something heard long before, nay, pictures to itself whatever it pleases. Manifold also is the skill with which it devises things incredible, and which is the mother of so many marvelous devices. These are unfailing signs of divinity in man. ^{f226} Why is it that the soul not only vaguely roves about but conceives many useful things, ponders concerning many, even divines the future — all while man sleeps? What ought we to say here except that the signs of immortality which have been implanted in man cannot be effaced? Now what reason would there be to believe that man is divine and not to recognize his Creator? Shall we, indeed, distinguish between right and wrong by that judgment which has been imparted to us, yet will there be no judge in heaven? Will there remain for us even in sleep some remnant of intelligence, yet will no God keep watch in governing the world? Shall we think ourselves the inventors of so many arts and useful things that God may be defrauded of his praise even though experience sufficiently teaches that what we have has been unequally distributed among us from another source?

Some persons, moreover, babble about a secret inspiration that gives life to the whole universe, but what they say is not only weak but completely profane. Vergil's famous saying pleases them:

*“First of all, an inner spirit feeds
 Sky, earth, and watery fields, the shining orb
 Of moon, and Titan’s star; and mind pervades
 Its members, sways all the mass, unites
 With its great frame. Thence come the race of man
 And beast, the life of winged things, strange shapes
 That ocean bears beneath his glassy floor.
 Of fire the vigor, and divine the source
 Of those life-seeds.”^{f227}*

As if the universe, which was founded as a spectacle of God’s glory, were its own creator! For thus the same author has elsewhere followed the view common to Greeks and Latins alike:

*“The bees, some teach, received a share of mind,
 Divine, ethereal draught. For God, men say,
 Pervades all things, the earth, expanse of seas
 And heaven’s depth. From him the flocks and herds,
 Men and beasts of every sort, at birth
 Draw slender life; yea, unto him all things
 Do then return; unmade, are then restored;
 Death has no place; but still alive they fly
 Unto the starry ranks, to heaven’s height.”^{f228}*

See, of what value to beget and nourish godliness in men’s hearts is that jejune speculation about the universal mind which animates and quickens the world! This shows itself even more clearly in the sacrilegious words of the filthy dog Lucretius which have been deduced from that principle.^{f229} This is indeed making a shadow deity to drive away the true God, whom we should fear and adore. I confess, of course, that it can be said reverently, provided that it proceeds from a reverent mind, that nature is God; but because it is a harsh and improper saying, since nature is rather the order prescribed by God, it is harmful in such weighty matters, in which special devotion is due, to involve God confusedly in the inferior course of his works.^{f230}

6. THE CREATOR REVEALS HIS LORDSHIP OVER THE CREATION

^eLet us therefore remember, whenever each of us contemplates his own nature, that there is one God who so governs all natures that he would have us look unto him, direct our faith to him, and worship and call upon him. For nothing is more preposterous than to enjoy the very remarkable

gifts that attest the divine nature within us, yet to overlook the Author who gives them to us at our asking. ^bWith what clear manifestations his might draws us to contemplate him! Unless perchance it be unknown to us in whose power it lies to sustain this infinite mass of heaven and earth by his Word: by his nod alone sometimes to shake heaven with thunderbolts, to burn everything with lightnings, to kindle the air with flashes; sometimes to disturb it with various sorts of storms, and then at his pleasure to clear them away in a moment; to compel the sea, which by its height seems to threaten the earth with continual destruction, to hang as if in mid-air; ^{f231} sometimes to arouse it in a dreadful way with the tumultuous force of winds; sometimes, with waves quieted, to make it calm again! ^eBelonging to this theme are the praises of God's power from the testimonies of nature which one meets here and there especially indeed in The Book of Job and in Isaiah. These I now intentionally pass over, for they will find a more appropriate place where I shall discuss from the Scriptures the creation of the universe. ^{f232} Now I have only wanted to touch upon the fact that this way of seeking God is common both to strangers and to those of his household, ^{f233} if they trace the outlines that above and below sketch a living likeness of him. ^bThis very might leads us to ponder his eternity; for he from whom all things draw their origin must be eternal and have beginning from himself. Furthermore, if the cause is sought by which he was led once to create all these things, and is now moved to preserve them, we shall find that it is his goodness alone. But this being the sole cause, it ought still to be more than sufficient to draw us to his love, inasmuch as there is no creature, as the prophet declares, upon whom God's mercy has not been poured out [^{<19E509>}Psalm 145:9; cf. Ecclesiasticus 18:11; 18:9, Vg.].

7. GOD'S GOVERNMENT AND JUDGMENT

^bIn the second kind of works, which are outside the ordinary course of nature also, proofs of his powers just as clear are set forth. For in administering human society he so tempers his providence ^{f234} that, although kindly and beneficent toward all in numberless ways, he still by open and daily indications declares his clemency to the godly and his severity to the wicked and criminal. For there are no doubts about what sort of vengeance he takes on wicked deeds. Thus he clearly shows himself the protector and vindicator of innocence, while he prospers the life of

good men with his blessing, relieves their need, soothes and mitigates their pain, and alleviates their calamities; and in all these things he provides for their salvation. And indeed the unfailing rule of his righteousness ought not to be obscured by the fact that he frequently allows the wicked and malefactors to exult unpunished for some time, while he permits the upright and deserving to be tossed about by many adversities, and even to be oppressed by the malice and iniquity of the impious. But a far different consideration ought, rather, to enter our minds: that, when with a manifest show of his anger he punishes one sin, he hates all sins; that, when he leaves many sins unpunished, there will be another judgment to which have been deferred the sins yet to be punished. Similarly, what great occasion he gives us to contemplate his mercy when he often pursues miserable sinners with unwearied kindness, until he shatters their wickedness by imparting benefits and by recalling them to him with more than fatherly kindness!

8. GOD'S SOVEREIGN SWAY OVER THE LIFE OF MEN

^eTo this end, the prophet is mindful that in their desperate straits God suddenly and wonderfully and beyond all hope succors the poor and almost lost; those wandering through the desert he protects from wild beasts and at last guides them back to the way [^{<19A704>}Psalm 107:4-7]; to the needy and hungry he supplies food [v. 9]; the prisoners he frees from loathsome dungeons and iron bands [vs. 10-16]; the shipwrecked he leads back to port unharmed [vs. 23-30]; the half dead he cures of disease [vs. 17-20]; he burns the earth with heat and dryness, or makes it fertile with the secret watering of grace [vs. 33-38]; he raises up the humblest from the crowd, or casts down the lofty from the high level of their dignity [vs. 39-41]. By setting forth examples of this sort, the prophet shows that what are thought to be chance occurrences are just so many proofs of heavenly providence, especially of fatherly kindness. And hence ground for rejoicing is given to the godly, while as for the wicked and the reprobate, their mouths are stopped [v. 42]. But because most people, immersed in their own errors, are struck blind in such a dazzling theater,^{f235} he exclaims that to weigh these works of God wisely is a matter of rare and singular wisdom [v. 43], in viewing which they who otherwise seem to be extremely acute profit nothing. And certainly however much the glory of

God shines forth, scarcely one man in a hundred ^{f236} is a true spectator of it!

^bIn no greater degree is his power or his wisdom hidden in darkness. His power shows itself clearly when the ferocity of the impious, in everyone's opinion unconquerable, is overcome in a moment, their arrogance vanquished, their strongest defenses destroyed, their javelins and armor shattered, their strength broken, their machinations overturned, and themselves fallen of their own weight; and when their audacity, which exalted them above heaven, lays them low even to the center of the earth; when, conversely the humble are raised up from the dust, and the needy are lifted up from the dung heap [^{<19B307>}Psalm 113:7]; the oppressed and afflicted are rescued from their extreme tribulation; the despairing are restored to good hope; the unarmed, few and weak, snatch victory from the armed, many and strong. Indeed, his wisdom manifests his excellence when he dispenses everything at the best opportunity; when he confounds all wisdom of the world [cf. ^{<460120>}1 Corinthians 1:20]; when "he catches the crafty in their own craftiness" [^{<460319>}1 Corinthians 3:19 p.; cf. ^{<180513>}Job 5:13]. In short, there is nothing that he does not temper in the best way.

9. WE OUGHT NOT TO RACK OUR BRAINS ABOUT GOD; BUT RATHER, WE SHOULD CONTEMPLATE HIM IN HIS WORKS

^bWe see that no long or toilsome proof is needed to elicit evidences that serve to illuminate and affirm the divine majesty; since from the few we have sampled at random, whithersoever you turn, it is clear that they are so very manifest and obvious that they can easily be observed with the eyes and pointed out with the finger. And here again we ought to observe that we are called to a knowledge of God: not that knowledge which, content with empty speculation, merely flits in the brain, but that which will be sound and fruitful if we duly perceive it, and if it takes root in the heart. ^{f237} For the Lord manifests himself by his powers, the force of which we feel within ourselves and the benefits of which we enjoy. We must therefore be much more profoundly affected by this knowledge than if we were to imagine a God of whom no perception came through to us. Consequently, we know the most perfect way of seeking God, and the most suitable order, is not for us to attempt with bold curiosity to penetrate to the investigation of his essence, which we ought more to

adore than meticulously to search out, but for us to contemplate him in his works whereby he renders himself near and familiar to us, and in some manner communicates himself. The apostle was referring to this when he said that we need not seek him far away, seeing that he dwells by his very present power in each of us [^{<441727>}Acts 17:27-28]. For this reason, David, having first confessed his unspeakable greatness [^{<19E503>}Psalms 145:3], afterward proceeds to mention his works and professes that he will declare his greatness [^{<19E505>}Psalms 145:5-6; cf. ^{<194005>}Psalms 40:5]. It is also fitting, therefore, for us to pursue this particular search for God, which may so hold our mental powers suspended in wonderment as at the same time to stir us deeply. ^cAnd as Augustine teaches elsewhere, because, disheartened by his greatness, we cannot grasp him, we ought to gaze upon his works, that we may be restored by his goodness. ^{f238}

10. THE PURPOSE OF THIS KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

^bKnowledge of this sort, then, ought not only to arouse us to the worship of God but also to awaken and encourage us to the hope of the future life. ^{f239}For since we notice that the examples that the Lord shows us both of his clemency and of his severity are inchoate and incomplete, doubtless we must consider this to presage even greater things, the manifestation and full exhibition of which are deferred to another life. On the other hand — since we see the pious laden with afflictions by the impious, stricken with unjust acts, overwhelmed with slanders, wounded with abuses and reproaches; while the wicked on the contrary flourish, are prosperous, obtain repose with dignity and that without punishment — we must straightway conclude that there will be another life in which iniquity is to have its punishment, and righteousness is to be given its reward. Furthermore, since we observe that believers are often chastised by the Lord's rods, we may with full assurance believe that one day the wicked must no less suffer his lash. ^eIndeed, Augustine's remark is well known: "If now every sin were to suffer open punishment, it would seem that nothing is reserved for the final judgment. Again, if God were now to punish no sin openly, one would believe that there is no providence." ^{f240}

^bWe must therefore admit in God's individual works — but especially in them as a whole — that God's powers are actually represented as in a painting. Thereby the whole of mankind is invited and attracted to

recognition of him, and from this to true and complete happiness. Now those powers appear most clearly in his works. Yet we comprehend their chief purpose, their value, and the reason why we should ponder them, only when we descend into ourselves and contemplate by what means the Lord shows in us his life, wisdom, and power; and exercises in our behalf his righteousness, goodness, and mercy. ^eFor even though David justly complains that unbelievers are foolish because they do not ponder the deep designs of God in the governance of mankind [^{<199205>}Psalm 92:5-6], yet what he says elsewhere is very true: that God's wonderful wisdom here abounds more than the hairs of our head [cf. ^{<194012>}Psalm 40:12]. But because this argument is to be treated more amply below, ^{f241} I now pass over it.

(Man nevertheless, failing to know and worship him, falls into superstition and confusion, 11-12)

11. THE EVIDENCE OF GOD IN CREATION DOES NOT PROFIT US*

^bBut although the Lord represents both himself and his everlasting Kingdom in the mirror of his works with very great clarity, such is our stupidity that we grow increasingly dull toward so manifest testimonies, and they flow away without profiting us. For with regard to the most beautiful structure and order of the universe, how many of us are there who, when we lift up our eyes to heaven or cast them about through the various regions of earth, recall our minds to a remembrance of the Creator, and do not rather, disregarding their Author, sit idly in contemplation of his works? In fact, with regard to those events which daily take place outside the ordinary course of nature, how many of us do not reckon that men are whirled and twisted about by blindly indiscriminate fortune, ^{f242} rather than governed by God's providence? Sometimes we are driven by the leading and direction of these things to contemplate God; this of necessity happens to all men. Yet after we rashly grasp a conception of some sort of divinity, straightway we fall back into the ravings or evil imaginings of our flesh, and corrupt by our vanity the pure truth of God. In one respect we are indeed unlike, because each one of us privately forges his own particular error; yet we are very much alike in that, one and all, we forsake the one true God for prodigious trifles. Not only the

common folk and dull-witted men, but also the most excellent and those otherwise endowed with keen discernment, are infected with this disease.

In this regard how volubly has the whole tribe of philosophers shown their stupidity and silliness! For even though we may excuse the others (who act like utter fools), Plato, the most religious of all and the most circumspect, also vanishes in his round globe.^{f243} And what might not happen to others when the leading minds, whose task it is to light the pathway for the rest, wander and stumble! It is the same where the governance of human affairs shows providence so manifestly that we cannot deny it; yet we profit no more by it than if we believed that all things were turned topsy-turvy by the heedless will of fortune — so great is our inclination toward vanity and error! I always speak of the most excellent, not of those vulgar folk whose madness in profaning God's truth is beyond measure.

12. THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD IS CHOKED BY HUMAN SUPERSTITION AND THE ERROR OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

^eHence arises that boundless filthy mire of error wherewith the whole earth was filled and covered. For each man's mind is like a labyrinth,^{f244} so that it is no wonder that individual nations were drawn aside into various falsehoods; and not only this — but individual men, almost, had their own gods. For as rashness and superficiality are joined to ignorance and darkness, scarcely a single person has ever been found who did not fashion for himself an idol or specter in place of God. Surely, just as waters boil up from a vast, full spring, so does an immense crowd of gods flow forth from the human mind, while each one, in wandering about with too much license, wrongly invents this or that about God himself. However, it is not necessary here to draw up a list of the superstitions with which the world has been entangled, because there would be no end to it, and so without a word of them it is sufficiently clear from so many corruptions how horrible is the blindness of the human mind. I pass over the rude and untutored crowd. But among the philosophers who have tried with reason and learning to penetrate into heaven, how shameful is the diversity.^{f245} As each was furnished with higher wit, graced with art and knowledge, so did he seem to camouflage his utterances; yet if you look more closely upon all these, you will find them all to be fleeting unrealities. The Stoics

thought themselves very clear when they said that one could elicit from all parts of nature various names for God, yet without on this account destroying the unity of God — as if, indeed, we were not already more than prone to vanity, without being drawn farther and more violently into error by the multiplicity of gods foisted upon us! Even the mystic theology of the Egyptians^{f246} shows all have sedulously brooded upon this so as not to appear to rave without reason. And perchance even at first glance something that seemed probable would deceive the simple and careless; but no mortal ever contrived anything that did not basely corrupt religion.

And this very confused diversity emboldened the Epicureans and other crass despisers of piety^{f247} to cast out all awareness of God. For when they saw the wisest persons contending with contrary opinions, from the disagreements of these — and even from their frivolous or absurd teaching — they did not hesitate to gather that men vainly and foolishly bring torments upon themselves when they seek for a god that is not. And this they thought to do with impunity because it would be preferable to deny outright God's existence than to fashion uncertain gods, and then stir up endless quarrels. But these folk pass a purely foolish judgment, or, rather, they conjure up a cloud out of men's ignorance to conceal their own impiety; in such ignorance there is not the least justification for departing from God. But since all confess that there is nothing concerning which the learned and the unlearned at the same time disagree so much, hence one may conclude that the minds of men which thus wander in their search after God are more than stupid and blind in the heavenly mysteries. Some praise the reply of Simonides,^{f248} who, asked by the tyrant Hiero what God was, begged to be given a day to ponder. When on the following day the tyrant asked the same question, he asked for two days more, and after having frequently doubled the number of days, finally answered, "The longer I consider this, the more obscure it seems to me." He wisely indeed suspended judgment on a subject so obscure to himself. Yet hence it appears that if men were taught only by nature, they would hold to nothing certain or solid or clear-cut, but would be so tied to confused principles as to worship an unknown god [cf. <441723> Acts 17:23].^{f249}

13. THE HOLY SPIRIT REJECTS ALL CULTS CONTRIVED BY MEN

^eNow we must also hold that all who corrupt pure religion — and this is sure to happen when each is given to his own opinion — separate themselves from the one and only God. Indeed, they will boast that they have something else in mind; but what they intend, or what they have persuaded themselves of, has not much bearing on the matter, seeing that the Holy Spirit pronounces them all to be apostates who in the blindness of their own minds substitute demons in place of God [cf. ^{<461020>}1 Corinthians 10:20]. For this reason, Paul declares that the Ephesians were without God until they learned from the gospel what it was to worship the true God [^{<490212>}Ephesians 2:12-13]. And this must not be restricted to one people, since elsewhere he states generally that all mortals “became vain in their reasonings” [^{<450121>}Romans 1:21] after the majesty of the Creator had been disclosed to them in the fashioning of the universe. For this reason, Scripture, to make place for the true and only God, condemned as falsehood and lying whatever of divinity had formerly been celebrated among the heathen; nor did any divine presence remain except on Mt. Zion, where the proper knowledge of God continued to flourish [^{<350218>}Habakkuk 2:18, 20]. Certainly among the pagans in Christ’s lifetime the Samaritans seemed to come closest to true piety; yet we hear from Christ’s mouth that they knew not what they worshiped [^{<430422>}John 4:22]. From this it follows that they were deluded by vain error.

In short, even if not all suffered under crass vices, or fell into open idolatries, yet there was no pure and approved religion, founded upon common understanding alone. For even though few persons did not share in the madness of the common herd, there remains the firm teaching of Paul that the wisdom of God is not understood by the princes of this world [^{<460208>}1 Corinthians 2:8]. But if even the most illustrious wander in darkness, what can we say of the dregs? It is therefore no wonder that the Holy Spirit rejects as base all cults contrived through the will of men; for in the heavenly mysteries, opinion humanly conceived, even if it does not always give birth to a great heap of errors, is nevertheless the mother of error. And though nothing more harmful may result, yet to worship an

unknown god [cf. ^{<441723>}Acts 17:23] by chance is no light fault. Nevertheless, by Christ's own statement all who have not been taught from the law what god they ought to worship are guilty in this matter [^{<430422>}John 4:22]. And surely they who were the best legislators did not progress farther than to hold that religion was founded upon public agreement. Nay, according to Xenophon, Socrates praises the oracle of Apollo, which commanded that every man worship the gods after the manner of his forefathers and according to the custom of his own city.^{f250} But whence comes this law to mortals that they may by their own authority define what far surpasses the world? Or who could so acquiesce in decrees of his ancestors, or enactments of the people, as to receive without hesitation a god humanly taught him? Each man will stand upon his own judgment rather than subject himself to another's decision.^{f251} Therefore, since either the custom of the city or the agreement of tradition is too weak and frail a bond of piety to follow in worshipping God, it remains for God himself to give witness of himself from heaven.

14. THE MANIFESTATION OF GOD IN NATURE SPEAKS TO US IN VAIN*

^bIt is therefore in vain that so many burning lamps shine for us in the workmanship of the universe to show forth the glory of its Author. Although they bathe us wholly in their radiance, yet they can of themselves in no way lead us into the right path. Surely they strike some sparks, but before their fuller light shines forth these are smothered. For this reason, the apostle, in that very passage where he calls the worlds the images of things invisible, adds that through faith we understand that they have been fashioned by God's word [^{<581103>}Hebrews 11:3]. He means by this that the invisible divinity is made manifest in such spectacles, but that we have not the eyes to see this unless they be illumined by the inner revelation of God through faith. And where Paul teaches that what is to be known of God is made plain from the creation of the universe [^{<450119>}Romans 1:19], he does not signify such a manifestation as men's discernment can comprehend; but, rather, shows it not to go farther than to render them inexcusable. The same apostle also, even if he somewhere denies that God is to be sought far off, inasmuch as he dwells within us [^{<441727>}Acts 17:27], in another place teaches of what avail that sort of nearness is, saying: "In past generations the Lord let the nations follow

their own ways. Yet God did not leave himself without witness, sending benefits from heaven, giving rain and fruitful seasons, filling men's hearts with food and gladness" [^{<441416>}Acts 14:16-17; VS. 15-16, Vg.]. Therefore, although the Lord does not want for testimony while he sweetly attracts men to the knowledge of himself with many and varied kindnesses, they do not cease on this account to follow their own ways, that is, their fatal errors.

15. WE HAVE NO EXCUSE*

^bBut although we lack the natural ability to mount up unto the pure and clear knowledge of God, all excuse is cut off because the fault of dullness is within us. And, indeed, we are not allowed thus to pretend ignorance without our conscience itself always convicting us of both baseness and ingratitude. As if this defense may properly be admitted: for a man to pretend that he lacks ears to hear the truth when there are mute creatures with more than melodious voices to declare it; or for a man to claim that he cannot see with his eyes what eyeless creatures point out to him; or for him to plead feebleness of mind when even irrational creatures give instruction! ^{f252} Therefore we are justly denied every excuse when we stray off as wanderers and vagrants even though everything points out the right way. But, however that may be, yet the fact that men soon corrupt the seed of the knowledge of God, sown in their minds out of the wonderful workmanship of nature (thus preventing it from coming to a good and perfect fruit), must be imputed to their own failing; nevertheless, it is very true that we are not at all sufficiently instructed by this bare and simple testimony which the creatures render splendidly to the glory of God. For at the same time as we have enjoyed a slight taste of the divine from contemplation of the universe, having neglected the true God, we raise up in his stead dreams and specters of our own brains, and attribute to anything else than the true source the praise of righteousness, wisdom, goodness, and power. Moreover, we so obscure or overturn his daily acts by wickedly judging them that we snatch away from them their glory and from their Author his due praise.

CHAPTER 6.

SCRIPTURE IS NEEDED AS GUIDE AND TEACHER FOR ANYONE WHO WOULD COME TO GOD THE CREATOR

1. GOD BESTOWS THE ACTUAL KNOWLEDGE OF HIMSELF UPON US ONLY IN THE SCRIPTURES

^{e(b)}That brightness which is borne in upon the eyes of all men both in heaven and on earth is more than enough to withdraw all support from men's ingratitude — just as God, to involve the human race in the same guilt, sets forth to all without exception his presence portrayed in his creatures. Despite this, it is needful that another and better help be added to direct us aright to the very Creator of the universe, ^eIt was not in vain, then, that he added the light of his Word by which to become known unto salvation; and he regarded as worthy of this privilege those whom he pleased to gather more closely and intimately to himself. For because he saw the minds of all men tossed and agitated, after he chose the Jews as his very own flock, he fenced them about that they might not sink into oblivion as others had. With good reason he holds us by the same means in the pure knowledge of himself, since otherwise even those who seem to stand firm before all others would soon melt away. Just as old or bleary-eyed men and those with weak vision, if you thrust before them a most beautiful volume, even if they recognize it to be some sort of writing, yet can scarcely construe two words, but with the aid of spectacles ^{f253} will begin to read distinctly; so Scripture, gathering up the otherwise confused knowledge of God in our minds, having dispersed our dullness, clearly shows us the true God. This, therefore, is a special gift, ^bwhere God, to instruct the church, not merely uses mute teachers but also opens his own most hallowed lips. Not only does he teach the elect to look upon a god, but also shows himself as the God upon whom they are to look. He has from the beginning maintained this plan for his church, so that besides

these common proofs he also put forth his Word, which is a more direct and more certain mark whereby he is to be recognized. ^{f254}

(Two sorts of knowledge of God in Scripture)

^{e(b)}There is no doubt that Adam, Noah, Abraham, and the rest of the patriarchs with this assistance penetrated to the intimate knowledge of him ^ethat in a way distinguished them from unbelievers. I am not yet speaking of the proper doctrine of faith whereby they had been illumined unto the hope of eternal life. For, that they might pass from death to life, it was necessary to recognize God not only as Creator but also as Redeemer, for undoubtedly they arrived at both from the Word. First in order came that kind of knowledge by which one is permitted to grasp who that God is who founded and governs the universe. Then that other inner knowledge was added, which alone quickens dead souls, whereby God is known not only as the Founder of the universe and the sole Author and Ruler of all that is made, but also in the person of the Mediator as the Redeemer. But because we have not yet come to the fall of the world and the corruption of nature, I shall now forego discussion of the remedy. ^{f255} My readers therefore should remember that I am not yet going to discuss that covenant by which God adopted to himself the sons of Abraham, or that part of doctrine which has always separated believers from unbelieving folk, for it was founded in Christ. But here I shall discuss only how we should learn from Scripture that God, the Creator of the universe, can by sure marks be distinguished from all the throng of feigned gods. Then, in due order, that series will lead us to the redemption. ^{f256} We shall derive many testimonies from the New Testament, and other testimonies also from the Law and the Prophets, where express mention is made of Christ. Nevertheless, all things will tend to this end, that God, the Artificer of the universe, is made manifest to us in Scripture, and that what we ought to think of him is set forth there, lest we seek some uncertain deity by devious paths.

2. THE WORD OF GOD AS HOLY SCRIPTURE

^{e(b)}But whether God became known to the patriarchs through oracles and visions or by the work and ministry of men, he put into their minds what they should then hand down to their posterity. At any rate, there is no doubt that firm certainty of doctrine was engraved in their hearts, so that

they were convinced and understood that what they had learned proceeded from God.^{f257} For by his Word, God rendered faith unambiguous forever, a faith that should be superior to all opinion. Finally, in order that truth might abide forever in the world with a continuing succession of teaching and survive through all ages, the same oracles he had given to the patriarchs it was his pleasure to have recorded, as it were, on public tablets, ^eWith this intent the law was published, and the prophets afterward added as its interpreters. For even though the use of the law was manifold, as will be seen

clearly in its place,^{f258} it was especially committed to Moses and all the prophets to teach the way of reconciliation between God and men, whence also Paul calls “Christ the end of the law” [^{<451004>}Romans 10:4]. Yet I repeat once more: besides the specific doctrine of faith and repentance that sets forth Christ as Mediator, Scripture adorns with unmistakable marks and tokens the one true God, in that he has created and governs the universe, in order that he may not be mixed up with the throng of false gods. Therefore, however fitting it may be for man seriously to turn his eyes to contemplate God’s works, since he has been placed in this most glorious theater to be a spectator of them, it is fitting that he prick up his ears to the Word, the better to profit. And it is therefore no wonder that those who were born in darkness become more and more hardened in their insensibility; for there are very few who, to contain themselves within bounds, apply themselves teachably to God’s Word, but they rather exult in their own vanity. Now, in order that true religion may shine upon us, we ought to hold that it must take its beginning from heavenly doctrine and that no one can get even the slightest taste of right and sound doctrine unless he be a pupil of Scripture. Hence, there also emerges the beginning of true understanding when we reverently embrace what it pleases God there to witness of himself. But not only faith, perfect and in every way complete, but all right knowledge of God is born of obedience.^{f259 e(b)} And surely in this respect God has, by his singular providence, taken thought for mortals through all ages.

3. WITHOUT SCRIPTURE WE FALL INTO ERROR

^bSuppose we ponder how slippery is the fall of the human mind into forgetfulness of God, how great the tendency to every kind of error, how

great the lust to fashion constantly new and artificial religions. Then we may perceive how necessary was such written proof of the heavenly doctrine, that it should neither perish through forgetfulness nor vanish through error nor be corrupted by the audacity of men. It is therefore clear that God has provided the assistance of the Word for the sake of all those to whom he has been pleased to give useful instruction because he foresaw that his likeness imprinted upon the most beautiful form of the universe would be insufficiently effective. Hence, we must strive onward by this straight path if we seriously aspire to the pure contemplation of God. We must come, I say, to the Word, where God is truly and vividly described to us from his works, while these very works are appraised not by our depraved judgment but by the rule of eternal truth. If we turn aside from the Word, as I have just now said, though we may strive with strenuous haste, yet, since we have got off the track, we shall never reach the goal. For we should so reason that the splendor of the divine countenance, which even the apostle calls “unapproachable” [^{<540616>}1 Timothy 6:16], is for us like an inexplicable labyrinth unless we are conducted into it by the thread of the Word; so that it is better to limp along this path than to dash with all speed outside it. ^{f260} ^eDavid very often, therefore, teaching that we ought to banish superstitions from the earth so that pure religion may flourish, represented God as regnant [^{<199301>}Psalm 93:1; 96:10; 97:1; 99:1; and the like]. Now he means by the word “regnant” not the power with which he is endowed, and which he exercises in governing the whole of nature, but the doctrine by which he asserts his lawful sovereignty. For errors can never be uprooted from human hearts until true knowledge of God is planted therein.

4. SCRIPTURE CAN COMMUNICATE TO US WHAT THE REVELATION IN THE CREATION CANNOT

^bAccordingly, the same prophet, after he states, “The heavens declare the glory of God, the firmament shows forth the works of his hands, the ordered succession of days and nights proclaims his majesty” [^{<191901>}Psalm 19:1-2 p.], then proceeds to mention his Word: “The law of the Lord is spotless, converting souls; the testimony of the Lord is faithful, giving wisdom to little ones; the righteous acts of the Lord are right, rejoicing hearts; the precept of the Lord is clear, enlightening eyes” [^{<192808>}Psalm 28:8-9, Vg.; 19:7-8, EV]. ^{e(b)}For although he also includes other uses of the

law, he means in general that, since God in vain calls all peoples to himself by the contemplation of heaven and earth, this is the very school of God's children. ^cPsalm 29 looks to this same end, where the prophet — speaking forth concerning God's awesome voice, which strikes the earth in thunder [v. 3], winds, rains, whirlwinds and tempests, causes mountains to tremble [v. 6], shatters the cedars [v. 5] — finally adds at the end that his praises are sung in the sanctuary because the unbelievers are deaf to all the voices of God that resound in the air [vs. 9-11]. Similarly, he thus ends another psalm where he has described the awesome waves of the sea: "Thy testimonies have been verified, the beauty and holiness of thy temple shall endure forevermore" [^{<199305>}Psalm 93:5 p.]. ^cHence, also, arises that which Christ said to the Samaritan woman, that her people and all other peoples worshiped they knew not what; that the Jews alone offered worship to the true God [^{<430422>}John 4:22]. For, since the human mind because of its feebleness can in no way attain to God unless it be aided and assisted by his Sacred Word, all mortals at that time — except for the Jews — because they were seeking God without the Word, had of necessity to stagger about in vanity and error.

CHAPTER 7.

SCRIPTURE MUST BE CONFIRMED BY THE
WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT. THUS MAY ITS
AUTHORITY ^{F261} BE ESTABLISHED AS CERTAIN;

*And It Is a Wicked Falsehood that Its Credibility Depends on the
Judgment of the Church*

1. SCRIPTURE HAS ITS AUTHORITY FROM GOD, NOT FROM THE CHURCH

^eBefore I go any farther, it is worth-while to say something about the authority of Scripture, ^{f262} not only to prepare our hearts to reverence it, but to banish all doubt, ^bWhen that which is set forth is acknowledged to be the Word of God, there is no one so deplorably insolent — unless devoid also both of common sense and of humanity itself — as to dare impugn the credibility of Him who speaks. Now daily oracles are not sent from heaven, for it pleased the Lord to hallow his truth to everlasting remembrance in the Scriptures alone [cf. ^{<430539>} John 5:39]. ^{e(b)}Hence the Scriptures obtain full authority among believers only when men regard them as having sprung from heaven, ^bas if there the living words of God were heard. This matter is very well worth treating more fully and weighing more carefully. But my readers will pardon me if I regard more what the plan of the present work demands than what the greatness of this matter requires.

But a most pernicious error widely prevails that Scripture has only so much weight as is conceded to it by the consent of the church. As if the eternal and inviolable truth of God depended upon the decision of men! For they mock the Holy Spirit when they ask: Who can convince us that these writings came from God? Who can assure us that Scripture has come down whole and intact even to our very day? Who can persuade us to receive one book in reverence but to exclude another, unless the church prescribe a sure rule for all these matters? What reverence is due Scripture

and what books ought to be reckoned within its canon depend, they say, upon the determination of the church.^{f263} Thus these sacrilegious men, wishing to impose an unbridled tyranny under the cover of the church, do not care with what absurdities they ensnare themselves and others, provided they can force this one idea upon the simple-minded: that the church has authority in all things. Yet, if this is so, what will happen to miserable consciences seeking firm assurance of eternal life if all promises of it consist in and depend solely upon the judgment of men? Will they cease to vacillate and tremble when they receive such an answer? Again, to what mockeries of the impious is our faith subjected, into what suspicion has it fallen among all men, if we believe that it has a precarious authority dependent solely upon the good pleasure of men!

2. THE CHURCH IS ITSELF GROUNDED UPON SCRIPTURE

^bBut such wranglers are neatly refuted by just one word of the apostle. He testifies that the church is “built upon the foundation of the prophets and apostles” [^{<490220>}Ephesians 2:20]. If the teaching of the prophets and apostles is the foundation, this must have had authority before the church began to exist. Groundless, too, is their subtle objection that, although the church took its beginning here, the writings to be attributed to the prophets and apostles nevertheless remain in doubt until decided by the church. For if the Christian church was from the beginning founded upon the writings of the prophets and the preaching of the apostles, wherever this doctrine is found, the acceptance of it — without which the church itself would never have existed — must certainly have preceded the church.^{f264} It is utterly vain, then, to pretend that the power of judging Scripture so lies with the church that its certainty depends upon churchly assent. Thus, while the church receives and gives its seal of approval to the Scriptures, it does not thereby render authentic what is otherwise doubtful or controversial. But because the church recognizes Scripture to be the truth of its own God, as a pious duty it unhesitatingly venerates Scripture. As to their question — How can we be assured that this has sprung from God unless we have recourse to the decree of the church? — it is as if someone asked: Whence will we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter? Indeed, Scripture exhibits fully as clear evidence of its own truth^{f265} as white and black things do of their color, or sweet and bitter things do of their taste.

3. AUGUSTINE CANNOT BE CITED AS COUNTEREVIDENCE

^d Indeed, I know that statement of Augustine is commonly referred to, that he would not believe the gospel if the authority of the church did not move him to do so. ^{f266} But it is easy to grasp from the context how wrongly and deceptively they interpret this passage. Augustine was there concerned with the Manichees, who wished to be believed without controversy when they claimed, but did not demonstrate, that they themselves possessed the truth. Because in fact they used the gospel as a cloak to promote faith in their Mani, Augustine asks: “What would they do if they were to light upon a man who does not even believe in the gospel? By what kind of persuasion would they bring him around to their opinion?” Then he adds, “Indeed, I would not believe the gospel,” etc., meaning that if he were alien to the faith, he could not be led to embrace the gospel as the certain truth of God unless constrained by the authority of the church. And what wonder if someone, not yet having known Christ, should have respect for men! Augustine is not, therefore, teaching that the faith of godly men is founded on the authority of the church; nor does he hold the view that the certainty of the gospel depends upon it. He is simply teaching that there would be no certainty of the gospel for unbelievers to win them to Christ if the consensus of the church did not impel them. And this he clearly confirms a little later, saying: “When I praise what I believe, and laugh at what you believe, how do you think we are to judge, or what are we to do? Should we not forsake those who invite us to a knowledge of things certain and then bid us believe things uncertain? Must we follow those who invite us first to believe what we are not yet strong enough to see, that, strengthened by this very faith, we may become worthy to comprehend what we believe [^{<S10104>}Colossians 1:4-11, 23] — with God himself, not men, now inwardly strengthening and illumining our mind?” ^{f267}

These are Augustine’s very words. From them it is easy for anyone to infer that the holy man’s intention was not to make the faith that we hold in the Scriptures depend upon the assent or judgment of the church. He only meant to indicate what we also confess as true: those who have not yet been illumined by the Spirit of God are rendered teachable by reverence for the church, so that they may persevere in learning faith in Christ from the gospel. Thus, he avers, the authority of the church is an introduction through which we are prepared for faith in the gospel. For, as

we see, he wants the certainty of the godly to rest upon a far different foundation. I do not deny that elsewhere, when he wishes to defend Scripture, which they repudiate, he often presses the Manichees with the consensus of the whole church. Hence, he reproaches Faustus ^{f268} for not submitting to the gospel truth—so firm, so stable, celebrated with such glory, and handed down from the time of the apostles through a sure succession. But it never occurs to him to teach that the authority which we ascribe to Scripture depends upon the definition or decree of men. He puts forward only the universal judgment of the church, in which he was superior to his adversaries, because of its very great value in this case. If anyone desires a fuller proof of this, let him read Augustine's little book *The Usefulness of Belief*. ^{f269} There he will find that the author recommends no other inducement to believe except what may provide us with an approach and be a suitable beginning for inquiry, as he himself says; yet we should not acquiesce in mere opinion, but should rely on sure and firm truth.

4. THE WITNESS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT: THIS IS STRONGER THAN ALL PROOF

^eWe ought to remember what I said a bit ago: ^{f270} credibility of doctrine is not established until we are persuaded beyond doubt that God is its Author. ^{f271} Thus, the highest proof of Scripture derives in general from the fact that God in person speaks in it. The prophets and apostles do not boast either of their keenness or of anything that obtains credit for them as they speak; nor do they dwell upon rational proofs. Rather, they bring forward God's holy name, that by it the whole world may be brought into obedience to him. Now we ought to see how apparent it is not only by plausible opinion but by clear truth that they do not call upon God's name heedlessly or falsely. ^bIf we desire to provide in the best way for our consciences — that they may not be perpetually beset by the instability of doubt or vacillation, and that they may not also boggle at the smallest quibbles — we ought to seek our conviction in a higher place than human reasons, judgments, or conjectures, that is, in the secret testimony of the Spirit. ^{f272 e}True, if we wished to proceed by arguments, we might advance many things that would easily prove — if there is any god in heaven — that the law, the prophets, and the gospel come from him. Indeed, ever so learned men, endowed with the highest judgment, rise up in opposition

and bring to bear and display all their mental powers in this debate. Yet, unless they become hardened to the point of hopeless impudence, this confession will be wrested from them: that they see manifest signs of God speaking in Scripture. From this it is clear that the teaching of Scripture is from heaven. And a little later we shall see that all the books of Sacred Scripture far surpass all other writings. Yes, if we turn pure eyes and upright senses toward it, the majesty of God will immediately come to view, subdue our bold rejection, and compel us to obey.

Yet they who strive to build up firm faith in Scripture through disputation are doing things backwards.^{f273} For my part, although I do not excel either in great dexterity or eloquence, if I were struggling against the most crafty sort of despisers of God, who seek to appear shrewd and witty in disparaging Scripture, I am confident it would not be difficult for me to silence their clamorous voices. And if it were a useful labor to refute their cavils, I would with no great trouble shatter the boasts they mutter in their lurking places. But even if anyone clears God's Sacred Word from man's evil speaking, he will not at once imprint upon their hearts that certainty which piety requires. Since for unbelieving men religion seems to stand by opinion alone, they, in order not to believe anything foolishly or lightly, both wish and demand rational proof that Moses and the prophets spoke divinely.^{f274} But I reply: the testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word,^{f275} so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded. Isaiah very aptly expresses this connection in these words: "My Spirit which is in you, and the words that I have put in your mouth, and the mouths of your offspring, shall never fail" [^{<235921>}Isaiah 59:21 p.]. Some good folk are annoyed that a clear proof is not ready at hand when the impious, unpunished, murmur against God's Word. As if the Spirit were not called both "seal" and "guarantee" [^{<470122>}2 Corinthians 1:22] for confirming the faith of the godly; because until he illumines their minds, they ever waver among many doubts!

5. SCRIPTURE BEARS ITS OWN AUTHENTICATION

^cLet this point therefore stand: that those whom the Holy Spirit has inwardly taught truly rest upon Scripture, and that Scripture indeed is self-authenticated;^{f276} hence, it is not right to subject it to proof and reasoning. And the certainty it deserves with us, it attains by the testimony of the Spirit.^{f277} ^bFor even if it wins reverence for itself by its own majesty, it seriously affects us only when it is sealed upon our hearts through the Spirit. Therefore, illumined by his power, we believe neither by our own nor by anyone else's judgment that Scripture is from God; but above human judgment we affirm with utter certainty (just as if we were gazing upon the majesty of God himself) that it has flowed to us from the very mouth of God by the ministry of men. We seek no proofs, no marks of genuineness upon which our judgment may lean; but we subject our judgment and wit to it as to a thing far beyond any guesswork! This we do, not as persons accustomed to seize upon some unknown thing, which, under closer scrutiny, displeases them, but fully conscious that we hold the unassailable truth! Nor do we do this as those miserable men who habitually bind over their minds to the thralldom of superstition; but we feel that the undoubted power of his divine majesty lives and breathes there. By this power we are drawn and inflamed, knowingly and willingly, to obey him, yet also more vitally and more effectively than by mere human willing or knowing!

^eGod, therefore, very rightly proclaims through Isaiah that the prophets together with the whole people are witnesses to him; for they, instructed by prophecies, unhesitatingly held that God has spoken without deceit or ambiguity [^{<234310>}Isaiah 43:10]. ^bSuch, then, is a conviction that requires no reasons; such, a knowledge with which the best reason agrees — in which the mind truly reposes more securely and constantly than in any reasons; such, finally, a feeling that can be born only of heavenly revelation. I speak of nothing other than what each believer experiences within himself — though my words fall far beneath a just explanation of the matter.

^dI now refrain from saying more, since I shall have opportunity to discuss this matter elsewhere.^{f278} Let us, then, know that the only true faith is that which the Spirit of God seals in our hearts. ^eIndeed, the modest and teachable reader will be content with this one reason: Isaiah promised all the children of the renewed church that “they would be God’s disciples”

[^{<235413>}Isaiah 54:13 p.]. God deems worthy of singular privilege only his elect, whom he distinguishes from the human race as a whole. Indeed, what is the beginning of true doctrine but a prompt eagerness to hearken to God's voice? But God asks to be heard through the mouth of Moses, as it is written: "Say not in your heart, who will ascend into heaven, or who will descend into the abyss: behold, the word is in your mouth" [conflation of ^{<053012>}Deuteronomy 30:12, 14 and ^{<19A726>}Psalms 107:26; 106:26, Vg.]. If God has willed this treasure of understanding to be hidden from his children, it is no wonder or absurdity that the multitude of men are so ignorant and stupid! Among the "multitude" I include even certain distinguished folk, until they become engrafted into the body of the church. Besides, Isaiah, warning that the prophetic teaching would be beyond belief, not only to foreigners but also to the Jews who wanted to be reckoned as members of the Lord's household, at the same time adds the reason: "The arm of God will not be revealed" to all [^{<235301>}Isaiah 53:1 p.]. Whenever, then, the fewness of believers disturbs us, let the converse come to mind, that only those to whom it is given can comprehend the mysteries of God [cf. ^{<401311>}Matthew 13:11].

CHAPTER 8.

SO FAR AS HUMAN REASON GOES, SUFFICIENTLY FIRM PROOFS ARE AT HAND TO ESTABLISH THE CREDIBILITY OF SCRIPTURE

*(The unique majesty and impressiveness, and the high antiquity
of Scripture, 1-4)*

1. SCRIPTURE IS SUPERIOR TO ALL HUMAN WISDOM

^bUnless this certainty, higher and stronger than any human judgment, be present, it will be vain to fortify the authority of Scripture by arguments, to establish it by common agreement of the church, or to confirm it with other helps. For unless this foundation is laid, its authority will always remain in doubt. Conversely, once we have embraced it devoutly as its dignity deserves, and have recognized it to be above the common sort of things, those arguments — not strong enough before to engraft and fix the certainty of Scripture in our minds — become very useful aids. What wonderful confirmation ensues when, with keener study, we ponder the economy of the divine wisdom, so well ordered and disposed; the completely heavenly character of its doctrine, savoring of nothing earthly; the beautiful agreement of all the parts with one another — as well as such other qualities as can gain majesty for the writings. But our hearts are more firmly grounded when we reflect that we are captivated with admiration for Scripture more by grandeur of subjects than by grace of language. For it was also not without God's extraordinary providence that the sublime mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven came to be expressed largely in mean and lowly words, lest, if they had been adorned with more shining eloquence, the impious would scoffingly have claimed that its power is in the realm of eloquence alone. Now since such uncultivated and almost rude simplicity inspires greater reverence for itself than any eloquence, what ought one to conclude except that the force of the truth of Sacred Scripture is manifestly too powerful to need the art of words? Therefore the apostle rightly contends that the faith of the Corinthians was founded “upon

God's power, not upon human wisdom" [^{<460205>}1 Corinthians 2:5 p.] because his own preaching among them commended itself "not in persuasive words of human wisdom but in demonstration of the Spirit and of might" [ch. 2:4 p.]. For truth is cleared of all doubt when, not sustained by external props, it serves as its own support.

Now this power which is peculiar to Scripture is clear from the fact that of human writings, however artfully polished, there is none capable of affecting us at all comparably. Read Demosthenes or Cicero; read Plato, Aristotle, and others of that tribe. They will, I admit, allure you, delight you, move you, enrapture you in wonderful measure. But betake yourself from them to this sacred reading. Then, in spite of yourself, so deeply will it affect you, so penetrate your heart, so fix itself in your very marrow, that, compared with its deep impression, such vigor as the orators and philosophers have will nearly vanish. Consequently, it is easy to see that the Sacred Scriptures, which so far surpass all gifts and graces of human endeavor, breathe something divine.^{f279}

2. NOT STYLE BUT CONTENT IS DECISIVE

^eIndeed, I admit that some of the prophets had an elegant and clear, even brilliant, manner of speaking, so that their eloquence yields nothing to secular writers,^{f280} and by such examples the Holy Spirit wished to show that he did not lack eloquence while he elsewhere used a rude and unrefined style. But whether you read David, Isaiah, and the like, whose speech flows sweet and pleasing, or Amos the herdsman, Jeremiah, and Zechariah, whose harsher style savors of rusticity, that majesty of the Spirit of which I have spoken will be evident everywhere. And I am not unaware that Satan is in many ways an imitator of God, in order by a false likeness to insinuate himself into the minds of simple folk. He has thus cleverly sowed, by uncultivated and even barbarous language, impious errors and by them has deceived miserable men. He has often made use of obsolete forms of speech, that under this mask he may cloak his impostures.^{f281} But all men endowed with moderate sense see how empty and loathsome is this affectation. As far as Sacred Scripture is concerned, however much forward men try to gnaw at it, nevertheless it clearly is crammed with thoughts that could not be humanly conceived. Let each of the prophets be looked into: none will be found who does not far exceed

human measure. Consequently, those for whom prophetic doctrine is tasteless ought to be thought of as lacking taste buds.

3. THE GREAT ANTIQUITY OF SCRIPTURE

^dOthers have dealt with this argument at length; it will therefore be enough to select for the present only a few main details that summarize the whole matter. Besides those points which I have already touched upon, the very antiquity of Scripture has no slight weight. For however much Greek writers may talk about the Egyptian theology, no monument of any religion is extant that is not far later than the age of Moses.^{f282} And Moses devised no new god, but rather set forth what the Israelites had accepted concerning the eternal God handed down by the patriarchs age after age. For what else does he do but call them back to the covenant begun with Abraham [^{<011707>}Genesis 17:7]? Had he, however, brought forward something unheard of, it would not have been approved. But their liberation from the slavery in which they were held must have been a matter of such common knowledge that the very mention of it would immediately arouse the minds of all. Indeed, it is likely that they had been taught concerning the four-hundred-year period [^{<011513>}Genesis 15:13; ^{<021240>}Exodus 12:40; ^{<480317>}Galatians 3:17]. Now, if Moses (who nevertheless is so much earlier in time than all other writers) traced the transmission of his doctrine back to such a remote source, we must ponder how much Sacred Scripture outstrips all other writings in antiquity.

4. THE TRUTHFULNESS OF SCRIPTURE SHOWN BY MOSES' EXAMPLE

^eUnless, perhaps, one chooses to believe the Egyptians, who extend their antiquity to six thousand years before the creation of the world! But since their garrulity was always held in derision, even by every secular writer, there is no reason for me to toil in refuting it. Moreover, Josephus cites, in his *Against Apion*, testimonies out of very ancient writers worth recalling, from which one may conclude that by the agreement of all nations the doctrine set forth in the law was renowned from the remotest ages, even though it was neither read nor truly known.^{f283}

Now to prevent any suspicion from persisting among the malicious, and to remove any occasion for the wicked to quibble, God meets both dangers

with the best of remedies. While Moses recalls what Jacob almost three hundred years before had declared under heavenly inspiration concerning his posterity, does he in any way ennoble his tribe? No — he brands it with eternal infamy in the person of Levi! “Simeon and Levi,” says he, “are vessels of iniquity: may my soul not enter into their counsel, nor my tongue into their secret place.” [^{<014905>}Genesis 49:5-6 p.] Surely he could have remained silent about that shame, not only to spare his father, but also not to besmirch himself and his whole family with part of the same ignominy. How could Moses be suspected, who first preached to the family from which he had sprung that their progenitor was utterly detestable to the oracle of the Holy Spirit, and who did not think of his own personal interests or refuse to suffer the odium of his relations for whom this was doubtless an annoyance? Also, when he recalls the wicked murmuring of his brother Aaron and his sister Miriam [^{<041201>}Numbers 12:1], shall we say that he speaks from the feeling of his flesh, or that he is obedient to the command of the Holy Spirit? Moreover, since his was the highest authority, why did he not at least leave the right of the high priest to his sons, but instead relegate them to the lowest place? I select only a few instances out of many; but in the law itself, here and there, we will meet many proofs that vindicate the full assurance that Moses undoubtedly came forth like an angel of God from heaven.

(Refutation of objections regarding miracles and prophecy, 5-10)

5. MIRACLES STRENGTHEN THE AUTHORITY OF GOD’S MESSENGERS

^dNow these very numerous and remarkable miracles which he relates are so many confirmations of the law that he has delivered, and of the doctrine that he has published. For — that he was borne up into the mountain in a cloud; that there he was without human fellowship for forty days [^{<022418>}Exodus 24:18]; that in the very promulgation of the law his face shone like the rays of the sun [^{<023429>}Exodus 34:29]; that lightnings flashed round about, thunders and crashes were heard throughout the heavens, and a trumpet blown by no human mouth resounded [^{<021916>}Exodus 19:16]; that the entrance to the Tabernacle, covered by a cloud, was hidden from the people’s view [^{<024034>}Exodus 40:34]; that by the dreadful death of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, and their whole wicked faction, ^{f284}his authority was

most marvelously vindicated [^{<041624>}Numbers 16:24]; that the rock struck by his rod straightway brought forth a river [^{<042010>}Numbers 20:10-11; ^{<021706>}Exodus 17:6; cf. ^{<461004>}1 Corinthians 10:4]; that manna rained from heaven at his prayer [^{<041109>}Numbers 11:9; ^{<021613>}Exodus 16:13; cf. ^{<461003>}1 Corinthians 10:3] —by these was not God, from heaven, commending Moses as his undoubted prophet? If anyone should object that I am taking as fact what is controversial, this subtle objection is easy to answer. Inasmuch as Moses published all these things before the congregation, among eyewitnesses of the events what opportunity was there for fraud? Moses would, of course, have appeared before the people, rebuked them for their unfaithfulness, obstinacy, ungratefulness, and other offenses, and then would have boasted that under their very eyes his doctrine had been authenticated by miracles that they had never seen!

6. MOSES' MIRACLES ARE INCONTESTABLE

^cFor this is also worth noting: every time he tells of miracles, at the same time there are disagreeably conjoined things that could stir up the whole people to contradict loudly if the slightest occasion had presented itself. From this it is clear that they have been led to assent solely because they were quite enough convinced by their own experience. But since the matter was too manifest for secular writers to be free to deny that Moses performed miracles, the father of lies slanderously attributed them to magic arts [cf. ^{<020711>}Exodus 7:11 or 9:11]. Moses shrank so much from this superstition as to order that anyone who merely consulted magicians and soothsayers should be stoned to death [^{<032006>}Leviticus 20:6]. By what conjecture then do they make him out to have been a magician? Surely any impostor plies his legerdemain in an effort to overwhelm the minds of the multitude to snatch renown. But what about Moses? Proclaiming that he and his brother Aaron are nothing but only following what God has laid down [^{<021607>}Exodus 16:7], he sufficiently wipes away every mark of reproach. Now if the events themselves be considered, what sort of incantation could cause manna daily raining from heaven to provide sufficient food for the people: if anyone had more than his due measure stored up, to teach him from its very putrefaction that his unbelief was divinely punished [^{<021619>}Exodus 16:19-20]? Besides, God allows his servant so to be tested by many severe proofs that the wicked may now have no success in clamoring against him. Sometimes the whole people

rose up in their pride and insolence; sometimes certain ones among them conspired in an attempt to overthrow God's holy servant. How, then, could Moses by legerdemain have escaped this fury of theirs? And the outcome plainly bears out that in this way his doctrine was sanctioned for all time.

7. PROPHECIES THAT ARE FULFILLED CONTRARY TO ALL HUMAN EXPECTATION

^dIn addition, who can deny that the prophetic spirit, in the person of the patriarch Jacob, caused the primacy to be assigned to the tribe of Judah [^{<014910>}Genesis 49:10] — especially if we take the act itself into account, as its outcome has proved? Picture Moses as the first author of this prophecy. Yet from the time that this writing was recorded, four hundred years passed during which there was no mention of a scepter in the tribe of Judah. After the consecration of Saul [^{<091115>}1 Samuel 11:15], the royal power seems to have resided in the tribe of Benjamin. When David was anointed by Samuel [^{<091613>}1 Samuel 16:13], what visible reason was there for the transference of the kingly power? Who would have anticipated that a king was to come forth from the lowly house of a herdsman? And since there were seven brothers in the family, who would have marked the youngest for the honor? How could he have any hope of the Kingdom? Who would say that his anointing had been determined by human art or effort or prudence, and was not rather the fulfillment of heavenly prophecy? Similarly, Moses foretells things, albeit obscurely, concerning the election of the Gentiles into God's covenant [^{<014910>}Genesis 49:10], which actually took place almost two thousand years later. Is this not plain proof that he spoke by divine inspiration? I omit other predictions, which so clearly breathe the divine revelation as to convince sane men that it is God who speaks. In brief, Moses' one song [^{<053201>}Deuteronomy 32] is a bright mirror in which God is manifest.

8. GOD HAS CONFIRMED THE PROPHETIC WORDS

^dBut in the remaining prophets it is now discerned even more clearly. I will select only a few examples, for to gather all of them together would be too toilsome. Although in the time of Isaiah the Kingdom of Judah was at peace, and perhaps even regarded itself as somewhat under the Chaldeans'

protection, Isaiah spoke publicly of the fall of the city and the exile of the people [^{<233906>}Isaiah 39:6-7]. Let us grant that to predict, long before, what at the time seemed incredible but at last actually came to pass was not yet a clear enough token of divine inspiration. Yet from what source but God shall we say have come those prophecies which Isaiah at the same time utters concerning release? He names Cyrus [^{<234501>}Isaiah 45:1] through whom the Chaldeans had to be conquered and the people set free. More than a hundred years elapsed from the time the prophet so prophesied and the time Cyrus was born; ^{&285} for the latter was born about a hundred years after the prophet's death. No one could have divined then that there was to be a man named Cyrus who would wage war with the Babylonians, would subdue such a powerful monarchy, and terminate the exile of the people of Israel. Does not this bare narrative, without any verbal embellishment, plainly show the things Isaiah recounts to be undoubted oracles of God, not the conjectures of a man? Again, when Jeremiah, some time before the people were led away into exile, set the duration of the captivity at seventy years and indicated the return and liberation [^{<242511>}Jeremiah 25:11-12; 29:10], must not his tongue have been under the guidance of the Spirit of God? How shameless will it be to say that the authority of the prophets has not been confirmed by such proofs, and that what they boast, to claim credibility for their own words, has not so far been fulfilled! "Behold, the former things have come to pass...new things I declare; before they spring forth I point them out to you." [^{<234209>}Isaiah 42:9, Comm.] I pass over the fact that Jeremiah and Ezekiel, far apart yet prophesying at the same time, in all their statements commonly agreed as if each had dictated the other's words. What of Daniel? Did he not so clothe his prophecies of future events almost to the six hundredth year as if he were writing a history of past events generally known? If godly men take these things to heart, they will be abundantly equipped to restrain the barking of ungodly men; for this is a proof too clear to be open to any subtle objections.

9. THE TRANSMISSION OF THE LAW IS TO BE TRUSTED

^dI know what certain rascals bawl out in corners in order to display the keenness of their wit in assailing God's truth. For they ask, Who assures us that the books that we read under the names of Moses and the prophets were written by them? ^{&286} They even dare question whether there

ever was a Moses. Yet if anyone were to call in doubt whether there ever was a Plato, an Aristotle, or a Cicero, who would not say that such folly ought to be chastised with the fist or the lash? The law of Moses was wonderfully preserved by heavenly providence rather than by human effort. And although by priests' negligence the law lay buried for a short time, after godly King Josiah found it [^{<122208>}2 Kings 22:8; cf. ^{<143415>}2 Chronicles 34:15], it continued to be read age after age.^{f287} Indeed, Josiah did not put it forward as something unknown or new, but as something that had always been of common knowledge, the memory of which was then famous. The archetypal roll was committed to the Temple; a copy was made from it and designated for the royal archives [^{<051718>}Deuteronomy 17:18-19]. What had happened was merely this: the priests had ceased to publish the law itself according to the solemn custom, and the people themselves also had neglected the habit of reading it. Why is it that almost no age goes by in which its sanction is not confirmed and renewed? Was Moses unknown to those who were versed in David? But, to generalize concerning all sacred authors, it is absolutely certain that their writings passed down to posterity in but one way: from hand to hand. Some had heard their actual words; others learned that they had so spoken from hearers whose memories were still fresh.

10. GOD HAS MARVELOUSLY PRESERVED THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

^aIndeed, the passage in the history of the Maccabees that they put forth in order to detract from the authenticity of Scripture is such that nothing more appropriate could be thought of to establish it. Yet first let us wipe away their pretenses; then we shall turn back upon them the siege engine they are erecting against us. Since Antiochus (they say) ordered all books to be burned [1 Maccabees 1:56-57], where did the copies that we now have come from?^{f288} But I, in turn, ask, In what workshop could they have been fabricated so quickly? For it is well known that directly after the persecutions had ceased, the books were extant, and were acknowledged without controversy by all the godly, who were brought up on their doctrine and knew them intimately. But even though all wicked men, as if conspiring together, have so shamelessly insulted the Jews, no one has ever dared charge them with substituting false books. For whatever, in their opinion, the Jewish religion may be, they confess Moses to be its

author. What but their own more than canine shamelessness do these babblers betray when they utter the lie that these books (whose sacred antiquity is confirmed by the agreement of all histories) are spurious? But not to expend further effort uselessly in refuting such filthy calumnies, let us rather ponder here how much care the Lord has taken to preserve his Word, when, contrary to everybody's expectation, he snatched it away from a most cruel and savage tyrant, as from a raging fire. Let us consider how he armed godly priests and others with so great constancy that they did not hesitate to transmit to their posterity this treasure redeemed, if necessary, at the expense of their own lives; and how he frustrated the whole fierce book hunt of rulers and their minions. Who does not recognize as a remarkable and wonderful work of God the fact that those sacred monuments, which the wicked had persuaded themselves had utterly perished, soon returned and took their former place once more, and even with enhanced dignity? For the Greek translation followed, which published them abroad throughout the world. ^{f289}

The miracle appeared not only in that God delivered the Tables of his covenant from the bloody edicts of Antiochus, but also in that the Jewish people, ground down and wasted by such manifold misfortunes, were soon almost exterminated, yet the writings remained safe and intact. The Hebrew language lay not only unesteemed, but almost unknown; and to be sure, if God had not been pleased to care for their religion, it would have perished completely, ^eFor after the Jews were brought back from exile, how much they departed from the true use of the mother tongue appears from the prophets of that age, a fact worth noting because from this comparison one more clearly perceives the antiquity of the Law and the Prophets. ^dAnd through whom did God preserve for us the doctrine of salvation embraced in the Law and the Prophets, that Christ in his own time might be made manifest [^{<402237>}Matthew 22:37-40]? Through the Jews, Christ's most violent enemies, whom Augustine justly calls the "bookmen" of the Christian church, ^{f290} because they have furnished us with reading matter of which they themselves do not make use.

*(Simplicity and heavenly character and authority
of the New Testament, 2)*

^eNext, if one comes to the New Testament, with what solid props its truth is supported! Three Evangelists recount their history in a humble and

lowly style; for many proud folk this simplicity ^{f291} arouses contempt. This is because they do not pay attention to the chief divisions of doctrine from which it would be easy to infer that the Evangelists are discussing heavenly mysteries above human capacity. Surely all who are endowed with a drop of sincere modesty, on reading the first chapter of Luke, will be made ashamed. Now Christ's discourses, briefly summarized by those three Evangelists, readily clear their writings of all contempt. But John, thundering from the heights, lays low more mightily than any thunderbolt the obstinacy of those whom he does not impel to the obedience of faith. Let all those sharp-nosed faultfinders — whose highest desire is to drive the reverence for Scripture from their own and others' hearts — come into the open. Let them read John's Gospel: whether they want to or not, there they shall find a thousand sayings to arouse, at least, their dull minds — nay, I should rather say, to burn a dreadful brand upon their consciences for the restraint of their mockery. The same thing applies to Paul and Peter. Although most men are blind to their writings, yet the very heavenly majesty therein holds all men closely attached and as it were bound to itself. ^{f292} But this one fact raises their doctrine more than enough above the world: Matthew, previously tied to the gain of his table, Peter and John going about in their boats — all of them rude, uneducated men — had learned nothing in the school of men that they could pass on to others. Paul, not only a sworn but fierce and murderous enemy, was converted into a new man; this sudden and unhopèd-for change shows that he was compelled by heavenly authority to affirm a doctrine that he had assailed. Let these dogs deny that the Holy Spirit came down upon the apostles; or even let them discredit history. Yet the truth cries out openly that these men who, previously contemptible among common folk, suddenly began to discourse so gloriously of the heavenly mysteries must have been instructed by the Spirit.

12. (Consent of the church, and fidelity of the martyrs, 12-13)

**12. UNVARYING TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH
TO THE SCRIPTURE***

^{d(b)}Besides this, there are other very good reasons why the consent of the church should not be denied its due weight, ^bSince the publication of Scripture, age after age agreed to obey it steadfastly and harmoniously. By

countless wondrous means Satan with the whole world has tried either to oppress it or overturn it, to obscure and obliterate it utterly from the memory of men — yet, like the palm, it has risen ever higher and has remained unassailable. Indeed, there has scarcely ever been either a sophist or rhetorician of superior ability who did not try his power against it; yet all were unsuccessful. Such facts as these should be accounted of no slight importance. The whole power of earth has armed itself to destroy it, yet all these efforts have gone up in smoke. How could it, assailed so strongly from every side, have resisted if it had relied upon human protection alone? Rather, by this very fact it is proved to be from God, because, with all human efforts striving against it, still it has of its own power thus far prevailed. Besides this, it is not one state, not one people, that has agreed to receive and embrace it; but, as far and as wide as the earth extends, it has obtained its authority by the holy concord of divers peoples, who otherwise had nothing in common among themselves. Such agreement of minds, so disparate and otherwise disagreeing in everything among themselves, ought to move us greatly, since it is clear that this agreement is brought about by nothing else than the divine will. Yet no little weight is added thereto when we observe the godliness of those who so agree, not of all, indeed, but of those whom the Lord has made to shine as lamps in his church.

13. MARTYRS DIED FIRMLY FOR SCRIPTURE DOCTRINE*

^bNow with what assurance ought we to enlist under that doctrine which we see confirmed and attested by the blood of so many holy men! They, having once received it, did not hesitate, courageously and intrepidly, and even with great eagerness, to suffer death for it. Should we not accept with sure and unshaken conviction what has been handed on to us with such a pledge? It is no moderate approbation of Scripture that it has been sealed by the blood of so many witnesses, especially when we reflect that they died to render testimony to the faith; not with fanatic excess (as erring spirits are sometimes accustomed to do), but with a firm and constant, yet sober, zeal toward God.

^bThere are other reasons, neither few nor weak, for which the dignity and majesty of Scripture are not only affirmed in godly hearts, but brilliantly vindicated against the wiles of its disparagers; yet of themselves these are

not strong enough to provide a firm faith, until our Heavenly Father, revealing his majesty there, lifts reverence for Scripture beyond the realm of controversy. Therefore Scripture will ultimately suffice for a saving knowledge of God only when its certainty is founded upon the inward persuasion of the Holy Spirit. Indeed, these human testimonies which exist to confirm it will not be vain if, as secondary aids to our feebleness, they follow that chief and highest testimony. ^dBut those who wish to prove to unbelievers that Scripture is the Word of God are acting foolishly, for only by faith can this be known. Augustine therefore justly warns that godliness and peace of mind ought to come first if a man is to understand anything of such great matters. ^{f293}

CHAPTER 9.

FANATICS, ABANDONING SCRIPTURE AND FLYING OVER TO REVELATION, CAST DOWN ALL THE PRINCIPLES OF GODLINESS

1. THE FANATICS WRONGLY APPEAL TO THE HOLY SPIRIT

^bFurthermore, those who, having forsaken Scripture, imagine some way or other of reaching God, ought to be thought of as not so much gripped by error as carried away with frenzy. For of late, certain giddy men have arisen who, with great haughtiness exalting the teaching office of the Spirit, despise all reading and laugh at the simplicity of those who, as they express it, still follow the dead and killing letter.^{f294} But I should like to know from them what this spirit is by whose inspiration they are borne up so high that they dare despise the Scriptural doctrine as childish and mean. For if they answer that it is the Spirit of Christ, such assurance is utterly ridiculous. Indeed, they will, I think, agree that the apostles of Christ and other believers of the primitive church were illumined by no other Spirit. Yet no one of them thence learned contempt for God's Word; rather, each was imbued with greater reverence as their writings most splendidly attest, ^eAnd indeed it had thus been foretold through the mouth of Isaiah. For where he says, "My Spirit which is in you, and the words that I have put in your mouth, will not depart from your mouth, nor from the mouth of your seed...forever" [^{<235921>}Isaiah 59:21 p., cf. Vg.], he does not bind the ancient folk to outward doctrine as if they were learning their ABC's; rather, he teaches that under the reign of Christ the new church will have this true and complete happiness: to be ruled no less by the voice of God than by the Spirit. Hence we conclude that by a heinous sacrilege these rascals tear apart those things which the prophet joined together with an inviolable bond. Besides this, Paul, "caught up even to the third heaven" [^{<471202>}2 Corinthians 12:2], yet did not fail to become proficient in the doctrine of the Law and the Prophets, just as also he urges Timothy, a teacher of singular excellence, to give heed to reading

[^{<540413>}1 Timothy 4:13]. And worth remembering is that praise with which he adorns Scripture, that it “is useful for teaching, admonishing, and reproving in order that the servants of God may be made perfect” [^{<550316>}2 Timothy 3:16-17 p.]. What devilish madness is it to pretend that the use of Scripture, which leads the children of God even to the final goal, is fleeting or temporal?

^bThen, too, I should like them to answer me whether they have drunk of another spirit than that which the Lord promised his disciples. Even if they are completely demented, yet I do not think that they have been seized with such great dizziness as to make this boast. But in promising it, of what sort did he declare his Spirit would be? One that would speak not from himself but would suggest to and instill into their minds what he had handed on through the Word [^{<431613>}John 16:13]. Therefore the Spirit, promised to us, has not the task of inventing new and unheard-of revelations, or of forging a new kind of doctrine, to lead us away from the received doctrine of the gospel, but of sealing our minds with that very doctrine which is commended by the gospel.

2. THE HOLY SPIRIT IS RECOGNIZED IN HIS AGREEMENT WITH SCRIPTURE

^bFrom this we readily understand that we ought zealously to apply ourselves both to read and to hearken to Scripture if indeed we want to receive any gain and benefit from the Spirit of God — ^eeven as Peter praises the zeal of those who were attentive to the prophetic teaching, which nevertheless could be seen to have given up its place after the light of the gospel dawned [^{<610119>}2 Peter 1:19]. ^bBut on the contrary, if any spirit, passing over the wisdom of God’s Word, foists another doctrine upon us, he justly deserves to be suspected of vanity and lying [^{<480106>}Galatians 1:6-9]. What then? Since “Satan disguises himself as an angel of light” ^{<471114>}[2 Corinthians 11:14], what authority will the Spirit have among us, unless he be discerned by a most certain mark? And he is very clearly pointed out to us by the voice of the Lord: except that these miserable folk willingly prefer to wander to their doom, while they seek the Spirit from themselves rather than from him. Yet, indeed, they contend that it is not worthy of the Spirit of God, to whom all things ought to be subject, himself to be subject to Scripture. As if, indeed, this were

ignominy for the Holy Spirit to be everywhere equal and in conformity with himself, to agree with himself in all things, and to vary in nothing! To be sure, if the Spirit were judged by the rule of men, or of angels, or of anything else, then one would have to regard him as degraded, or if you like, reduced to bondage; but when he is compared with himself, when he is considered in himself, who will on this account say that injustice is done him? Nevertheless, he is thus put to a test, I confess, but a test by which it pleased him to establish his majesty among us. He ought to be sufficient for us as soon as he penetrates into us. But lest under his sign the spirit of Satan should creep in, he would have us recognize him in his own image, which he has stamped upon the Scriptures. He is the Author of the Scriptures: he cannot vary and differ from himself. Hence he must ever remain just as he once revealed himself there. This is no affront to him, unless perchance we consider it honorable for him to decline or degenerate from himself.

3. WORD AND SPIRIT BELONG INSEPARABLY TOGETHER

^bThey censure us for insisting upon the letter that kills, ^{f295} but in this matter they pay the penalty for despising Scripture. For it is clear enough that Paul there [^{<470306>}2 Corinthians 3:6] contends against the false apostles, who indeed, in commending the law apart from Christ, were calling the people away from the benefits of the New Testament, in which the Lord covenants “to engrave his law in the inward parts of believers, and to write it in their hearts” [^{<243133>}Jeremiah 31:33 p.]. The letter, therefore, is dead, and the law of the Lord slays its readers where it both is cut off from Christ’s grace [^{<470306>}2 Corinthians 3:6] and, leaving the heart untouched, sounds in the ears alone. But if through the Spirit it is really branded upon hearts, if it shows forth Christ, ^{f296} it is the word of life [cf.

^{<500316>}Philippians 3:16] “converting souls giving wisdom to little ones,” etc. [^{<191808>}Psalms 18:8, Vg.; 19: 7, EV]. What is more, in the very same place the apostle calls his preaching “the ministration of the Spirit” [^{<470308>}2 Corinthians 3:8], meaning, doubtless, that the Holy Spirit so inheres in His truth, which He expresses in Scripture, that only when its proper reverence and dignity are given to the Word does the Holy Spirit show forth His power. And what has lately been said ^{f298}—that the Word itself is not quite certain for us unless it be confirmed

by the testimony of the Spirit — is not out of accord with these things. For by a kind of mutual bond the Lord has joined together the certainty of his Word and of his Spirit so that the perfect religion of the Word may abide in our minds when the Spirit, who causes us to contemplate God's face, shines; and that we in turn may embrace the Spirit with no fear of being deceived when we recognize him in his own image, namely, in the Word.

So indeed it is. God did not bring forth his Word among men for the sake of a momentary display, intending at the coming of his Spirit to abolish it. Rather, he sent down the same Spirit by whose power he had dispensed the Word, to complete his work by the efficacious confirmation of the Word.

In this manner Christ opened the minds of two of his disciples [^{<422427>}Luke 24:27, 45], not that they should cast away the Scriptures and become wise of themselves, but that they should know the Scriptures. Similarly Paul, while he urges the Thessalonians not to “quench the Spirit” [^{<520519>}1 Thessalonians 5:19-20], does not loftily catch them up to empty speculations without the Word, but immediately adds that prophecies are not to be despised. By this, no doubt, he intimates that the light of the Spirit is put out as soon as prophecies fall into contempt. What say these fanatics, swollen with pride,^{f298} who consider this the one excellent illumination when, carelessly forsaking and bidding farewell to God's Word, they, no less confidently than boldly, seize upon whatever they may have conceived while snoring? Certainly a far different sobriety befits the children of God, who just as they see themselves, without the Spirit of God, bereft of the whole light of truth, so are not unaware that the Word is the instrument by which the Lord dispenses the illumination of his Spirit to believers. For they know no other Spirit than him who dwelt and spoke in the apostles, and by whose oracles they are continually recalled to the hearing of the Word.

CHAPTER 10.

SCRIPTURE, TO CORRECT ALL SUPERSTITION,
HAS SET THE TRUE GOD ALONE OVER AGAINST
ALL THE GODS OF THE HEATHEN ^{F299}

1. THE SCRIPTURAL DOCTRINE OF GOD THE CREATOR

^bWe have taught that the knowledge of God, otherwise quite clearly set forth in the system of the universe ^{F300} and in all creatures, is nonetheless more intimately and also more vividly revealed in his Word. But now it is worth-while to ponder whether the Lord represents himself to us in Scripture as we previously saw him delineate himself in his works. This would indeed be a long matter, if anyone wished to pause and treat it more thoroughly. Yet I shall be content to have provided godly minds with a sort of index to what they should particularly look for in Scripture concerning God, and to direct their search to a sure goal. ^eI do not yet touch upon the special covenant by which he distinguished the race of Abraham from the rest of the nations [cf. ^{<011704>}Genesis 17:4]. For, even then in receiving by free adoption as sons those who were enemies, he showed himself to be their Redeemer. We, however, are still concerned with that knowledge which stops at the creation of the world, and does not mount up to Christ the Mediator. But even if it shall be worth-while a little later ^{F301} to cite certain passages from the New Testament, in which the power of God the Creator and of his providence in the preservation of the primal nature are proved, yet I wish to warn my readers what I now intend to do, lest they overleap the limits set for them. Finally, at present let it be enough to grasp how God, the Maker of heaven and earth, governs the universe founded by him. Indeed, both his fatherly goodness and his beneficently inclined will are repeatedly extolled; and examples of his severity are given, which show him to be the righteous avenger of evil deeds, especially where his forbearance toward the obstinate is of no effect.

2. THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD ACCORDING TO SCRIPTURE AGREE WITH THOSE KNOWN IN HIS CREATURES

^bIndeed, in certain passages clearer descriptions are set forth for us, wherein his true appearance is exhibited, to be seen as in an image.^{f302} For when Moses described the image, he obviously meant to tell briefly whatever was right for men to know about him. “Jehovah,” he says, “Jehovah, a merciful and gracious God, patient and of much compassion, and true, who keepest mercy for thousands, who takest away iniquity and transgression ... in whose presence the innocent will not be innocent, who visitest the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children’s children.” [^{<023406>}Exodus 34:6-7, cf. Vg.] Here let us observe that his eternity and his self-existence^{f303} are announced by that wonderful name twice repeated. Thereupon his powers are mentioned, by which he is shown to us not as he is in himself, but as he is toward us:^{f304} so that this recognition of him consists more in living experience than in vain and high-flown speculation. Now we hear the same powers enumerated there that we have noted as shining in heaven and earth: kindness, goodness, mercy, justice, judgment, and truth. For power and might are contained under the title *Elohim*.

By the same epithets also the prophets designate him when they wish to display his holy name to the full. That we may not be compelled to assemble many instances, at present let one psalm [^{<19E501>}Psalm 145] suffice for us, in which the sum of all his powers is so precisely reckoned up that nothing would seem to have been omitted [esp. ^{<19E505>}Psalm 145:5]. And yet nothing is set down there that cannot be beheld in his creatures. Indeed, with experience as our teacher we find God just as he declares himself in his Word. In Jeremiah, where God declares in what character he would have us know him, he puts forward a less full description but one plainly amounting to the same thing. “Let him who glories, glory in this,” he says, “that he knows that I am the Lord who exercise mercy, judgment, and justice in the earth.” [^{<240924>}Jeremiah 9:24; ^{<460131>}1 Corinthians 1:31.] Certainly these three things are especially necessary for us to know: mercy, on which alone the salvation of us all rests; judgment, which is daily exercised against wrongdoers, and in even greater severity awaits them to their everlasting ruin; justice, whereby believers are preserved, and are most tenderly nourished. When these are understood, the prophecy

witnesses that you have abundant reason to glory in God. Yet neither his truth, nor power, nor holiness, nor goodness is thus overlooked. For how could we have the requisite knowledge of his justice, mercy, and judgment unless that knowledge rested upon his unbending truth? And without understanding his power, how could we believe that he rules the earth in judgment and justice? But whence comes his mercy save from his goodness? If, finally, “all his paths are mercy” [^{<192510>}Psalm 25:10], judgment, justice [cf. ^{<192508>}Psalm 25:8-9], in these also is his holiness visible.

Indeed, the knowledge of God set forth for us in Scripture is destined for the very same goal as the knowledge whose imprint shines in his creatures, in that it invites us first to fear God, then to trust in him. By this we can learn to worship him both with perfect innocence of life and with unfeigned obedience, then to depend wholly upon his goodness.

3. BECAUSE THE UNITY OF GOD WAS ALSO NOT UNKNOWN TO THE HEATHEN, THE WORSHIPERS OF IDOLS ARE THE MORE INEXCUSABLE

^eBut here I propose to summarize the general doctrine. And first, indeed, let readers observe that Scripture, to direct us to the true God, distinctly excludes and rejects all the gods of the heathen, for religion was commonly adulterated throughout almost all ages. Indeed, it is true that the name of one God was everywhere known and renowned. For men who worshiped a swarm of gods, whenever speaking from a real feeling of nature, as if content with a single God, simply used the name “God”; and Justin Martyr, wisely noting this, composed a book, *God’s Monarchy*, in which he showed by very many testimonies that the unity of God has been engraved upon the hearts of all. ^{f305} Tertullian likewise proves the same point by phrases in common use. ^{f306} But all the heathen, to a man, by their own vanity either were dragged or slipped back into false inventions, and thus their perceptions so vanished that whatever they had naturally sensed concerning the sole God had no value beyond making them inexcusable. ^{f307} For even the wisest of them openly display the vague wanderings of their minds when they long for some god or other to be present among them, and so invoke dubious gods in their prayers. Besides this, in imagining a god of many natures — although they held a view less

absurd than the ignorant multitude with its Jupiter, Mercury, Venus, Minerva, and the rest — they, too, were not free of Satan’s deceptions. As we have already said elsewhere,^{f308} all the evasions the philosophers have skillfully contrived do not refute the charge of defection; rather, the truth of God has been corrupted by them all. For this reason, Habakkuk, when he condemned all idols, bade men seek God “in his temple” [^{<350220>}Habakkuk 2:20] lest believers admit someone other than him who revealed himself by his Word.

CHAPTER 11.

IT IS UNLAWFUL TO ATTRIBUTE A VISIBLE FORM TO GOD, AND GENERALLY WHOEVER SETS UP IDOLS REVOLTS AGAINST THE TRUE GOD^{F309}

(Scriptural argument for rejecting images in worship, 1-4)

1. WE ARE FORBIDDEN EVERY PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION OF GOD

^eBut as Scripture, having regard for men's rude and stupid wit, customarily speaks in the manner of the common folk, where it would distinguish the true God from the false it particularly contrasts him with idols. It does this, not to approve what is more subtly and elegantly taught by the philosophers, but the better to expose the world's folly, nay, madness, in searching for God when all the while each one clings to his own speculations. Therefore, that exclusive definition, encountered everywhere, annihilates all the divinity that men fashion for themselves out of their own opinion: for God himself is the sole and proper witness of himself.^{F310}

Meanwhile, since this brute stupidity gripped the whole world — to pant after visible figures of God, and thus to form gods of wood, stone, gold, silver, or other dead and corruptible matter — we must cling to this principle: God's glory is corrupted by an impious falsehood whenever any form is attached to him. Therefore in the law, after having claimed for himself alone the glory of deity, when he would teach what worship he approves or repudiates, God soon adds, “You shall not make for yourself a graven image, nor any likeness” [^{<022004>}Exodus 20:4]. By these words he restrains our waywardness from trying to represent him by any visible image, and briefly enumerates all those forms by which superstition long ago began to turn his truth into falsehood. For we know that the Persians worshiped the sun; all the stars they saw in the heavens the stupid pagans also fashioned into gods for themselves. There was almost no animal that for the Egyptians was not the figure of a god. Indeed, the Greeks seemed

to be wise above the rest, because they worshiped God in human form. ^{f311} But God does not compare these images with one another, as if one were more suitable, another less so; but without exception he repudiates all likenesses, pictures, and other signs by which the superstitious have thought he will be near them.

2. EVERY FIGURATIVE REPRESENTATION OF GOD CONTRADICTS HIS BEING

^eOne readily infers this from the reasons that he adds to the prohibition, ^bFirst, according to Moses: Remember “what Jehovah spoke to you in the valley of Horeb” [^{<050415>}Deuteronomy 4:15]; you heard a voice, “you did not see a body” [ch. ^{<050412>}4:12, cf. Comm.]. “Therefore take heed to yourself” [ch. 4:15] “lest perchance, deceived, you make for yourself any likeness,” etc. [ch. 4:16]. ^eWe see how openly God speaks against all images, that we may know that all who seek visible forms of God depart from him. Of the prophets it is enough to cite only ^bIsaiah, who is most emphatic in presenting this. He teaches that God’s majesty is sullied by an unfitting and absurd fiction, when the incorporeal is made to resemble corporeal matter, the invisible a visible likeness, the spirit an inanimate object, the immeasurable a puny bit of wood, stone, or gold [^{<234018>}Isaiah 40:18-20 and ^{<234107>}41:7, 29; ^{<234509>}45:9; ^{<234605>}46:5-7]. Paul also reasons in the same way: “Since we are the offspring of God, we ought not to judge the Deity to be like gold, and silver, or a stone, carved by the art or devising of man” [^{<441729>}Acts 17:29 p.]. From this it is clear that ^{e(b)}every statue man erects, or every image he paints to represent God, ^bsimply displeases God as something dishonorable to his majesty, ^dand what wonder if the Holy Spirit thunders these oracles from heaven, since he compels poor and blind idolaters on earth to bring forth a like confession? Well known is that complaint of Seneca, which we read in Augustine: “They establish the holy immortal and inviolable gods in the most vile and ignoble matter, and invest them with the appearance of men and wild beasts; ^esome fashion them with sexes confused and with incongruous bodies, and call them divinities; if these received breath, and confronted us, they would be considered monsters.” ^{f312} From this again it is quite evident that the supporters of images fall back upon a worthless dodge when they allege that images were forbidden to the Jews because they were inclined toward superstition. As if, indeed, what God brings forth from his eternal

essence and from the continuing order of nature belonged to but one people! Actually, Paul was addressing, not the Jews, but the Athenians, when he refuted their error of making a representation of God.

3. EVEN DIRECT SIGNS OF THE DIVINE PRESENCE GIVE NO JUSTIFICATION FOR IMAGES

^bGod, indeed, from time to time showed the presence of his divine majesty by definite signs, so that he might be said to be looked upon face to face. But all the signs that he ever gave forth ^{e(b)} aptly conformed to his plan of teaching and at the same time clearly told men of his incomprehensible essence. For clouds and smoke and flame [^{<050411>}Deuteronomy 4:11], although they were symbols of heavenly glory, restrained the minds of all, like a bridle placed on them, from attempting to penetrate too deeply, ^bTherefore Moses, to whom, nevertheless, God revealed himself more intimately than to the others [^{<023311>}Exodus 33:11], did not succeed by prayers in beholding that face; but he received the answer that man is not able to bear such great brightness [^{<023320>}Exodus 33:20]. ^eThe Holy Spirit appeared under the likeness of a dove [^{<400316>}Matthew 3:16]. Since, however, he vanished at once, who does not see that by one moment's symbol the faithful were admonished to believe the Spirit to be invisible in order that, content with his power and grace, they might seek no outward representation for themselves? For the fact that God from time to time appeared in the form of a man was the prelude to his future revelation in Christ. Therefore the Jews were absolutely forbidden so to abuse this pretext as to set up for themselves a symbol of deity in human form.

^bThe mercy seat from which God manifested the presence of his power under the law was so constructed as to suggest that the best way to contemplate the divine is where minds are lifted above themselves with admiration. Indeed, the cherubim with wings outspread covered it; the veil shrouded it; the place itself deeply enough hidden concealed it [^{<022517>}Exodus 25:17-21]. Hence it is perfectly clear that those who try to defend images of God and the saints with the example of those cherubim are raving madmen. What, indeed, I beg you, did those paltry little images mean? Solely that images are not suited to represent God's mysteries. For they had been formed to this end, that veiling the mercy seat with their wings ^{e(b)} they might bar not only human eyes but all the senses from

beholding God, and thus correct men's rashness, ^dIn addition to this, the prophets depict the seraphim as appearing in their visions with face veiled toward us [^{<230602>}Isaiah 6:2]. By this they signify that the splendor of divine glory is so great that the very angels also are restrained from direct gaze, and the tiny sparks of it that glow in the angels are withdrawn from our eyes. All who judge rightly recognize that the cherubim with which we are now concerned belonged to the antiquated tutelage ^{f313} of the law. Thus it is absurd to drag them in as an example to serve our own age. For that childish age, so to speak, for which rudiments of this sort were intended [^{<480403>}Galatians 4:3], is gone by. ^eAnd it is quite shameful that profane writers are more proficient interpreters of God's law than the papists. Juvenal upbraided the Jews for worshipping mere clouds and the deity of the sky. ^{f314} When he denies that any effigy of God existed among them, he speaks perversely indeed and impiously, yet more truly than the papists, who prate that there was some visible likeness of God. ^{f315} This people with fervid swiftness repeatedly rushed forth to seek out idols for themselves as waters from a great wellspring gush out with violent force. From this fact let us learn how greatly our nature inclines toward idolatry, rather than, by charging the Jews with being guilty of the common failing, we, under vain enticements to sin, sleep the sleep of death.

4. IMAGES AND PICTURES ARE CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE

^eThe saying, "The idols of the heathen are silver and gold, the works of men's hands" [^{<19D515>}Psalms 135:15; cf. ^{<19B504>}Psalms 115:4], has the same purpose. For from the material of which they are made, the prophet infers that they are not gods whose images are of gold or silver; and he takes it for granted that all we conceive concerning God in our own minds is an insipid fiction. He mentions gold and silver rather than clay or stone, that neither the splendor nor the price may win reverence for the idols. Yet he concludes in general that nothing is less commendable than for gods to be fashioned from any dead matter. Meanwhile he insists no less on the other point: that mortals are carried away by too much folly and rashness who, precariously drawing a fleeting breath from moment to moment, dare to confer God's honor upon idols. Man will be compelled to confess ^{f316} that he is a transient being, and yet he will want to be counted as God a piece of metal, to whose deity he himself gave origin. For whence came the beginning of idols but from the opinion of men? Most just is that profane

poet's mockery: "Once I was a little fig tree trunk, a useless bit of wood, when the workman, in doubt whether he should make a stool, preferred that I be a god,"^{f317} etc. So then the earthly manikin, who almost every moment breathes out his life, by his own cleverness would transfer God's name and honor to a dead trunk! But because that Epicurean in witty jest had no regard for religion, let us pass over his witticisms and those of men like him. Rather, let the prophet's reproof sting us, indeed transfix us, that they are utterly foolish who from the same wood warm themselves, kindle a fire to bake bread, roast or boil meat, and fashion a god before whom they prostrate themselves as suppliants to pray [^{<234412>}Isaiah 44:12-17]. Therefore he elsewhere not only accuses them as guilty before the law, but reproaches them for not learning from the foundations of the earth [^{<234021>}Isaiah 40:21]. For surely there is nothing less fitting than to wish to reduce God, who is immeasurable and incomprehensible, to a five-foot measure! And yet custom shows this monstrous thing, which is openly hostile to the order of nature, to be natural to men.

Now we ought to bear in mind that Scripture repeatedly describes superstitions in this language: they are the "works of men's hands," which lack God's authority [^{<230208>}Isaiah 2:8; 31:7; 37:19; ^{<281403>}Hosea 14:3; ^{<330513>}Micah 5:13]; this is done to establish the fact that all the cults men devise of themselves are detestable. The prophet heaps up fury in a psalm because men endowed with the intelligence to know that all things are moved solely by God's power call upon dead and insensible things for help. But because corruption of nature drives all peoples as well as each one individually to such great madness, finally the Spirit fulminates with a dire threat: "Let those who make them and those who trust in them become like them" [^{<19B508>}Psalm 115:8; cf. Psalm 113b:8, Vg.].^b But we must note that a "likeness" no less than a "graven image" is forbidden. Thus is the foolish scruple of the Greek Christians refuted. For they consider that they have acquitted themselves beautifully if they do not make sculptures of God, while they wantonly indulge in pictures more than any other nation.^{f318} But the Lord forbids not only that a likeness be erected to him by a maker of statues but that one be fashioned by any craftsman whatever, because he is thus represented falsely and with an insult to his majesty.

*(Pope Gregory's error in this refuted from Scripture
and the lathers, 5-7)*

5. SCRIPTURE JUDGES OTHERWISE

^dI know that it is pretty much an old saw that images are the books of the uneducated. Gregory said this;^{f319} yet the Spirit of God declares far otherwise; if Gregory had been taught in His school with regard to this, he never would have spoken thus. For when Jeremiah declares that “the wood is a doctrine of vanity” [^{<241008>}Jeremiah 10:8, cf. Vg., order changed]; when Habakkuk teaches that “a molten image is a teacher of falsehood” [^{<350218>}Habakkuk 2:18 p.], from such statements we must surely infer this general doctrine, that whatever men learn of God from images is futile, indeed false. If anyone takes exception that it was those who were misusing images for impious superstition who were rebuked by the prophets, I admit it is so. But I add, what is clear to all, that the prophets totally condemn the notion, taken as axiomatic by the papists, that images stand in place of books. For the prophets set images over against the true God as contraries that can never agree. This comparison, I say, is set forth in the passages that I have just now cited. Since there is one true God whom the Jews were wont to worship, visible figures are wickedly and falsely fashioned to represent God; and all who seek the knowledge of God from these are miserably deluded. In short, if it were not true that whatever knowledge of God is sought from images is fallacious and counterfeit, the prophets would not so generally have condemned it. At least I hold this: when we teach that it is vanity and falsehood for men to try to fashion God in images, we are doing nothing else but repeating word for word what the prophets have taught.

6. THE DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH, TOO, PARTLY JUDGED OTHERWISE

^bOne ought, besides, to read what Lactantius and Eusebius have written concerning this matter, who do not hesitate to take as a fact that all whose images are seen were once mortals.^{f320} Likewise, Augustine clearly declares that it is wrong not only to worship images but to set them up to God.^{f321}

^cYet he says nothing else but what had been decreed many years before in the Council of Elvira, of which the thirty-sixth canon reads: “It is decreed

that there shall be no pictures in churches, that what is revered or adored be not depicted on the walls.”^{f322} ^aBut especially memorable is what the same Augustine elsewhere cites from Varro, and confirms by his own subscription, that the first men to introduce statues of the gods “removed fear and added error.”^{f323} If Varro alone had said this, perhaps it would have had little authority, yet it deservedly ought to strike shame in us that a pagan man, groping so to speak in the dark, arrived at this light, that bodily images are unworthy of God’s majesty because they diminish the fear of him in men and increase error. Facts themselves certainly testify that this was said no less truly than wisely; but Augustine, having borrowed from Varro, as it were, brings it forth from his own thought. And at the outset, indeed, he points out that the first errors concerning God in which men were entangled did not begin from images, but once this new element was added, errors multiplied. Next, he explains that the fear of God was diminished or even destroyed, because in the folly of images and in stupid and absurd invention his divinity could easily be despised. On the second of these points, would that we might not have experienced it to be so true! Whoever, therefore, desires to be rightly taught must learn what he should know of God from some other source than images.

7 THE IMAGES OF THE PAPISTS ARE ENTIRELY INAPPROPRIATE

^{d(a)}Therefore, if the papists have any shame, let them henceforward not use this evasion, that pictures are the books of the uneducated, because it is plainly refuted by very many testimonies of Scripture. Even if I were to grant them this, yet they would not thus gain much to defend their idols. It is well known that they set monstrosities of this kind in place of God.

^aThe pictures or statues that they dedicate to saints — what are they but examples of the most abandoned lust and obscenity? If anyone wished to model himself after them, he would be fit for the lash. Indeed, brothels show harlots clad more virtuously and modestly than the churches show those objects which they wish to be thought images of virgins. ^bFor martyrs they fashion a habit not a whit more decent. ^aTherefore let them compose their idols at least to a moderate decency, that they may with a little more modesty falsely claim that these are books of some holiness!

(There would be no “uneducated” at all if the church had done its duty)

But then we shall also answer that this is not the method of teaching within the sacred precincts believing folk, whom God wills to be instructed there with a far different doctrine than this trash. In the preaching of his Word and sacred mysteries he has bidden that a common doctrine be there set forth for all. ^bBut those whose eyes rove about in contemplating idols betray that their minds are not diligently intent upon this doctrine.

^aTherefore, whom, then, do the papists call uneducated whose ignorance allows them to be taught by images alone? Those, indeed, whom the Lord recognizes as his disciples, ^cwhom he honors by the revelation of his heavenly philosophy, whom he wills to be instructed in the saving mysteries of his Kingdom. I confess, as the matter stands, that today there are not a few who are unable to do without such “books.” But whence, I pray you, this stupidity if not because they are defrauded of that doctrine which alone was fit to instruct them? ^dindeed, those in authority in the church turned over to idols the office of teaching for no other reason than that they themselves were mute. Paul testifies that by the true preaching of the gospel “Christ is depicted before our eyes as crucified”

[^{<480301>}Galatians 3:1 p.]. ^aWhat purpose did it serve for so many crosses — of wood, stone, silver, and gold — to be erected here and there in churches, if this fact had been duly and faithfully taught: that Christ died on the cross to bear our curse [^{<480313>}Galatians 3:13], to expiate our sins by the sacrifice of his body [^{<581010>}Hebrews 10:10], to wash them by his blood [^{<660105>}Revelation 1:5], ^din short, to reconcile us to God the Father [^{<450510>}Romans 5:10]? ^aFrom this one fact they could have learned more than from a thousand crosses of wood or stone. For perhaps the covetous fix their minds and eyes more tenaciously upon gold and silver than upon any word of God.

(Origin of the use of images, and consequent corruption of worship, although sculpture and painting are gifts of God, 8-16)

8. THE ORIGIN OF IMAGES: MAN'S DESIRE FOR A TANGIBLE DEITY

^dNext, what is held in the book of Wisdom concerning the origin of idols is received virtually by public consent: that the originators of idols were those who conferred this honor on the dead, and thus superstitiously worshiped their memory. ^{f324} Of course, I admit that this perverse custom was very ancient, nor do I deny that it was a torch with which to fire men's mad dash into idolatry all the more; yet I do not concede that this was the original source of the evil. For it appears from Moses that idols were in use before this eagerness to consecrate images of the dead prevailed, which is frequently mentioned by secular writers. When he relates that Rachel stole her father's idols [^{<013119>}Genesis 31:19], he is speaking of a vice that was common. From this we may gather that man's nature, so to speak, is a perpetual factory of idols. After the Flood there was a sort of rebirth of the world, but not many years passed by before men were fashioning gods according to their pleasure. ^e And it is believable that while the holy patriarch was still living his descendants were giving themselves over to idolatry, so that he discerned with his eyes (not without the bitterest pain) that the earth, whose corruptions God had recently purged by a most dreadful judgment, was polluted with idols. For as Joshua testifies [^{<062402>}Joshua 24:2], Terah and Nahor were worshipers of false gods before the birth of Abraham. If Shem's offspring degenerated very rapidly, what are we to judge of Ham's descendants who had already been cursed in their father? ^d So it goes. ^{e(a)} Man's mind, full as it is of pride and boldness, dares to imagine a god according to its own capacity; as it sluggishly plods, indeed is overwhelmed with the crassest ignorance, it conceives an unreality and an empty appearance as God.

To these evils a new wickedness joins itself, that man tries to express in his work the sort of God he has inwardly conceived. Therefore the mind begets an idol; the hand gives it birth. The example of the Israelites shows the origin of idolatry to be that men do not believe God is with them unless he shows himself physically present,

^b“We know not,” they said, “what has become of this Moses; make us gods who may go before us.” [^{<023201>}Exodus 32:1.] They knew, indeed, that this was God whose power they had experienced in very many miracles; but they did not trust that he was near them unless they could discern with their eyes a physical symbol of his countenance, which for them would be a testimony of the ruling God. Therefore they wished to recognize from an image going before them that God was the leader of their march. Daily experience teaches that flesh is always uneasy until it has obtained some figment like itself in which it may fondly find solace as in an image of God. In almost every age since the beginning of the world, men, ^ain order that they might obey this blind desire, have set up symbols in which they believed God appeared before their bodily eyes.

9. ANY USE OF IMAGES LEADS TO IDOLATRY*

^dAdoration promptly follows upon this sort of fancy: ^afor when men thought they gazed upon God in images, they also worshiped him in them. Finally, all men, having fixed their minds and eyes upon them, began to grow more brutish and to be overwhelmed with admiration for them, as if something of divinity inhered there, ^bNow it appears that men do not rush forth into the cult of images before they have been imbued with some opinion too crass-not indeed that they regard them as gods, but because they imagine that some power of divinity dwells there. Therefore, when you prostrate yourself in veneration, representing to yourself in an image either a god or a creature, you are already ensnared in some superstition. For this reason, the Lord forbade not only the erection of statues constructed to represent himself but also the consecration of any inscriptions and stones that would invite adoration [^{<022025>}Exodus 20:25].

^dFor the same reason, also, in the precept of the law a second part is subjoined concerning adoration. For just as soon as a visible form has been fashioned for God, his power is also bound to it. Men are so stupid that they fasten God wherever they fashion him; ^{f325} and hence they cannot but adore. And there is no difference whether they simply worship an idol, or God in the idol. It is always idolatry when divine honors are bestowed upon an idol, under whatever pretext this is done. And because it does not please God to be worshiped superstitiously, whatever is conferred upon the idol is snatched away from Him.

^aLet those persons take note of this who are looking for miserable excuses to defend the execrable idolatry by which true religion for many past ages has been overwhelmed and subverted. Images, they assert, are not regarded as gods. The Jews, too, were not so thoughtless as to forget that it was God by whose hand they had been led out of Egypt [^{<032613>}Leviticus 26:13] before they fashioned the calf [^{<023204>}Exodus 32:4]. ^bBut when Aaron said that those were the gods by whom they had been set free from the land of Egypt, they boldly assented [^{<023204>}Exodus 32:4, 8], obviously meaning that they wished to retain that liberating God, provided they could see him going before them in the calf. ^aAnd we must not think the heathen so stupid that they did not understand God to be something other than stocks and stones. For while they changed images at pleasure, they always kept the same gods in mind. There were many images for one god; yet they did not devise for themselves as many gods as the multitude of images. Moreover, they daily consecrated new images, yet did not believe themselves to be making new gods. ^cRead the excuses that Augustine refers to as having been pretended by the idolaters of his own age: when they were accused, the vulgar sort replied that they were not worshiping that visible object but a presence that dwelt there invisibly. Those who were of what he called “purer religion” stated that they were worshiping neither the likeness nor the spirit; but that through the physical image they gazed upon the sign of the thing that they ought to worship. ^{f326} ^aWhat then? All idolaters, whether Jews or pagans, ^bwere motivated just as has been said. Not content with spiritual understanding, they thought that through the images a surer and closer understanding would be impressed upon them. Once this perverse imitation of God pleased them, they never stopped until, deluded by new tricks, they presently supposed that God manifested his power in images. ^aIn these images, nevertheless, the Jews were convinced that they were worshiping the eternal God, the one true Lord of heaven and earth; the pagans, that they were worshiping their gods whom, though false, they imagined as dwelling in heaven.

10. IMAGE WORSHIP IN THE CHURCH

^aThose who assert that this was not done heretofore, and within our memory is still not being done, lie shamelessly. For why do they prostrate themselves before these things? Why do they, when about to pray, turn to them as if to God’s ears? ^cIndeed, what Augustine says is true, that no one

thus gazing upon an image prays or worships without being so affected that he thinks he is heard by it, or hopes that whatever he desires will be bestowed upon him.^{f327} ^bWhy is there so much difference among the images of the same God, that one is passed over or honored in a common manner, but upon another is bestowed every solemn honor? Why do they tire themselves out with votive pilgrimages to see images whose like they have at home? ^aWhy do they take up the sword to defend these images today as if they were altars and hearth fires, even to the point of butchery and carnage, and more easily bear being deprived of the one God than of their idols? Nevertheless, I do not yet enumerate the crass errors of the multitude, which are well-nigh infinite, and which occupy the hearts of almost all men; I am only indicating what they profess when they especially wish to exculpate themselves of idolatry. We do not call them “our gods,” they say. Neither did Jews nor pagans of old so speak of them, and yet the prophets did not hesitate repeatedly to accuse them of fornications with wood and stone [^{<240227>}Jeremiah 2:27; ^{<260604>}Ezekiel 6:4 ff.; cf. ^{<234019>}Isaiah 40:19-20; ^{<350218>}Habakkuk 2:18-19; ^{<053237>}Deuteronomy 32:37] only for doing the very things that are daily done by those who wish to be counted Christians, namely, that they carnally venerated God in wood and stone.

11. FOOLISH EVASIONS OF THE PAPISTS

^dYet I am not unaware, nor ought I to conceal the fact, that they escape by a wily distinction, of which fuller mention will be made a little later.^{f327} For the honor that they pay to their images they allege to be idol service, denying it to be idol worship.^{f328} For they speak thus when they teach that the honor which they call *dulia* can be given to statues and pictures without wronging God. Therefore they deem themselves innocent if they are only servants of idols, not worshipers of them too. As if, indeed, it were not something slighter to worship than to serve! And yet while they take refuge in a Greek word, they childishly contradict themselves. For since **λατρεύειν** means nothing else among the Greeks than “to worship,” what they say signifies the same thing as confessing that they “worship the images but without worship.” And there is no reason for them to object that I am trying to trip them in words; but they themselves display their own ignorance while they try to spread darkness over the eyes of the simple folk. Yet however eloquent they may be, never will they succeed

by their eloquence in proving to us that one and the same thing is really two things. Let them show, I say, the real difference that makes them unlike the ancient idolaters. For just as an adulterer or a homicide cannot escape guilt by dubbing his crime with some other name, so it is absurd for them to be absolved by the subtle device of a name if they differ in no respect from idolaters, whom they themselves are compelled to condemn. Yet so far are they from separating their own cause from the cause of these idolaters that the source of the whole evil is rather a preposterous emulation in which they vie with the latter while they both contrive by their own wit, and fashion with their own hands, the symbols to represent God for themselves.

12. THE FUNCTIONS AND LIMITS OF ART

°And yet I am not gripped by the superstition of thinking absolutely no images permissible. But because sculpture and painting are gifts of God, I seek a pure and legitimate use of each, lest those things which the Lord has conferred upon us for his glory and our good be not only polluted by perverse misuse but also turned to our destruction. We believe it wrong that God should be represented by a visible appearance, because he himself has forbidden it [^{<022004>}Exodus 20:4] and it cannot be done without some defacing of his glory. And lest they think us alone in this opinion, those who concern themselves with their writings will find that all well-balanced writers have always disapproved of it. If it is not right to represent God by a physical likeness, much less will we be allowed to worship it as God, or God in it. Therefore it remains that only those things are to be sculptured or painted which the eyes are capable of seeing: let not God's majesty, which is far above the perception of the eyes, be debased through unseemly representations. Within this class some are histories and events, some are images and forms of bodies without any depicting of past events. The former have some use in teaching or admonition; as for the latter, I do not see what they can afford other than pleasure. And yet it is clear that almost all the images that until now have stood in churches were of this sort. From this, one may judge that these images had been called forth not out of judgment or selection but of foolish and thoughtless craving. I am not saying how wickedly and indecently the greater part of them have been fashioned, how licentiously the painters and sculptors have played the wanton here — a matter that I touched

upon a little earlier.^{f330} I only say that even if the use of images contained nothing evil, it still has no value for teaching.

13. AS LONG AS DOCTRINE WAS PURE AND STRONG, THE CHURCH REJECTED IMAGES

But setting aside this distinction, let us in passing examine if it is expedient to have in Christian churches any images at all, whether they represent past events or the bodies of men. First, if the authority of the ancient church moves us in any way, we will recall that for about five hundred years, during which religion was still flourishing, and a purer doctrine thriving, Christian churches were commonly empty of images.^{f331} Thus, it was when the purity of the ministry had somewhat degenerated that they were first introduced for the adornment of churches. I shall not discuss what reason impelled those who were the first authors of this thing; but if you compare age with age, you will see that these innovations had much declined from the integrity of those who had done without images. Why? Are we to think that those holy fathers would have allowed the church to go for so long without something they adjudged useful and salutary? Of course it was because they saw in it either no usefulness or very little, but very much danger, that they repudiated it out of deliberation and reason, rather than overlooked it out of ignorance or negligence. Augustine even states this in clear words: “When they are established in these seats,” he says, “in honorable loftiness, so that they are attended by those who pray and those who sacrifice, by the very likeness of living members and senses — although they lack both sense and life — they affect infirm minds, so that they seem to live and breathe,” etc.^{f332} And elsewhere, “For the shape of the idol’s bodily members makes and in a sense compels the mind dwelling in a body to suppose that the idol’s body too has feeling, because it looks very like its own body,” etc. A little later, “Images have more power to bend the unhappy soul, because they have mouth, eyes, ears, feet, than to straighten it, because they do not speak, or see, or hear, or walk.”^{f333}

This seems likely to be the reason why John wished to warn us not only against the worship of idols but also against idols themselves [^{<620521>}1 John 5:21]. And by the dreadful madness that has heretofore occupied the world almost to the total destruction of godliness, we have experienced too

much how the ensign of idolatry is, as it were, set up, as soon as images are put together in churches. For men's folly cannot restrain itself from falling headlong into superstitious rites. But even if so much danger were not threatening, when I ponder the intended use of churches, somehow or other it seems to me unworthy of their holiness for them to take on images other than those living and symbolical ones which the Lord has consecrated by his Word. I mean Baptism and the Lord's Supper, together with other rites by which our eyes must be too intensely gripped and too sharply affected to seek other images forged by human ingenuity.

^aBehold! The incomparable boon of images, for which there is no substitute, ^dif we are to believe the papists!

14. CHILDISH ARGUMENTS FOR IMAGES AT THE COUNCIL OF NICAIA (787)*

^dNow, I believe, I should have said quite enough of this matter but for the fact that the Nicene Council commands my attention — not that most celebrated council called by Constantine the Great, but the one held eight hundred years ago at the command and under the auspices of the Empress Irene. ^{f334} For it decreed not only that there were to be images in churches but also that they were to be worshiped. ^{f335} For whatever I say, the authority of the Council will occasion a great prejudice in favor of the opposite side. Yet, to speak the truth, this does not move me so much as does the desire to inform my readers how far the madness went of those who were more attached to images than was becoming to Christians. But let us dispose of this first. Those who today defend the use of images allege the support of that Council of Nicaea. However, there exists a book in refutation under the name of Charlemagne, the style of which leads me to conclude that it was composed at the same time. ^{f336} In it are set forth the opinions of the bishops who participated in the Council and the proofs which they employed. John, the legate of the Easterns, said: “God created man in his image” [^{<010127>}Genesis 1:27], and from this he therefore concluded that we must have images. The same man thought that images were commended to us by this sentence: “Show me thy face, for it is beautiful” [Cant. 2:14]. Another, to prove that images ought to be set upon altars, cited this testimony: “No one lights a lantern and puts it under a bushel” [^{<400515>}Matthew 5:15]. Still another, to show us that

looking upon them is useful to us, adduced a verse from The Psalms: “O Lord, the light of thy countenance has been sealed upon us” [^{<190407>}Psalm 4:7, Vg.; 4:6, EV]. Another seized upon this comparison: just as the patriarchs have used the sacrifices of the heathen, so ought saints’ images for Christians to take the place of the heathens’ idols. To the same end they twisted that verse: “O Lord, I love the beauty of thy house” [^{<192505>}Psalm 25:5, Vg.; 26:8, EV]. But pre-eminently ingenious is this interpretation: “As we have heard, so also have we seen” [^{<620101>}1 John 1:1 p.]. Therefore he implies that men know God not only by hearing his Word but also by looking upon images. Bishop Theodore speaks with similar penetration: “Wonderful is God in his saints” [^{<196703>}Psalm 67:36, Vg.]; and elsewhere it is said, “To the saints who are on earth” [^{<191503>}Psalm 15:3, Vg.; 16: 3, EV]. Therefore this ought to refer to images. In short, so disgusting are their absurdities that I am ashamed even to mention them.

15. RIDICULOUS MISUSE OF SCRIPTURE TEXTS*

^dWhen they are discussing adoration, they bring forward the adoration of Pharaoh [^{<014710>}Genesis 47:10], of Joseph’s rod [^{<014731>}Genesis 47:31; ^{<581020>}Hebrews 10:20], and of the pillar set up. by Jacob [^{<012818>}Genesis 28:18].

Notwithstanding, in this last allegation they not only corrupt the meaning of Scripture, but seize upon something that is nowhere to be read. Then, “Worship his footstool” [^{<199805>}Psalm 98:5, Vg.; 99:5, EV]; likewise, “Worship on his holy mountain” [^{<199809>}Psalm 98:9, Vg.; 99:9, EV]; again, “All the rich men of the people shall entreat thy countenance” [^{<194413>}Psalm 44:13, Vg.; 45: 13, EV]. These appear to be absolutely firm and apposite proofs for them. If anyone in mockery wished to attribute a ridiculous character to the patrons of images, could he enumerate greater and grosser follies? To remove any remaining doubt, Theodosius, Bishop of Mira, confirms the adoration of images from the dreams of his archdeacon as gravely as if a heavenly oracle had been present. Now let the promoters of images go and urge upon us the decree of that synod. As if those venerable fathers do not abrogate all trust in themselves either by treating Scripture so childishly or by rending it so impiously and foully!

16. BLASPHEMOUS AND SHOCKING CLAIMS FOR IMAGES*

^dI come now to the terrible blasphemies, which it is a marvel that they have dared to spew forth, and a double marvel that everybody did not cry out against them with greatest loathing. But it is expedient that this wicked madness be publicly exposed, that the pretense of antiquity which the papists allege may at least be torn away from the worship of images. Theodosius, Bishop of Amorium, pronounces anathema against all who are unwilling that images be adored. Another imputes all the misfortunes of Greece and the East to the crime that images had not been adored. What punishments do the prophets, apostles, martyrs, deserve, in whose day no images existed? Thereafter they add: if the image of the emperor be approached with perfume and incense, much more do we owe this honor to the images of saints. Constantius, Bishop of Constance in Cyprus, professes to embrace images reverently, and affirms that he is going to show toward them the same worship and honor that is owed to the life-giving Trinity. Anyone who refuses to do the same he anathematizes and relegates among the Manichees and Marcionites. And lest you think this the private opinion of one man, the rest agree. Indeed, John, the legate of the Easterns, moved by even greater heat, warned that it would be better to admit all brothels into the city than to deny the worship of images. Finally, it was determined by the consent of all that the Samaritans are worse than all heretics, yet image fighters ^{f337} are worse than the Samaritans. Besides, lest the play should go unapplauded, ^{f338} a clause is added: let those who, having an image of Christ, offer sacrifice to it rejoice and exult. ^{f339} Where now is the distinction between latria and dulia, by which they are wont to hoodwink God and men? For the Council accords, without exception, as much to images as to the living God.'

CHAPTER 12

HOW GOD IS TO BE SO DISTINGUISHED FROM IDOLS THAT PERFECT HONOR MAY BE GIVEN TO HIM ALONE

1. TRUE RELIGION BINDS US TO GOD AS THE ONE AND ONLY GOD

^eMoreover, we said at the beginning ^{f340} that the knowledge of God does not rest in cold speculation, but carries with it the honoring of him. In passing, we also touched upon how he is to be rightly worshiped, a point that will have to be dealt with at greater length in other places. ^{f341} Now I only briefly repeat: as often as Scripture asserts that there is one God, it is not contending over the bare name, but also prescribing that nothing belonging to his divinity is to be transferred to another. From this it is also clear in what respect pure religion differs from superstition. Undoubtedly, for the Greeks the word **εὐσέβεια** meaning “religion,” also connotes befitting reverence. For even the blind themselves, groping in darkness, felt the need of adhering to a definite rule, to avoid the perverted honoring of God. Even though Cicero truly and learnedly derives the word “religion” from the word *relegere*, ^{f342} the reason that he assigns is forced and farfetched: that upright worshipers often reread and diligently weighed what was true. Rather, I believe that this word is opposed to giddy license; for the greater part of the world thoughtlessly seizes upon whatever is at hand, nay, even flits hither and thither. But godliness, to stand on a firm footing, keeps itself within its proper limits. Likewise, it seems to me that superstition is so called because, not content with the prescribed manner and order, it heaps up a needless mass of inanities.

But discussion aside, all ages have always agreed that religion was vitiated and perverted by falseness and error. From this we conclude that when we allow ourselves anything out of heedless zeal the excuse that the superstitious pretend is silly. Yet even though this confession cries out from all men’s lips, a foul ignorance appears; for, as we have already

taught, ^{f343} they neither cleave to the one God nor manifest any delight in honoring him. But God, to claim his own right, declares himself a jealous God, and a severe avenger if he be confused with any fictitious god [cf. ^{<022005>}Exodus 20:5]. Then he defines lawful worship in order to hold mankind in obedience. He combines both under his law, first when he binds believers to himself to be their sole lawgiver, and then when he prescribes a rule whereby he is to be duly honored according to his own will. As for the law, since its use and purpose are manifold, I will discuss it in its own place. ^{f344} I now touch merely on this point, that by it a bridle has been imposed upon men, to prevent their sinking into vicious rites. But what I have set down in an earlier section is to be kept in mind, that unless everything proper to his divinity resides in the one God, he is despoiled of his honor, and the reverencing of him profaned.

^b Here we must more carefully attend to those subtleties with which superstition disports itself. Indeed, it does not so decline to other gods as seemingly to desert the highest God, or to reduce him to the level of the rest. But while it concedes to him the supreme place, it surrounds him with a throng of lesser gods, among whom it parcels out his functions. The glory of his divinity is so rent asunder (although stealthily and craftily) that his whole glory does not remain with him alone. ^{f345} Thus, in the past, men, Jews as well as heathen, put a vast throng of gods under the father and ruler of the gods. Each of these gods according to his rank held in common with the highest god the government of heaven and earth. Thus a few centuries ago the saints who had departed this life were elevated into copartnership with God, to be honored, and also to be invoked and praised in his stead. Indeed, we suppose that by such an abomination God's majesty is not even obscured, while it is in great part suppressed and extinguished, except that we retain some sterile notion of his supreme power; ^e meanwhile, deceived by the trappings, we are drawn to various gods.

2. A DISTINCTION WITHOUT A DIFFERENCE*

^d In fact, the distinction between latria and dulia, as they called them, was invented in order that divine honors might seem to be transferred with impunity to angels and the dead. ^{f346} For it is obvious that the honor the papists give to the saints really does not differ from the honoring of God.

Indeed, they worship both God and the saints indiscriminately, except that, when they are pressed, they wriggle out with the excuse that they keep unimpaired for God what is due him because they leave latria to him. But since the thing itself, not the word, is in question, who can permit them to make light of this most important of all matters? But — to pass over this also — their distinction in the end boils down to this: they render honor [*cultus*] to God alone, but undergo servitude [*servitium*] for the others. For **λατρεία**, among the Greeks means the same thing as *cultus* among the Latins; **δουλεία** properly signifies *servitus*; and yet in Scripture this distinction is sometimes blurred. But suppose we concede it to be unvarying. Then we must inquire what both words mean: **δουλεία** is servitude; **λατρεία**, honor. Now no one doubts that it is greater to be enslaved than to honor. For it would very often be hard for you to be enslaved to one whom you were not unwilling to honor. Thus it would be unequal dealing to assign to the saints what is greater and leave to God what is lesser. Yet many of the old writers used this distinction. What, then, if all perceive that it is not only inept but entirely worthless?

3. HONORING IMAGES IS DISHONOR TO GOD*

^dLet us drop fine distinctions and examine the thing itself. When Paul reminds the Galatians what they were like before they were illumined in the knowledge of God, he says that “they exhibited dulia toward beings that by nature were no gods” [^{<480408>}Galatians 4:8 p.]. When he does not call it latria, is their superstition for this reason excusable? Assuredly, by labeling that perverse superstition dulia, he condemns it no less than if he had used the word “latria.” And when Christ fends off Satan’s insult with this shield, “It is written, ‘You shall worship the Lord your God’” [^{<400410>}Matthew 4: 10], it is not a question of the word “latria.” ^{f347} For Satan demanded of him only a reverent kneeling. ^{f348} Likewise, when John was rebuked by the angel because he fell down on his knees before him [^{<661910>}Revelation 19:10; 22:8-9], we ought not to suppose John to be so senseless as to wish to transfer to an angel the honor due God alone. But because any reverential act that has been joined with religion cannot but savor of something divine, he could not have “knelt” to the angel without detracting from God’s glory. Indeed, we often read that men were worshiped: but such an act was, so to speak, a civil honor. Religion,

however, has another concern; as soon as it has been joined with an act of reverence, it carries the profanation of divine honor along with it.

We can see this in Cornelius [^{<441025>}Acts 10:25]. He had not advanced so ill in godliness as not to pay God alone the highest reverence. Therefore, when he prostrated himself before Peter, undoubtedly he did not intend to worship Peter in place of God, yet Peter earnestly forbade him to do it. Why, unless because men never so articulately discern between the honoring of God and of creatures without indiscriminately transferring to the creature what belonged to God? ^bThus, if we wish to have one God, we should remember that we must not pluck away even a particle of his glory and that he must retain what is his own. ^cTherefore Zechariah, when he speaks of the restoration of the church, eloquently asserts not only that “God will be one” but also that “his name will be one” [^{<381409>}Zechariah 14:9 p.], in order no doubt that he may have nothing in common with idols. What sort of reverence God requires will be seen elsewhere in its proper place. ^{f349} For by his law it pleases him to prescribe for men what is good and right, and thus to hold them to a sure standard that no one may take leave to contrive any sort of worship he pleases.

But because it is not expedient to burden my readers by mingling many things, I do not yet touch on that matter. It is enough to recognize that, whenever any observances of piety are transferred to some one other than the sole God, sacrilege occurs. And first, indeed, superstition contrived divine honors either for the sun and the stars or for idols. Then followed ambition, which, by adorning mortals with the spoils of God, dared profane everything sacred. And although there remained the principle of worshiping a supreme Being, it was a common custom to offer sacrifices indiscriminately to tutelary divinities, lesser gods, or dead heroes. So inclined are we to lapse into this error that what God rigorously reserves for himself alone we distribute among a great throng.

CHAPTER 13.

IN SCRIPTURE, FROM THE CREATION ONWARD,
WE ARE TAUGHT ONE ESSENCE OF GOD, WHICH
CONTAINS THREE PERSONS ^{F350}

*(Terms used in the doctrine of the Trinity by
the orthodox fathers, 1-6)*

1. GOD'S NATURE IS IMMEASURABLE AND SPIRITUAL

The Scriptural teaching concerning God infinite and spiritual essence ought to be enough, not only to banish popular delusions, but also to refute the subtleties of secular philosophy. One of the ancients seems aptly to have remarked, “Whatever we see, and whatever we do not see, is God.” ^{F351} According to this, he fancied that divinity was poured out into the various parts of the world. But even if God to keep us sober speaks sparingly of his essence, yet by those two titles that I have used he both banishes stupid imaginings and restrains the boldness of the human mind. Surely, his infinity ought to make us afraid to try to measure him by our own senses. Indeed, his spiritual nature forbids our imagining anything earthly or carnal of him. For the same reason, he quite often assigns to himself a dwelling place in heaven. And yet as he is incomprehensible he also fills the earth itself. But because he sees that our slow minds sink down upon the earth, and rightly, in order to shake off our sluggishness and inertia he raises us above the world, ^{e(b)} And hence falls to the ground the error of the Manichees, who by postulating two principles ^e made the devil almost equal to God. ^{F352} Undoubtedly this was to wreck God’s unity and restrict his infinity. ^{e(b)} Indeed, that they dared abuse certain testimonies of Scripture was due to base ignorance; just as the error itself sprang from execrable madness. ^b The Anthropomorphites, also, who imagined a corporeal God from the fact that Scripture often ascribes to him a mouth, ears, eyes, hands, and feet, ^{F353} are easily refuted. For who even of slight intelligence does not understand that, as nurses commonly do with infants, God is wont in a measure to “lisp” in speaking to us? Thus such forms of

speaking do not so much express clearly what God is like as accommodate the knowledge of him to our slight capacity. To do this he must descend far beneath his loftiness.

2. THE THREE “PERSONS” IN GOD

^eBut God also designates himself by another special mark to distinguish himself more precisely from idols. For he so proclaims himself the sole God as to offer himself to be contemplated clearly in three persons. Unless we grasp these, only the bare and empty name of God flits about in our brains, to the exclusion of the true God. Again, lest anyone imagine that God is threefold, or think God’s simple essence to be torn into three persons, ^{f354} we must here seek a short and easy definition to free us from all error.

But because some hatefully inveigh against the word “person,” ^{f355} as if humanly devised, we ought first to see with what justice they do this. ^{e(b)}The apostle, calling the Son of God “the stamp of the Father’s hypostasis” [^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3], doubtless assigns some subsistence ^{f356} to the Father wherein he differs from the Son. For to consider hypostasis equivalent to *essence* (as certain interpreters have done, as if Christ, like wax imprinted with a seal, represented in himself the substance of the Father) would be not only uncouth but also absurd. For since the essence of God is simple and undivided, and he contains all in himself, without portion or derivation, but in integral perfection, the Son will be improperly, even foolishly, called his “stamp.” But because the Father, although distinct in his proper nature, expresses himself wholly in the Son, for a very good reason is it said that he has made his hypostasis visible in the latter, ^eIn close agreement with this are the words immediately following, that the Son is “the splendor of his glory” [^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3, cf. Vg.]. Surely we infer from the apostle’s words that the very hypostasis that shines forth in the Son is in the Father. From this we also easily ascertain the Son’s hypostasis, which distinguishes him from the Father.

The same reasoning applies to the Holy Spirit: for we shall presently prove that he is God, and yet it is necessary for him to be thought of as other than the Father. Indeed, this is not a distinction of essence, which it is unlawful to make manifold. Therefore, if the testimony of the apostle obtains any credence, it follows that there are in God three hypostases.

Since the Latins can express the same concept by the word “person,” to wrangle over this clear matter is undue squeamishness and even obstinacy. If anyone longs to translate word for word, let him use “subsistence.” Many have used “substance” in the same sense. Nor was the word “person” in use only among the Latins, for the Greeks, perhaps to testify their agreement, taught that there are three *prosopa* ^{f356A} in God. Although they, whether Greek or Latin, differ among themselves over the word, yet they quite agree in the essential matter.

3. THE EXPRESSIONS “TRINITY” AND “PERSON” AID THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE AND ARE THEREFORE ADMISSIBLE

^{e(a)} Now, although the heretics ^{f357} rail at the word “person,” or certain squeamish men ^{f358} cry out against admitting a term fashioned by the human mind, they cannot shake our conviction that three are spoken of, each of which is entirely God, yet that there is not more than one God. What wickedness, then, it is ^a to disapprove of words that explain nothing else than what is attested and sealed by Scripture!

It would be enough, they say, to confine within the limits of Scripture not only our thoughts but also our words, rather than scatter foreign terms about, which would become seedbeds of dissension and strife. For thus are we wearied with quarreling over words, thus by bickering do we lose the truth, thus by hateful wrangling do we destroy love.

If they call a foreign word one that cannot be shown to stand written syllable by syllable in Scripture, they are indeed imposing upon us an unjust law which condemns all interpretation not patched together out of the fabric of Scripture. But if that is “foreign” which has been curiously devised and is superstitiously defended, which conduces more to contention than to edification, which is made use of either unseasonably or fruitlessly, which by its harshness offends pious ears, which detracts from the simplicity of God’s Word — I wholeheartedly embrace their soberness. For I do not feel that concerning God we should speak with less conscientiousness than we should think, since whatever by ourselves we think concerning him is foolish, and whatever we speak, absurd. Yet some measure ought to be preserved: we ought to seek from Scripture a sure rule for both thinking and speaking, to which both the thoughts of our

minds and the words of our mouths should be conformed. But what prevents us from explaining in clearer words those matters in Scripture which perplex and hinder our understanding, yet which conscientiously and faithfully serve the truth of Scripture itself, and are made use of sparingly and modestly and on due occasion? There are quite enough examples of this sort of thing, ^bWhat is to be said, moreover, when it has been proved that the church is utterly compelled to make use of the words “Trinity” and “Persons”? ^aIf anyone, then, finds fault with the novelty of the words, does he not deserve to be judged as bearing the light of truth unworthily, since he is finding fault only with what renders the truth plain and clear?

4. THE CHURCH HAS REGARDED EXPRESSIONS LIKE “TRINITY, PERSON,” ETC., AS NECESSARY TO UNMASK FALSE TEACHERS

^aHowever, the novelty of words of this sort (if such it must be called) becomes especially useful when the truth is to be asserted against false accusers, who evade it by their shifts. Of this today we have abundant experience in our great efforts to rout the enemies of pure and wholesome doctrine. With such crooked and sinuous twisting these slippery snakes glide away unless they are boldly pursued, caught, and crushed. Thus men of old, stirred up by various struggles over depraved dogmas, were compelled to set forth with consummate clarity what they felt, lest they leave any devious shift to the impious, who cloaked their errors in layers of verbiage. Because he could not oppose manifest oracles, Arius confessed that Christ was God and the Son of God, and, as if he had done what was right, pretended some agreement with the other men. Yet in the meantime he did not cease to prate that Christ was created and had a beginning, as other creatures. The ancients, to drag the man’s versatile craftiness out of its hiding places, went farther, declaring Christ the eternal Son of the Father, consubstantial with the Father. Here impiety boiled over when the Arians began most wickedly to hate and curse the word *homoousios*. ¹³⁵⁹ But if at first they had sincerely and wholeheartedly confessed Christ to be God, they would not have denied him to be consubstantial with the Father. Who would dare inveigh against those upright men as wranglers and contentious persons because they became aroused to such heated discussion through one little word, and disturbed

the peace of the church? Yet that mere word marked the distinction between Christians of pure faith and sacrilegious Arians. Afterward Sabellius^{f360} arose, who counted the names of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as almost of no importance, arguing that it was not because of any distinction that they were put forward, but that they were diverse attributes of God, of which sort there are very many. If it came to a debate, he was accustomed to confess that he recognized the Father as God, the Son as God, and the Spirit as God; but afterward a way out was found, contending that he had said nothing else than if he had spoken of God as strong, and just, and wise. And so he re-echoed another old song, that the Father is the Son, and the Holy Spirit the Father, without rank, without distinction. To shatter the man's wickedness the upright doctors, who then had piety at heart, loudly responded that three properties must truly be recognized in the one God. And that they might fortify themselves against his tortuous cunning with the open and simple truth, they truly affirmed that a trinity of persons subsists in the one God, or, what was the same thing, subsists in the unity of God.

5. LIMITS AND NECESSITY OF THEOLOGICAL TERMS

^aIf, therefore, these terms were not rashly invented, we ought to beware lest by repudiating them we be accused of overweening rashness. Indeed, I could wish they were buried, if only among all men this faith were agreed on: that Father and Son and Spirit are one God, yet the Son is not the Father, nor the Spirit the Son, but that they are differentiated by a peculiar quality.

^bReally, I am not, indeed, such a stickler as to battle doggedly over mere words. For I note that the ancients, who otherwise speak very reverently concerning these matters, agree neither among themselves nor been at all times individually with themselves. What, now, are the formulas employed by the councils and excused by Hilary?^{f361} With what great freedom does Augustine sometimes burst forth?^{f362} How unlike are the Greeks and the Latins? But one example of the difference will suffice. When the Latins wished to translate the word *homoousios* they said "consubstantial," indicating that the substance of Father and Son is one, thus employing "Substance" instead of "essence." ^chence, likewise, Jerome in a letter to Damasus calls it a sacrilege to predicate three substances in

God. ^bYet you will find a more than a hundred times in Hilare that there are three “substances” in God. ^{f363 c} But how confused is Jerome by the word “hypostasis”! For he suspects poison lurking when three hypostases in one God are mentioned! Even if one uses this word in a pious sense, he does not, nevertheless, hide the fact that it is an improper expression. ^eThis would be true even if he spoke sincerely, rather than tried willingly and knowingly to charge the Eastern bishops, whom he hates, with unjust calumnies! Surely he shows little candor in asserting that in all profane schools ousia is nothing else but hypostasis, ^{f364} an opinion repeatedly refuted by common and well-worn usage. Augustine is more moderate and courteous, since even though he says that the word hypostasis in this sense is new to Latin ears, yet he leaves to the Greeks their manner of speaking so much that he gently bears with the Latins who had imitated the Greek phrase. ^{f365 c} And what Socrates writes concerning hypostasis in Book 6 of the *Tripartite History* suggests that it was wrongly applied to this matter by unlearned men. ^{f366 b} But the same Hilary accuses the heretics of a great crime, that by their wickedness he is forced to submit to the peril of human speech what ought to have been locked within the sanctity of men’s minds; and he does not hide the fact that this is to do things unlawful, to speak things inexpressible, to presume things not conceded. A little later he excuses himself at length for daring to put forward new terms; for when he has set forth the natural names — Father, Son, and Spirit — he adds that whatever is sought besides these is beyond the meaning of language, above the reach of sense, above the capacity of understanding. ^{f367} And elsewhere he pronounces the bishops of Gaul happy because they had neither wrought out, nor received, nor known, any other confession at all than the ancient and very simple one that had been received among all churches from the apostolic age. ^{f368 e} And Augustine’s excuse is similar: on account of the poverty of human speech in so great a matter, the word “hypostasis” had been forced upon us by necessity, not to express what it is, but only not to be silent on how Father, Son, and Spirit are three. ^{f369}

And ^bthis modesty of saintly men ought to warn us against forthwith so severely taking to task, like censors, those who do not wish to swear to the words conceived by us, ^eprovided they are not doing it out of either arrogance or forwardness or malicious craft. ^{e(b)} But let these very persons, in turn, weigh the necessity that compels us to speak thus, that gradually

they may at length become accustomed to a useful manner of speaking. Also let them learn to beware,^a lest, when they have to resist Arians on the one hand and Sabellians on the other, while indignant that the opportunity to evade the issue is cut off, they arouse some suspicion that they are disciples either of Arius or of Sabellius.^{f370} Arius says that Christ is God, but mutters that he was made and had a beginning. He says that Christ is one with the Father, but secretly whispers in the ears of his own partisans that He is united to the Father like other believers, although by a singular privilege. Say “consubstantial” and you will tear off the mask of this turncoat, and yet you add nothing to Scripture. Sabellius says that Father, Son, and Spirit signify no distinctions in God. Say they are three, and he will scream that you are naming three Gods. Say that in the one essence of God there is a trinity of persons; you will say in one word what Scripture states, and cut short empty talkativeness,^{b(a)} Indeed, if anxious superstition so constrains anyone that he cannot bear these terms, yet no one could now deny, even if he were to burst, that^a when we hear “one” we ought to understand “unity of substance”; when we hear “three in one essence,” the persons in this trinity are meant. When this is confessed without guile, we need not dally over words,^e But I have long since and repeatedly been experiencing that all who persistently quarrel over words nurse a secret poison. As a consequence, it is more expedient to challenge them deliberately than speak more obscurely to please them.

6. THE MEANING OF THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCEPTION

^eBut laying aside disputation over terms, I shall proceed to speak of the thing itself: “Person,” therefore, I call a “subsistence” in God’s essence, which, while related to the others, is distinguished by an incommunicable quality. By the term “subsistence” we would understand something different from “essence.”^{f371} For if the Word were simply God, and yet possessed no other characteristic mark, John would wrongly have said that the Word was always with God [^{<430101>}John 1:1]. When immediately after he adds that the Word was also God himself, he recalls us to the essence as a unity. But because he could not be with God without residing in the Father, hence emerges the idea of a subsistence, which, even though it has been joined with the essence by a common bond and cannot be separated from it, yet has a special mark whereby it is distinguished from it. Now, of the three subsistences I say that each one, while related to the others, is

distinguished by a special quality. This “relation” is here distinctly expressed: because where simple and indefinite mention is made of God, this name pertains no less to the Son and the Spirit than to the Father. But as soon as the Father is compared with the Son, the character of each distinguishes the one from the other. Thirdly, whatever is proper to each individually, I maintain to be incommunicable because whatever is attributed to the Father as a distinguishing mark cannot agree with, or be transferred to, the Son. Nor am I displeased with Tertullian’s definition, provided it be taken in the right sense, that there is a kind of distribution or economy in God which has no effect on the unity of essence.^{f372}

(The eternal deity of the Son, 7-13)

7. THE DEITY OF THE WORD

^{e(b)} Yet before I proceed farther, I must demonstrate the deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Thereafter we shall see how they differ from each other.

Certainly, ^b when God’s word is set before us in Scripture it would be the height of absurdity to imagine a merely fleeting and vanishing utterance, which, cast forth into the air, projects itself outside of God; and that both the oracles announced to the patriarchs and all prophecies were of this sort.^{f373} Rather, “Word” means the everlasting Wisdom, residing with God, from which both all oracles and all prophecies go forth. For, as Peter testifies, the ancient prophets spoke by the Spirit of Christ just as much as the apostles did [^{<600110>}1 Peter 1:10-11; Cf. ^{<610121>}2 Peter 1:21], and all who thereafter ministered the heavenly doctrine. ^e Indeed, because Christ had not yet been manifested, it is necessary to understand the Word as begotten of the Father before time [cf. Ecclesiasticus 24: 14, Vg.]. But if that Spirit, whose organs were the prophets, was the Spirit of the Word, we infer without any doubt that he was truly God. And Moses clearly teaches this in the creation of the universe, setting forth this Word as intermediary. For why does he expressly tell us that God in his individual acts of creation spoke, Let this or that be done [^{<010101>}Genesis, ch. 1] unless so that the unsearchable glory of God may shine forth in his image? It would be easy for censorious babblers to get around this, saying that the Word is to be understood as a bidding and command. But the apostles are better interpreters, who teach that the world was made through the Son,

and that he upholds all things by his powerful word [^{<580102>}Hebrews 1:2-3]. For here we see the Word understood as the order or mandate of the Son, who is himself the eternal and essential Word of the Father. And indeed, sane and modest men do not find obscure Solomon's statement, where he introduces wisdom as having been begotten of God before time [Ecclesiasticus 24:14, Vg.], and presiding over the creation of things and all God's works [^{<200822>}Proverbs 8:22 ff.]. ^{e(b)}For it would be foolish and silly to fancy a certain temporary volition of God; when God willed to set forth his fixed and eternal plan, and also something more secret. ^eThat saying of Christ's also applies here: "My Father and I have worked even to this day" [^{<430517>}John 5:17 p.]. For, affirming that he was constantly at work with the Father from the very beginning of the world, he explains more explicitly what Moses had briefly touched upon. Therefore we conclude that God has so spoken that the Word might have his share in the work and that in this way the work might be common to both. ^bBut John spoke most clearly of all when he declared that that Word, God from the beginning with God, was at the same time the cause of all things, together with God the Father [^{<430101>}John 1:1-3]. For John at once attributes to the Word a solid and abiding essence, ^eand ascribes something uniquely His own, and clearly shows how God, by speaking, was Creator of the universe, ^bTherefore, inasmuch as all divinely uttered revelations are correctly designated by the term "word of God," so this substantial Word is properly placed at the highest level, as the wellspring of all oracles. Unchangeable, the Word abides everlastingly one and the same with God, and is God himself.

8. THE ETERNITY OF THE WORD

^bHere some dogs bark out, who, while they dare not openly deprive him of his divinity, secretly filch away his eternity. For they say the Word for the first time began to be when God opened his holy mouth in the creation of the universe. ^{f374} But they are too reckless in inventing a sort of innovation in God's substance. For as the names of God that have respect to his outward activity began to be attributed to him after the existence of his work (as when he is called Creator of heaven and earth), so piety recognizes or allows no name which intimates that anything new has happened to God in himself, ^eFor if there had been anything adventitious, the passage of James would fall to the ground: that "every perfect gift

comes from above, and descends from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of change” [^{<590117>}James 1:17 p.]. Therefore nothing should be more intolerable to us than to fancy a beginning of that Word who both was always God and afterward was the artificer of the universe, ^bBut they think they are reasoning shrewdly when they aver that Moses, by narrating that God then spoke for the first time, hints thereby that there had been in him no Word before. Nothing is more trifling than this! For because something begins to be manifested at a certain time, we ought not therefore to gather that it never existed before. Indeed, I conclude far otherwise: the Word had existed long before God said, “Let there be light” [^{<010103>}Genesis 1:3] and the power of the Word emerged and stood forth. Yet if anyone should inquire how long before, he will find no beginning. Nor does He delimit a certain space of time when he says, “Father, glorify thy Son with the glory which I had with thee before the foundations of the universe were laid” [^{<431705>}John 17:5 p.]. ^eNor did John overlook this: because, before he passes on to the creation of the universe [^{<430103>}John 1:3], he says that “in the beginning the Word was with God” [^{<430101>}John 1:1 p.]. ^bTherefore we again state that the Word, conceived beyond the beginning of time by God, has perpetually resided with him. By this, his eternity, his true essence, and his divinity are proved.

9. THE DEITY OF CHRIST IN THE OLD TESTAMENT

^eFurther, I do not yet touch upon the person of the Mediator, but postpone it until we reach the treatment of redemption. ^{f375}Despite this, because it ought to be agreed among all that Christ is that Word endued with flesh, the testimonies affirming Christ’s deity are suitably included here. ^{e(b)}Though it is said in Psalm 45, “O God, thy throne is everlasting and forever and ever” [^{<194506>}Psalm 45:6; 44:7, Vg.], the Jews ^{f376}turned their backs and made the name Elohim fit also the angels and the highest powers. Yet nowhere in Scripture do we find a like passage, which raises up an eternal throne for a creature; ^bnor, indeed, is he called simply “God,” but also the eternal ruler. Furthermore, this title is bestowed on no one without an addition, as when Moses is said to become “as God to Pharaoh” [^{<020701>}Exodus 7:1]. ^eOthers read “of Pharaoh” in the genitive case, which is exceedingly silly. Indeed, I confess that what is remarkable for its singular excellence is often called “divine,” but from the context it is clear

enough that such an interpretation here is hard and forced, and really does not make sense.

But if their stubbornness does not yield, quite evidently ^{e(b)}Christ is brought forward by Isaiah both as God and as adorned with the highest power, which is the characteristic mark of the one God. ^b“This is,” he says, “the name by which they will call him, Mighty God, Father of the coming age,” etc. [^{<230906>}Isaiah 9:6 p.] The Jews also rail here, and thus invert the reading, “This is the name by which the Mighty God, Father of the coming age, shall call him,” etc., ^{e(b)}leaving to the Son only the title “Prince of Peace.” But to what purpose would so many titles be heaped up in this place to God the Father, since the intention of the prophet is to adorn Christ with clear marks to build up our faith in him? ^eTherefore there is no doubt that for the same reason he is now called “Mighty God” as a little before he was called “Immanuel.” ^{b(a)}Yet nothing clearer can be found than the passage of Jeremiah, that “this will be the name by which the branch of David will be called, ‘Jehovah our Righteousness’” [^{<242305>}Jeremiah 23:5-6 p.; cf. ch. 33:15-16]. For, since the Jews further teach that other names of God are nothing but titles, but that this one alone [Jehovah], which they speak of as ineffable, is a substantive to express his essence, we infer that the only Son is the eternal God who elsewhere declares that he will not give his glory to another [^{<234208>}Isaiah 42:8].

^bThe Jews, indeed, take refuge here, pointing out that Moses imposed this name upon the altar erected by him, and Ezekiel did so upon the new city of Jerusalem. But who does not see that the altar was built as a reminder that God was “the exaltation of Moses,” and that Jerusalem was not marked with God’s name simply to testify to God’s presence? For so does the prophet speak: “The name of the city from that day shall be ‘Jehovah is there’” [^{<264835>}Ezekiel 48:35]. Indeed, Moses expresses himself in this way: “He built an altar and called its name ‘Jehovah my exaltation’” [^{<021715>}Exodus 17:15, Cf. Vg.]. But more debate remains over another passage of Jeremiah, where this very formula is referred to Jerusalem in these words: “This is the name by which they will call it, ‘Jehovah our righteousness’” [^{<243316>}Jeremiah 33:16, cf. Vg. and Comm.]. However, this testimony is so very far from obscuring the truth that we are defending as rather to lend support to it. For whereas before he had witnessed that

Christ was the true Jehovah, from whom righteousness comes, now he declares that the church of God will be so clearly aware of this that it is able to glory in the very name. ^eTherefore in the former passage the source and cause of righteousness is set forth; in the latter, the effect is added.

10. THE “ANGEL OF THE ETERNAL GOD”*

^eBut if this evidence does not satisfy the Jews, I do not see by what subtleties they can elude the fact that Jehovah is so frequently set forth in the person of an angel. To the holy patriarchs an angel is said to have appeared, claiming for himself the name the Eternal God [^{<070611>}Judges 6:11, 12, 20, 21, 22; 7:5, 9]. If someone takes exception that this is said in regard to the role that he plays, the difficulty is by no means thus resolved. For as a servant he would not permit a sacrifice to be offered to himself and thus deprive God of His honor. Yet the angel, refusing to eat bread, commands that a sacrifice be offered to Jehovah [^{<071316>}Judges 13:16]. Indeed, the fact itself proves that he is Jehovah himself [ch. ^{<071320>}13:20]. Therefore Manoah and his wife infer from this sign that they have seen not only an angel but God himself. Hence that exclamation: “We shall ... die because we have seen God” [ch. ^{<071322>}13:22]. And when the wife answers, “If Jehovah had willed us to die, he would not have received the offering from our hand” [ch. ^{<071323>}13:23], she confesses that he who was previously called an angel is truly God. Besides, the angel’s reply removes all doubt: “Why do you ask concerning my name, which is wonderful?” [ch. ^{<071318>}13:18].

The impiety of Servetus ^{f377} was even more detestable, when he asserted that God was never revealed to Abraham and the other patriarchs, but that in his place an angel was worshiped. But the orthodox doctors of the church have rightly and prudently interpreted that chief angel to be God’s Word, who already at that time, as a sort of foretaste, began to fulfill the office of Mediator. ^{f378} For even though he was not yet clothed with flesh, he came down, so to speak, as an intermediary, in order to approach believers more intimately. Therefore this closer intercourse gave him the name of angel. Meanwhile, what was his he retained, that as God he might be of ineffable glory. The same thing is meant by Hosea, who, after recounting Jacob’s struggle with the angel, says, “Jehovah, the God of Hosts, Jehovah, his name is a remembrance” [^{<281205>}Hosea 12:5, Vg.].

Again, Servetus yelps that God took on the person of an angel. As if the prophet does not indeed confirm what had been said by Moses, “Why do you ask my name?” [^{<013229>}Genesis 32:29 p.]! And the confession of the holy patriarch sufficiently declares that he was not a created angel, but one in whom full deity dwelt, when Jacob says, “I have seen God face to face” [v. 30]. Hence, also, that saying of Paul’s that Christ was the leader of the people in the wilderness [^{<461004>}1 Corinthians 10:4];^{f379} because even though the time of humbling had not yet arrived, that eternal Word nevertheless set forth a figure of the office to which he had been destined. Now if we review objectively the second chapter of Zechariah, the angel who sends the other angel [^{<380203>}Zechariah 2:3] is immediately declared to be the God of Hosts, and to him is ascribed the highest power [v. 9]. I pass over innumerable testimonies on which our faith safely agrees, even though they move the Jews not a whit. For when it is said in Isaiah, “Behold, this is our God; ... he is Jehovah; we shall wait upon him, and he will preserve us” [^{<232509>}Isaiah 25:9, cf. Vg.], anyone with eyes can see that this refers to God, who rises up anew to save his people. And the emphatic demonstrations twice repeated permit a reference here to no one else but Christ. Even clearer and fuller is a passage in Malachi, where he promises that the ruler then awaited will come to his temple [^{<390301>}Malachi 3:1]. Certainly that temple was sacred to no other than to the one supreme God, yet the prophet claims it for Christ. From this it follows that he is the same God who had always been worshiped among the Jews.

11. THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: WITNESS OF THE APOSTLES*

^bMoreover, the New Testament abounds with innumerable testimonies. We must therefore take the trouble to make a brief selection rather than to heap up all. ^eBut although the apostles spoke of him after he had already appeared in the flesh as the Mediator, still all I bring forward will be a suitable proof of his eternal deity.

^bFirst of all, a point worth especial attention is the apostles’ teaching that what had been foretold concerning the eternal God had already been revealed in Christ or was someday to be manifested in him. For when Isaiah prophesies that the Lord of Hosts is to be “a stone of stumbling and a rock of offense for the Judeans and Israelites” [^{<230814>}Isaiah 8:14 p.], Paul

declares this prophecy fulfilled in Christ from.[9:32-33]. Therefore he proclaims Christ to be Lord of Hosts. Similarly, elsewhere he says, “We must all stand once before the judgment seat of Christ” from. 14:10 p.]. “For it is written,...To me every knee shall bow from. 14:11, Vg.], to me...every tongue shall swear” [^{<234523>}Isaiah 45:23, order changed]. Since in Isaiah, God foretells this concerning himself, and Christ, indeed, shows it forth in himself, it follows that he is that very God whose glory cannot be transferred to another. It is evident that what Paul cites to the Ephesians from The Psalms applies to God alone: “Ascending on high, he led the captivity” [^{<490408>}Ephesians 4:8; ^{<196818>}Psalms 68:18; 67:19, Vg.]. Understanding that an ascension of this sort had been prefigured when in a notable victory God put forth his power against the foreign nations, Paul indicates that it was manifested more fully in Christ. Thus John testifies that it was the glory of the Son which had been revealed through Isaiah’s vision [^{<431241>}John 12:41; ^{<230601>}Isaiah 6:1], even though the prophet himself writes that he saw the majesty of God. Obviously the titles of God that the apostle in The Letter to the Hebrews confers upon the Son are the most glorious of all: “In the beginning, thou, O Lord, didst found heaven and earth” [Hebrews 10: lop.; ^{<19A102>}Psalms 101:26 p., Vg.; ^{<19A225>}102:25, EV], etc. Likewise, “Adore him, all ye his angels” [^{<199607>}Psalms 96:7, Vg.; 97:7, EV; cf. ^{<580106>}Hebrews 1:6]. And still he does not misuse them when he applies them to Christ. Indeed, whatever they sing in The Psalms, He alone fulfills. For he it was who, rising up, was merciful to Zion [^{<19A114>}Psalms 101:14, Vg.; 102:13, EV]; he who asserted for himself the rule over all nations and islands [^{<199601>}Psalms 96:1, Vg.; 97: 1, EV]. And why should John have hesitated to refer the majesty of God to Christ, when he had declared that the Word was ever God [^{<430101>}John 1:1, 14]? Why should Paul have feared to place Christ on God’s judgment seat [^{<470510>}2 Corinthians 5:10], when he had previously proclaimed his divinity so openly, saying that he was “God...blessed forever” [^{<450905>}Romans 9:5]? And to make clear how consistent he is in this respect, in another passage he writes that “God has been manifested in the flesh” [^{<540316>}1 Timothy 3:16 p.]. If God is to be praised forever, he, then, it is to whom alone all glory and honor are due, as Paul affirms in another place [^{<540117>}1 Timothy 1:17]. And he does not conceal this, but openly proclaims: “Though he was in the form of God, he would not have counted it robbery if he had shown himself equal with God, yet he voluntarily emptied himself”

[^{<501706>}Philippians 2:6-7 p.]. And lest the impious carp about some feigned god, John went farther, saying: “He is the true God, and eternal life” [^{<620520>}1 John 5:20 p.]. However, it ought to be more than enough for us that tie is called God, especially by that witness who aptly declares to us that there are not many gods, but one [^{<050604>}Deuteronomy 6:4]. Moreover, it is that Paul who said, “Though many are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth,...yet for us there is one God, from whom are all things.” [^{<460805>}1 Corinthians 8:5-6 p.] When we hear from the same mouth that “God was manifested in the flesh” [^{<540316>}1 Timothy 3:16 p.], that “God has purchased the church by his blood” [^{<442028>}Acts 20:28 p.], why do we imagine a second god, whom Paul acknowledges not at all? And no doubt the same was the opinion of all godly men. In like manner Thomas openly proclaims him his Lord and God [^{<432028>}John 20:28], and thus professes him to be that sole God whom he had always worshiped.

12. THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IS DEMONSTRATED IN HIS WORKS

^bNow if we weigh his divinity by the works that are ascribed him in the Scriptures, it will thereby shine forth more clearly. Indeed, when he said that he had been working hitherto from the beginning with the Father [^{<430517>}John 5:17], the Jews, utterly stupid to all his other sayings, still sensed that he made use of divine power. And therefore, as John states, “the Jews sought all the more to kill him, because he not only broke the Sabbath, but also called God his Father, making himself equal with God” [^{<430518>}John 5:18]. How great will our stupidity then be if we do not feel that his divinity is here plainly affirmed? And verily, to govern the universe with providence and power, and to regulate all things by the command of his own power [^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3], deeds that the apostle ascribes to Christ, is the function of the Creator alone. And he not only participates in the task of governing the world with the Father; but he carries out also other individual offices, which cannot be communicated to the creatures. The Lord proclaims through the prophet, “I, even I, am the one who blots out your transgressions for my own sake” [^{<234325>}Isaiah 43:25 p.]. According to this saying, when the Jews thought that wrong was done to God in that Christ was remitting sins, Christ not only asserted in words, but also proved by miracle, that this power belonged to him [^{<400906>}Matthew 9:6]. We therefore perceive that he possesses not the

administration merely but the actual power of remission of sins, which the Lord says will never pass from him to another. What? Does not the searching and penetrating of the silent thoughts of hearts belong to God alone? Yet Christ also had this power [^{<400904>}Matthew 9:4; cf. ^{<430225>}John 2:25]. From this we infer his divinity.

13. THE DIVINITY OF CHRIST IS DEMONSTRATED BY HIS MIRACLES

^bHow plainly and clearly is his deity shown in miracles! Even though I confess that both the prophets and the apostles performed miracles equal to and similar to his, yet in this respect there is the greatest of differences: they distributed the gifts of God by their ministry, but he showed forth his own power. Indeed, he sometimes used prayer to render glory to the Father [^{<431141>}John 11:41]. But for the most part we see his own power shown to us. And why would he not be the real author of miracles, who by his own authority commits the dispensation of them to others? For the Evangelist relates that he gave to the apostles the power of raising the dead, curing lepers, casting out demons, etc. [^{<401008>}Matthew 10:8; cf. ^{<410325>}Mark 3:25; 6:7]. Moreover, they so used that sort of ministry as to show sufficiently that the power came from none other than Christ. “In the name of Jesus Christ,” says Peter, “... arise and walk.” [^{<440306>}Acts 3:6.] No wonder, then, if Christ offered his miracles to confound the unbelief of the Jews, inasmuch as these were done by his power and thus rendered the fullest testimony of his divinity [^{<430536>}John 5:36; ^{<431037>}10:37; ^{<431411>}14:11].

Moreover, if apart from God there is no salvation, no righteousness, no life, yet Christ contains all these in himself, God is certainly revealed. And let no one object to me that life and salvation have been infused into Christ by God, ^{f380} for Christ is not said to have received salvation, but to be salvation itself. And if no one but God is good [^{<401917>}Matthew 19:17], how could a mere man be — I do not say good and just — but goodness and justice itself? Why is it that, by the testimony of the Evangelist, life was in him from the beginning of Creation, and even then existing as life he was the light of men [^{<430104>}John 1:4]? Accordingly, relying upon such proofs, we dare put our faith and hope in him, although we know it to be a sacrilegious impiety for anyone to place his trust in creatures. “Do you

believe in God?" he asks. "Believe also in me." [^{<431401>}John 14:1 p.] And thus does Paul interpret two passages of Isaiah: "Whoever hopes in him will not be put to shame" [^{<451011>}Romans 10:11; ^{<232816>}Isaiah 28:16]. Also, "There will come from the root of Jesse one who will arise to rule over peoples; in him will the nations hope." [^{<451512>}Romans 15:12 p.; ^{<231110>}Isaiah 11:10.] And why should we search out more testimonies of Scripture concerning this matter, when we come so often upon this sentence: "He who believes in me has eternal life" [e.g., ^{<430647>}John 6:47]? Now the prayer that depends upon faith is also due Christ, yet it specially belongs to the divine majesty, if anything else does belong to it. For the prophet says: "Whoever will call upon the name of Jehovah will be saved." [^{<290232>}Joel 2:32, Vg.] Another: "The name of Jehovah is a very strong tower the righteous will flee to it and be saved." [^{<201810>}Proverbs 18:10 p.] But the name of Christ is invoked for salvation; therefore it follows that he is Jehovah. Moreover, we have an example of such invocation in Stephen, where he says, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" [^{<440759>}Acts 7:59]. Later in the whole church, as Ananias testifies in the same book, saying, "Lord, thou knowest how many evils this man has inflicted upon all the saints who call upon thy name" [^{<440913>}Acts 9:13-14 p.]. And to have it more plainly understood that "the whole fullness of divinity dwells bodily" in Christ [^{<510209>}Colossians 2:9], the apostle confesses that he introduced no other doctrine among the Corinthians than knowledge of him, and that he has preached nothing but this [^{<460202>}1 Corinthians 2:2].

What wondrous and great thing is this, I ask, that the name of the Son alone is announced to us, when God bade us glory in the knowledge of him alone? [^{<240924>}Jeremiah 9:24]. Who has dared talk of him as a mere creature, when the knowledge of him is our only reason for glorying? Besides this, ^{e(b)}the salutations prefixed to the letters of Paul pray for the same benefits from the Son as from the Father [^{<450107>}Romans 1:7; ^{<460103>}1 Corinthians 1:3; ^{<470102>}2 Corinthians 1:2; ^{<480103>}Galatians 1:3; etc.]. By this we are taught not only that by the Son's intercession do those things which the Heavenly Father bestows come to us but that by mutual participation in power the Son himself is the author of them. by his practical knowledge is doubtless more certain and firmer than any idle speculation. ^{f381} There, indeed, does the pious mind perceive the very presence of God, and almost touches him, when it feels itself quickened, illumined, preserved, justified, and sanctified.

14. THE DIVINITY OF THE SPIRIT IS DEMONSTRATED IN HIS WORK

^bAccordingly, we ought to seek from the same source proof of the deity of the Spirit. Indeed, that testimony of Moses in the history of the Creation is very clear, that “the Spirit of God was spread over the deeps”

[^{<010102>}Genesis 1:2, cf. Vg.], or formless matter; for it shows not only that the beauty of the universe (which we now perceive) owes its strength and preservation to the power of the Spirit but that before this adornment was added, even then the Spirit was occupied with tending that confused mass. And men cannot subtly explain away Isaiah’s utterance, “And now Jehovah has sent me, and his Spirit” [^{<234816>}Isaiah 48:16, cf. Comm.], for in sending the prophets he shares the highest power with the Holy Spirit. ^{f382}From this his divine majesty shines forth. But the best confirmation for us, as I have said, will be from familiar use. ^bFor what Scripture attributes to him and we ourselves learn by the sure experience of godliness is far removed from the creatures. For it is the Spirit who, everywhere diffused, sustains all things, causes them to grow, and quickens them in heaven and in earth. Because he is circumscribed by no limits, he is excepted from the category of creatures; but in transfusing into all things his energy, and breathing into them essence, life, and movement, he is indeed plainly divine.

Again, if regeneration into incorruptible life is higher and much more excellent than any present growth, what ought we to think of him from whose power it proceeds? Now, Scripture teaches in many places that he is the author of regeneration not by borrowing but by his very own energy; and not of this only, but of future immortality as well. In short, upon him, as upon the Son, are conferred functions that especially belong to divinity. “For the Spirit searches...even the depths of God” [^{<460210>}1 Corinthians 2:10], who has no counselor among the creatures [^{<451134>}Romans 11:34]; he bestows wisdom and the faculty of speaking [^{<461210>}1 Corinthians 12:10], although the Lord declares to Moses that it is his work alone [^{<020411>}Exodus 4:11]. Thus through him we come into communion with God, so that we in a way feel his life-giving power toward us. Our justification is his work; from him is power, sanctification

[cf. ^{<460611>}1 Corinthians 6:11], truth, grace, and every good thing that can be conceived, since there is but one Spirit from whom flows every sort of gift [^{<461211>}1 Corinthians 12:11]. ^eEspecially worth noting is this saying of Paul's: "Although there are divers gifts" [^{<461204>}1 Corinthians 12:4] and manifold and varied distribution [cf. ^{<580204>}Hebrews 2:4], "but the same Spirit" [^{<461204>}1 Corinthians 12:4 p.]; because this makes him not only the beginning or source, but also the author. This Paul also more clearly expresses a little later in these words: "One and the same Spirit apports all things as he will" [^{<461211>}1 Corinthians 12:11 p.]. For if the Spirit were not an entity subsisting in God, choice and will would by no means be conceded to him. Paul, therefore, very clearly attributes to the Spirit divine power, and shows that He resides hypostatically in God.

15. EXPRESS TESTIMONIES FOR THE DEITY OF THE SPIRIT

^bNor, indeed, does Scripture in speaking of him refrain from the designation "God." For Paul concludes that we are the temple of God from the fact that his Spirit dwells in us [^{<460316>}1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:19; ^{<470616>}2 Corinthians 6:16]. We are not lightly to pass over this fact. For, while God indeed frequently promises that he will choose us as a temple for himself, this promise is not otherwise fulfilled than by his Spirit dwelling in us. ^eCertainly, as Augustine very clearly states: "If we are bidden to make a temple for the Spirit out of wood and stone, because this honor is due to God alone, such a command would be a clear proof of the Spirit's divinity. Now, then, how much clearer is it that we ought not to make a temple for him, but ought ourselves to be that temple?" ^{f383} and the apostle himself sometimes writes that "we are God's temple" [^{<460316>}1 Corinthians 3:16-17; ^{<470616>}2 Corinthians 6:16], at other times, in the same sense, "the temple of the Holy Spirit" [^{<460619>}1 Corinthians 6:19]. Indeed, Peter, rebuking Ananias for lying to the Holy Spirit, says that he has lied not to men but to God [^{<440503>}Acts 5:3-4]. And where Isaiah introduces the Lord of Hosts speaking, Paul teaches that it is the Holy Spirit who speaks [^{<230609>}Isaiah 6:9; ^{<442825>}Acts 28:25-26]. ^eIndeed, where the prophets usually say that the words they utter are those of the Lord of Hosts, Christ and the apostles refer them to the Holy Spirit [cf. ^{<610121>}2 Peter 1:21]. It therefore follows that he who is pre-eminently the author of prophecies is truly Jehovah. Again, ^bwhere God complains that he was provoked to anger by the stubbornness of his people, Isaiah writes that "his Holy

Spirit was grieved” [^{<236310>}Isaiah 63:10 p.]. ^eFinally, if blasphemy against the Spirit is remitted neither in this age nor in the age to come, although he who has blasphemed against the Son may obtain pardon [^{<401231>}Matthew 12:31; ^{<410329>}Mark 3:29; ^{<431210>}Luke 12:10], by this his divine majesty, to injure or diminish which is an inexpressible crime, is openly declared. I deliberately omit many testimonies that the church fathers used. They thought it justifiable to cite from David, “By the word of the Lord the heavens were established, and all their power by the spirit of his mouth” [^{<193306>}Psalms 33:6 p.], to prove that the universe was no less the work of the Holy Spirit than of the Son. But since it is common practice in The Psalms to repeat the same thing twice, and since in Isaiah “spirit of the mouth” means the same thing as “the word” [^{<231104>}Isaiah 11:4], that was a weak reason. Thus I have chosen to touch only a few things upon which godly minds may securely rest.

(Distinction and unity of the three Persons, 16-20)

16. ONENESS

^eMoreover, because God more clearly disclosed himself in the coming of Christ, thus he also became known more familiarly in three persons.

^{e(b/a)}But of the many testimonies this one will suffice for us. ^{f384} ^aFor Paul so connects these three — God, faith, and baptism [^{<490405>}Ephesians 4:5] — as to reason from one to the other: namely, because faith is one, that he may thereby show God to be one; because baptism is one, that he may thence show faith also to be one. ^bTherefore, if through baptism we are initiated into the faith and religion of one God, we must consider him into whose name we are baptized to be the true God. ^{e(b)}Indeed, there is no doubt that Christ willed by this solemn pronouncement to testify that the perfect light of faith was manifested when he said, “Baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” [^{<402819>}Matthew 28:19 p.]. For this means precisely to be baptized into the name of the one God who has shown himself with complete clarity in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit. Hence it is quite clear that in God’s essence reside three persons in whom one God is known.

^{e(a)}Indeed, faith ought not to gaze hither and thither, nor to discourse of various matters, about to look upon the one God, to unite with him, to cleave to him. From this, then, it is easily established that if there are

various kinds of faith, there must also be many gods. Now because Baptism is the sacrament of faith, it confirms for us the unity of God from the fact that it is one. ^{b(a)}Hence it also follows that we are not permitted to be baptized except into the one God, because we embrace the faith of him into whose name we are baptized. What, then, did Christ mean when he commanded that Baptism should be in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, except that we ought with one faith to believe in the Father, the Son, and the Spirit? ^aWhat else is this than to testify clearly that Father, Son, and Spirit are one God? ^bTherefore, since that there is one God, not more, is regarded as a settled principle, we conclude that Word and Spirit are nothing else than the very essence of God. The Arians used to prate most foolishly when, in confessing the divinity of the Son, they took away the substance of God from him. A like madness tormented the Macedonians ^{f385} who by “Spirit” wanted to understand only those gifts of grace poured out upon men. For, as wisdom, understanding, prudence, fortitude, and fear of the Lord proceed from him, so is he the one Spirit of wisdom, prudence, fortitude, and godliness [cf. ^{<231102>}Isaiah 11:2]. And he is not divided according to the distribution of gifts, but however diversely they may be divided; yet, says the apostle, he remains “one and the same” [^{<461211>}1 Corinthians 12:11].

17. THREENESS

^bAgain, Scripture sets forth a distinction of the Father from the Word, and of the Word from the Spirit. Yet the greatness of the mystery warns us how much reverence and sobriety we ought to use in investigating this. And that passage in Gregory of Nazianzus vastly delights me:

“I cannot think on the one without quickly being encircled by the splendor of the three; nor can I discern the three without being straightway carried back to the one.” ^{f386} Let us not, then, be led to imagine a trinity of persons that keeps our thoughts distracted and does not at once lead them back to that unity. Indeed, the words “Father,” “Son,” and “Spirit” imply a real distinction — let no one think that these titles, whereby God is variously designated from his works, are empty — but a distinction, not a division,

^{e(b)}The passages ^ethat we have already cited [e.g., ^{<381307>}Zechariah 13:7]

^{e(b)}show that the Son has a character distinct from the Father, ^ebecause the Word would not have been with God unless he were another than the

Father, nor would he have had his glory with the Father were he not distinct from the Father. ^bIn like manner he distinguishes the Father from himself when he says that there is another who bears witness to him [^{<430532>}John 5:32; 8:16; and elsewhere], ^{b(a)}And with this agrees what is said elsewhere: that the Father created all things through the Word [^{<430103>}John 1:3; ^{<581103>}Hebrews 11:3]. This he could not have done without being somehow distinct from the Word. Furthermore, it was not the Father who descended upon the earth, but he who went forth from the Father; the Father did not die, nor did he arise again, but rather he who had been sent by the Father. Nor did this distinction have its beginning from the time that he assumed flesh, ^{f387}but before this also it is manifest that he was the only-begotten “in the bosom of the Father” [^{<430118>}John 1:18]. For who would take upon himself to assert that the Son did not enter into the bosom of the Father until he descended from heaven to assume humanity? Therefore he was in the bosom of the Father before, and held his own glory in the presence of the Father [^{<431705>}John 17:5]. Christ implies the distinction of the Holy Spirit from the Father when he says that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father [^{<431526>}John 15:26; cf. ch. 14: 26]. He implies the distinction of the Holy Spirit from himself as often as he calls the Spirit “another,” as when he announces that he will send another Comforter [^{<431416>}John 14:16], and often elsewhere.

18. DIFFERENCE OF FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT

^bI really do not know whether it is expedient to borrow comparisons from human affairs to express the force of this distinction. Men of old were indeed accustomed sometimes to do so, but at the same time they confessed that the analogies they advanced were quite inadequate. ^{f388}Thus it is that I shrink from all rashness here: lest if anything should be inopportunately expressed, it may give occasion either of calumny to the malicious, or of delusion to the ignorant. Nevertheless, it is not fitting to suppress the distinction that we observe to be expressed in Scripture. It is this: to the Father is attributed the beginning of activity, ^{f389}and the fountain and wellspring of all things; to the Son, wisdom, counsel, and the ordered disposition of all things; but to the Spirit is assigned the power and efficacy of that activity. Indeed, although the eternity of the Father is also the eternity of the Son and the Spirit, since God could never exist apart from his wisdom and power, and we must not seek in eternity a

before or an *after*, nevertheless the observance of an order is not meaningless or superfluous, when the Father is thought of as first, then from him the Son, and finally from both the Spirit. For the mind of each human being is naturally inclined to contemplate God first, then the wisdom coming forth from him, and lastly the power whereby he executes the decrees of his plan. For this reason, the Son is said to come forth from the Father alone; the Spirit, from the Father and the Son ^{f390} at the same time. This appears in many passages, ^{b(a)} but nowhere more clearly than in chapter 8 of Romans, where the same Spirit is indifferently called sometimes the Spirit of Christ [v. 9], sometimes the Spirit of him “who raised up Christ... from the dead” [v. 11] — ^b and not without justification. For Peter also testifies that it was by the Spirit of Christ that the prophets prophesied [^{<610121>} 2 Peter 1:21; cf. ^{<600111>} 1 Peter 1:11], even though Scripture often teaches that it was the Spirit of God the Father.

19. THE RELATIONSHIP OF FATHER, SON, AND SPIRIT

^b Furthermore, this distinction is so far from contravening the utterly simple unity of God as to ^{b(a)} permit us to prove from it that the Son is one God with the Father because he shares with the Father one and the same Spirit; and that the Spirit is not something other than the Father and different from the Son, because he is the Spirit of the Father and the Son.

^b For in each hypostasis the whole divine nature is understood, with this qualification — that to each belongs his own peculiar quality. The Father is wholly in the Son, the Son wholly in the Father, even as he himself declares: “I am in the Father, and the Father in me” [^{<431410>} John 14:10]. And ecclesiastical writers do not concede that the one is separated from the other by any difference of essence, ^c By these appellations which set forth the distinction (says Augustine) is signified their mutual relationships and not the very substance by which they are one. ^b In this sense the opinions of the ancients are to be harmonized, which otherwise would seem somewhat to clash. Sometimes, indeed, they teach that the Father is the beginning of the Son; sometimes they declare that the Son has both divining and essence from himself, can thus has one beginning with the Father. Augustine well and clearly expresses the cause of this diversity in another place, when he speaks as follows: “Christ with respect to himself is called God; with respect to the Father, Son. Again, the Father with respect to himself is called God; with respect to the Son, Father. In so far

as he is called Father with respect to the Son, he is not the Son; in so far as he is called the Son with respect to the Father, he is not the Father; in so far as he is called both Father with respect to himself, and Son with respect to himself, he is the same God.”^{f391} Therefore, when we speak simply of the Son without regard to the Father, we well and properly declare him to be of himself; and for this reason we call him the sole beginning. But when we mark the relation that he has with the Father, we rightly make the Father the beginning of the Son. ^eThe whole fifth book of Augustine *On the Trinity* is concerned with explaining this matter. Indeed, it is far safer to stop with that relation which Augustine sets forth than by too subtly penetrating into the sublime mystery to wander through many evanescent speculations.

20. THE TRIUNE GOD

^eTherefore, let those who dearly love soberness, and who will be content with the measure of faith, receive in brief form what is useful to know: ^{f392} namely, that, when we profess to believe in one God, under the name of God is understood a single, simple essence, in which we comprehend three persons, or hypostases. Therefore, whenever the name of God is mentioned without particularization, there are designated no less the Son and the Spirit than the Father; but where the Son is joined to the Father, then the relation of the two enters in; and so we distinguish among the persons. But because the peculiar qualities in the persons carry an order within them, e.g., in the Father is the beginning and the source, so often as mention is made of the Father and the Son together, or the Spirit, the name of *God* is peculiarly applied to the Father. In this way, unity of essence is retained, and a reasoned order is kept, which yet takes nothing away from the deity of the Son and the Spirit. Certainly, since we have already seen that the apostles declared him to be the Son of God whom Moses and the prophets testified to be Jehovah, it is always necessary to come to the unity of essence. Thus we regard it a detestable sacrilege for the Son to be called another God than the Father, for the simple name of God admits no relation, nor can God be said to be this or that with respect to himself. ^{f393}

Now, that the name of Jehovah taken without specification corresponds to Christ is also clear from Paul’s words: “Three times I besought the Lord about this” [^{<471208>}2 Corinthians 12:8]. When he received Christ’s answer,

“My grace is sufficient for you,” he added a little later, “That the power of Christ may dwell in me” [^{<471209>}2 Corinthians 12:9]. For it is certain that the name “Lord” was put there in place of “Jehovah,” and thus it would be foolish and childish so to restrict it to the person of the Mediator, seeing that in his prayer he uses an absolute expression which introduces no reference to the relationship of Father and Son. And we know from the common custom of the Greeks that the apostles usually substitute the name κύριος [Lord] for Jehovah. And to take a ready example, Paul prayed to the Lord in no other sense than that in which Peter cites the passage from Joel “Whoever calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved” [^{<440221>}Acts 2:21; ^{<290232>}Joel 2:32]. Where this name is expressly applied to the Son, we shall see in its proper place that the reason is different. For the present, it is enough to grasp that when Paul calls upon God in an absolute sense he immediately adds the name of Christ. ^{e(b/a)}Even so, Christ himself calls God in his entirety “Spirit” [^{<430424>}John 4:24]. ^{b(a)}For nothing excludes the view that the whole essence of God is spiritual, in which are comprehended Father, Son, and Spirit. This is made plain from Scripture. For as we there hear God called Spirit, so also do we hear the Holy Spirit, seeing that the Spirit is a hypostasis of the whole essence, spoken of as of God and from God.

(Refutation of anti-Trinitarian heresies, 21-29)

21. THE GROUND OF ALL HERESY: A WARNING TO ALL

^{b(a)}Moreover, Satan, in order to tear our faith from its very roots, has always been instigating great battles, partly concerning the divine essence of the Son and the Spirit, partly concerning the distinction of the persons. He has during nearly all ages stirred up ungodly spirits to harry orthodox teachers over this matter can today also is trying to kindle a new fire from the old embers. For these reasons, it is important here to resist the perverse ravings of certain persons. ^{e(b/a)}Hitherto it has been my particular intention to lead by the hand those who are teachable, but not to strive hand to hand with the inflexible and the contentious. But now the truth which has been peaceably shown must be maintained against all the calumnies of the wicked. ^{b(a)}And yet I will exert especial effort to the end that they who lend ready and open ears to God’s Word may have a firm standing ground, ^bHere, indeed, if anywhere in the secret mysteries of

Scripture, we ought to play the philosopher soberly and with great moderation; let us use great caution that neither our thoughts nor our speech go beyond the limits to which the Word of God itself extends. For how can the human mind measure off the measureless essence of God according to its own little measure,^{†394} a mind as yet unable to establish for certain the nature of the sun's body, though men's eyes daily gaze upon it? Indeed, how can the mind by its own leading come to search out God's essence when it cannot even get to its own? Let us then willingly leave to God the knowledge of himself. For, as Hilary says, he is the one fit witness to himself, and is not known except through himself.^{†395} But we shall be "leaving it to him" if we conceive him to be as he reveals himself to us, without inquiring about him elsewhere than from his Word. On this question there are extant five homilies of Chrysostom *Against the Anomoeans*;^{†396} yet not even these could restrain the presumptuous Sophists from giving their stuttering tongues free rein. For in this matter they have behaved no more modestly than they usually do everywhere. We ought to be warned by the unhappy outcome of this presumption so that we may take care to apply ourselves to this question with teachableness rather than with subtlety. And let us not take it into our heads either to seek out God anywhere else than in his Sacred Word, or to think anything about him that is not prompted by his Word, or to speak anything that is not taken from that Word.^{e(b)} But if some distinction does exist in the one divinity of Father, Son, and Spirit — something hard to grasp — and occasions to certain minds more difficulty and trouble than is expedient,^e let it be remembered that men's minds, when they indulge their curiosity, enter into a labyrinth.^{†397} And so let them yield themselves to be ruled by the heavenly oracles, even though they may fail to capture the height of the mystery.

22. SERVETUS' CONTENTION AGAINST THE TRINITY

^eTo frame a catalogue of the errors with which the sincerity of the faith was once assailed on this head of doctrine would be too long and needlessly irksome. And very many of the heretics with brutish ravings, seeking to overthrow the whole glory of God, have thought it enough to alarm and confuse the uninstructed. Presently, indeed, from a few men there have boiled up several sects, which partly tore asunder God's essence, partly confused the distinction that exists between the persons.

Indeed, if we hold fast to what has been sufficiently shown above from Scripture — that the essence of the one God is simple and undivided, and that it belongs to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit; and on the other hand that by a certain characteristic the Father differs from the Son, and the Son from the Spirit — the gate will be closed not only to Arius and Sabellius but to other ancient authors of errors.

But because in our own day there have arisen certain frenzied persons, such as Servetus and his like, who have entangled everything with new deceptions, it is of importance to discuss their fallacies in a few words. For Servetus the name “Trinity” was so utterly hateful and detestable that he commonly labeled all those whom he called Trinitarians as atheists.^{f398} I pass over the senseless words that he thought up to rail at them. This, indeed, was the sum of his speculations: God is assumed to be tripartite when three persons are said to reside in his essence; this is an imaginary triad, because it clashes with God’s unity. Meanwhile, he would hold the persons to be certain external ideas which do not truly subsist in God’s essence, but represent God to us in one manifestation or another. In the beginning there was no distinction in God, because the Word and the Spirit were formerly one and the same: but when Christ came forth as God from God, the Spirit proceeded from him as another God. But even though he sometimes colors his absurdities with allegories, as when he says that the eternal Word of God was the Spirit of Christ with God and the refulgence of his idea, and that the Spirit was the shadow of deity, yet afterward he annihilates the deity of both, declaring that as God metes out according to his dispensation there is a part of God both in the Son and in the Spirit, just as the same Spirit, being substantially in us and also in wood and stone, is a portion of God. We will see in its proper place what he babbles concerning the person of the Mediator. Indeed, this monstrous fabrication, that “person” is nothing else than a visible manifestation of the glory of God, needs no long refutation. For although John affirms that the Word^{f399} was God when the universe was as yet not created, he utterly distinguishes Word from idea [^{<430101>}John 1:1]. If then, also, that Word who was God from farthest eternity both was with the Father and had his own glory with the Father [^{<431705>}John 17:5], surely he could not have been an outward or figurative splendor, but of necessity it follows that he was a hypostasis that resided in God himself.

Moreover, although no mention is made of the Spirit except in the history of the creation of the universe, nevertheless the Spirit is introduced here, not as a shadow, but as the essential power of God, when Moses tells that the as yet formless mass was itself sustained in him [^{<010102>}Genesis 1:2]. Therefore it then has become clear that the eternal Spirit had always been in God, while with tender care he supported the confused matter of heaven and earth, until beauty and order were added. Surely there could not yet be a likeness or representation of God, as Servetus dreams. Elsewhere, indeed, he is forced to disclose more openly his impious notion that God, by decreeing through his eternal reason a Son visible to himself, in this way showed himself visibly. For if this be true, no other divinity is left to Christ, except in so far as the Son has been ordained by God's eternal decree. Besides this, he so transforms those specters which he posits in place of hypostases that he does not hesitate falsely to attach new accidental qualities to God. Indeed, to be execrated far beyond all else is the fact that he indiscriminately mingles both the Son of God and the Spirit with created beings generally. For he publicly declares that in the essence of God there are parts and divisions, each portion of which is God: indeed, he particularly states that the spirits of believers are coeternal and consubstantial with God, although he elsewhere assigns a substantial deity not only to the soul of man but to other created things.

23. THE SON IS GOD EVEN AS THE FATHER

^eFrom this morass another similar monster has come forth.^{f400} For certain rascals, to escape the invidiousness and shame of Servetus' impiety, indeed confessed that there are three persons; but they added the provision that the Father, who is truly and properly the sole God, in forming the Son and the Spirit, infused into them his own deity. Indeed, they do not refrain from this dreadful manner of speaking: the Father is distinguished from the Son and the Spirit by this mark, that he is the only "essence giver."^{f401} First they allege the specious argument that Christ is commonly called the Son of God and infer from this that no other than the Father is, properly speaking, God. Yet they do not observe that, even though the name "God" is also common to the Son, it is sometimes applied to the Father par excellence^{f402} because he is the fountainhead and beginning of deity — and this is done to denote the simple unity of essence.

They object: if he is truly the Son of God, it is absurd to think of him as the Son of a person. I reply that both are true: that is, he is the Son of God, because the Word was begotten by the Father before all ages [cf. ^{<460207>}1 Corinthians 2:7] (for we do not yet have occasion to mention the person of the Mediator); and yet for the sake of clarification we must have regard to the person, so as not to take the name of God here without qualification, but as used of the Father. For if we consider no one but the Father to be God, we definitely cast the Son down from this rank. Therefore whenever mention is made of deity, we ought by no means to admit any antithesis between Son and Father, as if the name of the true God applied to the latter alone. For of course the God who manifested himself to Isaiah [^{<230601>}Isaiah 6:1] was the true and only God, the God whom nevertheless John affirms to have been Christ [^{<431241>}John 12:41]. He who also through the mouth of Isaiah testified that he would be as a stone of stumbling for the Jews [^{<230814>}Isaiah 8:14] was the only God, whom Paul declared to have been Christ [^{<460933>}Romans 9:33]. When through Isaiah he proclaims, “I live” [^{<234918>}Isaiah 49:18]: “to me every knee shall bow” from. 14:11, Vg.; cf. ^{<234524>}Isaiah 45:24, Vg.], he is the sole God; yet Paul interprets the same to be Christ [^{<451411>}Romans 14:11]. To this are added the testimonies that the apostle puts forward: “Thou, O God, hast founded heaven and earth” [^{<580110>}Hebrews 1:10; ^{<19A225>}Psalms 102:25-26]. Likewise: “Let all the angels of God adore him.” [^{<580106>}Hebrews 1:6; ^{<199707>}Psalms 97:7] These things are appropriate only to the sole God: nevertheless, he contends that they are proper titles of Christ. And there is no value in the subtle distinction that what is proper to God is transferred to Christ, because he is the splendor of his glory [^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3]. For, since the name of Jehovah is set forth everywhere, it follows that with respect to his deity his being is from himself. For if he is Jehovah, it cannot be denied that he is that same God who elsewhere proclaims through Isaiah, “I, I am, and apart from me there is no God” [^{<234406>}Isaiah 44:6 p.]. Jeremiah’s utterance also bears considering: “The gods who did not make heaven and earth shall perish from the earth which is under heaven” [^{<241011>}Jeremiah 10:11 p.].

On the other hand, it will be necessary to admit that the Son of God is he whose deity is quite often proved in Isaiah from the creation of the universe. But how will the Creator, who gives being to all, not have being from himself, but borrow his essence from elsewhere? For whoever says

that the Son has been given his essence from the Father denies that he has being from himself. But the Holy Spirit gives the lie to this, naming him “Jehovah.” Now if we concede that all essence is in the Father alone, either it will become divisible or be taken away from the Son. And thus deprived of his essence, he will be God in name only. The essence of God, if these babblers are to be believed, belongs to the Father only, inasmuch as he alone is, and is the essence giver of the Son. Thus the divinity of the Son will be something abstracted from God’s essence, or a part derived from the whole.

Now they are compelled from their own presupposition to concede that the Spirit is of the Father alone, because if he is a derivation from the primal essence, which is proper only to the Father, he will not rightly be considered the Spirit of the Son. Yet this is disproved by Paul’s testimony, where he makes the Spirit common to Christ and the Father [^{<450809>}Romans 8:9]. Furthermore, if the person of the Father is expunged from the Trinity, in what respect would he differ from the Son and the Spirit except that only he is God himself? They confess Christ to be God, and yet to differ from the Father. Conversely, there must be some mark of differentiation in order that the Father may not be the Son. Those who locate that mark in the essence clearly annihilate Christ’s true deity, which without essence, and indeed the whole essence, cannot exist. Certainly the Father would not differ from the Son unless he had in himself something unique, which was not shared with the Son. Now what can they find to distinguish him? If the distinction is in the essence, let them answer whether or not he has shared it with the Son. Indeed, this could not be done in part because it would be wicked to fashion a half-God. Besides, in this way they would basely tear apart the essence of God. It remains that the essence is wholly and perfectly common to Father and Son. If this is true, then there is indeed with respect to the essence no distinction of one from the other. If they make rejoinder that the Father in bestowing essence nonetheless remains the sole God, in whom the essence is, Christ then will be a figurative God, a God in appearance and name only, not in reality itself. For there is nothing more proper to God than to be, according to that saying, “He who is has sent me to you” [^{<020314>}Exodus 3:14, Vg.].

24. THE NAME “GOD” IN SCRIPTURE DOES NOT REFER TO THE FATHER ALONE

From many passages one can readily refute as false their assumption that any unqualified reference to God in Scripture applies to the Father alone. In the very passages that they cite on their own side they shamelessly disclose their thoughtlessness, for the name of the Son is in these set beside that of the Father. From this it appears that the name of God is understood in a relative sense, and is therefore to be restricted to the person of the Father. Thus their objection, “Unless the Father alone were truly God, he would be his own Father,” is removed with one word. Nor, indeed, is it absurd for him who not only has begotten his own wisdom from himself but is also the God of the Mediator, as I shall treat more fully in its proper place, ^{f403} to be specially called God on account of degree and rank. For from the time that Christ was manifested in the flesh, he has been called the Son of God, not only in that he was the eternal Word begotten before all ages from the Father, but because he took upon himself the person and office of the Mediator, that he might join us to God. And since they so brazenly exclude the Son from the honor of God, I should like to know, when he declares that no one is good except the one God [^{<401917>}Matthew 19:17], whether he deprives himself of goodness. I am not speaking of his human nature, lest they counter that whatever good there was in it flowed from a free gift. I ask whether the eternal Word of God is good or not. If they deny it, their impiety stands sufficiently convicted; by admitting it, they cut their own throats. But the fact that at first glance Christ seems to put away from himself the name of “good” all the more confirms our contention. Surely, since it is the singular title of the one God, when as he was greeted as “good” in the common manner of speaking, Christ repudiated the false honor, and so admonished them that the goodness with which he was endowed was divine.

I also ask, when Paul affirmed that God alone is immortal [^{<540117>}1 Timothy 1:17], wise [^{<451627>}Romans 16:27], and true [^{<450304>}Romans 3:4], whether by these words Christ is reduced to the level of stupid and false mortals. Will he not therefore be immortal who from the beginning was life to confer immortality upon the angels? Will he not be wise who is God’s eternal wisdom? Will he not be true who is truth itself? Furthermore, I ask whether they think Christ ought to be worshiped or not. For if he rightly

claimed for himself that every knee should bow before him [^{<502910>}Philippians 2:10], it follows that he is the God who in the law forbade anyone else than himself to be worshiped [^{<022003>}Exodus 20:3]. If they mean to be understood of the Father alone what is said in Isaiah, “I am, and there is none beside me” [^{<234406>}Isaiah 44:6 p.]. I turn this testimony back upon them, when we see that whatever is of God is attributed to Christ. Nor is there any place for their subtle distinction that Christ was exalted in the flesh in which he had been humbled, and in respect to the flesh all power has been given to him in heaven and on earth. For even though the majesty of King and Judge is extended to the whole person of the Mediator, yet unless he had been God manifested in the flesh he could not have been raised to such a height without God himself striving against himself. And Paul best settles this controversy, teaching that he was equal to God before he humbled himself under the form of a servant [^{<501706>}Philippians 2:6-7]. Indeed, how would this equality stand had he not been the God whose name is Jah and Jehovah, who rides above the cherubim [cf. ^{<191710>}Psalms 17:10; 79:2; 98: 1, all Vg.], who is King of the whole earth [^{<194608>}Psalms 46:8, Vg.], and King of the ages? Now no matter how they grumble they cannot take away from Christ what Isaiah says elsewhere: “He, he is our God; we have waited for him” [^{<232509>}Isaiah 25:9 p.]. With these words he describes the coming of God the Redeemer who not only led the people back from the Babylonian exile but fully restored the church to all its numbers.

And they will not benefit at all by another evasion, that Christ was God in his Father. For even though we admit that in respect to order and degree the beginning of divinity is in the Father, yet we say that it is a detestable invention that essence is proper to the Father alone, as if he were the deifier of the Son. For in this way either essence would be manifold or they call Christ “God” in title and imagination only. If they grant that the Son is God, but second to the Father, then in him will be begotten and formed the essence that is in the Father unbegotten and unformed, ^{e(b/a)}I know that many censorious persons laugh at us for deriving the distinction of the persons from Moses’ words, where he introduces God as speaking thus: “Let us make man in our own image” [^{<010126>}Genesis 1:26]; yet pious readers see how uselessly and absurdly Moses would have introduced this conversation, so to speak, if not more than one person subsisted in the one God. It is certain that those whom the Father is addressing were uncreated;

but there is nothing uncreated except God himself, and he is one. Now therefore unless they grant that the power of creating was common to the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, common also the authority to command, it will follow that God did not speak thus within himself, but addressed other outside artificers, ^eFinally, one passage easily rids us at once of two of their objections. For what Christ himself declared, that “God is Spirit” [^{<430424>}John 4:24], would not be appropriately restricted to the Father alone, as if the Word were not himself of a spiritual nature. But if the name “Spirit” fits the Son equally with the Father, I conclude that the Son is to be comprehended under the unparticularized name “God.” Nevertheless he adds immediately after ^{f404} that no one else but those who worship the Father in spirit and in truth prove themselves to be worshipers of the Father [^{<430423>}John 4:23]. From this follows the other point: since Christ exercises the office of Teacher under the Head [the Father], he ascribes to the Father the name of God, not to abolish his own deity, but to raise us up to it by degrees.

25. THE DIVINE NATURE IS COMMON TO ALL THREE PERSONS

^eBut they are obviously deceived in this connection, for they dream of individuals, each having its own separate part of the essence. Yet we teach from the Scriptures that God is one in essence, and hence that the essence both of the Son and of the Spirit is unbegotten; but inasmuch as the Father is first in order, and from himself begot his wisdom, as has just been said ^{f405} he is rightly deemed the beginning and fountainhead of the whole of divinity. Thus God without particularization is unbegotten; and the Father also in respect to his person is unbegotten. They also foolishly think they may conclude from our statement that we have set up a quaternity, for they falsely and calumniously ascribe this fiction of their own brain to us, as if we pretended that three persons came forth by derivation from one essence. On the contrary, it is clear from our writings that we do not separate the persons from the essence, but we distinguish among them while they remain within it. If the persons had been separate from the essence, the reasoning of these men might have been probable; but in this way there would have been a trinity of gods, not of persons whom the one God contains in himself.

Thus is their useless question answered: whether or not the essence co-operates in producing the Trinity, as if we imagined that three gods descend from it.^{f406} Their rejoinder that if not, the Trinity would therefore be without God, is born of the same foolishness. For although the essence does not enter into the distinction as a part or a member of the Trinity, nevertheless the persons are not without it, or outside it; because the Father, unless he were God, could not have been the Father; and the Son could not have been the Son, unless he were God. Therefore we say that deity in an absolute sense exists of itself; whence likewise we confess that the Son since he is God, exists of himself, but not in respect of his Person; indeed, since he is the Son, we say that he exists from the Father. Thus his essence is without beginning; while the beginning of his person is God himself. Those orthodox writers who formerly spoke concerning the Trinity applied this name only to the persons, since it would have been not only an absurd error but even the sheerest impiety to embrace the essence in this distinction. For those who want to make a Trinity of these three — Essence, Son, and Spirit — are plainly annihilating the essence of the Son and the Spirit; otherwise the parts joined together would fall apart, and this is faulty in any distinction. Finally, if Father and God were synonymous, thus would the Father be the deifier; nothing would be left in the Son but a shadow; and the Trinity would be nothing else but the conjunction of the one God with two created things.

26. THE SUBORDINATION OF THE INCARNATE WORD TO THE FATHER IS NO COUNTEREVIDENCE

^eThey object that Christ, if he be properly God, is wrongly called Son. To this I have replied^{f407} that when a comparison of one person is made with another, the name of God is not to be taken without particularization, but restricted to the Father, seeing that he is the beginning of deity, not in the bestowing of essence, as fanatics babble, but by reason of order. In this sense is to be understood that saying of Christ to the Father, “This is eternal life, that they believe thee to be the one true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent” [^{<431703>}John 17:3 p.]. For speaking in the person of the Mediator, he holds a middle rank between God and man; yet his majesty is not on this account diminished. For even though he emptied himself [^{<502007>}Philippians 2:7], he lost not his glory with the Father which was hidden to the world. Thus the apostle in Hebrews, ch. 2, although he

admits that Christ was for a short time abased beneath the angels [vs. 7, 9], does not hesitate at the same time to declare him to be the everlasting God who founded the earth [^{<580110>}Hebrews 1:10].

Therefore we must hold that, as often as Christ in this person of Mediator addresses God, under this name of God is included his deity, which is also Christ's. Thus when he said to the apostles, "It is expedient that I go up to the Father" [^{<431607>}John 16:7; cf. ch. ^{<432017>}20:17] "because the Father is greater than I" [ch. ^{<431428>}14:28, Vg.], he does not attribute to himself merely a secondary deity so that he is inferior to the Father with respect to eternal essence; but because endowed with heavenly glory he gathers believers into participation in the Father. He places the Father in the higher rank, seeing that the bright perfection of splendor that appears in heaven differs from that measure of glory which was seen in him when he was clothed with flesh. With the same intent, Paul elsewhere says that Christ "shall deliver up the Kingdom to the God and Father" [^{<461524>}1 Corinthians 15:24], "that God may be all in all" [^{<461528>}1 Corinthians 15:28]. Nothing is more absurd than to deny that Christ's deity is everlasting. But if he will never cease to be the Son of God, but will ever remain the same as he was from the beginning, it follows that there is comprehended under the name of "Father" the unique essence of God which is common to both. And certainly for this reason Christ descended to us, to bear us up to the Father, and at the same time to bear us up to himself, inasmuch as he is one with the Father. Therefore to restrict the name "God" to the Father, to the exclusion of the Son, is neither lawful nor right. On this account, also, John indeed declares him to be the true God [^{<430101>}John 1:1; ^{<620520>}1 John 5:20] lest anyone think of placing him in a second rank of deity beneath the Father. Moreover, I wonder what these makers of new gods mean when, having confessed Christ as true God, they immediately exclude him from the deity of the Father. As if he could be true God and not be one God, and as if a divinity transfused were anything but a newfangled fiction!

27. OUR ADVERSARIES FALSELY APPEAL TO IRENAEUS

^eThey pile up many passages from Irenaeus, ^{f408} where he declares the Father of Christ to be the sole and eternal God of Israel. This is either shameful ignorance or consummate depravity. For they ought to have

considered that that saintly man was dealing and contending with fanatics who denied that the Father of Christ was that same God who had of old spoken through Moses and the prophets, but fancied a sort of specter produced from the corruption of the world. Therefore he is wholly concerned with this point: to make it plain that no other God is proclaimed in Scripture than the Father of Christ, and that it is wrong to imagine another. Hence it is no wonder he so often concludes that there was no other God of Israel than he who is celebrated by Christ and the apostles. So also now, when we must resist another sort of error, we shall truly say: the God who of old appeared to the patriarchs was no other than Christ. Indeed, if anyone objects that it was in fact the Father, our reply will be ready: while we contend for the divinity of the Son, we do not at all exclude the Father. If the readers were to pay attention to this advice of Irenaeus, all contention would cease. In Chapter 6 of Book 3 all strife is easily brought to naught, where the godly man insists on this one thing, “that he who in Scripture is called God in an absolute and undifferentiated sense is in truth the only God, and that Christ indeed is called God in an absolute sense.” Let us remember that this was the basis of his argument, as is clear from the whole drift, and especially in Book 2, Chapter 46: that he is not called Father enigmatically and parabolically.

Besides this, he elsewhere contends that both the Son and the Father were jointly declared to be God by the prophets and the apostles [Book 3, Chapter 9]. Afterward he defines how Christ, who is Lord over all things, and King, and God, and Judge, received power from him who is God of all things, namely, in respect to subjection in that he was humbled even to death on the cross [Book 3, Chapter 12]. Moreover, a little later he affirms that the Son was the Maker of heaven and earth, who gave the law through the hand of Moses, and appeared to the patriarchs. Now if anyone prates that for Irenaeus the Father alone was the God of Israel, I shall turn back upon him what the same writer openly teaches, that Christ is one and the same, just as the prophecy of Habakkuk also refers to him: “God will come from the south” [^{<350303>}Habakkuk 3:3, Vg.] [Book 3, Chapters 18 and 23]. To the same end pertains what is read in Book 4, Chapter 9. Christ himself, therefore, is God with the Father of the living. And in Chapter 12 of the same book he explains that Abraham believed in God, because the Maker of heaven and earth, and the sole God, is Christ. ^{f409}

28. THE APPEAL TO TERTULLIAN ALSO IS OF NO AVAIL

^eNot a whit more truthfully do they adopt Tertullian as their advocate; for even if he is sometimes rough and thorny in his mode of speech, yet he not ambiguously hands on the sum of the doctrine that we defend. In his view, although God is one, his Word exists by dispensation or economy; God is one in unity of substance, and nonetheless the unity is disposed into a trinity by the mystery of dispensation. There are thus three, not in status, but in degree; not in substance, but in form; not in power, but in its manifestation. He says, indeed, that he retains the Son as second to the Father, but he understands him to be not different except by way of distinction. Elsewhere he speaks of the Son as visible; but after he has argued both sides of the question, he decides that he is invisible in so far as he is the Word. Finally, affirming that the Father is determined by his own person, Tertullian proves himself far removed from that fabrication which we are refuting. And although he recognizes no other God than the Father, nevertheless, explaining himself in the next passage, he shows that he is not speaking exclusively with respect to the Son, because he denies that there is another God than the Father, and thus his monarchy is not broken by distinction of person. And from his unwavering purpose one can readily gather the meaning of his words. For he contends against Praxeas that although God is distinguished into three persons, yet this does not make more than one God, nor is his unity sundered. And because according to Praxeas' fabrication Christ could not be God without being the same as the Father, he therefore toils mightily over this distinction. That he, indeed, calls the Word and the Spirit a portion of the whole, even though it is a hard saying, is yet excusable, seeing that it is not applied to substance, but merely marks the disposition and economy that has to do with the persons alone, as Tertullian himself testifies. Upon this also hangs his statement: "How many persons, O most wicked Praxeas, do you think there are, unless there be as many as there are names?" Thus, also, a little later: "That they may believe the Father and the Son each in their names and persons."^{f410} By these references I think I have been able sufficiently to refute the impudence of those who try from Tertullian's authority to deceive the simple.

29. ALL ACKNOWLEDGED DOCTORS OF THE CHURCH CONFIRM THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY

° And certainly anyone who diligently compares the writings of the ancients among themselves will find in Irenaeus nothing else than what his successors set forth. Justin is one of the earliest, yet he supports us at every point. ^{f411} They will object that both by him and by the rest the Father of Christ is called the one God. Hilary also teaches the same thing, indeed speaks more sharply, that eternity is in the Father. ^{f412} Is that to deprive the Son of the divine essence? Yet he is wholly concerned with the defense of the very faith to which we adhere. Our enemies, however, are not ashamed to pluck out any kind of mutilated utterances, from which they would have us believe that Hilary is the patron of their error!

With regard to their citation of Ignatius, if they want it to have any weight, let them prove that the apostles made a law concerning Lent and like corruptions. Nothing is more disgusting than those vile absurdities which have been put forth under the name of Ignatius. ^{f413} Even less tolerable is the shamelessness of those who cover themselves with such masks in order to deceive. Indeed, the agreement of the ancients is clearly seen here, that in the Council of Nicaea, Arius dared not make a pretense on the basis of the authority of any proved writer; and no one of the Greeks or the Latins excuses himself for disagreeing with those before him. We need say nothing of how carefully Augustine (toward whom these rascals are most hostile) searched the writings of all, and how reverently he embraced them. To be sure, in some small details he was accustomed to show why he was compelled to depart from them. Even in this argument, if he read anything ambiguous or obscure among other writers, he does not hide it. Nevertheless, he takes for granted the doctrine these men are attacking, as received without controversy from the earliest times. ^{f414} Yet from a single word it is clear that what others had taught before was not unknown to him, when in Book 1, *Christian Doctrine*, he says that unity is in the Father. Will they chatter about his then forgetting himself? Yet elsewhere he clears himself of this calumny, where he calls the Father the beginning of all deity because he is from no one; and wisely considers that the name of God is especially ascribed to the Father because if the beginning comes not from him, the simple unity of God cannot be conceived. ^{f415}

Now, the godly reader will, I hope, recognize that these words refute all the chicaneries by which Satan has heretofore tried to pervert or darken the pure faith of doctrine. Finally, I trust that the whole sum of this doctrine has been faithfully explained, if my readers will impose a limit upon their curiosity, and not seek out for themselves more eagerly than is proper troublesome and perplexed disputations. For I suspect that those who intemperately delight in speculation will not be at all satisfied. Certainly I have not shrewdly omitted anything that I might think to be against me: but while I am zealous for the edification of the church, I felt that I would be better advised not to touch upon many things that would profit but little, and would burden my readers with useless trouble. For what is the point in disputing whether the Father always begets? Indeed, it is foolish to imagine a continuous act of begetting, since it is clear that three persons have subsisted in God from eternity. ^{f416}

CHAPTER 14.

EVEN IN THE CREATION OF THE UNIVERSE AND OF ALL THINGS, SCRIPTURE BY UNMISTAKABLE MARKS DISTINGUISHES THE TRUE GOD FROM FALSE GODS

(Creation of the world and of man, 1-2)

1. WE CANNOT AND SHOULD NOT GO BEHIND GOD'S ACT OF CREATION IN OUR SPECULATION

^eIsaiah rightly charges the worshipers of false gods with obtuseness, because they have not learned from the foundations of the earth and the circle of the heavens who is the true God [^{<234021>}Isaiah 40:21; cf. v. 22; see Comm.]. Despite this, such is the slowness and dullness of our wit that, to prevent believers from deserting to the fabrications of the heathen, we must depict the true God more distinctly than they do. Since the notion of God as the mind of the universe^{f417} (in the philosophers' eyes, a most acceptable description) is ephemeral, it is important for us to know him more intimately, lest we always waver in doubt. Therefore it was his will that the history of Creation be made manifest, in order that the faith of the church, resting upon this, might seek no other God but him who was put forth by Moses as the Maker and Founder of the universe.

Therein time was first marked so that by a continuing succession of years believers might arrive at the primal source of the human race and of all things. This knowledge is especially useful not only to resist the monstrous fables that formerly were in vogue in Egypt and in other regions of the earth, but also that, once the beginning of the universe is known, God's eternity may shine forth more clearly, and we may be more rapt in wonder at it. And indeed, that impious scoff ought not to move us: that it is a wonder how it did not enter God's mind sooner to found heaven and earth, but that he idly permitted an immeasurable time to pass away, since he could have made it very many millenniums earlier, albeit

the duration of the world, now declining to its ultimate end, has not yet attained six thousand years. For it is neither lawful nor expedient for us to inquire why God delayed so long, because if the human mind strives to penetrate thus far, it will fail a hundred times on the way. And it would not even be useful for us to know what God himself, to test our moderation of faith, on purpose willed to be hidden. When a certain shameless fellow mockingly asked a pious old man what God had done before the creation of the world, the latter aptly countered that he had been building hell for the curious.^{f418}

Let this admonition, no less grave than severe, restrain the wantonness that tickles many and even drives them to wicked and hurtful speculations. In short, let us remember that that invisible God, whose wisdom, power, and righteousness are incomprehensible, sets before us Moses' history as a mirror in which his living likeness glows. For just as eyes, when dimmed with age or weakness or by some other defect, unless aided by spectacles, discern nothing distinctly; so, such is our feebleness, unless Scripture guides us in seeking God, we are immediately confused.^{f419} They who, indeed, indulge their own wantonness, since they are now warned in vain, will feel too late by a dreadful ruin how much better it would have been for them reverently to accept God's secret purposes than to belch forth blasphemies by which to obscure heaven. And Augustine rightly complains that wrong is done to God when a higher cause of things than his will is demanded.^{f420} Elsewhere the same man wisely warns that it is no less wrong to raise questions concerning immeasurable stretches of time than of space.^{f421} Indeed, however widely the circuit of the heavens extends, it still has some limit. Now if anyone should expostulate with God that the void exceeds the heavens a hundredfold, would not this impudence be detestable to all the godly? Into such madness leap those who carp at God's idleness because he did not in accord with their judgment establish the universe innumerable ages before. To gratify their curiosity, they strive to go forth outside the world. As if in the vast circle of heaven and earth enough things do not present themselves to engross all our senses with their incomprehensible brightness! As if within six thousand years God has not shown evidences enough on which to exercise our minds in earnest meditation! Therefore let us willingly remain enclosed within these bounds to which God has willed to confine us, and as it were,

to pen up our minds that they may not, through their very freedom to wander, go astray.

2. THE WORK OF THE SIX DAYS SHOWS GOD'S GOODNESS TOWARD MEN

^eWith the same intent Moses relates that God's work was completed not in a moment but in six days [^{<010202>}Genesis 2:2]. For by this circumstance we are drawn away from all fictions to the one God who distributed his work into six days that we might not find it irksome to occupy our whole life in contemplating it. For even though our eyes, in whatever direction they may turn, are compelled to gaze upon God's works, yet we see how changeable is our attention, and how swiftly are dissipated any godly thoughts that may touch us. Here also, until human reason is subjected to the obedience of faith and learns to cultivate that quiet to which the sanctification of the seventh day invites us, it grumbles, as if such proceedings were foreign to God's power. But we ought in the very order of things diligently to contemplate God's fatherly love toward mankind ^{f422} in that he did not create Adam until he had lavished upon the universe all manner of good things. For if he had put him in an earth as yet sterile and empty, if he had given him life before light, he would have seemed to provide insufficiently for his welfare. Now when he disposed the movements of the sun and stars to human uses, filled the earth, waters, and air with living things, and brought forth an abundance of fruits to suffice as foods, in thus assuming the responsibility of a foreseeing and diligent father of the family he shows his wonderful goodness toward us. If anyone should more attentively ponder what I only briefly touch upon, it will be clear that Moses was a sure witness and herald of the one God, the Creator. I pass over what I have already explained, ^{f423} that he there not only speaks of the bare essence of God, but also sets forth for us His eternal Wisdom and Spirit; that we may not conjure up some other god than him who would have himself recognized in that clear image.

(The angels, 3-12)

3. GOD IS LORD OVER ALL!

^{e(c)}But before I begin more fully to discuss man's nature, ^{f424} I ought to insert something concerning angels. To be sure, Moses, accommodating

himself to the rudeness of the common folk, mentions in the history of the Creation no other works of God than those which show themselves to our own eyes. Yet afterward when he introduces angels as ministers of God, one may easily infer that he, to whom they devote their effort and functions, is their Creator. °Although Moses, speaking after the manner of the common people, did not in laying down basic principles immediately reckon the angels among God's creatures, yet nothing prevents us from conveying plainly and explicitly what Scripture elsewhere repeatedly teaches concerning them. For if we desire to recognize God from his works, we ought by no means to overlook such an illustrious and noble example. Besides, this part of doctrine is very necessary to refute many errors. The pre-eminence of the angelic nature has so overwhelmed the minds of many that they think the angels wronged if, subjected to the authority of the one God, they are, as it were, forced into their own rank. For this reason, divinity was falsely attributed to them.

Also, Mani, ^{f425} with his sect, arose, fashioning for himself two principles: God and the devil. To God he attributed the origin of good things, but evil natures he referred to the devil as their author. ^{e(c)} If this madness held our minds ensnared, God's glory in the creation of the universe would not abide with him. °For, since nothing is more characteristic of God than eternity and self-existence ^{f426} — that is, existence of himself, so to speak — do not those who attribute this to the devil in a sense adorn him with the title of divinity? Now where is God's omnipotence, if such sovereignty is conceded to the devil that he carries out whatever he wishes, against God's will and resistance? The Manichees have only one foundation: that it is wrong to ascribe to the good God the creation of any evil thing. This does not in the slightest degree harm the orthodox faith, which does not admit that any evil nature exists in the whole universe. For the depravity and malice both of man and of the devil, or the sins that arise therefrom, do not spring from nature, but rather from the corruption of nature. ^{f427} And from the beginning nothing at all has existed in which God has not put forth an example both of his wisdom and of his righteousness, °Therefore, in order to meet these perverse falsehoods it is necessary to lift up our minds higher than our eyes can reach. ^{e(c)} It is probably for this purpose that in the Nicene Creed, where God is called the Creator of all things, invisible things are expressly mentioned. Nevertheless, we will take care to keep to the measure which the rule of godliness prescribes, that our

readers may not, by speculating more deeply than is expedient, wander away from simplicity of faith. And in fact, while the Spirit ever teaches us to our profit, he either remains absolutely silent upon those things of little value for edification, or only lightly and cursorily touches them. It is also *our* duty willingly to *renounce* those things which are unprofitable.

(Creation and functions of angels, 4-12)

4. ALSO WE SHOULD NOT INDULGE IN SPECULATIONS CONCERNING THE ANGELS, BUT SEARCH OUT THE WITNESS OF SCRIPTURE

^cSince the angels are God's ministers, ordained to carry out his commands, there should be no question that they are also his creatures [^{<19A320>}Psalm 103:20-21]. Is it not evidence of stubbornness rather than of diligence to raise strife over the time and order in which they were created. ^{f428}Moses tells that the earth was finished and that the heavens with all their host were finished [^{<010201>}Genesis 2:1]. What point, then, is there in anxiously investigating on what day, apart from the stars and planets, the other more remote heavenly hosts began also to exist? Not to take too long, let us remember here, as in all religious doctrine, that we ought to hold to one rule of modesty and sobriety: not to speak, or guess, or even to seek to know, concerning obscure matters anything except what has been imparted to us by God's Word. Furthermore, in the reading of Scripture we ought ceaselessly to endeavor to seek out and meditate upon those things which make for edification. Let us not indulge in curiosity or in the investigation of unprofitable things. And because the Lord willed to instruct us, not in fruitless questions, but in sound godliness, in the fear of his name, in true trust, and in the duties of holiness, let us be satisfied with this knowledge. For this reason, if we would be duly wise, we must leave those empty speculations ^{f429} which idle men have taught apart from God's Word concerning the nature, orders, and number of angels. I know that many persons more greedily seize upon and take more delight in them than in such things as have been put to daily use. But, if we are not ashamed of being Christ's disciples, let us not be ashamed to follow that method which he has prescribed. Thus it will come to pass that, content with his teaching, we shall not only abandon but also abhor those utterly empty speculations from which he calls us back.

No one will deny that Dionysius, whoever he was, ^{f430} subtly and skillfully discussed many matters in his *Celestial Hierarchy*. But if anyone examine it more closely, he will find it for the most part nothing but talk. The theologian's task is not to divert the ears with chatter, but to strengthen consciences by teaching things true, sure, and profitable. If you read that book, you would think a man fallen from heaven recounted, not what he had learned, but what he had seen with his own eyes. Yet Paul, who had been caught up beyond the third heaven [^{<471202>}2 Corinthians 12:2], not only said nothing about it, but also testified that it is unlawful for any man to speak of the secret things that he has seen [^{<471204>}2 Corinthians 12:4]. Therefore, bidding farewell to that foolish wisdom, let us examine in the simple teaching of Scripture what the Lord would have us know of his angels.

5. THE DESIGNATION OF THE ANGELS IN SCRIPTURE

^cOne reads here and there in Scripture that angels are celestial spirits whose ministry and service God uses to carry out all things he has decreed [e.g., ^{<19A320>}Psalms 103:20-21]. Hence, likewise, this name has been applied to them because God employs them as intermediary messengers to manifest himself to men. The other names by which they are called have also been taken for a like reason. They are called “hosts” [^{<420213>}Luke 2:13] because, as bodyguards surround their prince, they adorn his majesty and render it conspicuous; like soldiers they are ever intent upon their leader's standard, and thus are ready and able to carry out his commands. As soon as he beckons, they gird themselves for the work, or rather are already at work. The other prophets describe the image of God's throne so as to declare his magnificence, but Daniel especially does this where he says that a thousand thousands and ten thousand times ten thousand stood when God ascended his tribunal [^{<271710>}Daniel 17:10]. Indeed, since the Lord through them wonderfully sets forth and declares the power and strength of his hand, for this reason they are called virtues [^{<490121>}Ephesians 1:21; ^{<461524>}1 Corinthians 15:24]. Because he exercises and administers his authority in the world through them, they are sometimes called principalities, sometimes powers, sometimes dominions [^{<510116>}Colossians 1:16; ^{<490121>}Ephesians 1:21; ^{<461524>}1 Corinthians 15:24]. Finally, because in a sense the glory of God resides in them, they are for this reason also called thrones [^{<510116>}Colossians 1:16]. ^aStill, of this last I would rather say

nothing; because a different interpretation fits equally well or even better.

^{f431} But, to pass over this name, ^cthe Holy Spirit often uses those ^dprevious names ^eto commend the dignity of the angelic ministry. And is he not reasonable to pass over without honor those instruments through which God particularly shows forth the presence of his divine majesty? Likewise, on this account they are more than once called gods [e.g., ^{<19D801>}Psalm 138:1], because in their ministry as in a mirror they in some respect exhibit his divinity to us.

For even though I am not displeased that the ancient writers, when Scripture relates that the angel of God appeared to Abraham [^{<011801>}Genesis 18:1], Jacob [^{<013202>}Genesis 32:2, 28], Moses, and others [^{<060514>}Joshua 5:14; ^{<070614>}Judges 6:14; 13:10, 22], interpret that angel to have been Christ, yet more often when mention is made of all angels, the

designation “gods” is applied to them [cf. Vg.; e.g., ^{<012211>}Genesis 22:11-12]. That ought not to seem anything marvelous; for if the honor is given to princes and governors [^{<198206>}Psalm 82:6] because they are vice-gerents of God, who is the highest King and Judge, there is far greater reason why it should be conferred upon the angels, in whom the brightness of the divine glory shines forth much more richly.

6. THE ANGELS AS PROTECTORS AND HELPERS OF BELIEVERS

^cBut Scripture strongly insists upon teaching us what could most effectively make for our consolation and the strengthening of our faith: namely, that angels are dispensers and administrators of God’s beneficence toward us. For this reason, Scripture recalls that they keep vigil for our safety, take upon themselves our defense, direct our ways, and take care that some harm may not befall us. Universal are the statements that apply first of all to Christ, the Head of the church, then to all believers. “He has commanded his angels to guard you in all your ways. They shall bear you in their hands, that you may not stumble upon a stone.” [^{<199011>}Psalm 90:11-12, Vg.; 91: 11-12, EV.] Likewise: “The angel of the Lord abides round about those who fear him, and rescues them.” [^{<193407>}Psalm 34:7 p.] God hereby shows that he delegates to the angels the protection of those whom he has undertaken to guard. According to this reckoning, the angel of the Lord consoles the fleeing Hagar and commands her to be reconciled

to her mistress [^{<011609>}Genesis 16:9]. He promises to Abraham, his servant, an angel to be his guide for the journey. [^{<012407>}Genesis 24:7.] Jacob in blessing Ephraim and Manasses prays that the angel of the Lord, through whom he has been delivered from all evil, will cause them to prosper. [^{<014816>}Genesis 48:16.] Thus an angel was appointed to protect the camps of the Israelites [^{<021419>}Exodus 14:19; 23:20]; and as often as God would have Israel rescued from the hand of the enemy, he raised up avengers by the ministry of angels [^{<070201>}Judges 2:1; 6:11; 13:3-20]. In short (there is no need to recite other instances), the angels ministered to Christ [^{<400411>}Matthew 4:11] and were present with him in all his tribulations [^{<422243>}Luke 22:43]. They announced his resurrection to the women [^{<402805>}Matthew 28:5, 7; ^{<422405>}Luke 24:5], his glorious coming to the disciples [^{<440110>}Acts 1:10]. Thus, to fulfill the task of protecting us the angels fight against the devil and all our enemies, and carry out God's vengeance against those who harm us. As we read, the angel of God, to lift the siege of Jerusalem, slew 185,000 in the camp of the King of Assyria in a single night [^{<121935>}2 Kings 19:35; ^{<233736>}Isaiah 37:36].

7. GUARDIAN ANGELS?

^cBut whether individual angels have been assigned to individual believers for their protection, I dare not affirm with confidence. Certainly, when Daniel introduces the angel of the Persians and the angel of the Greeks [^{<271013>}Daniel 10:13, 20; ^{<271201>}12:1] he signifies that specific angels have been appointed as guardians over kingdoms and provinces. Christ also, when he says that the children's angels always behold the Father's face [^{<401810>}Matthew 18:10], hints that there are certain angels to whom their safety has been committed. But from this I do not know whether one ought to infer that each individual has the protection of his own angel, ^dWe ought to hold as a fact that the care of each one of us is not the task of one angel only, but all with one consent watch over our salvation, ^cFor it is said of all the angels together that they rejoice more over the turning of one sinner to repentance than over ninety-nine righteous men who have stood fast in righteousness [^{<421507>}Luke 15:7]. Also, it is said of a number of angels that "they bore Lazarus' soul to Abraham's bosom" [^{<421622>}Luke 16:22 p.]. ^dAnd Elisha does not in vain show to his servant so many fiery chariots which had been destined especially for him [^{<120617>}2 Kings 6:17].

^cThere is one passage that seems to confirm this a little more clearly than the rest. For when Peter, led out of the prison, knocked at the gates of the house in which the brethren were gathered, since they could not imagine it was he, “they said, ‘It is his angel’” [^{<441215>}Acts 12:15]. This seems to have entered their minds from the common notion that each believer has been assigned his own guardian angel. Although here, also, it can be answered that nothing prevents us from understanding this of any angel at all to whom the Lord had then given over the care of Peter; yet he would not on that account be Peter’s perpetual guardian. Similarly the common folk imagine two angels, good and bad — as it were different geniuses — attached to each person. ^{f432} Yet it is not worth-while anxiously to investigate what it does not much concern us to know. For if the fact that all the heavenly host are keeping watch for his safety will not satisfy a man, I do not see what benefit he could derive from knowing that one angel has been given to him as his especial guardian. Indeed, those who confine to one angel the care that God takes of each one of us are doing a great injustice both to themselves and to all the members of the church; as if it were an idle promise that we should fight more valiantly with these hosts supporting and protecting us round about!

8. THE HIERARCHY, NUMBER, AND FORM OF THE ANGELS

^cLet those who dare determine the number and orders of angels ^{f433} see what sort of foundation they have. Michael, I admit, is called “the great prince” in The Book of ^{<271201>}Daniel 12:1, and “the archangel” in ^{<650109>}Jude [v. 9]. And Paul teaches that it will be the archangel who will call men to judgment with a trumpet [^{<520416>}1 Thessalonians 4:16; cf. ^{<261005>}Ezekiel 10:5]. But who could on this basis determine the degrees of honor among the angels, distinguish each by his insignia, assign to each his place and station? For the two names that exist in Scripture, Michael [^{<271021>}Daniel 10:21] and Gabriel [^{<270816>}Daniel 8:16; ^{<420119>}Luke 1:19, 26], and a third [Raphael] if you wish to add the one from the history of Tobit [Tobit 12:15], could seem from their meaning to have been applied to angels on account of the feebleness of our capacity, although I prefer to leave that an open question.

As to number, we hear from Christ’s mouth “many legions” [^{<402653>}Matthew 26:53], from Daniel “many myriads” [^{<270710>}Daniel 7:10];

^eElisha's servant saw full chariots [^{<120617>}2 Kings 6:17]; and that the angels are said to "camp round about those who fear God" indicates a huge multitude [^{<193407>}Psalm 34:7 p.]. ^{f434}

It is certain that spirits lack bodily form, and yet Scripture, matching the measure of our comprehension, usefully depicts for us winged angels under the names of cherubim and seraphim, that we may not doubt that they are ever ready to bring help to us with incredible swiftness, should circumstance require it, even as lightning sent forth from heaven flies to us with its usual speed.

^eWhatever besides can be sought of both their number and order, let us hold it among those mysteries whose full revelation is delayed until the Last Day. Therefore let us remember not to probe too curiously or talk too confidently.

9. THE ANGELS ARE NOT MERE IDEAS, BUT ACTUALITY

^eYet this point, which some restless men call in question, ^{f435} ought to be held certain: that angels are "ministering spirits" [^{<580114>}Hebrews 1:14], whose service God uses for the protection of his own, and through whom he both dispenses his benefits among men and also carries out his remaining works. Indeed, it was the opinion of the Sadducees of old [^{<442308>}Acts 23:8] that by angels nothing was meant but either the impulses that God inspires in men or those examples of his power which he puts forth. But so many testimonies of Scripture cry out against this nonsense that it is a wonder such crass ignorance could be borne with in that people. For, to omit those passages which I have referred to above, where thousands [^{<660511>}Revelation 5:11] and legions [^{<402653>}Matthew 26:53] of angels are mentioned, where joy is attributed to them [^{<431510>}Luke 15:10], where they are said to lift up believers by their hands [^{<199111>}Psalm 91:11; ^{<400406>}Matthew 4:6; ^{<430410>}Luke 4:10-11], and to carry their souls to rest [^{<421622>}Luke 16:22], to see the face of the Father [^{<401810>}Matthew 18:10], and the like — there are other passages from which it is clearly demonstrated that they are, indeed, spirits having a real existence. ^{f436} For we must so understand, however much it may be twisted, what Stephen and Paul say, that the law was given by the hand of the angels [^{<440753>}Acts 7:53; ^{<480319>}Galatians 3:19]. We must in like manner understand Christ's statement that after the resurrection the elect will be like the angels

[^{<402230>}Matthew 22:30], that the Day of Judgment is not known even to the angels [^{<402436>}Matthew 24:36], and that then he will come with the holy angels [^{<402531>}Matthew 25:31; ^{<420926>}Luke 9:26]. Similarly, when Paul charged Timothy before Christ and his chosen angels to keep his commandments [^{<540521>}1 Timothy 5:21], he meant not qualities or inspirations without substance, but true spirits. And what one reads in The Letter to the Hebrews does not otherwise make sense: that Christ was made more excellent than the angels [^{<580104>}Hebrews 1:4], that the world was not subjected to them [^{<580205>}Hebrews 2:5], and that Christ assumed the nature not of them but of men [^{<580216>}Hebrews 2:16], unless we mean that they are blessed spirits, to whom these comparisons may apply. And the author of the letter makes himself clear when he assembles the souls of believers and the holy angels at the same time in the Kingdom of God [^{<581222>}Hebrews 12:22].

^eLet us add what we have already referred to, that the angels of children ever see God's face [^{<401810>}Matthew 18:10], that we are defended by their guard [^{<420410>}Luke 4:10-11], that they rejoice over our salvation [^{<431510>}Luke 15:10], that they marvel at the manifold grace of God in the church, and that they are under Christ the Head. ^{f437} This is related to their numerous appearances to the holy patriarchs under the form of men, their speaking and receiving hospitality [^{<011802>}Genesis 18:2]. And Christ himself, because of the primacy that he holds in the person of the Mediator, is called an angel [^{<390301>}Malachi 3:1]. ^eIt seemed good to me to touch on this by the way, to fortify the simple against those foolish and absurd opinions which, raised by Satan many ages ago, from time to time break out afresh.

10. THE DIVINE GLORY DOES NOT BELONG TO THE ANGELS

^eIt remains for us to cope with that superstition which frequently creeps in, to the effect that angels are the ministers and dispensers of all good things to us. For at once, man's reason so lapses that he thinks that no honor ought to be withheld from them. Thus it happens that what belongs to God and Christ alone is transferred to them. Thus we see that Christ's glory was for some ages past obscured in many ways, when contrary to God's Word unmeasured honors were lavished upon angels. And among those vices which we are today combating, there is hardly any more ancient. For it appears that Paul had a great struggle with certain persons

who so elevated angels that they well-nigh degraded Christ to the same level. Hence he urges with very great solicitude in the letter to the Colossians that not only is Christ to be preferred before all angels but that he is the author of all good things that they have [^{<510116>}Colossians 1:16, 20]. This he does that we may not depart from Christ and go over to those who are not self-sufficient but draw from the same well as we. Surely, since the splendor of the divine majesty shines in them, nothing is easier for us than to fall down, stupefied, in adoration of them, and then to attribute to them everything that is owed to God alone. Even John in Revelation confesses that this happened to him, but at the same time he adds that this answer came to him [chs. ^{<661910>}1910; 22:8-9]: “You must not do that! I am a fellow servant with you ... Worship God.”

11. GOD MAKES USE OF THE ANGELS, NOT FOR HIS OWN SAKE, BUT FOR OURS

^cYet we shall well avoid this peril if we inquire why it is through them rather than through himself without their service that God is wont to declare his power, to provide for the safety of believers, and to communicate the gifts of his beneficence to them. Surely he does not do this out of necessity as if he could not do without them, for as often as he pleases, he disregards them and carries out his work through his will alone, so far are they from being to him a means of lightening difficulty. Therefore he makes use of angels to comfort our weakness, that we may lack nothing at all that can raise up our minds to good hope, or confirm them in security. One thing, indeed, ought to be quite enough for us: that the Lord declares himself to be our protector. But when we see ourselves beset by so many perils, so many harmful things, so many kinds of enemies — such is our softness and frailty — we would sometimes be filled with trepidation or yield to despair if the Lord did not make us realize the presence of his grace according to our capacity. For this reason, he not only promises to take care of us, but tells us he has innumerable guardians whom he has bidden to look after our safety; that so long as we are hedged about by their defense and keeping, whatever perils may threaten, we have been placed beyond all chance of evil. I confess that we act wrongly when, after that simple promise of the protection of the one God, we still seek whence our help may come [cf. ^{<19C101>}Psalm 121:1; 120:1, Vg.]. But because the Lord, out of his immeasurable kindness and

gentleness, wishes to remedy this fault of ours, we have no reason to disregard his great benefit. We have an example of this thing in Elisha's servant, who, when he saw the mountain besieged by the Syrian army and that there was no escape, was overwhelmed with fear, as if all was over for himself and his master. Here Elisha prayed to God that He might open his servant's eyes. Straightway the servant saw the mountain filled with fiery horses and chariots, that is, with a host of angels, who were to protect him as well as the prophet [^{<120617>}2 Kings 6:17]. Strengthened by this vision, he recovered himself and was able with undaunted courage to look down upon his enemies, at sight of whom he had almost expired.

12. THE ANGELS MUST NOT DIVERT US FROM DIRECTING OUR GAZE TO THE LORD ALONE

^cSo, then, whatever is said concerning the ministry of angels, let us direct it to the end that, having banished all lack of trust, our hope in God may be more firmly established. Indeed, these helps have been prepared for us by the Lord that we may not be frightened by the multitude of the enemy, as if they might prevail against. His assistance, but that we may take refuge in that utterance of Elisha that "there are more for us than against us" [^{<120616>}2 Kings 6:16 p.]. How preposterous, then, it is for us to be led away from God by the angels, who have been established to testify that his help is all the closer to us! But they do lead us away unless they lead us by the hand straight to him, that we may look upon him, call upon him, and proclaim him as our sole helper; unless we regard them as his hands that are moved to no work without his direction; unless they keep us in the one Mediator, Christ, that we may wholly depend upon him, lean upon him, be brought to him, and rest in him. For what is described in the vision of Jacob ought to stick and be deeply fixed within our minds: that angels descend to the earth, to men, and ascend from men to heaven by a ladder upon which the Lord of Hosts stands [^{<012812>}Genesis 28:12]. This indicates that only through Christ's intercession is it brought about that the angels' ministrations come to us, ^eas he himself affirms: "Hereafter you will see the heavens opened and angels ... descending upon the Son of Man" [^{<430151>}John 1:51]. ^cTherefore the servant of Abraham, though entrusted to the angel's charge [^{<012407>}Genesis 24:7], does not for that reason call upon him to help him, but, relying on that commitment, pours out his prayers unto the Lord, and beseeches him to show his mercy to Abraham

[<012412>Genesis 24:12]. For as God does not make them ministers of his power and goodness to share his glory with them, so he does not promise us his help through their ministry in order that we should divide our trust between them and him. Farewell, then, to that Platonic philosophy of seeking access to God through angels, and of worshiping them with intent to render God more approachable to us.^{f438} This is what superstitious and curious men have tried to drag into our religion from the beginning and persevere in trying even to this day.

(The devils in the purposes of God, 13-19)

13. SCRIPTURE FOREARMS US AGAINST THE ADVERSARY

call that Scripture teaches concerning devils aims at arousing us to take precaution against their stratagems and contrivances, and also to make us equip ourselves with those weapons which are strong and powerful enough to vanquish these most powerful foes. For when Satan is called the god [<470404>2 Corinthians 4:4] and prince [<431231>John 12:31] of this world, when he is spoken of as a strong armed man [<421121>Luke 11:21; cf. <401229>Matthew 12:29], the spirit who holds power over the air [<490202>Ephesians 2:2], a roaring lion [<600508>1 Peter 5:8], these descriptions serve only to make us more cautious and watchful, and thus more prepared to take up the struggle. This also sometimes is noted explicitly: for Peter, after he has said that the devil “prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour” [<600508>1 Peter 5:8], immediately subjoins the exhortation that with faith we steadfastly resist him [<600509>1 Peter 5:9]. And Paul, after he has warned us that our struggle is not with flesh and blood, but with the princes of the air, with the powers of darkness, and spiritual wickedness [<490612>Ephesians 6:12], forthwith bids us put on that armor capable of sustaining so great and dangerous a contest [<490613>Ephesians 6:13 ff.]. We have been forewarned that an enemy relentlessly threatens us, an enemy who is the very embodiment of rash boldness, of military prowess, of crafty wiles, of untiring zeal and haste, of every conceivable weapon and of skill in the science of warfare.^{f439} We must, then, bend our every effort to this goal: that we should not let ourselves be overwhelmed by carelessness or faintheartedness,^{f440} but on the contrary, with courage rekindled stand our ground in combat. Since this military service ends only at death, let us urge ourselves to perseverance.

Indeed, conscious of our weakness and ignorance, let us especially call upon God's help, relying upon him alone in whatever we attempt, since it is he alone who can supply us with counsel and strength, courage and armor.

14. THE REALM OF WICKEDNESS

Moreover, in order that we may be aroused and exhorted all the more to carry this out, Scripture makes known that there are not one, not two, nor a few foes, but great armies, which wage war against us. For Mary Magdalene is said to have been freed from seven demons by which she was possessed [^{<411609>}Mark 16:9; ^{<420802>}Luke 8:2], and Christ bears witness that usually after a demon has once been cast out, if you make room for him again, he will take with him seven spirits more wicked than he and return to his empty possession [^{<401243>}Matthew 12:43-45]. Indeed, a whole legion is said to have assailed one man [^{<420830>}Luke 8:30]. We are therefore taught by these examples that we have to wage war against an infinite number of enemies, lest, despising their fewness, we should be too remiss to give battle, or, thinking that we are sometimes afforded some respite, we should yield to idleness.

But the frequent mention of Satan or the devil in the singular denotes the empire of wickedness opposed to the Kingdom of Righteousness. For as the church and fellowship of the saints has Christ as Head, so the faction of the impious and impiety itself are depicted for us together with their prince who holds supreme sway over them. For this reason, it was said: "Depart, ... you cursed, into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels" [^{<402541>}Matthew 25:41].

15. AN IRRECONCILABLE STRUGGLE

The fact that the devil is everywhere called God's adversary and ours also ought to fire us to an unceasing struggle against him. For if we have God's glory at heart, as we should have, we ought with all our strength to contend against him who is trying to extinguish it. If we are minded to affirm Christ's Kingdom as we ought, we must wage irreconcilable war with him who is plotting its ruin. Again, if we care about our salvation at all, we ought to have neither peace nor truce with him who continually lays traps to destroy it. So, indeed, is he described in Genesis, ch. 3, where

he seduces man from the obedience owed to God, that he may simultaneously deprive God of his due honor and hurl man himself into ruin [vs. 1-5]. So, also, in the Evangelists, where he is called “an enemy” [^{<401328>}Matthew 13:28, 39], and is said to sow weeds in order to corrupt the seed of eternal life [^{<401325>}Matthew 13:25]. In sum, we experience in all of Satan’s deeds what Christ testifies concerning him, that “from the beginning he was a murderer ... and a liar” [^{<430844>}John 8:44]. For he opposes the truth of God with falsehoods, he obscures the light with darkness, he entangles men’s minds in errors, he stirs up hatred, he kindles contentions and combats, everything to the end that he may overturn God’s Kingdom and plunge men with himself into eternal death. From this it appears that he is in nature depraved, evil, and malicious. For there must be consummate depravity in that disposition which devotes itself to assailing God’s glory and man’s salvation. This, also, is what John means in his letter, when he writes that “the devil has sinned from the beginning” [^{<620308>}1 John 3:8]. Indeed, he considers him as the author, leader, and architect of all malice and iniquity.

16. THE DEVIL IS A DEGENERATE CREATION OF GOD

^cYet, since the devil was created by God, let us remember that this malice, which we attribute to his nature, came not from his creation but from his perversion. For, whatever he has that is to be condemned he has derived from his revolt and fall. For this reason, Scripture warns us lest, believing that he has come forth in his present condition from God, we should ascribe to God himself what is utterly alien to him. For this reason, Christ declares that “when Satan lies, he speaks according to his own nature” and states the reason, because “he abode not in the truth” [^{<430844>}John 8:44 p.]. Indeed, when Christ states that Satan “abode not in the truth,” he hints that he was once in it, and when he makes him “the father of lies,” he deprives him of imputing to God the fault which he brought upon himself.

But although these things are briefly and not very clearly stated, they are more than enough to clear God’s majesty of all slander. And what concern is it to us to know anything more about devils or to know it for another purpose? Some persons grumble that Scripture does not in numerous passages set forth systematically and clearly that fall of the devils, its cause, manner, time, and character. But because this has nothing to do with

us, it was better not to say anything, or at least to touch upon it lightly, because it did not befit the Holy Spirit to feed our curiosity with empty histories to no effect. And we see that the Lord's purpose was to teach nothing in his sacred oracles except what we should learn to our edification. Therefore, lest we ourselves linger over superfluous matters, let us be content with this brief summary of the nature of devils: they were when first created angels of God, but by degeneration they ruined themselves, and became the instruments of ruin for others. Because this is profitable to know, it is plainly taught in Peter and Jude. God did not spare those angels who sinned [^{<610204>}2 Peter 2:4] and kept not their original nature, but left their abode [^{<650106>}Jude 6]. ^c And Paul, in speaking of the "elect angels" [^{<540521>}1 Timothy 5:21], is no doubt tacitly contrasting them with the reprobate angels.

17. THE DEVIL STANDS UNDER GOD'S POWER

^c As for the discord and strife that we say exists between Satan and God, we ought to accept as a fixed certainty the fact that he can do nothing unless God wills and assents to it. For we read in the history of Job that he presented himself before God to receive his commands [^{<180106>}Job 1:6; 2:1], and did not dare undertake any evil act without first having obtained permission [chs. 1:12; 2:6]. Thus, also, when Ahab was to be deceived, Satan took upon himself to become a spirit of falsehood in the mouths of all the prophets; and commissioned by God, he carried out his task [^{<112220>}1 Kings 22:20-22]. For this reason, too, the spirit of the Lord that troubled Saul is called "evil" because the sins of the impious king were punished by it as by a lash [^{<091614>}1 Samuel 16:14; 18:10]. And elsewhere it is written that the plagues were inflicted upon the Egyptians by God "through evil angels" [^{<197849>}Psalms 78:49]. According to these particular examples Paul generally testifies that the blinding of unbelievers is God's work [^{<530211>}2 Thessalonians 2:11], although he had before called it the activity of Satan [^{<530209>}2 Thessalonians 2:9; cf. ^{<470404>}2 Corinthians 4:4; ^{<490202>}Ephesians 2:2]. Therefore Satan is clearly under God's power, and is so ruled by his bidding as to be compelled to render him service. Indeed, when we say that Satan resists God, and that Satan's works disagree with God's works, we at the same time assert that this resistance and this opposition are dependent upon God's sufferance. I am not now speaking of Satan's will, nor even of his effort, but only of his effect. For inasmuch as the devil is

by nature wicked, he is not at all inclined to obedience to the divine will, but utterly intent upon contumacy and rebellion. From himself and his own wickedness, therefore, arises his passionate and deliberate opposition to God. By this wickedness he is urged on to attempt courses of action which he believes to be most hostile to God. But because with the bridle of his power God holds him bound and restrained, he carries out only those things which have been divinely permitted to him; and so he obeys his Creator, whether he will or not, because he is compelled to yield him service wherever God impels him.

18. ASSURANCE OF VICTORY!

^cNow, because God bends the unclean spirits hither and thither at will, he so governs their activity that they exercise believers in combat, ambush them, invade their peace, beset them in combat, and also often weary them, rout them, terrify them, and sometimes wound them; yet they never vanquish or crush them. But the wicked they subdue and drag away; they exercise power over their minds and bodies, and misuse them as if they were slaves for every shameful act. As far as believers are concerned, because they are disquieted by enemies of this sort, they heed these exhortations: “Give no place to the devil” [^{<490427>}Ephesians 4:27, Vg.]. “The devil your enemy goes about as a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour; resist him, be firm in your faith” [^{<600508>}1 Peter 5:8-9 p.], and the like. Paul admits that he was not free from this sort of strife when he writes that, as a remedy to tame his pride, he was given an angel of Satan to humble him [^{<471207>}2 Corinthians 12:7]. Therefore this exercise is common to all the children of God. But because that promise to crush Satan’s head [^{<010315>}Genesis 3:15] pertains to Christ and all his members in common, I deny that believers can ever be conquered or overwhelmed by him. Often, indeed, are they distressed, but not so deprived of life as not to recover; they fall under violent blows, but afterward they are raised up; they are wounded, but not fatally; in short, they so toil throughout life that at the last they obtain the victory.

^eYet I do not confine this to individual acts. For we know that by God’s just vengeance David was for a time given over to Satan, that at his prompting he should take a census of the people [^{<102401>}2 Samuel 24:1]. And Paul does not abandon hope of pardon as impossible, even if men are

ensnared in the devil's net [^{<550225>}2 Timothy 2:25-26]. "In another passage Paul shows that the promise mentioned above begins to have effect in this life, wherein we must struggle; and that after the struggle it is fulfilled. As he puts it, "The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet." [^{<451620>}Romans 16:20.] In our Head, indeed, this victory always fully existed, for the prince of the world had nothing in him [^{<431430>}John 14:30]. Moreover, it now appears in part in us, who are his members; it will be completed when we shall have put off our flesh, in respect to which we are as yet subject to infirmity, and will be filled with the power of the Holy Spirit.

To the extent that Christ's Kingdom is upbuilt, Satan with his power falls; as the Lord himself says, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" [^{<421018>}Luke 10:18]. For, by this answer he confirms what the apostles had related concerning the power of their preaching, "Likewise: "When a prince occupies his own palace, all his possessions are undisturbed. But when one stronger than he overcomes him, he is cast out," etc. [^{<421121>}Luke 11:21-22 p.]. And Christ, by dying, conquered Satan, who had "the power of death" [^{<580214>}Hebrews 2:14], and triumphed over all his forces, to the end that they might not harm the church. Otherwise, at every moment they would do away with it a hundred times over. For, such is our weakness and such is the power of his fury, how could we stand even in the slightest against his manifold and continuous attacks, unless we relied upon the victory of our leader? "Therefore God does not allow Satan to rule over the souls of believers, but gives over only the impious and unbelievers, whom he deigns not to regard as members of his own flock, to be governed by him. For the devil is said to occupy this world unchallenged until he is cast out by Christ [cf. ^{<421121>}Luke 11:21]. Likewise, he is said to blind all those who do not believe in the gospel [^{<470404>}2 Corinthians 4:4]. Again, to carry out his "work in the sons of disobedience" [^{<490202>}Ephesians 2:2], and rightly, for all the impious are vessels of wrath. Hence, to whom would they be subjected but to the minister of divine vengeance? Finally, they are said to be of their father the devil [^{<430844>}John 8:44]; for, as believers are recognized as the children of God because they bear his image, so are those rightly recognized to be the children of Satan from his image, into which they have degenerated [^{<620308>}1 John 3:8-10].

19. DEVILS ARE NOT THOUGHTS, BUT ACTUALITIES

^cInasmuch as we have before refuted ^{f441} that trifling philosophy about the holy angels which teaches that they are nothing but good inspirations or impulses which God arouses in men's minds, so also in this place ought those men to be refuted who babble of devils as nothing else than evil emotions or perturbations which come upon us from our flesh. ^{f442} We shall be able to do this briefly because there are not a few testimonies of Scripture clear enough on this matter. First, when those who have degenerated from their original state [^{<650106>}Jude 6] are called unclean spirits and apostate angels [^{<401243>}Matthew 12:43], the names themselves sufficiently express, not impulses or affections of minds, but rather what are called minds or spirits endowed with sense perception and understanding. Likewise, when the children of God are compared with the children of the devil both by Christ and by John [^{<430844>}John 8:44; 1 John 3:10], would this comparison not be pointless if the name "devil" signified nothing but evil inspirations? And John adds something even clearer, that "the devil has sinned from the beginning" [^{<620308>}1 John 3:8]. So, also, when Jude introduces "the archangel Michael, as contending with the devil" [Jude 9], he surely sets against the good angel an evil and rebellious one. What we read in the history of Job agrees with this, that Satan appeared with the holy angels in God's presence [^{<180106>}Job 1:6; 2:1]. Moreover, clearest of all are those passages which make mention of the punishment, which the devils have begun to feel from God's judgment, and will especially feel at the resurrection. "O Son" of David, why "have you come to torment us before the time?" [^{<400829>}Matthew 8:29.] Likewise: "Depart, you cursed ones, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." [^{<402541>}Matthew 25:41.] Also: "If he spared not his own angels, but cast them bound with chains into darkness to be kept for eternal damnation," etc. [^{<610204>}2 Peter 2:4.]

How meaningless would these expressions be, that the devils are destined for eternal judgment, that fire has been prepared for them, that they are now tormented and tortured by Christ's glory, if devils were nonexistent! But this matter does not require discussion among those who have faith in the Lord's Word, while among these empty speculators, indeed, to whom nothing is pleasing unless it be new, there is little profit in the testimonies of Scripture. It seems to me, therefore, that I have accomplished what I

meant to do, namely, to equip godly minds against such delusions, with which uneasy men confound themselves and others more simple-minded than they. But it was worth-while to touch upon this point, also, lest any persons, entangled in that error, while thinking themselves without an enemy, become more slack and heedless about resisting.

(The spiritual lessons of Creation, 20-22)

20. GREATNESS AND ABUNDANCE OF CREATION

^{e(c)} Meanwhile let us not be ashamed to take pious delight in the works of God open and manifest in this most beautiful theater. ^{f443 c} For, as I have elsewhere said, ^{f444} although it is not the chief evidence for faith, yet it is the first evidence in the order of nature, to be mindful that wherever we cast our eyes, all things they meet are works of God, and at the same time to ponder with pious meditation to what end God created them. Therefore, that we may apprehend with true faith what it profits us to know of God, it is important for us to grasp first the history of the creation of the universe, as it has been set forth briefly by Moses [Genesis, chs. 1 and 2], and then has been more fully illustrated by saintly men, especially by Basil and Ambrose. ^{f445} From this history we shall learn that God by the power of his Word and Spirit created heaven and earth out of nothing; that thereupon he brought forth living beings and inanimate things of every kind, that in a wonderful series he distinguished an innumerable variety of things, that he endowed each kind with its own nature, assigned functions, appointed places and stations; and that, although all were subject to corruption, he nevertheless provided for the preservation of each species until the Last Day. We shall likewise learn that he nourishes some in secret ways, and, as it were, from time to time instills new vigor into them; on others he has conferred the power of propagating, lest by their death the entire species perish; that he has so wonderfully adorned heaven and earth with as unlimited abundance, variety, and beauty of all things as could possibly be, quite like a spacious and splendid house, provided and filled with the most exquisite and at the same time most abundant furnishings. Finally, we shall learn that in forming man and in adorning him with such goodly beauty, and with such great and numerous gifts, he put him forth as the most excellent example of his works. But since it is not my purpose to recount the creation of the

universe, let it be enough for me to have touched upon these few matters again in passing. For it is better, as I have already warned my readers, to seek a fuller understanding of this passage from Moses and from those others who have faithfully and diligently recorded the narrative of Creation [Genesis, chs. 1 and 2].

21. HOW SHOULD WE VIEW GOD'S WORKS?

^{e(c)} Nothing is to be gained by further discussing what direction the contemplation of God's works should take and to what goal such contemplation ought to be applied, inasmuch as the greater part of this topic has been disposed of in another place, ^{f446 c} and it is possible to accomplish in a few words whatever concerns our present purpose. Indeed, if we chose to explain in a fitting manner how God's inestimable wisdom, power, justice, and goodness shine forth in the fashioning of the universe, no splendor, no ornament of speech, would be equal to an act of such great magnitude. There is no doubt that the Lord would have us uninterruptedly occupied in this holy meditation; that, while we contemplate in all creatures, as in mirrors, those immense riches of his wisdom, justice, goodness, and power, we should not merely run over them cursorily, and, so to speak, with a fleeting glance; but we should ponder them at length, turn them over in our minds seriously and faithfully, and recollect them repeatedly. But because our purpose here is to teach, it is proper for us to omit those matters which require long harangue. Therefore, to be brief, let all readers know that they have with true faith apprehended what it is for God to be Creator of heaven and earth, if they first of all follow the universal rule, not to pass over in ungrateful thoughtlessness or forgetfulness those conspicuous powers which God shows forth in his creatures, and then learn so to apply it to themselves that their very hearts are touched. The first part of the rule is exemplified when we reflect upon the greatness of the Artificer who stationed, arranged, and fitted together the starry host of heaven in such wonderful order that nothing more beautiful in appearance can be imagined; who so set and fixed some in their stations that they cannot move; who granted to others a freer course, but so as not to wander outside their appointed course; who so adjusted the motion of all that days and nights, months, years, and seasons of the year are measured off; who so proportioned the inequality of days, which we daily observe, that

no confusion occurs. It is so too when we observe his power in sustaining so great a mass, in governing the swiftly revolving heavenly system,^{f447} and the like. For these few examples make sufficiently clear what it is to recognize God's powers in the creation of the universe. Otherwise, as I have said, if I decide to set forth the whole matter in my discourse, there will be no end. For there are as many miracles of divine power, as many tokens of goodness, and as many proofs of wisdom, as there are kinds of things in the universe, indeed, as there are things either great or small.

22. THE CONTEMPLATION OF GOD'S GOODNESS IN HIS CREATION WILL LEAD US TO THANKFULNESS AND TRUST

^cThere remains the second part of the rule, more closely related to faith. It is to recognize that God has destined all things for our good and salvation but at the same time to feel his power and grace in ourselves and in the great benefits he has conferred upon us, and so bestir ourselves to trust, invoke, praise, and love him.^{f448} Indeed, as I pointed out a little before,^{f449} God himself has shown by the order of Creation that he created all things for man's sake. For it is not without significance that he divided the making of the universe into six days [^{<010131>}Genesis 1:31], even though it would have been no more difficult for him to have completed in one moment the whole work together in all its details than to arrive at its completion gradually by a progression of this sort. But he willed to commend his providence and fatherly solicitude toward us in that, before he fashioned man, he prepared everything he foresaw would be useful and salutary for him. How great ingratitude would it be now to doubt whether this most gracious Father has us in his care, who we see was concerned for us even before we were born! How impious would it be to tremble for fear that his kindness might at any time fail us in our need, when we see that it was shown, with the greatest abundance of every good thing, when we were yet unborn! Besides, from Moses we hear that, through His liberality, all things on earth are subject to us [^{<010128>}Genesis 1:28; 9:2]. It is certain that He did not do this to mock us with the empty title to a gift. Therefore nothing that is needful for our welfare will ever be lacking to us.

To conclude once for all, whenever we call God the Creator of heaven and earth, let us at the same time bear in mind that the dispensation of all those things which he has made is in his own hand and power and that we are

indeed his children, whom he has received into his faithful protection to nourish and educate. We are therefore to await the fullness of all good things from him alone and to trust completely that he will never leave us destitute of what we need for salvation, and to hang our hopes on none but him! We are therefore, also, to petition him for whatever we desire; and we are to recognize as a blessing from him, and thankfully to acknowledge, every benefit that falls to our share. So, invited by the great sweetness of his beneficence and goodness, let us study to love and serve him with all our heart.

CHAPTER 15.

^EDISCUSSION OF HUMAN NATURE AS CREATED,

OF THE FACULTIES OF THE SOUL, OF THE IMAGE OF GOD, OF FREE WILL, AND OF THE ORIGINAL INTEGRITY OF MAN'S NATURE ^{F450}

*(Man's nature deformed; yet his soul bears, though almost
obliterated, the image of God, 1-4)*

1. MAN PROCEEDED SPOTLESS FROM GOD'S HAND; THEREFORE HE MAY NOT SHIFT THE BLAME FOR HIS SINS TO THE CREATOR

We must now speak of the creation of man: not only because among all God's works here is the noblest and most remarkable example of his justice, wisdom, and goodness; but because, as we said at the beginning, ^{F451} we cannot have a clear and complete knowledge of God unless it is accompanied by a corresponding knowledge of ourselves. This knowledge of ourselves is twofold: namely, to know what we were like when we were first created and what our condition became after the fall of Adam. While it would be of little benefit to understand our creation unless we recognized in this sad ruin what our nature in its corruption and deformity is like, we shall nevertheless be content for the moment with the description of our originally upright nature. ^{e(b)} And to be sure, before we come to the miserable condition of man to which he is now subjected, it is worth-while to know what he was like when first created, ^b Now we must guard against singling out only those natural evils of man, lest we seem to attribute them to the Author of nature. For in this excuse, impiety thinks it has sufficient defense, if it is able to claim that whatever defects it possesses have in some way proceeded from God. It does not hesitate, if it is reproved, to contend with God himself, and to impute to him the fault of which it is deservedly accused. And those who wish to seem to speak more

reverently of the Godhead still willingly blame their depravity on nature, not realizing that they also, although more obscurely, insult God. For if any defect were proved to inhere in nature, this would bring reproach upon him.

Since, then, we see the flesh panting for every subterfuge by which it thinks that the blame for its own evils may in any way be diverted from itself to another, we must diligently oppose this evil intent. Therefore we must so deal with the calamity of mankind that we may cut off every shift, and may vindicate God's justice from every accusation.^e Afterward, in the proper place, we shall see how far away men are from the purity that was bestowed upon Adam.^{f452} And first we must realize that when he was taken from earth and clay [^{<010207>}Genesis 2:7; 18:27], his pride was bridled. For nothing is more absurd than for those who not only "dwell in houses of clay" [^{<180419>}Job 4:19], but who are themselves in part earth and dust, to boast of their own excellence. But since God not only deigned to give life to an earthen vessel, but also willed it to be the abode of an immortal spirit, Adam could rightly glory in the great liberality of his Maker.

2. DIVERSITY OF BODY AND SOUL

^eFurthermore, that man consists of a soul and a body ought to be beyond controversy. Now I understand by the term "soul" an immortal yet created essence, which is his nobler part. Sometimes it is called "spirit." For even when these terms are joined together, they differ from one another in meaning; yet when the word "spirit" is used by itself, it means the same thing as soul; as when Solomon, speaking of death, says that then "the spirit returns to God who gave it" [^{<211207>}Ecclesiastes 12:7]. And when Christ commended his spirit to the Father [^{<422346>}Luke 23:46] and Stephen his to Christ [^{<440759>}Acts 7:59] they meant only that when the soul is freed from the prison house of the body, God is its perpetual guardian. Some imagine the soul to be called "spirit" for the reason that it is breath, or a force divinely infused into bodies, but that it nevertheless is without essence; both the thing itself and all Scripture show them to be stupidly blundering in this opinion. It is of course true that while men are tied to earth more than they should be they grow dull; indeed, because they have been estranged from the Father of Lights [^{<590117>}James 1:17], they become

blinded by darkness, so that they do not think they will survive death; yet in the meantime the light has not been so extinguished in the darkness that they remain untouched by a sense of their own immortality. Surely the conscience, which, discerning between good and evil, responds to God's judgment, is an undoubted sign of the immortal spirit. For how could a motion without essence penetrate to God's judgment seat, and inflict itself with dread at its own guilt? For the body is not affected by the fear of spiritual punishment, which falls upon the soul only; from this it follows that the soul is endowed with essence. Now the very knowledge of God sufficiently proves that souls, which transcend the world, are immortal, for no transient energy could penetrate to the fountain of life.

In short, the many pre-eminent gifts with which the human mind is endowed proclaim that something divine has been engraved upon it; all these are testimonies of an immortal essence. For the sense perception inhering in brute animals does not go beyond the body, or at least extends no farther than to material things presented to it. But the nimbleness of the human mind in searching out heaven and earth and the secrets of nature, and when all ages have been compassed by its understanding and memory, in arranging each thing in its proper order, and in inferring future events from past, clearly shows that there lies hidden in man something separate from the body.^{f453} With our intelligence we conceive the invisible God and the angels, something the body can by no means do. We grasp things that are right, just, and honorable, which are hidden to the bodily senses. Therefore the spirit must be the seat of this intelligence. Indeed, sleep itself, which benumbs man, seeming even to deprive him of life, is no obscure witness of immortality, since it suggests not only thoughts of things that have never happened, but also presentiments of the future. I have briefly touched upon these things which secular writers grandly extol and depict in more brilliant language;^{f454} but among godly readers this simple reminder will be enough.

Now, unless the soul were something essential, separate from the body, Scripture would not teach that we dwell in houses of clay [^{<180419>}Job 4:19] and at death leave the tabernacle of the flesh, putting off what is corruptible so that at the Last Day we may finally receive our reward, according as each of us has done in the body. For surely these passages and similar ones that occur repeatedly not only clearly distinguish the soul

from the body, but by transferring to it the name “man” indicate it to be the principal part. Now when Paul urges believers to cleanse themselves of every defilement of flesh and spirit [^{<470701>}2 Corinthians 7:1], he points out the two parts in which the filth of sin resides. Peter, also, calling Christ “shepherd and bishop of ... souls” [^{<600225>}1 Peter 2:25], would have spoken wrongly if there had not been souls on whose behalf he might fulfill this office. If souls did not have their own proper essence, there would be no point in Peter’s statement about the eternal “salvation of ... souls” [^{<600109>}1 Peter 1:9], or in his injunction to purify our souls and ascertain that “wicked lusts ... war against the soul” [^{<600211>}1 Peter 2:11 p.]. The same applies to the statement of the author of Hebrews, that the pastors “stand watch ... to render account for our souls” [^{<581317>}Hebrews 13:17 p.]. The fact that Paul, upon his soul, calls God to witness [^{<470123>}2 Corinthians 1:23, Vg.] points to the same conclusion, because it would not become guilty before God unless it were liable for punishment. This is expressed even more clearly in Christ’s words, when he bids us be afraid of him who, after he has killed the body, can send the soul into the Gehenna of fire [^{<401028>}Matthew 10:28; ^{<421205>}Luke 12:5]. Now when the author of The Letter to the Hebrews distinguishes the fathers of our flesh from God, who is the one “Father of spirits” [^{<581209>}Hebrews 12:9], he could not assert more clearly the essence of souls. Besides, unless souls survive when freed from the prison houses of their bodies, it would be absurd for Christ to induce the soul of Lazarus as enjoying bliss in Abraham’s bosom, and again, the soul of the rich man sentenced to terrible torments [^{<421622>}Luke 16:22-23]. Paul confirms this same thing, teaching us that we journey away from God so long as we dwell in the flesh, but that we enjoy his presence outside the flesh [^{<470506>}2 Corinthians 5:6, 8]. Lest I go any farther in a topic of no great difficulty, I shall add only this word from Luke, that among the errors of the Sadducees it is mentioned that they did not believe in spirits and angels [^{<442308>}Acts 23:8].

3. GOD’S IMAGE AND LIKENESS IN MAN

^eAlso, a reliable proof of this matter may be gathered from the fact that man was created in God’s image [^{<010127>}Genesis 1:27]. ^{f455} For although God’s glory shines forth in the outer man, yet there is no doubt that the proper seat of his image is in the soul. I do not deny, indeed, that our outward form, in so far as it distinguishes and separates us from brute

animals, at the same time more closely joins us to God. And if anyone wishes to include under “image of God” the fact that, “while all other living things being bent over look earthward, man has been given a face uplifted, bidden to gaze heavenward and to raise his countenance to the stars” ^{f456} I shall not contend too strongly — provided it be regarded as a settled principle that the image of God, which is seen or glows in these outward marks, is spiritual. For Osiander, ^{f457} whose writings prove him to have been perversely ingenious in futile inventions. indiscriminately extending God’s image both to the body and to the soul, mingles heaven and earth. He says that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit place their image in man, because however upright Adam might have remained, yet Christ would have to become man. Thus, according to them, ^{f458} the body that was destined for Christ was the exemplar and type of that corporeal figure which was then formed. But where will he find that Christ is the image of the Spirit? I admit that in the person of the Mediator the glory of the whole divinity surely shines, but how will the Eternal Word be called the image of the Spirit, whom he precedes in order? In short, the distinction between Son and Spirit is overthrown if the latter calls the former the image of himself. Furthermore, I should like to know from him how in the flesh that he took upon himself Christ resembles the Holy Spirit, and by what marks or lineaments he expresses his likeness. And since that saying, “Let us make man,” etc. [^{<010126>}Genesis 1:26], is common also to the person of the Son, it would follow that he is the image of himself. This is repugnant to all reason. Besides this, if Osiander’s fabrication is accepted, man was formed only after the type and exemplar of Christ as man; and thus the pattern from which Adam was taken was Christ in so far as he was to be clothed with flesh. But Scripture teaches in a far other sense that he was created in God’s image. There is more color to the cleverness of those who explain that Adam was created in God’s image because he conformed to Christ, who is the sole image of God ^{f459}; but in that, also, there is nothing sound.

Also, there is no slight quarrel over “image” and “likeness” when interpreters seek a nonexistent difference between these two words, except that “likeness” has been added by way of explanation. First, we know that repetitions were common among the Hebrews, in which they express one thing twice; then in the thing itself there is no ambiguity, simply man is called God’s image because he is like God. Accordingly, those who thus

philosophize more subtly over these terms appear to be ridiculous: they either apply *zelem*, that is, image, to the substance of the soul, and *demuth*, that is, likeness, to its qualities; or they adduce something different.^{f460} For, when God determined to create man in his image, which was a rather obscure expression, he for explanation repeats it in this phrase, “According to his likeness,” as if he were saying that he was going to make man, in whom he would represent himself as in an image, by means of engraved marks of likeness. Therefore Moses, a little after, reciting the same thing, repeats “image of God” twice, without mentioning “likeness.” Osiander’s objection is trivial, that not a part of man — say, the soul with its endowments — is called God’s image, but the whole Adam, whose name was given him from the earth whence he was taken. Trivial, I say, all readers of sound mind will deem it. For, while the whole man is called mortal, the soul is not thereby subjected to death; nor does reason or intelligence belong to the body merely because man is called a “rational animal.”^{f461} Therefore, although the soul is not man, yet it is not absurd for man, in respect to his soul, to be called God’s image; even though I retain the principle I just now set forward, that the likeness of God extends to the whole excellence by which man’s nature towers over all the kinds of living creatures. Accordingly, the integrity with which Adam was endowed is expressed by this word, when he had full possession of right understanding, when he had his affections kept within the bounds of reason, all his senses tempered in right order, and he truly referred his excellence to exceptional gifts bestowed upon him by his Maker. And although the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and heart, or in the soul and its powers, yet there was no part of man, not even the body itself, in which some sparks did not glow. It is sure that even in the several parts of the world some traces of God’s glory shine. From this we may gather that when his image is placed in man a tacit antithesis is introduced which raises man above all other creatures and, as it were, separates him from the common mass. And indeed, we ought not to deny that angels were created according to God’s likeness, inasmuch as our highest perfection, as Christ testifies, will be to become like them [^{<402230>}Matthew 22:30]. But by this particular title Moses rightly commends God’s grace toward us, especially when he compares only the visible creatures with man.

4. THE TRUE NATURE OF THE IMAGE OF GOD IS TO BE DERIVED FROM WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS OF ITS RENEWAL THROUGH CHRIST

^eNevertheless, it seems that we do not have a full definition of “image” if we do not see more plainly those faculties in which man excels, and in which he ought to be thought the reflection of God’s glory. That, indeed, can be nowhere better recognized than from the restoration of his corrupted nature. There is no doubt that Adam, when he fell from his state, was by this defection alienated from God. Therefore, even though we grant that God’s image was not totally annihilated and destroyed in him, yet it was so corrupted that whatever remains is frightful deformity. Consequently, the beginning of our recovery of salvation is in that restoration which we obtain through Christ, who also is called the Second Adam for the reason that he restores us to true and complete integrity. For even though Paul, contrasting the life-giving spirit that the believers receive from Christ with the living soul in which Adam was created [^{<461545>}1 Corinthians 15:45], commends the richer measure of grace in regeneration, yet he does not remove that other principal point, that the end of regeneration is that Christ should reform us to God’s image. ^{e(b)}Therefore elsewhere he teaches that “the new man is renewed ... according to the image of his Creator” [^{<510310>}Colossians 3:10 p.]. With this agrees the saying, “Put on the new man, who has been created according to God” [^{<490424>}Ephesians 4:24, Vg.].

Now we are to see what Paul chiefly comprehends under this renewal. In the first place he posits knowledge, then pure righteousness and holiness. From this we infer that, to begin with, God’s image was visible in the light of the mind, in the uprightness of the heart, and in the soundness of all the parts. For although I confess that these forms of speaking are synecdoches, yet this principle cannot be overthrown, that what was primary in the renewing of God’s image ^{f462} also held the highest place in the creation itself. ^{e(c)}To the same pertains what he teaches elsewhere, that “we...with unveiled face beholding the glory of Christ are being transformed into his very image” [^{<470318>}2 Corinthians 3:18].

Now we see how Christ is the most perfect image of God; if we are conformed to it, we are so restored that with true piety, righteousness, purity, and intelligence we bear God’s image.

^eWhen this has been established, Osiander's fancy concerning the shape of the body readily vanishes of itself. But the statement in which man alone is called by Paul "the image and glory of God" [^{<461107>}1 Corinthians 11:7, Vg.] and woman excluded from this place of honor is clearly to be restricted, as the context shows, to the political order. Yet I now consider it sufficiently proved that whatever has to do with spiritual and eternal life is included under "image," mention of which has been made. John confirms this same point in other words, declaring that "the life" which was from the beginning in God's Eternal Word "was the light of men" [^{<430104>}John 1:4]. It was his intent to praise God's singular grace, wherein man excels the remaining living creatures, in order to separate him from the multitude because he attained no common life, but one joined with the light of understanding. Accordingly, he shows at the same time how man was created in God's image. Now God's image is the perfect excellence of human nature which shone in Adam before his defection, but was subsequently so vitiated and almost blotted out that nothing remains after the ruin except what is confused, mutilated, and disease-ridden. Therefore in some part it now is manifest in the elect, in so far as they have been reborn in the spirit; but it will attain its full splendor in heaven.

Yet in order that we may know of what parts this image consists, it is of value to discuss the faculties of the soul. For that speculation of Augustine, that the soul is the reflection of the Trinity because in it reside the understanding, will, and memory, ^{f463} is by no means sound. ^{e(b)}Nor is there any probability in the opinion of those who locate God's likeness in the dominion given to man, as if in this mark alone he resembled God, that he was established as heir and possessor of all things; ^ewhereas God's image is properly to be sought within him, not outside him, indeed, it ^eis an inner good of the soul.

5. MANICHAEAN ERROR OF THE SOUL'S EMANATION

^eBut before we go farther, we must confront the delusion of the Manichees, which Servetus has tried to introduce once more in this age. Because it is said that God breathed the breath of life upon man's face [^{<010207>}Genesis 2:7], they thought the soul to be a derivative of God's substance, as if some portion of immeasurable divinity had flowed into man. Yet it is easy to point out quickly what crass and foul absurdities

this devilish error drags in its train. For if man's soul be from the essence of God through derivation,^{f464} it will follow that God's nature is subject not only to change and passions, but also to ignorance, wicked desires, infirmity, and all manner of vices. Nothing is more inconstant than man. Contrary motions stir up and variously distract his soul. Repeatedly he is led astray by ignorance. He yields, overcome by the slightest temptation. We know his mind to be a sink and lurking place for every sort of filth. All these things one must attribute to God's nature, if we understand the soul to be from God's essence, or to be a secret inflowing of divinity. Who would not shudder at this monstrous thing? Indeed, Paul truly quotes Aratus^{f465} that we are God's offspring [^{<441728>}Acts 17:28], but in quality, not in essence, inasmuch as he, indeed, adorned us with divine gifts. Meanwhile, to tear apart the essence of the Creator so that everyone may possess a part of it is utter folly. Therefore we must take it to be a fact that souls, although the image of God be engraved upon them, are just as much created as angels are. But creation is not inpouring, but the beginning of essence out of nothing. Indeed, if the spirit has been given by God, and in departing from the flesh returns to him [cf. ^{<211207>}Ecclesiastes 12:7], we must not forthwith say that it was plucked from his substance. And Osiander, while carried away with his own delusions, as in this matter entangled himself in an impious error; he does not recognize the image of God in man apart from essential righteousness, as if God were unable to make us conform to himself by the inestimable power of his Spirit, apart from Christ's pouring his own substance into us! However some persons may try to camouflage these deceptions, they will never prevent well-balanced readers from seeing that such savor of the error of the Manichaeans. And when Paul discusses the restoration of the image, it is clear that we should infer from his words that man is made to conform to God, not by an inflowing of substance, but by the grace and power of the Spirit. For he says that by "beholding Christ's glory, we are being transformed into his very image ... as through the Spirit of the Lord" [^{<470318>}2 Corinthians 3:18], who surely works in us without rendering us consubstantial with God.

*(Opinions of the philosophers on the soul criticized in
view of the fall of Adam, 6-8)*

6. THE SOUL AND ITS FACULTIES

^eIt would be foolish to seek a definition of “soul” from the philosophers. Of them hardly one, except Plato, has rightly affirmed its immortal substance. Indeed, other Socratics also touch upon it, but in a way that shows how nobody teaches clearly a thing of which he has not been persuaded. Hence Plato’s opinion is more correct, because he considers the image of God in the soul. ^{f466} Others so attach the soul’s powers and faculties to the present life that they leave nothing to it outside the body.

^{f467}

Indeed, from Scripture we have already taught that the soul is an incorporeal substance; ^{f468} now we must add that, although properly it is not spatially limited, still, set in the body, it dwells there as in a house; not only that it may animate all its parts and render its organs fit and useful for their actions, but also that it may hold the first place in ruling man’s life, not alone with respect to the duties of his earthly life, but at the same time to arouse him to honor God. Even though in man’s corruption this last point is not clearly perceived, yet some vestige remains imprinted in his very vices. For whence comes such concern to men about their good name but from shame? And whence comes shame but from regard for what is honorable? The beginning and cause of this is that they understand themselves to have been born to cultivate righteousness, in which the seed of religion is enclosed. But, without controversy, just as man was made for meditation upon the heavenly life ^{f469} so it is certain that the knowledge of it was engraved upon his soul. And if human happiness, whose perfection it is to be united with God, were hidden from man, he would in fact be bereft of the principal use of his understanding. Thus, also, the chief activity of the soul is to aspire thither. Hence the more anyone endeavors to approach to God, the more he proves himself endowed with reason.

We ought to repudiate those persons who would affirm more than one soul in man, that is, a sensitive and a rational soul, ^{f470} because there is nothing firm in their reasonings, even though they seem to be asserting something probable, unless we want to torture ourselves in trivial and useless matters. They say that there is great disagreement between organic

motions and the soul's rational part. As if reason itself did not also disagree with itself and were not at cross-purposes with itself, just like armies at war. But since this disturbance arises out of depravity of nature, it is wrong to conclude from this that there are two souls, just because the faculties do not agree among themselves in befitting proportion.

^{e(b)} But I leave it to the philosophers to discuss these faculties in their subtle way. For the upbuilding of godliness a simple definition will be enough for us. ^c I, indeed, agree that the things they teach are true, not only enjoyable, but also profitable to learn, and skillfully assembled by them. And I do not forbid those who are desirous of learning to study them. Therefore ^b I admit in the first place that there are five senses, which Plato preferred to call organs, by which all objects are presented to common sense, as a sort of receptacle. ^{f471} There follows fantasy, which distinguishes those things which have been apprehended by common sense; then reason, which embraces universal judgment; finally understanding, which in intent and quiet study contemplates what reason discursively ponders. Similarly, to understanding, reason, and fantasy (the three cognitive faculties of the soul) correspond three appetitive faculties: will, whose functions consist in striving after what understanding and reason present; the capacity for anger, which seizes upon what is offered to it by reason and fantasy; the capacity to desire inordinately, which apprehends what is set before it by fantasy and sense. ^{f472}

Although these things are true, or at least are probable, yet since I fear that they may involve us in their own obscurity rather than help us, I think they ought to be passed over. I shall not strongly oppose anyone who wants to classify the powers of the soul in some other way: to call one appetitive, which, even though without reason, if directed elsewhere, yet obeys reason; to call the other intellective, which is through itself participant in reason.

Nor would I refute the view that there are three principles of action: sense, understanding, appetite.

But let us rather choose a division within the capacity of all, which cannot be successfully sought from the philosophers. For they, while they want to speak with utter simplicity, divide the soul into appetite and understanding, but make both double. They say the latter is sometimes

contemplative because, content with knowledge alone, it has no active motion (a thing that Cicero thought to be designated by the term “*genius*”);^{f473} sometimes practical because by the apprehension of good or evil it variously moves the will. In this division is included the knowledge of how to live well and justly. The former part (I mean the appetitive) they also divide, into will and concupiscence; and as often as appetite, which they call βούλησις obeys reason, it is ὁρμή but it becomes πάθος when the appetite, having thrown off the yoke of reason, rushes off to intemperance.^{f474} Thus they always imagine reason in man as that faculty whereby he may govern himself aright.

7. UNDERSTANDING AND WILL AS THE TRULY FUNDAMENTAL FACULTIES

^{e(b)}We are forced to part somewhat from this way of teaching because the philosophers, ignorant of the corruption of nature that originated from the penalty for man’s defection, mistakenly confuse two very diverse states of man. ^bThus let us, therefore, hold — as indeed is suitable to our present purpose — that the human soul consists of two faculties, understanding and will. Let the office, moreover, of understanding be to distinguish between objects, as each seems worthy of approval or disapproval; while that of the will, to choose and follow what the understanding pronounces good, but to reject and flee what it disapproves.^{f475} Let not those minutiae of Aristotle delay us here, that the mind has no motion in itself, but is moved by choice.^{f476} This choice he calls the appetitive understanding. Not to entangle ourselves in useless questions, let it be enough for us that the understanding is, as it were, the leader and governor of the soul!; and that the will is always mindful of the bidding of the understanding, and in its own desires awaits the judgment of the understanding. For this reason, Aristotle himself truly teaches the same: that shunning or seeking out in the appetite corresponds to affirming or denying ill the mind. Indeed, in another place^{f477} we shall see how firmly the understanding now governs the direction of the will; here we wish to say only this, that no power can be found in the soul that does not duly have reference to one or the other of these members. And in this way we include sense under understanding. The philosophers, on the other hand, make this distinction: that sense inclines to pleasure, while understanding follows the good; thence it comes about that sensual appetite becomes inordinate desire and lust; the

inclination of the understanding, will. Again, for the term “appetite,” which they prefer, I substitute the word “will,” which is more common.

8. FREE CHOICE AND ADAM’S RESPONSIBILITY

^eTherefore God provided man’s soul with a mind, by which to distinguish good from evil, right from wrong; and, with the light of reason as guide, to distinguish what should be followed from what should be avoided. For this reason, the philosophers called this directing part τὸ ἡγεμονικόν.^{f478} To this he joined the will, under whose control is choice. Man in his first condition excelled in these pre-eminent endowments, so that his reason, understanding, prudence, and judgment not only sufficed for the direction of his earthly life, but by them men mounted up even to God and eternal bliss. Then was choice added, to direct the appetites and control all the organic motions, and thus make the will completely amenable to the guidance of the reason.

In this integrity man by free will had the power, if he so willed, to attain eternal life. Here it would be out of place to raise the question of God’s secret predestination because our present subject is not what can happen or not, but what man’s nature was like. Therefore Adam could have stood if he wished, seeing that he fell solely by his own will. But it was because his will was capable of being bent to one side or the other, and was not given the constancy to persevere, that he fell so easily. Yet his choice of good and evil was free, and not that alone, but the highest rectitude was in his mind and will, and all the organic parts were rightly composed to obedience, until in destroying himself he corrupted his own blessings.

Hence the great obscurity faced by the philosophers, for they were seeking in a ruin for a building, and in scattered fragments for a well-knit structure. They held this principle, that man would not be a rational animal unless he possessed free choice of good and evil;^{f479} also it entered their minds that the distinction between virtues and vices would be obliterated if man did not order his life by his own planning. Well reasoned so far—if there had been no change in man. But since this was hidden from them, it is no wonder they mix up heaven and earth! They, as professed disciples of Christ, are obviously playing the fool when, by compromising between the opinions of the philosophers and heavenly doctrine, so that these touch neither heaven nor earth, in man — who is lost and sunk down

into spiritual destruction — they still seek after free choice. But these matters will be better dealt with in their proper place.^{f480} Now we need bear only this in mind: man was far different at the first creation from his whole posterity, who, deriving their origin from him in his corrupted state, have contracted from him a hereditary taint. For, the individual parts of his soul were formed to uprightness, the soundness of his mind stood firm, and his will was free to choose the good.^{f481} If anyone objects that his will was placed in an insecure position because its power was weak, his status should have availed to remove any excuse; nor was it reasonable for God to be constrained by the necessity of making a man who either could not or would not sin at all. Such a nature would, indeed, have been more excellent. But to quarrel with God on this precise point, as if he ought to have conferred this upon man, is more than iniquitous, inasmuch as it was in his own choice to give whatever he pleased. But the reason he did not sustain man by the virtue of perseverance lies hidden in his plan; sobriety is for us the part of wisdom. Man, indeed, received the ability provided he exercised the will; but he did not have the will to use his ability, for this exercising of the will would have been followed by perseverance.^{f482} Yet he is not excusable, for he received so much that he voluntarily brought about his own destruction; indeed, no necessity was imposed upon God of giving man other than a mediocre and even transitory will, that from man's Fall he might gather occasion for his own glory.

CHAPTER 16.

GOD BY HIS POWER NOURISHES AND MAINTAINS THE WORLD CREATED BY HIM, AND RULES ITS SEVERAL PARTS BY HIS PROVIDENCE^{F483}

*(God's special providence asserted, against the
opinions of philosophers, 1-4)*

1. CREATION AND PROVIDENCE INSEPARABLY JOINED

^eMoreover, to make God a momentary Creator, who once for all finished his work, would be cold and barren, and we must differ from profane men especially in that we see the presence of divine power shining as much in the continuing state of the universe as in its inception, ^bFor even though the minds of the impious too are compelled by merely looking upon earth and heaven to rise up to the Creator, yet faith has its own peculiar way of assigning the whole credit for Creation to God. To this pertains that saying of the apostle's to which we have referred before,^{F484} that only “by faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God” [^{<581103>}Hebrews 11:3]. For unless we pass on to his providence — however we may seem both to comprehend with the mind and to confess with the tongue — we do not yet properly grasp what it means to say: “God is Creator.” Carnal sense, once confronted with the power of God in the very Creation, stops there, and at most weighs and contemplates only the wisdom, power, and goodness of the author in accomplishing such handiwork. (These matters are self-evident, and even force themselves upon the unwilling.) It contemplates, moreover, some general preserving and governing activity, from which the force of motion derives. ^eIn short, carnal sense thinks there is an energy divinely bestowed from the beginning, sufficient to sustain all things.

^bBut faith ought to penetrate more deeply, namely, having found him Creator of all, forthwith to conclude he is also everlasting Governor and Preserver — not only in that he drives the celestial frame^{F485} as well as its

several parts by a universal motion, but also in that he sustains, nourishes, and cares for, everything he has made, even to the least sparrow [cf.

^{<401029>}Matthew 10:29]. ^eThus David, having briefly stated that the universe was created by God, immediately descends to the uninterrupted course of His providence, “By the word of Jehovah the heavens were made, and all their host by the breath of his mouth” [^{<193306>}Psalms 33:6; cf. ^{<193206>}Psalms 32:6, Vg.]. Soon thereafter he adds, “Jehovah has looked down upon the sons of men” [^{<193313>}Psalms 33:13; cf. ^{<193213>}Psalms 32:13-14, Vg.], and what follows is in the same vein. For although all men do not reason so clearly, yet, because it would not be believable that human affairs are cared for by God unless he were the Maker of the universe, and nobody seriously believes the universe was made by God without being persuaded that he takes care of his works, David not inappropriately leads us in the best order from the one to the other. In general, philosophers teach and human minds conceive that all parts of the universe are quickened by God’s secret inspiration. ^{e(b)}Yet they do not reach as far as David is carried, bearing with him all the godly, when he says: ^b“These all look to thee, to give them their food in due season; when thou givest to them, they gather it up; when thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good things; when thou hidest thy face, they are dismayed; when thou takest away their breath, they die and return to the earth. If thou sendest forth thy spirit again, they are created, and thou re-newest the face of the earth” [^{<19A427>}Psalms 104:27-30 p.]. Indeed, although they subscribe to Paul’s statement that we have our being and move and live in God [^{<441728>}Acts 17:28], yet they are far from that earnest feeling of grace which he commends, because they do not at all taste God’s special care, by which alone his fatherly favor is known.

2. THERE IS NO SUCH THING AS FORTUNE OR CHANCE

^eThat this difference may better appear, we must know that God’s providence, as it is taught in Scripture, is opposed to fortune and fortuitous happenings. ^{f486} Now it has been commonly accepted in all ages, and almost all mortals hold the same opinion today, that all things come about through chance. What we ought to believe concerning providence is by this depraved opinion most certainly not only beclouded, but almost buried. Suppose a man falls among thieves, or wild beasts; is shipwrecked at sea by a sudden gale; is killed by a falling house or tree. Suppose another man wandering through the desert finds help in his straits; having

been tossed by the waves, reaches harbor; miraculously escapes death by a finger's breadth. Carnal reason ascribes all such happenings, whether prosperous or adverse, to fortune. But anyone who has been taught by Christ's lips that all the hairs of his head are numbered [^{<401030>}Matthew 10:30] will look farther afield for a cause, and will consider that all events are governed by God's secret plan. ^{e(c)}And concerning inanimate objects we ought to hold that, although each one has by nature been endowed with its own property, yet it does not exercise its own power except in so far as it is directed by God's ever-present hand. ^eThese are, thus, nothing but instruments to which God ^{e(c)}continually imparts as much effectiveness as he wills, and according to his own purpose bends and turns them to either one action or another.

^eNo creature has a force more wondrous or glorious than that of the sun. For besides lighting the whole earth with its brightness, how great a thing is it that by its heat it nourishes and quickens all living things! That with its rays it breathes fruitfulness into the earth.! That it warms the seeds in the bosom of the earth, draws them forth with budding greenness, increases and strengthens them, nourishes them anew, until they rise up into stalks! That it feeds the plant with continual warmth, until it grows into flower, and from flower into fruit! That then, also, with baking heat it brings the fruit to maturity! That in like manner trees and vines warmed by the sun first put forth buds and leaves, then put forth a flower, and from the flower produce fruit! Yet the Lord, to claim the whole credit for all these things, willed that, before he created the sun, light should come to be and earth be filled with all manner of herbs and fruits [^{<010103>}Genesis 1:3, 11, 14]. Therefore a godly man will not make the sun either the principal or the necessary cause of these things which existed before the creation of the sun, but merely the instrument that God uses because he so wills; for with no more difficulty he might abandon it, and act through himself.

^eThen when we read that at Joshua's prayers the sun stood still in one degree for two days [^{<061013>}Joshua 10:13], and that its shadow went back ten degrees for the sake of King Hezekiah [^{<122011>}2 Kings 20:11 or ^{<233808>}Isaiah 38:8], God has witnessed by those few miracles that the sun does not daily rise and set by a blind instinct of nature but that he himself, to renew our remembrance of his fatherly favor toward us, governs its course. Nothing is more natural than for spring to follow winter; summer, spring; and fall, summer — each in turn. Yet in this series one sees such

great and uneven diversity that it readily appears each year, month, and day is governed by a new, a special, providence of God.

3. GOD'S PROVIDENCE GOVERNS ALL

^{b(a)} And truly God claims, and would have us grant him, omnipotence — not the empty, idle, and almost unconscious sort that the Sophists ^{f487} imagine, but a watchful, effective, active sort, ^eengaged in ceaseless activity. Not, indeed, an omnipotence that is only a general principle of confused motion, as if he were to command a river to flow through its once-appointed channels, but one that is directed toward individual and particular motions. ^bFor he is deemed omnipotent, not because he can indeed act, yet sometimes ceases and sits in idleness, ^{e(b)}or continues by a general impulse that order of nature which he previously appointed; but because, governing heaven and earth by his providence, he so regulates all things that nothing takes place without his deliberation. For when, in The Psalms, it is said that “he does whatever he wills” [^{<19B503>}Psalm 115:3; cf. Psalm 113(b): 3, Vg.], a certain and deliberate will is meant. ^eFor it would be senseless to interpret the words of the prophet after the manner of the philosophers, that God is the first agent because he is the beginning and cause of all motion ^{f488} for in times of adversity believers comfort themselves with the solace that they suffer nothing except by God's ordinance and command, for they are under his hand.

But if God's governance is so extended to all his works, it is a childish cavil to enclose it within the stream of nature. Indeed, those as much defraud God of his glory as themselves of a most profitable doctrine who confine God's providence to such narrow limits as though he allowed all things by a free course to be borne along according to a universal law of nature. ^{f489} For nothing would be more miserable than man if he were exposed to every movement of the sky, air, earth, and waters. Besides, in this way God's particular goodness toward each one would be too unworthily reduced. David exclaims that infants still nursing at their mothers' breasts are eloquent enough to celebrate God's glory [^{<190802>}Psalm 8:2], for immediately on coming forth from the womb, they find food prepared for them by his heavenly care. Indeed, this is in general true, provided what experience plainly demonstrates does not escape our eyes and senses, that some mothers have full and abundant breasts, but others'

are almost dry, as God wills to feed one more liberally, but another more meagerly.

^{e(b)}Those who ascribe just praise to God's omnipotence doubly benefit thereby. First, power ample enough to do good there is in him in whose possession are heaven and earth, and to whose beck all creatures are so attentive as to put themselves in obedience to him. Secondly, they may safely rest in the protection of him to whose will are subject all the harmful things which, whatever their source, we may fear; whose authority curbs Satan with all his furies and his whole equipage; and upon whose nod depends whatever opposes our welfare. ^{e(c)}And we cannot otherwise correct or allay these uncontrolled and superstitious fears, which we repeatedly conceive at the onset of dangers. We are superstitiously timid, I say, if whenever creatures threaten us or forcibly terrorize us we become as fearful as if they had some intrinsic power to harm us, ^cor might wound us inadvertently and accidentally, or there were not enough help in God against their harmful acts.

For example, the prophet forbids God's children "to fear the stars and signs of heaven, as disbelievers commonly do" [^{<241002>}Jeremiah 10:2 p.]. Surely he does not condemn every sort of fear. But when unbelievers transfer the government of the universe from God to the stars, they fancy that their bliss or their misery depends upon the decrees and indications of the stars, not upon God's will; so it comes about that their fear is transferred from him, toward whom alone they ought to direct it, to stars and comets. Let him, therefore, who would beware of this infidelity ever remember that there is no erratic power, or action, or motion in creatures, ^{e(c)}but that they are governed by God's secret plan in such a way that nothing happens except what is knowingly and willingly decreed by him.

^{f490}

4. THE NATURE OF PROVIDENCE

^eAt the outset, then, let my readers grasp that providence means not that by which God idly observes from heaven ^{f491} what takes place on earth, but that by which, as keeper of the keys, he governs all events. Thus it pertains no less to his hands than to his eyes. And indeed, when Abraham said to his son, "God will provide" [^{<012208>}Genesis 22:8], he meant not only to assert God's foreknowledge of a future event, but to cast the care of a

matter unknown to him upon the will of Him who is wont to give a way out of things perplexed and confused. Whence it follows that providence is lodged in the act; ^{e(c)}for many babble too ignorantly of bare foreknowledge. Not so crass is the error of those who attribute a governance to God, ^bbut of a confused and mixed sort, as I have said, namely, one that by a general motion revolves and drives the system of the universe, with its several parts, but which does not specifically direct the action of individual creatures. ^eYet this error, also, is not tolerable; ^bfor by this providence which they call universal, they teach that nothing hinders all creatures from being contingently moved, or man from turning himself hither and thither by the free choice of his will. And they so apportion things between God and man that God by His power inspires in man a movement by which he can act in accordance with the nature implanted in him, but He regulates His own actions by the plan of His will. Briefly, they mean that the universe, men's affairs, and men themselves are governed by God's might but not by His determination. I say nothing of the Epicureans (a pestilence that has always filled the world) who imagine that God is idle and indolent; and others just as foolish, who of old fancied that God so ruled above the middle region of the air that he left the lower regions to fortune. ^{f492} As if the dumb creatures themselves do not sufficiently cry out against such patent madness!

("General" and "special" providence)^{e(b)}

For now I propose to refute the opinion (which almost universally obtains) that concedes to God some kind of blind and ambiguous motion, while taking from him the chief thing: that he directs everything by his incomprehensible wisdom and disposes it to his own end. And so in name only, not in fact, it makes God the Ruler of the universe because it deprives him of his control. What, I pray you, is it to have control but so to be in authority that you rule in a determined order those things over which you are placed? ^eYet I do not wholly repudiate what is said concerning universal providence, provided they in turn grant me that the universe is ruled by God, not only because he watches over the order of nature set by himself, but because he exercises especial care over each of his works. It is, indeed, true that the several kinds of things are moved by a secret impulse of nature, as if they obeyed God's eternal command, and what God has once determined flows on by itself.

^{e(b)}At this point we may refer to Christ's statement that from the very beginning he and the Father were always at work [^{<430517>}John 5:17]; and to Paul's teaching that "in him we live, move, and have our being" [^{<441728>}Acts 17:28]; also, what the author of The Letter to the Hebrews ^{f493}says, meaning to prove the divinity of Christ, that all things are sustained by his mighty command [^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3]. But they wrongly conceal and obscure by this excuse that special providence which is so declared by sure and clear testimonies of Scripture that it is a wonder anyone can have doubts about it. ^eAnd surely they who cast over it the veil of which I spoke are themselves compelled to add, by way of correction, that many things take place under God's especial care. But they wrongly restrict this to particular acts alone. Therefore we must prove God so attends to the regulation of individual events, and they all so proceed from his set plan, that nothing takes place by chance.

*(Doctrine of special providence supported by the
evidence of Scripture, 5-7)*

5. GOD'S PROVIDENCE ALSO DIRECTS THE INDIVIDUAL

^eSuppose we grant that the beginning of motion ^{f494}is with God, but that all things, either of themselves or by chance, are borne whither inclination of nature impels. Then the alternation of days and nights, of winter and summer, will be God's work, inasmuch as he, assigning to each one his part, has set before them a certain law; that is, if with even tenor they uninterruptedly maintain the same way, days following after nights, months after months, and years after years. But that sometimes immoderate heat joined with dryness burns whatever crops there are, that at other times unseasonable rains damage the grain, that sudden calamity strikes from hail and storms — this will not be God's work, unless, perhaps because clouds or fair weather, cold or heat, take their origin from the conjunction of the stars and other natural causes. Yet in this way no place is left for God's fatherly favor, nor for his judgments. If they say that God is beneficent enough to mankind because he sheds upon heaven and earth an ordinary power, by which they are supplied with food, this is too weak and profane a fiction. As if the fruitfulness of one year were not a singular blessing of God, and scarcity and famine were not his curse and vengeance! But because it would take too long to collect all the reasons, let

the authority of God himself suffice. ^{e(b)} In the Law and in the Prophets he often declares that as often as he waters the earth with dews and rain [^{<032603>}Leviticus 26:3-4; ^{<051113>}Deuteronomy 11:13-14; 28:12] he testifies to his favor; but when the heaven is hardened like iron at his command [^{<032619>}Leviticus 26:19], the grainfields consumed by a blight and other harmful things [^{<052822>}Deuteronomy 28:22], as often as the fields are struck with hail and storms [cf. ^{<232802>}Isaiah 28:2; ^{<370218>}Haggai 2:18, Vg.; 2:17, EV, etc.], these are a sign of his certain and special vengeance. If we accept these things, it is certain that not one drop of rain falls without God's sure command.

Indeed, David praises God's general providence, that he gives food to the young of the ravens which call upon him [^{<19E709>}Psalm 147:9; cf. ^{<19E609>}Psalm 146:9, Vg.]; but when God himself threatens the animals with famine, does he not sufficiently declare that he feeds all living things sometimes with a meager, at other times with a fuller, portion as seems best? It is childish, as I have already said, to restrict this to particular acts, since Christ says, without exception, that not even a tiny and insignificant sparrow falls to the ground without the Father's will [^{<401029>}Matthew 10:29]. ^eSurely if the flight of birds is governed by God's definite plan, we must confess with the prophet that he so dwells on high as to humble himself to behold whatever happens in heaven and on earth [^{<19B305>}Psalm 113:5-6].

6. GOD'S PROVIDENCE ESPECIALLY RELATES TO MEN

^eBut because we know that the universe was established especially for the sake of mankind, ^{f495} we ought to look for this purpose in his governance also. ^bThe prophet Jeremiah exclaims, "I know, O Lord, that the way of man is not his own, nor is it given to man to direct his own steps" [^{<241023>}Jeremiah 10:23, cf. Vg.]. Moreover, Solomon says, "Man's steps are from the Lord [^{<202024>}Proverbs 20:24 p.] and how may man dispose his way?" [^{<201609>}Proverbs 16:9 p., cf. Vg.]. Let them now say that man is moved by God according to the inclination of his nature, but that he himself turns that motion whither he pleases. Nay, if that were truly said, the free choice of his ways would be in man's control. Perhaps they will deny this because he can do nothing without God's power. Yet they cannot really get by with that, since it is clear that the prophet and

Solomon ascribe to God not only might but also choice and determination. Elsewhere Solomon elegantly rebukes this rashness of men, who set up for themselves a goal without regard to God, as if they were not led by his hand. “The disposition of the heart is man’s, but the preparation of the tongue is the Lord’s.” [^{<201601>}Proverbs 16:1, 9, conflated.] It is an absurd folly that miserable men take it upon themselves to act without God, when they cannot even speak except as he wills!

Indeed, Scripture, to express more plainly that nothing at all in the world is undertaken without his determination, shows that things seemingly most fortuitous are subject to him. For what can you attribute more to chance than when a branch breaking off from a tree kills a passing traveler? But the Lord speaks far differently, acknowledging that he has delivered him to the hand of the slayer [^{<022113>}Exodus 21:13]. Likewise, who does not attribute lots to the blindness of fortune? But the Lord does not allow this, claiming for himself the determining of them. He teaches that it is not by their own power that pebbles are cast into the lap and drawn out, but the one thing that could have been attributed to chance he testifies to come from himself [^{<201633>}Proverbs 16:33]. ^e In the same vein is that saying of Solomon, “The poor man and the usurer meet together; God illumines the eyes of both” [^{<202913>}Proverbs 29:13; cf. ch. 22:2]. He points out that, even though the rich are mingled with the poor in the world, while to each his condition is divinely assigned, God, who lights all men, is not at all blind. And so he urges the poor to patience; because those who are not content with their own lot try to shake off the burden laid upon them by God. Thus, also, another prophet rebukes the impious who ascribe to men’s toil, or to fortune, the fact that some lie in squalor and others rise up to honors. “For not from the east, nor from the west, nor from the wilderness comes lifting up; because God is judge, he humbles one and lifts up another.” [^{<197506>}Psalms 75:6-7.] Because God cannot put off the office of judge, hence he reasons that it is by His secret plan that some distinguish themselves, while others remain contemptible.

7. GOD’S PROVIDENCE ALSO REGULATES “NATURAL” OCCURRENCES

^eAlso, I say that particular events are generally testimonies of the character of God’s singular providence. In the desert God stirred up the south wind,

which brought to the people an abundance of birds. [^{<021613>}Exodus 16:13; ^{<041131>}Numbers 11:31.] When he would have Jonah cast into the sea, God sent a wind by stirring up a whirlwind [^{<320104>}Jonah 1:4]. Those who do not think that God controls the government of the universe will say that this was outside the common course. Yet from it I infer that no wind ever arises or increases except by God's express command. Otherwise it would not be true that he makes the winds his messengers and the flaming fire his ministers, that he makes the clouds his chariots and rides upon the wings of the wind [^{<19A403>}Psalms 104:3-4; cf. ^{<19A303>}Psalms 103:3-4, Vg.], unless by his decision he drove both clouds and winds about, and showed in them the singular presence of his power. So, also, we are elsewhere taught that whenever the sea boils up with the blast of winds those forces witness to the singular presence of God. "He commands and raises the stormy wind which lifts on high the waves of the sea" [^{<19A725>}Psalms 107:25; cf. ^{<19A625>}Psalms 106:25, Vg.]; "then he causes the storm to become calm, so that the waves cease for the sailors" [^{<19A&29>}Psalms 107:29]; just as elsewhere he declares that he "has scourged the people with burning winds" [^{<300409>}Amos 4:9, cf. Vg.].

So too, although the power to procreate is naturally implanted in men, yet God would have it accounted to his special favor that he leaves some in barrenness, but graces others with offspring [cf. ^{<19B309>}Psalms 113:9]; "for the fruit of the womb is his gift" [^{<19C703>}Psalms 127:3 p.]. For this reason, Jacob said to his wife, "Am I God that I can give you children?" [^{<013002>}Genesis 30:2 p.]. To end this at once: there is nothing more ordinary in nature than for us to be nourished by bread. ^{e(b)} Yet the Spirit declares not only that the produce of the earth is God's special gift but that "men do not live by bread alone" [^{<050803>}Deuteronomy 8:3; ^{<400404>}Matthew 4:4]; because it is not plenty itself that nourishes men, but God's secret blessing; ^{f496} ^e just as conversely he threatens that he is going to "take away the stay of bread" [^{<230301>}Isaiah 3:1]. And indeed, that earnest prayer for daily bread [^{<400611>}Matthew 6:11] could be understood only in the sense that God furnishes us with food by his fatherly hand. For this reason, the prophet, to persuade believers that God in feeding them fulfills the office of the best of all fathers of families, states that he gives food to all flesh [^{<19D625>}Psalms 136:25; cf. ^{<19D502>}Psalms 135:25, Vg.]. Finally, when we hear on the one side, "The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous and his ears toward their prayers" [^{<193415>}Psalms 34:15], but on the other, "The eye of

the Lord is upon the impious, to destroy their memory from the earth” [¹⁹³⁴¹⁶Psalm 34:16 p.], let us know that all creatures above and below are ready to obey, that he may apply them to any use he pleases. From this we gather that his general providence not only flourishes among creatures so as to continue the order of nature, but is by his wonderful plan adapted to a definite and proper end.

(Discussion of fortune, chance, and seeming contingency in events, 8-9)

8. THE DOCTRINE OF PROVIDENCE IS NO STOIC BELIEF IN FATE!

^bThose who wish to cast odium upon this doctrine defame it as the Stoics’ dogma of fate. This charge was once hurled at Augustine. ^{f497} Even though we are unwilling to quarrel over words, yet we do not admit the word “fate,” both because it is one of those words whose profane novelties Paul teaches us to avoid [⁵⁴⁰⁶²⁰1 Timothy 6:20], and because men try by the odium it incurs to oppress God’s truth. Indeed, we are falsely and maliciously charged with this very dogma. We do not, with the Stoics, contrive a necessity out of the perpetual connection and intimately related series of causes, which is contained in nature; but we make God the ruler and governor of all things, who in accordance with his wisdom has from the farthest limit of eternity decreed what he was going to do, and now by his might carries out what he has decreed. From this we declare that not only heaven and earth and the inanimate creatures, but also the plans and intentions of men, are so governed by his providence that they are borne by it straight to their appointed end.

What then? you will ask. Does nothing happen by chance, nothing by contingency? I reply: Basil the Great has truly said that “fortune” and “chance” are pagan terms, with whose significance the minds of the godly ought not to be occupied. ^{f498} For if every success is God’s blessing, and calamity and adversity his curse, no place now remains in human affairs for fortune or chance. ^c And that saying of Augustine also ought to impress us: “*It grieves me that in my books *Against the Academics* I have so often mentioned Fortune; although I did not mean some goddess or other to be understood by this name, but only a fortuitous outcome of things in outward good or evil.*” ^{f499} From *fortuna* also come those words which we should have no scruple about using: *forte, forsan, forsitan, fortasse,*

fortuito [haply, perchance, mayhap, perhaps, fortuitously]; which nevertheless must be wholly referred to divine providence. And I did not pass over this in silence but said it, for perhaps what is commonly called ‘fortune’ is also ruled by a secret order, and we call a ‘chance occurrence’ only that of which the reason and cause are secret. Indeed, I said this: but I regret having thus mentioned ‘fortune’ here, since I see that men have a very bad custom, that where one ought to say ‘God willed this,’ they say, ‘fortune willed this.’”^e In fine, Augustine commonly teaches that if anything is left to fortune, the world is aimlessly whirled about. And although in another place he lays down that all things are carried on partly by man’s free choice, partly by God’s providence, yet a little after this he sufficiently demonstrates that men are under, and ruled by, providence; taking as his principle that nothing is more absurd than that anything should happen without God’s ordaining it, because it would then happen without any cause. For this reason he excludes, also, the contingency that depends upon men’s will; soon thereafter he does so more clearly, denying that we ought to seek the cause of God’s will. How the term “permission,” so frequently mentioned by him, ought to be understood will best appear from one passage, where he proves that God’s will is the highest and first cause of all things because nothing happens except from his command or permission.^{f500} Surely he does not conjure up a God who reposes idly in a watchtower, willing the while to permit something or other, when an actual will not his own, so to speak, intervenes, which otherwise could not be deemed a cause.

9. THE TRUE CAUSES OF EVENTS ARE HIDDEN TO US

^{e(b)} Yet since the sluggishness of our mind lies far beneath the height of God’s providence, we must employ a distinction to lift it up. ^b Therefore I shall put it this way: however all things may be ordained by God’s plan, according to a sure dispensation, for us they are fortuitous. Not that we think that fortune rules the world and men, tumbling all things at random up and down, for it is fitting that this folly be absent from the Christian’s breast! But since the order, reason, end, and necessity of those things which happen for the most part lie hidden in God’s purpose, and are not apprehended by human opinion, those things, which it is certain take place by God’s will, are in a sense fortuitous. For they bear on the face of them no other appearance, whether they are considered in their own nature or

weighed according to our knowledge and judgment. Let us imagine, for example, a merchant who, entering a wood with a company of faithful men, unwisely wanders away from his companions, and in his wandering comes upon a robber's den, falls among thieves, and is slain. His death was not only foreseen by God's eye, but also determined by his decree. For it is not said that he foresaw how long the life of each man would extend, but that he determined and fixed the bounds that men cannot pass [^{<181405>}Job 14:5]. Yet as far as the capacity of our mind is concerned, all things therein seem fortuitous. What will a Christian think at this point? Just this: whatever happened in a death of this sort he will regard as fortuitous by nature, as it is; yet he will not doubt that God's providence exercised authority over fortune in directing its end. The same reckoning applies to the contingency of future events.^{f501} As all future events are uncertain to us, so we hold them in suspense, as if they might incline to one side or the other. Yet in our hearts it nonetheless remains fixed that nothing will take place that the Lord has not previously foreseen.

^eIn this sense the term "fate" is often repeated in Ecclesiastes [chs. 2:14-15; 3:19; 9:2-3, 11],^{f502} because at first glance men do not penetrate to the first cause, which is deeply hidden. And yet what is set forth in Scripture concerning God's secret providence was never so extinguished from men's hearts without some sparks always glowing in the darkness. Thus the soothsayers of the Philistines, although they wavered in doubt, yet attributed their adverse fate partly to God, partly to fortune. If the Ark, they say, shall pass through that way, we shall know that it is God who has struck us; but if it passes through another way, then it has happened to us by chance [^{<090609>}1 Samuel 6:9]. Foolishly indeed, where their divination deceived them, they took refuge in fortune. Meanwhile we see them constrained from daring to think simply fortuitous what had happened unfavorably to them. But how God by the bridle of his providence turns every event whatever way he wills, will be clear from this remarkable example. At the very moment of time in which David was trapped in the wilderness of Maon, the Philistines invaded the land, and Saul was compelled to depart [^{<092326>}1 Samuel 23:26-27]. If God, intending to provide for his servant's safety, cast this hindrance in Saul's way, surely, although the Philistines took up arms suddenly and above all human expectation, yet we will not say that this took place by chance; but

what for us seems a contingency, faith recognizes to have been a secret impulse from God.

Not always does a like reason appear, but we ought undoubtedly to hold that whatever changes are discerned in the world are produced from the secret stirring of God's hand. But what God has determined must necessarily so take place, even though it is neither unconditionally, nor of its own peculiar nature, necessary. A familiar example presents itself in the bones of Christ. When he took upon himself a body like our own, no sane man will deny that his bones were fragile; yet it was impossible to break them [^{<431933>}John 19:33, 36]. Whence again we see that distinctions concerning relative necessity and absolute necessity, likewise of consequent and consequence,^{f503} were not recklessly invented in schools, when God subjected to fragility the bones of his Son, which he had exempted from being broken, and thus restricted to the necessity of his own plan what could have happened naturally.

CHAPTER 17.

HOW WE MAY APPLY THIS DOCTRINE TO OUR GREATEST BENEFIT

*(Interpretation of divine providence with reference to the
past and the future, 1-5)*

1. THE MEANING OF GOD'S WAYS

Moreover, as men's dispositions are inclined to vain subtleties, any who do not hold fast to a good and right use of this doctrine can hardly avoid entangling themselves in inscrutable difficulties. Therefore it is expedient here to discuss briefly to what end Scripture teaches that all things are divinely ordained.

Three things, indeed, are to be noted. First, God's providence must be considered with regard to the future as well as the past. Secondly, it is the determinative principle of all things in such a way that sometimes it works through an intermediary, sometimes without an intermediary, sometimes contrary to every intermediary. Finally, it strives to the end that God may reveal his concern for the whole human race, but especially his vigilance in ruling the church, which he deigns to watch more closely. Now this, also, ought to be added, that although either fatherly favor and beneficence or severity of judgment often shine forth in the whole course of providence, nevertheless sometimes the causes of the events are hidden. So the thought creeps in that human affairs turn and whirl at the blind urge of fortune;^{f504} or the flesh incites us to contradiction, as if God were making sport of men by throwing them about like balls. It is, indeed, true that if we had quiet and composed minds ready to learn, the final outcome would show that God always has the best reason for his plan: either to instruct his own people in patience, or to correct their wicked affections and tame their lust, or to subjugate them to self-denial, or to arouse them from sluggishness; again, to bring low the proud, to shatter the cunning of the impious and to overthrow their devices. Yet however hidden and fugitive

from our point of view the causes may be, we must hold that they are surely laid up with him, and hence we must exclaim with David: “Great, O God, are the wondrous deeds that thou hast done, and thy thoughts toward us cannot be reckoned; if I try to speak, they would be more than can be told” [¹⁹⁴⁰⁰⁵Psalm 40:5]. For even though ill our miseries our sins ought always to come to mind, that punishment itself may incite us to repentance, yet we see how Christ claims for the Father’s secret plan a broader justice than simply punishing each one as he deserves. For concerning the man born blind he says: “Neither he nor his parents sinned, but that God’s glory may be manifested in him” [⁴³⁰⁹⁰³John 9:3 p.]. For here our nature cries out, when calamity comes before birth itself, as if God with so little mercy thus punished the undeserving. Yet Christ testifies that in this miracle the glory of his Father shines, provided our eyes be pure.

But we must so cherish moderation that we do not try to make God render account to us, but so reverence his secret judgments as to consider his will the truly just cause of all things. When dense clouds darken the sky, and a violent tempest arises, because a gloomy mist is cast over our eyes, thunder strikes our ears and all our senses are benumbed with fright, everything seems to us to be confused and mixed up; but all the while a constant quiet and serenity ever remain in heaven. So must we infer that, while the disturbances in the world deprive us of judgment, God out of the pure light of his justice and wisdom tempers and directs these very movements in the best-conceived order to a right end. And surely on this point it is sheer folly that many dare with greater license to call God’s works to account, and to examine his secret plans, and to pass as rash a sentence on matters unknown as they would on the deeds of mortal men. For what is more absurd than to use this moderation toward our equals, that we prefer to suspend judgment rather than be charged with rashness; yet haughtily revile the hidden judgments of God, which we ought to hold in reverence?

2. GOD’S RULE WILL BE OBSERVED WITH RESPECT!

^eTherefore no one will weigh God’s providence properly and profitably but him who considers that his business is with his Maker¹⁵⁰⁵ and the Framers of the universe, and with becoming humility submits himself to

fear and reverence. Hence it happens that today so many dogs assail this doctrine with their venomous bitings, or at least with barking: for they wish nothing to be lawful for God beyond what their own reason prescribes for themselves. Also they rail at us with as much wantonness as they can; because we, not content with the precepts of the law, which comprise God's will, say also that the universe is ruled by his secret plans.^{f506} As if what we teach were a figment of our brain, and the Holy Spirit did not everywhere expressly declare the same thing and repeat it in innumerable forms of expression. But, because some shame restrains them from daring to vomit forth these blasphemies against heaven, they feign it is with us they are contending, that they may rave more freely.

But if they do not admit that whatever happens in the universe is governed by God's incomprehensible plans, let them answer to what end Scripture says that his judgments are a deep abyss [^{<193606>}Psalm 36:6]. For since Moses proclaims that the will of God is to be sought not far off in the clouds or in abysses, because it has been set forth familiarly in the law [^{<053011>}Deuteronomy 30:11-14], it follows that he has another hidden will^{f507} which may be compared to a deep abyss; concerning which Paul also says: "O depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and how inscrutable his ways! 'For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who has been his counselor?'" [^{<451133>}Romans 11:33-34; cf. ^{<234013>}Isaiah 40:13-14]. And it is, indeed, true that in the law and the gospel are comprehended mysteries which tower far above the reach of our senses. But since God illumines the minds of his own with the spirit of discernment [^{<182003>}Job 20:3 or ^{<231102>}Isaiah 11:2]^{f508} for the understanding of these mysteries which he has deigned to reveal by his Word, now no abyss is here; rather, a way in which we ought to walk in safety, and a lamp to guide our feet [^{<19B9105>}Psalm 119:105, Vg.; 119:105, EV], the light of life [cf. ^{<430104>}John 1:4; 8:12], and the school of sure and clear truth. Yet his wonderful method of governing the universe is rightly called an abyss, because while it is hidden from us, we ought reverently to adore it.

Moses has beautifully expressed both ideas in a few words: "The secret things," he says, "belong to the Lord our God, but what is here written, to you and your children" [^{<052929>}Deuteronomy 29:29 p.]. For we see how he bids us not only direct our study to meditation upon the law, but to look

up to God's secret providence with awe. Also, in The Book of Job is set forth a declaration of such sublimity as to humble our minds. For after the author, in surveying above and below the frame of the universe, has magnificently discoursed concerning God's works, he finally adds: "Behold! These are but the outskirts of his ways, and how small a thing is heard therein!" [^{<182614>}Job 26:14]. In this way he distinguishes in another place between the wisdom that resides with God and the portion of wisdom God has prescribed for men. For when he has discoursed on the secrets of nature, he says that wisdom is known to God alone, but "eludes the eyes of all the living" [^{<182821>}Job 28:21]. But he adds a little later that His wisdom has been published to be searched out, because it is said to man: "Behold, the fear of the Lord is wisdom" [^{<182828>}Job 28:28]. To this point the saying of Augustine applies: "Because we do not know all the things which God in the best possible order does concerning us, we act solely in good will according to the law, but in other things we are acted upon according to the law, because his providence is an unchangeable law."^{f509} Therefore, since God assumes to himself the right (unknown to us) to rule the universe, let our law of soberness and moderation be to assent to his supreme authority. that his will may be for us the sole rule of righteousness, and the truly just cause of all things. Not, indeed, that absolute will of which the Sophists babble, by an impious and profane distinction separating his justice from his power^{f510} — but providence, that determinative principle of all things, from which flows nothing but right, although the reasons have been hidden from us.

3. GOD'S PROVIDENCE DOES NOT RELIEVE US FROM RESPONSIBILITY

^eAll who will compose themselves to this moderation will not murmur against God on account of their adversities in time past, nor lay the blame for their own wickedness upon him as did the Homeric Agamemnon, saying: "I am not the cause, but Zeus and fate."^{f511} And they will not, as if carried off by the fates, out of desperation cast themselves to destruction like that youth of Plautus: "Unstable is the lot of things, the fates drive men according to their own pleasure. I will betake myself to the precipice, that there I may lose my goods with my life." And they will not follow the example of another, and cover up their own evil deeds with the name "God." For thus Lyconides says in another comedy: "God was the

instigator; I believe the gods willed it. For I know if they had not so willed, it would not have happened.”^{f512} But rather let them inquire and learn from Scripture what is pleasing to God so that they may strive toward this under the Spirit’s guidance. At the same time, being ready to follow God wherever he calls, they will show in very truth that nothing is more profitable than the knowledge of this doctrine.

^{e(b)}Profane men^{f513} with their absurdities foolishly raise an uproar,^b so that they almost, as the saying is, mingle heaven and earth. If the Lord has indicated the point of our death, they say, we cannot escape it. Therefore it is vain for anyone to busy himself in taking precautions. One man does not dare take a road that he hears is dangerous, lest he be murdered by thieves; another summons physicians, and wears himself out with medicines to keep himself alive; another abstains from coarser foods, lest he impair his weak health; another is afraid of living in tumble-down houses. In short, all devise ways and forge them with great purpose of mind, to attain what they desired. Now either all these remedies which attempt to correct God’s will are vain; or else there is no fixed decree of God that determines life and death, health and disease, peace and war, and other things that men, as they desire or hate them, so earnestly try by their own toil either to obtain or to avoid. Also they conclude that believers’ prayers, by which the Lord is asked to provide for things that he has already decreed from eternity, are perverse, not to say superfluous. To sum up, they cancel all those plans which have to do with the future, as militating against God’s providence, which, without their being consulted, has decreed what he would have happen. Then whatever does happen now, they so impute to God’s providence that they close their eyes to the man who clearly has done it. Does an assassin murder an upright citizen? He has carried out, they say, God’s plan. Has someone stolen, or committed adultery? Because he has done what was foreseen and ordained by the Lord, he is the minister of God’s providence. Has a son, neglecting remedies, with never a care awaited the death of a parent? He could not resist God, who had so appointed from eternity. Thus all crimes, because subject to God’s ordinance, they call virtues.

4. GOD'S PROVIDENCE DOES NOT EXCUSE US FROM DUE PRUDENCE

^bBut with respect to future events, Solomon easily brings human deliberations into agreement with God's providence. For just as he laughs at the dullness of those who boldly undertake something or other without the Lord, as though they were not ruled by his hand, so elsewhere he says: "Man's heart plans his way, but the Lord will direct his steps"

[^{<201609>}Proverbs 16:9 p.]. This means that we are not at all hindered by God's eternal decrees either from looking ahead for ourselves or from putting all our affairs in order, but always in submission to his will. The reason is obvious. For he who has set the limits to our life has at the same time entrusted to us its care; he has provided means and helps to preserve it; he has also made us able to foresee dangers; that they may not overwhelm us unaware, he has offered precautions and remedies. Now it is very clear what our duty is: thus, if the Lord has committed to us the protection of our life, our duty is to protect it; if he offers helps, to use them; if he forewarns us of dangers, not to plunge headlong; if he makes remedies available, not to neglect them. But no danger will hurt us, say they, unless it is fatal, and in this case it is beyond remedies. But what if the dangers are not fatal, because the Lord has provided you with remedies for repulsing and overcoming them? See how your reckoning fits in with the order of divine dispensation. You conclude that we ought not to beware of any peril because, since it is not fatal, we shall escape it even without taking any precaution. But the Lord enjoins you to beware, because he would not have it fatal for you. These fools do not consider what is under their very eyes, that the Lord has inspired in men the arts of taking counsel and caution, by which to comply with his providence in the preservation of life itself. Just as, on the contrary, by neglect and slothfulness they bring upon themselves the ills that he has laid upon them. How does it happen that a provident man, while he takes care of himself, also disentangles himself from threatening evils, but a foolish man perishes from his own unconsidered rashness, unless folly and prudence are instruments of the divine dispensation in both cases? For this reason, God pleased to hide all future events from us, in order that we should resist them as doubtful, and not cease to oppose them with ready remedies, until they are either overcome or pass beyond all care. ^cI have therefore already remarked that God's providence does not always meet

us in its naked form, but God in a sense clothes it with the means employed.

5. GOD'S PROVIDENCE DOES NOT EXCULPATE OUR WICKEDNESS

^{e(b)}The same men wrongly and rashly lay the happenings of past time to the naked providence of God. For since on it depends everything that happens, ^btherefore, say they, neither thefts, nor adulteries, nor murders take place without God's will intervening. Why therefore, they ask, should a thief be punished, who plundered someone whom the Lord would punish with poverty? Why shall a murderer be punished, who has killed one whose life the Lord had ended? If all such men are serving God's will, why shall they be punished? On the contrary, I deny that they are serving God's will. For we shall not say that one who is motivated by an evil inclination, by only obeying his own wicked desire, renders service to God at His bidding. A man, having learned of His will, obeys God in striving toward the goal to which he is called by that same will. From what source do we learn but from his Word? In such fashion we must in our deeds search out God's will which he declares through his Word. God requires of us only what he commands. If we contrive anything against his commandment, it is not obedience but obstinacy and transgression. Yet, unless he willed it, we would not do it. I agree. But do we do evil things to the end that we may serve him? Yet he by no means commands us to do them; rather we rush headlong, without thinking what he requires, but so raging in our unbridled lust that we deliberately strive against him. And in this way we serve his just ordinance by doing evil, for so great and boundless is his wisdom that he knows right well how to use evil instruments to do good. And see how absurd their argument is: they would have transgressors go unpunished, on the ground that their misdeeds are committed solely by God's dispensation.

I grant more: thieves and murderers and other evildoers are the instruments of divine providence, and the Lord himself uses these to carry out the judgments that he has determined with himself. Yet I deny that they can derive from this any excuse for their evil deeds. Why? Will they either involve God in the same iniquity with themselves, or will they cloak their own depravity with his justice? They can do neither. In their own

conscience they are so convicted as to be unable to clear themselves; in themselves they so discover all evil, but in him only the lawful use of their evil intent, as to preclude laying the charge against God. Well and good, for he works through them. And whence, I ask you, comes the stench of a corpse, which is both putrefied and laid open by the heat of the sun? All men see that it is stirred up by the sun's rays; yet no one for this reason says that the rays stink.^{f514} Thus, since the matter and guilt of evil repose in a wicked man, what reason is there to think that God contracts any defilement, if he uses his service for his own purpose? Away, therefore, with this doglike impudence, which can indeed bark at God's justice afar off but cannot touch it.

(Meditating on the ways of God in providence: the happiness of recognizing acts of providence, 6-11)

6. GOD'S PROVIDENCE AS SOLACE OF BELIEVERS

^{e(b)}But these calumnies, or rather ravings of distracted men, will be easily dispersed by pious and holy meditation on providence, which the rule of piety dictates to us, so that from this we may receive the best and sweetest fruit, ^bTherefore the Christian heart, since it has been thoroughly persuaded that all things happen by God's plan, and that nothing takes place by chance, will ever look to him as the principal cause of things, yet will give attention to the secondary causes in their proper place. Then the heart will not doubt that God's singular providence keeps watch to preserve it, and will not suffer anything to happen but what may turn out to its good and salvation. But since God's dealings are first with man, then with the remaining creatures, the heart will have assurance that God's providence rules over both. As far as men are concerned, whether they are good or evil, the heart of the Christian will know that their plans, wills, efforts, and abilities are under God's hand; that it is within his choice to bend them whither he pleases and to constrain them whenever he pleases.

There are very many and very clear promises that testify that God's singular providence watches over the welfare of believers: "Cast your care upon the Lord, and he will nourish you, and will never permit the righteous man to flounder" [^{<195522>}Psalm 55:22 p.; cf. ^{<195402>}Psalm 54:28, Vg.]. For he takes care of us. [^{<600507>}1 Peter 5:7 p.] "He who dwells in the help of the Most High will abide in the protection of the God of heaven."

[^{<199101>}Psalm 91:1; 90:1, Vg.] “He who touches you touches the pupil of mine eye.” [^{<380208>}Zechariah 2:8 p.] “I will be your shield” [^{<011501>}Genesis 15:1 p.], “a brazen wall” [^{<240118>}Jeremiah 1:18; 15:20]; “I will contend with those who contend with you” [^{<234925>}Isaiah 49:25]. “Even though a mother may forget her children, yet will I not forget you.” [^{<234915>}Isaiah 49:15 p.] Indeed, the principal purpose of Biblical history is to teach that the Lord watches over the ways of the saints with such great diligence that they do not even stumble over a stone [cf. ^{<199112>}Psalm 91:12].

^{e(b)}Therefore, as we rightly rejected a little above ^{f515} the opinion of those ^bwho imagine a universal providence of God, which does not stoop to the especial care of any particular creature, yet first of all it is important that we recognize this special care toward us. ^{f516} Whence Christ, when he declared that not even a tiny sparrow of little worth falls to earth without the Father’s will [^{<401029>}Matthew 10:29], immediately applies it in this way: that since we are of greater value than sparrows, we ought to realize that God watches over us with all the closer care [^{<401031>}Matthew 10:31]; and he extends it so far that we may trust that the hairs of our head are numbered [^{<401030>}Matthew 10:30]. What else can we wish for ourselves, if not even one hair can fall from our head without his will? ^eI speak not only concerning mankind; but, because God has chosen the church to be his dwelling place, there is no doubt that he shows by singular proofs his fatherly care in ruling it.

7. GOD’S PROVIDENCE IN PROSPERITY

^bThe servant of God, strengthened both by these promises and by examples, will join thereto the testimonies which teach that all men are under his power, whether their minds are to be conciliated, or their malice to be restrained that it may not do harm. For it is the Lord who gives us favor, not alone among those who wish us well, but even “in the eyes of the Egyptians” [^{<020321>}Exodus 3:21]; indeed, he knows how to shatter the wickedness of our enemies in various ways. For sometimes he takes away their understanding so that they are unable to comprehend anything sane or sober, as when he sends forth Satan to fill the mouths of all the prophets with falsehood in order to deceive Ahab [^{<112222>}1 Kings 22:22]. He drives Rehoboam mad by the young men’s advice that through his own folly he may be despoiled of the kingdom [^{<111210>}1 Kings 12:10, 15].

Sometimes when he grants them understanding, he so frightens and dispirits them that they do not wish, or plan, to carry out what they have conceived. Sometimes, also, when he permits them to attempt what their lust and madness has prompted, he at the right moment breaks off their violence, and does not allow their purpose to be completed. Thus Ahitophel's advice, which would have been fatal for David, he destroyed before its time [^{<101707>}2 Samuel 17:7, 14]. Thus, also, it is his care to govern all creatures for their own good and safety; and even the devil himself, who, we see, dared not attempt anything against Job without His permission and command [^{<180112>}Job 1:12].

Gratitude of mind for the favorable outcome of things, patience in adversity, and also incredible freedom from worry about the future all necessarily follow upon this knowledge. Therefore whatever shall happen prosperously and according to the desire of his heart, God's servant will attribute wholly to God, whether he feels God's beneficence through the ministry of men, or has been helped by inanimate creatures. For thus he will reason in his mind: surely it is the Lord who has inclined their hearts to me, who has so bound them to me that they should become the instruments of his kindness toward me. In abundance of fruits he will think: "It is the Lord who 'hears' the heaven, that the heaven may 'hear' the earth, that the earth also may 'hear' its offspring" [cf. ^{<280221>}Hosea 2:21-22, Vg.; 2: 22-23, EV]. In other things he will not doubt that it is the Lord's blessing alone by which all things prosper. Admonished by so many evidences, he will not continue to be ungrateful.

8. CERTAINTY ABOUT GOD'S PROVIDENCE HELPS US IN ALL ADVERSITIES

^bIf anything adverse happens, straightway he will raise up his heart here also unto God, whose hand can best impress patience and peaceful moderation of mind upon us. If Joseph had stopped to dwell upon his brothers' treachery, he would never have been able to show a brotherly attitude toward them. But since he turned his thoughts to the Lord, forgetting the injustice, he inclined to gentleness and kindness, even to the point of comforting his brothers and saying: "It is not you who sold me into Egypt, but I was sent before you by God's will, that I might save your life" [^{<014505>}Genesis 45:5, 7-8 p.]. "Indeed you intended evil against

me, but the Lord turned it into good.” [^{<015020>}Genesis 50:20, cf. Vg.] If Job had turned his attention to the Chaldeans, by whom he was troubled, he would immediately have been aroused to revenge; but because he at once recognized it as the Lord’s work, he comforts himself with this most beautiful thought: “The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord” [^{<180121>}Job 1:21]. Thus David, assailed with threats and stones by Shimei, if he had fixed his eyes upon the man, would have encouraged his men to repay the injury; but because he knows that Shimei does not act without the Lord’s prompting, he rather appeases them: “Let him alone,” he says, “because the Lord has ordered him to curse” [^{<101611>}2 Samuel 16:11]. ^eBy this same bridle he elsewhere curbs his inordinate sorrow: “I have kept silence and remained mute,” says he, “because thou hast done it, O Jehovah” [^{<193909>}Psalms 39:9 p.]. ^bIf there is no more effective remedy for anger and impatience, he has surely benefited greatly who has so learned to meditate upon God’s providence that he can always recall his mind to this point: the Lord has willed it; therefore it must be borne, not only because one may not contend against it, but also because he wills nothing but what is just and expedient. ^{e(b)}To sum this up: when are unjustly wounded by men, let us overlook their wickedness (which would but worsen our pain and sharpen our minds to revenge), remember to mount up to God, and learn to believe for certain that whatever our enemy has wickedly committed against us was permitted and sent by God’s just dispensation.

^ePaul, to restrain us from retaliation for injuries, wisely points out that our struggle “is not with flesh and blood” [^{<490612>}Ephesians 6:12], but with our spiritual enemy the devil [^{<490611>}Ephesians 6:11], in order that we may prepare ourselves for the combat. Yet a most useful admonition to still all impulses to wrath is that God arms both the devil and all the wicked for the conflict, and sits as a judge of the games to exercise our patience.

^{e(c)}But if the destruction and misery that press upon us happen without human agency, let us recall the teaching of the law: “Whatever is prosperous flows from the fountain of God’s blessing, and all adversities are his curses” [^{<052802>}Deuteronomy 28:2 ff., 15 ff. p.]. ^eLet this dreadful warning terrify us: “If you happen to walk contrary to me, I will also happen to walk contrary to you” [^{<032623>}Leviticus 26:23-24, cf. Comm.]. In these words our sluggishness is rebuked as a crime; for after the common

sense of the flesh we regard as fortuitous whatever happens either way, whether good or evil, and so are neither aroused by God's benefits to worship him, nor stimulated by lashes to repentance.^{e(b)} It is for this same reason that Jeremiah and Amos bitterly expostulated with the Jews, for they thought both good and evil happened without God's command [^{<250338>}Lamentations 3:38; ^{<300306>}Amos 3:6].^e In the same vein is Isaiah's declaration: "I, God, creating light and forming darkness, making peace and creating evil: I, God, do all these things" [^{<234507>}Isaiah 45:7, cf. Vg.].

9. NO DISREGARD OF INTERMEDIATE CAUSES!

^bMeanwhile, nevertheless, a godly man will not overlook the secondary causes. And indeed, he will not, just because he thinks those from whom he has received benefit are ministers of the divine goodness, pass them over, as if they had deserved no thanks for their human kindness; but from the bottom of his heart will feel himself beholden to them, willingly confess his obligation, and earnestly try as best he can to render thanks and as occasion presents itself. In short, for benefits received he will reverence and praise the Lord as their principal author, but will honor men as his ministers; and will know what is in fact true: it is by God's will that he is beholden to those through whose hand God willed to be beneficent. If this godly man suffers any loss because of negligence or imprudence, he will conclude that it came about by the Lord's will, but also impute it to himself. Suppose a disease should carry off anyone whom he treated negligently, although it was his duty to take care of him. Even though he knows that this person had come to an impassable boundary, he will not on this account deem his misdeed less serious; rather, because he did not faithfully discharge his duty toward him, he will take it that through the fault of his negligence the latter had perished. Where fraud or premeditated malice enters into the committing of either murder or theft, he will even less excuse such a crime on the pretext of divine providence; but in this same evil deed he will clearly contemplate God's righteousness and man's wickedness, as each clearly shows itself.

But especially with reference to future events he will take into consideration inferior causes of this sort. For he will count it among the blessings of the Lord, if he is not destitute of human helps which he may use for his safety. Therefore he will neither cease to take counsel, nor be

sluggish in beseeching the assistance of those whom he sees to have the means to help him; but, considering that whatever creatures are capable of furnishing anything to him are offered by the Lord into his hand, he will put them to use as lawful instruments of divine providence. And since it is uncertain what will be the outcome of the business he is undertaking (except that he knows that in all things the Lord will provide for his benefit), he will aspire with zeal to that which he deems expedient for himself, as far as it can be attained by intelligence and understanding. Yet in taking counsel he will not follow his own opinion, but will entrust and submit himself to God's wisdom, to be directed by his leading to the right goal. But his confidence will not so rely upon outward supports as to repose with assurance in them if they are present, or, if they are lacking, to tremble as if left destitute. For he will always hold his mind fixed upon God's providence alone, and not let preoccupation with present matters draw him away from steadfast contemplation of it. ^cThus Joab, though recognizing the outcome of the battle to be in God's hand, has yielded not to idleness, but diligently carries out the duties of his calling. To the Lord, moreover, he commits the determination of the outcome: "We will stand fast," says he, "for our people and the cities of our God; but let the Lord do what is good in his eyes" [^{<101012>}2 Samuel 10:12 p.]. This same knowledge will drive us to put off rashness and over-confidence, and will impel us continually to call upon God. Then also he will buttress our minds with good hope, that, with confidence and courage, we may not hesitate to despise those dangers which surround us.

10. WITHOUT CERTAINTY ABOUT GOD'S PROVIDENCE LIFE WOULD BE UNBEARABLE

^bHence appears the immeasurable felicity of the godly mind. ^{f517}
Innumerable are the evils that beset human life; innumerable, too, the deaths that threaten it. We need not go beyond ourselves: since our body is the receptacle of a thousand diseases — in fact holds within itself and fosters the causes of diseases — a man cannot go about unburdened by many forms of his own destruction, and without drawing out a life enveloped, as it were, with death. For what else would you call it, when he neither freezes nor sweats without danger? Now, wherever you turn, all things around you not only are hardly to be trusted but almost openly menace, and seem to threaten immediate death. Embark upon a ship, you

are one step away from death. Mount a horse, if one foot slips, your life is imperiled. Go through the city streets, you are subject to as many dangers as there are tiles on the roofs. If there is a weapon in your hand or a friend's, harm awaits. All the fierce animals you see are armed for your destruction. But if you try to shut yourself up in a walled garden, seemingly delightful, there a serpent sometimes lies hidden. Your house, continually in danger of fire, threatens in the daytime to impoverish you, at night even to collapse upon you. Your field, since it is exposed to hail, frost, drought, and other calamities, threatens you with barrenness, and hence, famine. I pass over poisonings, ambushes, robberies, open violence, which in part besiege us at home, in part dog us abroad. Amid these tribulations must not man be most miserable, since, but half alive in life, he weakly draws his anxious and languid breath, as if he had a sword perpetually hanging over his neck?

You will say: these events rarely happen, or at least not all the time, nor to all men, and never all at once. I agree; but since we are warned by the examples of others that these can also happen to ourselves, and that our life ought not to be excepted any more than theirs, we cannot but be frightened and terrified as if such events were about to happen to us. What, therefore, more calamitous can you imagine than such trepidation? Besides that, if we say that God has exposed man, the noblest of creatures, to all sorts of blind and heedless blows of fortune, we are not guiltless of reproaching God. But here I propose to speak only of that misery which man will feel if he is brought under the sway of fortune.

11. CERTAINTY ABOUT GOD'S PROVIDENCE PUTS JOYOUS TRUST TOWARD GOD IN OUR HEARTS

^bYet, when that light of divine providence has once shone upon a godly man, he is then relieved and set free not only from the extreme anxiety and fear that were pressing him before, but from every care. For as he justly dreads fortune, so he fearlessly dares commit himself to God. His solace, I say, is to know that his Heavenly Father so holds all things in his power, so rules by his authority and will, so governs by his wisdom, that nothing can befall except he determine it. Moreover, it comforts him to know that he has been received into God's safekeeping and entrusted to the care of his angels, and that neither water, nor fire, nor iron can harm him, except in

so far as it pleases God as governor to give them occasion. Thus indeed the psalm sings: “For he will deliver you from the snare of the fowler and from the deadly pestilence. Under his wings will he protect you, and in his pinions you will have assurance; his truth will be your shield. You will not fear the terror of night, nor the flying arrow by day, nor the pestilence that stalks in darkness, nor the destruction that wastes at midday” [^{<199103>}Psalm 91:3-6; cf. ^{<199003>}Psalm 90:3-6, Vg.; cf. Comm.].

From this, also, arises in the saints the assurance that they may glory. “The Lord is my helper” [^{<19B806>}Psalm 118:6; 117:6, Vg.]; “I will not fear what flesh can do against me” [^{<195604>}Psalm 56:4; 55:5, Vg.]. “The Lord is my protector; what shall I fear?” [^{<192701>}Psalm 27:1; cf. Psalm 26: 1, Vg.] “If armies should stand together against me” [^{<192703>}Psalm 27:3; cf. ^{<192603>}Psalm 26:3, Vg.], “if I should walk in the midst of the shadow of death” [^{<192204>}Psalm 22:4, Vg.; 23:4, EV], “I will not cease to have good hope” [^{<195605>}Psalm 56:5; 55:4, Vg.; 71:14; 70:14, Vg.]. Whence, I pray you, do they have this never-failing assurance but from knowing that, when the world appears to be aimlessly tumbled about, the Lord is everywhere at work, and from trusting that his work will be for their welfare? Now if their welfare is assailed either by the devil or by wicked men, then indeed, unless strengthened through remembering and meditating upon providence, they must needs quickly faint away. But let them recall that the devil and the whole cohort of the wicked are completely restrained by God’s hand as by a bridle, so that they are unable either to hatch any plot against us or, having hatched it, to make preparations or, if they have fully planned it, to stir a finger toward carrying it out, except so far as he has permitted, indeed commanded. ^cLet them, also, recall that the devil and his crew are not only lettered, but also curbed and compelled to do service, bSuch thoughts will provide them abundant comfort. For as it belongs to the Lord to arouse their fury and turn and direct it whither he pleases; so, also, is it his to set a measure and limit, lest they licentiously exult in their own lust.

^cPaul, supported by this conviction, after saying in one passage that his journey had been hindered by Satan [^{<520218>}1 Thessalonians 2:18], states elsewhere that with God’s permission he determined to set out [^{<461607>}1 Corinthians 16:7]. If he had said only that the obstacle was from Satan, he would have seemed to give too much power to him, as if it were in his

power to overthrow even the very plans of God; but now when he declares God the Ruler upon whose permission all his journeys depend, he at the same time shows that Satan cannot carry out anything that he may contrive except with God's assent. For the same reason, David, on account of the various changes by which the life of men is continually turned, and as it were, whirled about, betakes himself to this refuge: that his "times are in God's hand" [^{<193115>}Psalm 31:15]. He could have put here either "course of life" or "time" in the singular, but he chose to express by using the plural "times" that however unstable the condition of men may be, whatever changes take place from time to time, they are governed by God.^b For this reason, although Rezin and the King of Israel, having joined forces to destroy Judah, seemed firebrands kindled to destroy and consume the land, they are called by the prophet "smoking firebrands," that can do nothing but breathe out a little smoke [^{<230704>}Isaiah 7:4].^c Thus Pharaoh, although to all he was fearsome both on account of his riches and strength, and the size of his armies, is himself compared to a sea monster, and his troops to fish [^{<262904>}Ezekiel 29:4]. God therefore announces that he is going to seize the leader and the army with his hook and drag them where He pleases,^b in short, not to tarry any longer over this, if you pay attention, you will easily perceive that ignorance of providence is the ultimate of all miseries; the highest blessedness lies in the knowledge of it.

(Answer to objections, 12-14)

12. ON GOD'S "REPENTANCE"

^bWe should have said enough concerning God's providence to achieve the perfect instruction and comfort of believers (for nothing whatsoever can be sufficient to satisfy the curiosity of vain men, nor ought we to wish to satisfy it) if certain passages did not stand in the way. These seem to suggest, contrary to the above exposition, that the plan of God does not stand firm and sure, but is subject to change in response to the disposition of things below. First, God's repenting is several times mentioned, as when he repented of having created man [^{<010606>}Genesis 6:6]; of having put Saul over the kingdom [^{<091511>}1 Samuel 15:11]; and of his going to repent of the evil that he had determined to inflict upon his people, as soon as he sensed any change of heart in them [^{<241808>}Jeremiah 18:8]. Next, some abrogations of his decrees are referred to. He made known through Jonah

to the Ninevites that after forty days had passed Nineveh would be destroyed, yet he was immediately persuaded by their repentance to give a more kindly sentence. [^{<320304>}Jonah 3:4, 10.] He proclaimed the death of Hezekiah through the mouth of Isaiah; but he was moved by the king's tears and prayers to defer this [^{<233801>}Isaiah 38:1, 5; ^{<122001>}2 Kings 20:1, 5; cf. ^{<143224>}2 Chronicles 32:24]. Hence many contend that God has not determined the affairs of men by an eternal decree, but that, according to each man's deserts or according as he deems him fair and just, he decrees this or that each year, each day, and each hour. ^{f518}

Concerning repentance, we ought so to hold that it is no more chargeable against God than is ignorance, or error, or powerlessness. For if no one wittingly and willingly puts himself under the necessity of repentance, we shall not attribute repentance to God without saying either that he is ignorant of what is going to happen, or cannot escape it, or hastily and rashly rushes into a decision of which he immediately has to repent. But that is far removed from the intention of the Holy Spirit, who in the very reference to repentance says that God is not moved by compunction because he is not a man so that he can repent [^{<091529>}1 Samuel 15:29]. ^e And we must note that in the same chapter both are so joined together that the comparison well harmonizes the apparent disagreement. When God repents of having made Saul king, the change of mind is to be taken figuratively. A little later there is added: "The strength of Israel will not lie, nor be turned aside by repentance; for he is not a man, that he may repent" [^{<091529>}1 Samuel 15:29 p.]. By these words openly and unfiguratively God's unchangeableness is declared. ^b Therefore it is certain that God's ordinance in the managing of human affairs is both everlasting and above all repentance. And lest there be doubt as to his constancy, even his adversaries are compelled to render testimony to this. For Balaam, even against his will, had to break forth into these words: "God is not like man that he should lie, nor as the son of man that he should change. It cannot be that he will not do what he has said or not fulfill what he has spoken" [Numbers 23: 19 p., cf. Vg.].

13. SCRIPTURE SPEAKS OF GOD'S "REPENTANCE" TO MAKE ALLOWANCE FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING

^bWhat, therefore, does the word "repentance" mean? Surely its meaning is like that of all other modes of speaking that describe God for us in human terms. For because our weakness does not attain to his exalted state, the description of him that is given to us must be accommodated to our capacity so that we may understand it. Now the mode of accommodation is for him to represent himself to us not as he is in himself, but as he seems to us. Although he is beyond all disturbance of mind, yet he testifies that he is angry toward sinners. Therefore whenever we hear that God is angered, we ought not to imagine any emotion in him, but rather to consider that this expression has been taken from our own human experience; because God, whenever he is exercising judgment, exhibits the appearance of one kindled and angered. So we ought not to understand anything else under the word "repentance" than change of action, because men are wont by changing their action to testify that they are displeased with themselves. Therefore, since every change among men is a correction of what displeases them, but that correction arises out of repentance, then by the word "repentance" is meant the fact that God changes with respect to his actions. Meanwhile neither God's plan nor his will is reversed, nor his volition altered; but what he had from eternity foreseen, approved, and decreed, he pursues in uninterrupted tenor, however sudden the variation may appear in men's eyes.

14. GOD FIRMLY EXECUTES HIS PLAN

^bThe sacred history does not show that God's decrees were abrogated when it relates that the destruction which had once been pronounced upon the Ninevites was remitted [^{<320310>}Jonah 3:10]; and that Hezekiah's life, after his death had been intimated, had been prolonged [^{<233805>}Isaiah 38:5].

^{f519} Those who think so are deceived in these intimations. Even though the latter make a simple affirmation, it is to be understood from the outcome that these nonetheless contain a tacit condition. For why did the Lord send Jonah to the Ninevites to foretell the ruin of the city? Why did he through Isaiah indicate death to Hezekiah? For he could have destroyed both the Ninevites and Hezekiah without any messenger of destruction. Therefore he had in view something other than that, forewarned of their death, they

might discern it coming from a distance. Indeed, he did not wish them to perish, but to be changed lest they perish. Therefore Jonah's prophecy that after forty days Nineveh would be destroyed was made so it might not fall. Hezekiah's hope for longer life was cut off in order that it might come to pass that he would obtain longer life. Who now does not see that it pleased the Lord by such threats to arouse to repentance those whom he was terrifying, that they might escape the judgment they deserved for their sins? If that is true, the nature of the circumstances leads us to recognize a tacit condition in the simple intimation.

This is also confirmed by like examples. The Lord, rebuking King Abimelech because he had deprived Abraham of his wife, uses these words: "Behold, you will die on account of the woman whom you have taken, for she has a husband" [^{<012003>}Genesis 20:3, Vg.]. But after Abimelech excused himself, God spoke in this manner: "Restore the woman to her husband, for he is a prophet, and will pray for you that you may live. If not, know that you shall surely die, and all that you have" [^{<012007>}Genesis 20:7, Vg.]. Do you see how in the first utterance, he strikes Abimelech's mind more violently in order to render him intent upon satisfaction, but in the second sentence he clearly explains his will? Inasmuch as there is a similar meaning in other passages, do not infer from them that there was any derogation from the Lord's first purpose because he had made void what he had proclaimed. For the Lord, when by warning of punishment he admonishes to repentance those whom he wills to spare, paves the way for his eternal ordinance, rather than varies anything of his will, or even of his Word, although he does not express syllable by syllable what is nevertheless easy to understand. That saying of Isaiah must indeed remain true: "The Lord of Hosts has purposed, and who will annul it? His hand is stretched out, and who will turn it back?" [^{<231427>}Isaiah 14:27].

CHAPTER 18.

GOD SO USES THE WORKS OF THE UNGODLY,
AND SO BENDS THEIR MINDS TO CARRY OUT
HIS JUDGMENTS, THAT HE REMAINS PURE FROM
EVERY STAIN^{F520}

1. NO MERE “PERMISSION”!

°From other passages, where God is said to bend or draw Satan himself and all the wicked to his will, there emerges a more difficult question. For carnal sense can hardly comprehend how in acting through them he does not contract some defilement from their transgression, and even in a common undertaking can be free of all blame, and indeed can justly condemn his ministers. Hence the distinction was devised between doing and permitting^{f521} because to many this difficulty seemed inexplicable, that Satan and all the impious are so under God’s hand and power that he directs their malice to whatever end seems good to him, and uses their wicked deeds to carry out his judgments. And perhaps the moderation of those whom the appearance of absurdity alarms would be excusable, except that they wrongly try to clear God’s justice of every sinister mark by upholding a falsehood. It seems absurd to them for man, who will soon be punished for his blindness, to be blinded by God’s will and command. Therefore they escape by the shift that this is done only with God’s permission, not also by his will;^{f522} but he, openly declaring that he is the doer, repudiates that evasion. However, that men can accomplish nothing except by God’s secret command, that they cannot by deliberating accomplish anything except what he has already decreed with himself and determines by his secret direction, is proved by innumerable and clear testimonies. What we have cited before from the psalm, that God does whatever he wills [^{<19B503>}Psalm 115:3], certainly pertains to all the actions of men. If, as is here said, God is the true Arbiter of wars and of peace, and this without any exception, who, then, will dare say that men are

borne headlong by blind motion unbeknown to God or with his acquiescence?

But particular examples will shed more light. From the first chapter of Job we know that Satan, no less than the angels who willingly obey, presents himself before God [^{<180106>}Job 1:6; 2:1] to receive his commands. He does so, indeed, in a different way and with a different end; but he still cannot undertake anything unless God so wills. However, even though a bare permission to afflict the holy man seems then to be added, yet we gather that God was the author of that trial of which Satan and his wicked thieves were the ministers, because this statement is true: “The Lord gave, the Lord has taken away; as it has pleased God, so is it done” [^{<180102>}Job 1:2 1, Vg. (p.)]. Satan desperately tries to drive the holy man insane; the Sabaeans cruelly and impiously pillage and make off with another’s possessions. Job recognizes that he was divinely stripped of all his property, and made a poor man, because it so pleased God. Therefore, whatever men or Satan himself may instigate, God nevertheless holds the key, so that he turns their efforts to carry out his judgments. God wills that the false King Ahab be deceived; the devil offers his services to this end; he is sent, with a definite command, to be a lying spirit in the mouth of all the prophets [^{<112220>}1 Kings 22:20, 22]. If the blinding and insanity of Ahab be God’s judgment, the figment of bare permission vanishes: because it would be ridiculous for the Judge only to permit what he wills to be done, and not also to decree it and to command its execution by his ministers.

^(b)The Jews intended to destroy Christ; Pilate and his soldiers complied with their mad desire; yet in solemn prayer the disciples confess that all the impious ones had done nothing except what “the hand and plan” of God had decreed [^{<440428>}Acts 4:28, cf. Vg.]. So Peter had already preached that “by the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, Christ had been given over” to be killed [^{<440223>}Acts 2:23, cf. Vg.]. It is as if he were to say that God, to whom from the beginning nothing was hidden, wittingly and willingly determined what the Jews carried out. As he elsewhere states: “God, who has foretold through all his prophets that Christ is going to suffer, has thus fulfilled it” [^{<440318>}Acts 3:18, cf. Vg.]. ^eAbsalom, polluting his father’s bed by an incestuous union, commits a detestable crime [^{<101622>}2 Samuel 16:22]; yet God declares this work to be his own; for the

words are: “You did it secretly; but I will do this thing openly, and in broad daylight” [^{<101212>}2 Samuel 12:12 p.]. Jeremiah declared that every cruelty the Chaldeans exercised against Judah was God’s work [^{<240115>}Jeremiah 1:15; 7:14; 50:25, and *passim*]. For this reason Nebuchadnezzar is called God’s servant [^{<242509>}Jeremiah 25:9; cf. ch. 27:6]. God proclaims in many places that by his hissing [^{<230718>}Isaiah 7:18 or 5:26], by the sound of his trumpet [^{<280801>}Hosea 8:1], by his authority and command, the impious are aroused to war [cf. ^{<360201>}Zephaniah 2:1]. The Assyrian he calls the rod of his anger [^{<231005>}Isaiah 10:5 p.], and the ax that he wields with his hand [cf. ^{<400310>}Matthew 3:10]. The destruction of the Holy City and the ruin of the Temple he calls his own work [^{<232821>}Isaiah 28:21]. David, not murmuring against God, but recognizing him as the just judge, yet confesses that the curses of Shimei proceeded from His command [^{<101610>}2 Samuel 16:10]. “The Lord,” he says, “commanded him to curse.” [^{<101611>}2 Samuel 16:11.] We very often find in the Sacred History that whatever happens proceeds from the Lord, as for instance the defection of the ten tribes [^{<111131>}1 Kings 11:31], the death of Eli’s sons [^{<090234>}1 Samuel 2:34], and very many examples of this sort. Those who are moderately versed in the Scriptures see that for the sake of brevity I have put forward only a few of many testimonies. Yet from these it is more than evident that they babble and talk absurdly who, in place of God’s providence, substitute bare permission — as if God sat in a watchtower awaiting chance events, and his judgments thus depended upon human will.

2. HOW DOES GOD’S IMPULSE COME TO PASS IN MEN?

^eAs far as pertains to those secret promptings we are discussing, Solomon’s statement that the heart of a king is turned about hither and thither at God’s pleasure [^{<202101>}Proverbs 21:1] certainly extends to all the human race, and carries as much weight as if he had said: “Whatever we conceive of in our minds is directed to his own end by God’s secret inspiration.” And surely unless he worked inwardly in men’s minds, it would not rightly have been said that he removes speech from the truthful, and prudence from the old men [^{<260726>}Ezekiel 7:26]; that he takes away the heart of the princes of the earth so they may wander in trackless wastes [^{<181224>}Job 12:24; cf. ^{<19A740>}Psalms 107:40; 106:40, Vg.]. To this pertains what one often reads: that men are fearful according as dread of him takes

possession of their minds [^{<032636>}Leviticus 26:36]. So David went forth from Saul's camp without anyone's knowing it, because the sleep of God had overtaken them all. [^{<092612>}1 Samuel 26:12.] But one can desire nothing clearer than where he so often declares that he blinds men's minds [^{<232914>}Isaiah 29:14], smites them with dizziness [cf. ^{<052828>}Deuteronomy 28:28; ^{<381204>}Zechariah 12:4], makes them drunk with the spirit of drowsiness [^{<232910>}Isaiah 29:10], casts madness upon them [^{<450128>}Romans 1:28], hardens their hearts [^{<021417>}Exodus 14:17 and *passim*]. These instances may refer, also, to divine permission, as if by forsaking the wicked he allowed them to be blinded by Satan. But since the Spirit clearly expresses the fact that blindness and insanity are inflicted by God's just judgment [^{<450120>}Romans 1:20-24], such a solution is too absurd. It is said that he hardened Pharaoh's heart [^{<020912>}Exodus 9:12], also that he made it heavy [ch. ^{<021001>}10:1] and stiffened it [chs. 10:20,27; ^{<021110>}11:10; ^{<021408>}14:8]. By this foolish cavil certain ones get around these expressions, for while it is said elsewhere that Pharaoh himself made heavy his own heart [^{<020815>}Exodus 8:15, 32; 9:34], God's will is posited as the cause of hardening. As if these two statements did not perfectly agree, although in divers ways, that man, while he is acted upon by God, yet at the same time himself acts! Moreover, I throw their objection back upon them: for if "to harden" denotes bare permission, the very prompting to obstinacy will not properly exist in Pharaoh. Indeed, how weak and foolish would it be to interpret this as if Pharaoh only suffered himself to be hardened! Besides, Scripture cuts off any occasion for such cavils. "I will restrain," says God, "his heart." [^{<020421>}Exodus 4:21.] Thus, also, concerning the dwellers in the Land of Canaan, Moses said they had come forth to battle because God stiffened their hearts [^{<061120>}Joshua 11:20; Cf. ^{<050230>}Deuteronomy 2:30]. The same thing is repeated by another prophet, "He turns their hearts to hate his people" [^{<19A525>}Psalms 105:25]. Likewise in Isaiah, He declares that he will send the Assyrians against the deceitful nation and will command them "to take spoil and seize plunder" [^{<231006>}Isaiah 10:6] — not because he would teach impious and obstinate men to obey him willingly, but because he will bend them to execute his judgments, as if they bore his commandments graven upon their hearts; from this it appears that they had been impelled by God's sure determination.

I confess, indeed, that it is often by means of Satan's intervention that God acts in the wicked, but in such a way that Satan performs his part by God's impulsion and advances as far as he is allowed. An evil spirit troubles Saul; but it is said to have come from God [^{<091614>}1 Samuel 16:14], that we may know that Saul's madness proceeds from God's just vengeance. Also, it is said that the same Satan "blinds the minds of unbelievers" [^{<470404>}2 Corinthians 4:4]; but whence does this come, unless the working of error flows from God himself [^{<530211>}2 Thessalonians 2:11], to make those believe lies who refuse to obey the truth? According to the former reason it is said, "If any prophet should speak in lies, I, God, have deceived him" [^{<261409>}Ezekiel 14:9]. According to the second reason, he himself is indeed said to "give men up to an evil mind" [^{<450128>}Romans 1:28, cf. Vg.] and cast them into base desires [cf. ^{<450129>}Romans 1:29]; because he is the chief author of his own just vengeance, while Satan is but the minister of it. But because we must discuss this matter again when we discourse in the Second Book concerning man's free or unfree choice,^{f523} it seems to me that I have now briefly said as much as the occasion calls for. To sum up, since God's will is said to be the cause of all things, I have made his providence the determinative principle for all human plans and works, not only in order to display its force in the elect, who are ruled by the Holy Spirit, but also to compel the reprobate to obedience.

3. GOD'S WILL IS A UNITY

^eWhile hitherto I have recounted only those things which are openly and unambiguously related in Scripture, let those who do not hesitate to brand the heavenly oracles with sinister marks of ignominy see what kind of censure they use. For if they seek from pretending ignorance to be praised for moderation, what haughtier thing can be imagined than to oppose God's authority with one little word such as "To me it seems otherwise," or, "I do not want to touch upon this"? But if they openly curse, what will they gain by spitting at the sky? Indeed, an example of such petulance is not new, for in every age there have been impious and profane men, who have frothed and snarled against this portion of doctrine. But they shall surely feel to be true what the Spirit declared of old through David's mouth, that God may overcome when he is judged [^{<195006>}Psalms 50:6, Vg.; 51:4, EV]. David indirectly reproves the madness of men in the very unbridled license with which, out of their own filthiness, they not only

argue against God, but claim for themselves the power to condemn him. Meanwhile, he briefly warns that the blasphemies they spew out against heaven do not reach God, but that he, dispelling their clouds of calumnies, makes his own righteousness shine forth. Even our faith (because, founded upon God's Sacred Word, it is above the whole world [cf. ^{<620504>}1 John 5:4]) from its lofty height despises these clouds.

For it is easy to dispose of their first objection, that if nothing happens apart from God's will, there are in him two contrary wills, because by his secret plan he decrees what he has openly forbidden by his law. Yet before I answer, I should like my readers again to be warned that this cavil is not hurled against me but against the Holy Spirit, who surely put this confession in the mouth of the holy man Job, "As it pleased God, so was it done" [^{<180121>}Job 1:21, cf. Vg.]. When he had been robbed by thieves, in their unjust acts and evil-doing toward him he recognized God's just scourge. What does Scripture say elsewhere? Eli's sons did not obey their father because God willed to slay them [^{<090225>}1 Samuel 2:25]. Another prophet also proclaims that "God, who resides in heaven, does whatever he pleases" [^{<191503>}Psalms 15:3]. And now I have already shown plainly enough that God is called the Author of all the things that these faultfinders would have happen only by his indolent permission. He declares that he creates light and darkness, that he forms good and bad [^{<234507>}Isaiah 45:7 p.]; that nothing evil happens that he himself has not done [^{<300306>}Amos 3:6]. Let them tell me, I pray, whether he exercises his judgments willingly or unwillingly. Yet, as Moses teaches, he who is killed by a chance slip of the ax has been divinely given over to the striker's hand. [^{<051905>}Deuteronomy 19:5; cf. ^{<022113>}Exodus 21:13.]

Thus, according to Luke, the whole church says that Herod and Pilate conspired to do what God's hand and plan had decreed. [^{<440428>}Acts 4:28.] And indeed, unless Christ had been crucified according to God's will, whence would we have redemption? Yet God's will is not therefore at war with itself, nor does it change, nor does it pretend not to will what he wills. But even though his will is one and simple in him, it appears manifold to us because, on account of our mental incapacity, we do not grasp how in divers ways it wills and does not will something to take place. When Paul said that the calling of the Gentiles was "a mystery hidden" [^{<490309>}Ephesians 3:9], he added shortly thereafter that in it was

shown forth “God’s manifold wisdom” [^{<490310>}Ephesians 3:10]. ^{f524} Because God’s wisdom appears manifold (or “multiform” as the old translator renders it), ought we therefore, on account of the sluggishness ^{f525} of our understanding, to dream that there is any variation in God himself, as if he either may change his plan or disagree with himself? Rather, when we do not grasp how God wills to take place what he forbids to be done, let us recall our mental incapacity, and at the same time consider that the light in which God dwells is not without reason called unapproachable [^{<540616>}1 Timothy 6:16], because it is overspread with darkness. Therefore all godly and modest folk readily agree with this saying of Augustine: “Sometimes with a good will a man wills something which God does not will ... For example, a good son wills that his father live, whom God wills to die. Again, it can happen that the same man wills with a bad will what God wills with a good will. For example, a bad son wills that his father die; God also wills this. That is, the former wills what God does not will; but the latter wills what God also wills. And yet the filial piety of the former, even though he wills something other than God wills, is more consonant with God’s good will than the impiety of the latter, who wills the same thing as God does. There is a great difference between what is fitting for man to will and what is fitting for God, and to what end the will of each is directed, so that it be either approved or disapproved. For through the bad wills of evil men God fulfills what he righteously wills.” A little before he had said that by their defection the apostate angels and all the wicked, from their point of view, had done what God did not will, but from the point of view of God’s omnipotence they could in no way have done this, because while they act against God’s will, his will is done upon them. Whence he exclaims: “Great are God’s works, sought out in all his wills” [^{<19B102>}Psalm 111:2; cf. ^{<19B002>}Psalm 110:2, Vg.]; so that in a wonderful and ineffable manner nothing is done without God’s will, not even that which is against his will. For it would not be done if he did not permit it; yet he does not unwillingly permit it, but willingly; nor would he, being good, allow evil to be done, unless being also almighty he could make good even out of evil.” ^{f526}

4. EVEN WHEN GOD USES THE DEEDS OF THE GODLESS FOR HIS PURPOSES, HE DOES NOT SUFFER REPROACH

^eIn this way, also, the other objection is solved, or rather vanishes by itself: if God not only uses the work of the ungodly, but also governs their plans and intentions, he is the author of all wickednesses; and therefore men are undeservedly damned if they carry out what God has decreed because they obey his will. His will is wrongly confused with his precept: innumerable examples clearly show how utterly different these two are. For even though, when Absalom committed adultery with his father's wives [^{<101622>}2 Samuel 16:22], God willed to punish David's adultery with this shameful act, yet he did not for this reason bid the wicked son commit incest, unless perhaps with regard to David, as he speaks concerning Shimei's railings. For when he confesses that Shimei curses him at God's command [^{<101610>}2 Samuel 16:10-11], he does not at all commend his obedience, as if that impudent dog were obeying God's authority. But recognizing his tongue to be a scourge of God, he patiently bears the chastisement. We ought, indeed, to hold fast by this: while God accomplishes through the wicked what he has decreed by his secret judgment, they are not excusable, as if they had obeyed his precept which out of their own lust they deliberately break.

Now the choice of King Jeroboam [^{<111220>}1 Kings 12:20] shows clearly that what men do perversely is of God, and ruled by his hidden providence. In this choice the rashness and insanity of the people is condemned for having perverted the order sanctioned by God, and having faithlessly fallen away from the house of David. And yet we know that he willed him to be anointed. Accordingly in Hosea's statements there likewise occurs a certain appearance of contradiction: for God complained in one place that that kingdom had been established without his knowledge and against his will [^{<280804>}Hosea 8:4]; yet elsewhere he proclaims that in his anger he had given King Jeroboam [^{<281811>}Hosea 18:11]. How will these statements agree: that Jeroboam did not reign by God's will and yet was appointed king by the same God? The answer is obviously that the people could neither revolt from the house of David without shaking off the divinely imposed yoke, nor was God himself deprived of the freedom to punish Solomon thus for his ungratefulness. Therefore we see how God does not will a breach of faith, yet with another end in view, justly wills defection. Hence

likewise, contrary to expectation, he compelled Jeroboam with sacred anointing to become king. In this way the Sacred History says that an enemy was raised up by God [^{<111123>}1 Kings 11:23] to divest Solomon's son of part of his kingdom.

Let my readers weigh both these things with care. Because it had pleased God that his people be governed under the hand of one king, when the nation is split into two parts, it is done against his will. And yet the beginning of the separation came from the will of the same God. For surely when the prophet both by word of mouth and by the token of anointing stirred Jeroboam, who was thinking of no such thing, to the expectation of the kingdom, this was not done without the knowledge or against the will of God, who so commanded it to be done. And yet the rebellion of the people is rightly condemned because against God's will they revolted from David's descendants. For this reason, also, it is afterward added that Rehoboam haughtily despised the petitions of the people and that this was done by God to establish the Word which he had proclaimed through the hand of Ahijah his servant [^{<111215>}1 Kings 12:15]. Note how it is against God's will that the sacred unity is broken, and yet how by his same will the ten tribes are estranged from Solomon's son. Besides this, there is another similar example, where with the people's consent — indeed, with them lending a hand — the sons of King Ahab are murdered, and all his posterity exterminated [^{<121007>}2 Kings 10:7]. Indeed, Jehu rightly reports that “nothing of God's words has fallen to the ground, but he has done what he said by the hand of his servant Elijah” [^{<121010>}2 Kings 10:10 p.]. And yet not without cause did he rebuke the citizens of Samaria because they had given assistance. “Are you righteous?” he asks; “if I conspired against my master, who killed all these?” [^{<121009>}2 Kings 10:9; 4 Kings 10:9, Vg.] I have, unless I am mistaken, already clearly explained how in the same act as man's evil deed shows itself, so God's justice shines forth.

And for modest minds this answer of Augustine will always be enough: “Since the Father delivered up the Son, and Christ, his body, and Judas, his Lord, why in this delivering up is God just and man guilty, unless because in the one thing they have done, the cause of their doing it is not one?”^{f527} But if some people find difficulty in what we are now saying — namely, that there is no agreement between God and man, where man does by God's just impulsion what he ought not to do — let them recall what

the same Augustine points out in another passage: “Who does not tremble at these judgments, where God works even in evil men’s hearts whatever he wills, yet renders to them according to their deserts?”^{f528} And surely in Judas’ betrayal it will be no more right, because God himself both willed that his Son be delivered up and delivered him up to death, to ascribe the guilt of the crime to God than to transfer the credit for redemption to Judas. Therefore the same writer correctly points out, elsewhere, that in this examination God does not inquire into what men have been able to do, or what they have done, but what they have willed to do,^{f529} so that purpose and will may be taken into account.

Let those for whom this seems harsh consider for a little while how bearable their squeamishness is in refusing a thing attested by clear Scriptural proofs because it exceeds their mental capacity, and find fault that things are put forth publicly, which if God had not judged useful for men to know, he would never have bidden his prophets and apostles to teach. For our wisdom ought to be nothing else than to embrace with humble teachableness, and at least without finding fault, whatever is taught in Sacred Scripture. Those who too insolently scoff, even though it is clear enough that they are prating against God, are not worthy of a longer refutation.

FOOTNOTES

INTRODUCTION

- ^{ft1} Nicolas Cop was the son of Guillaume Cop, distinguished Paris physician and scholar. In the weeks preceding the address, Nicolas Cop had strongly defended at the University the cause of Marguerite d'Angouleme, sister of the king, whose *Mirror of a Sinful Soul* had been condemned by the Sorbonne. Cop's address (*Concio academica*) is printed in the works of Calvin, CR 10. 2. 30-36; OS 1. 4-10.
- ^{ft2} Discussions of these events, and of the conversion of Calvin, include the following: P. Imbart de la Tour, *Les Origines de la Reforme* I. 478-568; J. Vienot, *Histoire de la Reforme francaise des origines a l'Edit de Nantes*, Pt. 2, ch. 1; F. Wendel, *Calvin: Sources et evolution de sa pensee religieuse*, pp. 20-26; J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, ch. 7.
- ^{ft3} The word *institutio*, sometimes in the plural, *institutiones*, appears often in the titles of Latin works on law and is employed by Christian writers in titles of compendia on various topics, e.g., by Lactantius, Ambrose, Isidore, Paul the Deacon, Hinkmar, and Bernard. In his choice of the word, however, Calvin may have recalled its use by Erasmus in *Institutio principis Christiani* (1516), or by Guillaume Bude in *L'Institution du prince* (1516), which, though unpublished (until 1547), may easily have been available to Calvin, who was well acquainted with Bude's family. Erasmus' title has been rendered, in L. W. Born's translation, "The Education of a Christian Prince." A common rendering of *institutio* in this sense is "instruction." Thus German versions have rendered the word *Unterweisung* or *Unterricht*; the Dutch have used *onderwijsinghe*, modern *onderwijzing*. See also Q. Breen, John Calvin: *A Study in French Humanism*, pp. 119 ff., and J. T. McNeill, *Christian Hope for World Society*, pp. 90-95. The plural form does not appear in the title of the whole work prior to 1654, when it was used in the Elzevir edition. In English, "Institution" was, until 1813, the word commonly used in references and uniformly in the

title of the work when published in its entirety. But in 1580, Edward May, the translator of Edmund Bunney's abridgment, has *Institutions*, and this form was followed by Henry Holland in his English version of John Piscator's *Aphorisms* in 1596. John Allen, in his translation of the entire treatise, employed the word *Institutes*, 1813, and this form has since prevailed. (See below, p. 65.)

^{ft4} King of France, 1515-1547. Francis was a patron of the Renaissance. His policy toward the church was designed to secure his control of it. This involved some conception of its reform, but his attitude toward the Protestants within his kingdom was increasingly hostile.

^{ft5} CR 31. 23-27; tr. Comm. Psalms 1. 61 ff.; LCC 23. 51 ff.

^{ft6} J. Vienot, *op. cit.*, p. 129.

^{ft7} See *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948*, ed. Ruth Rouse and Stephen Neill, p. 40.

^{ft8} There is no complete study in English of the early editions of the *Institutio*. The best is that of Benjamin B. Warfield, an article published in *The Presbyterian and Reformed Review* 10 (1899), 193-219, and inserted with some changes in the 1909 edition of Allen's translation. D. Clement, in *Bibliothèque curieuse historique et critique, ou Catalogue raisonné de livres difficiles à trouver* 4. 64-102, provides much convenient information on special features of numerous early editions known to him, but this excellent work is now rare. There is an extensive account in the *Corpus Reformatorum* edition of Calvin's works (CR 23-66), but this is superseded by that given in the *Opera Selecta* (OS), edited by P. Barth and W. Niesel, 3. 6-50.

^{ft9} The *Instruction et confession de foy* has been translated with explanatory notes by P. T. Fuhrmann, *Instruction in Faith* (1537).

^{ft10} CR 22. 7.

^{ft11} Laudatory comments on Calvin's French style from competent literary critics are very abundant. See below, pp. 68 ff. E. Doumergue, in Jean Calvin — *Les hommes et les choses de son temps* 4. 5-8, has quoted some of these. See also J. Pannier I. 22-24.

^{ft12} Robert was the son of Henri Estienne (d. 1520), founder of the printing house, and was himself a front-rank classical scholar and the author of valuable reference works. In Paris, he had editorial assistance from

Mathurin Cordier, who had awakened the young Calvin's enthusiasm for Latin at Paris, and who too ended his days in Geneva.

^{ft13} The editors of the CR edition were convinced that the 1560 French version, with the exception of the first seven chapters of Book I, was not by Calvin, but was carelessly made without his oversight. (CR 3. 25-28 and 21. 56. 87 f.) This view was adopted by Doumergue (*Jean Calvin* 4. 10 f.) and was first seriously challenged by J. W. Marmelstein in *Etude comparative des textes latins et francais de l'Institution de la Religion Chretienne de Calvin*. Marmelstein answers the argument from defects of style by citing similar lapses in the 1541 edition, and argues from explicit statements of Nicolas Colladon and Theodore Beza that Calvin was directly responsible for the translation. This view has been adopted by P. Barth and W. Niesel in OS 3. 38-68; by J. Cadier in his preface to the modernized edition, *Jean Calvin: Institution de la Religion Chretienne* 1. 10-13; and by J.-D. Benoit in the Introduction to his edition of the French version: *Jean Calvin: Institution de la Religion Chrestienne* 1. 9 ff. The weight of argument compels us to adopt Marmelstein's main contention. English translators have differed in their recognition of the French edition. Norton (1561) calls the Latin of 1559 "the author's last edition"; but Allen (1813) uses this expression for the 1560 French. Those who are convinced that the translation passed through Calvin's hands or was his work tend to date his labor on it largely before the publication of the 1559 Latin. Yet nobody denies that it is definitely a translation from the Latin, with only a few intentional variations. It is noteworthy that changes made in the French version were never transferred to the Latin, though in later printings Calvin had ample opportunity to do this. This may be partially explained on the ground that the French edition was specifically intended for popular use and some of its variations from the original would have been unsuitable in a Latin text. But in any case, the 1559 Latin edition remains Calvin's final redaction of the work for international circulation, and as such retains its authority.

^{ft14} Marlorat (1506-1562) was a former Augustinian monk who became a Reformed minister, held parishes in the Vaud, attended the Colloquy at Poissy (1561), and met a cruel death with great resolution at Rouen. His numerous writings include an Exposition of the New Testament

(1561) (Eugene Haag and Emile Haag, *La France Protestante* 7. 256-259; CR 1. 14).

^{ft14a} Enzinas Hebraized his name to “Elao,” and apparently the place of publication, given as “Topeia,” was Ghent. B. F. Stockwell, “Historia literaria de la Institucion,” prefaced to the Buenos Aires facsimile reproduction of Valera’s translation of 1597, pp. 20. f.

^{ft15} Among works translated by Dyrkinus are the New Testament, the Hausbuch of Heinrich Bullinger, and Calvin’s Commentaries on the Epistles of Paul. The main facts of his life are in the article “Johannes Dyrkinus,” by A. A. van Schelven, in *Nieuw Nederlandsch Biographisch Woordenboek*, ed. P.O. Molhuysen, et al., 4. 547 ff., and in W. Hollweg, *Heinrich Bullinger’s Hausbuch*, pp. 92 ff. (Spellings of his name are numerous.) There are copies of this translation (*Institutie ofte onderwijsinghe der Christlicken religie*) in the University Library, Leiden, and in the Library of the Dutch Church of London. It was reprinted in 1566 and in 1578 at Dort, and in 1596 at Leiden, but the version by Charles Agricola, 1602, superseded it, and this in turn gave place to the superior work of William Cotsman, 1650.

^{ft16} “*Institutio Christianae religionis. Das ist underweisung inn Christlicher Religion in Vier Bucher verfasst. Durch Herrn Johannem Calvinum. Aus Lateinischer und Frantzosischer Sprach treulich verteutscht Gedruckt in der Churfurstlichen Statt Heydelberg durch Johannem Meyer. 1572.*” (There is a copy in the Library of Colby College, Waterville, Maine.) It opens with a 3 1/2 page address to the Christian reader by the theologians and church officers (*Kirchendiener*) of Heidelberg, commending the work as an unrivaled “*summa Christlicher Religion*” and declaring that the German text is a translation and not a paraphrase of the Latin. No names of translators are given: we know that in 1572 the theological Faculty of Heidelberg included the eminent Reformed scholars, Caspar Olevianus (1536-1585), Zacharius Ursinus (1534-1583), Hieronymus Zanchius (1516-1590), and Pierre Boquin (ca. 1500-1582).

^{ft17} Valera spent most of the period of Elizabeth’s reign in England. His preface to the *Institutes* contains a passage in warm praise of the queen’s policy in harboring Protestant refugees. He helped to revise the earlier Spanish translation of the Bible. In 1637, the celebrated

Giovanni Deodati of Geneva stated that three thousand copies of Valera's *Institucion* had been circulated throughout Spain. (T. McCrie, *History of the Reformation in Spain*, p. 374.) On Valera's early life, see the article "A Spanish Heretic: Cipriano de Valera," by L. J. Hutton, *Church History* 27 (1958), 23-31.

^{ft18} For notes on early editions in Czech and Hungarian, see G. Loesche, *Luther, Melanthon, und Calvin in Osterreich-Ungarn*, pp. 356 ff. See also the entries in R. Pitcairn's "Catalogue Raisonne of the Earlier Editions of Calvin's Institutes" in H. Beveridge, *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (Edinburgh, 1845) 1. 66.

^{ft19} *The Life and Comunicacion of a Christen Man*, translated by Thomas Broke, 1549. Broke was at the time an official of the ports of Dover and Calais. In his preface he indicates a desire to translate the whole work. As a translator he is not distinguished, and certainly inferior to Norton. Cf. note 65, below.

^{ft20} In some copies of this edition the printer's note is omitted. One of these is in the Harvard Andover Library. John Dawes is probably the Cambridge graduate (M.A., 1540) of that name who was rector of Sutton, Suffolk, 1570-1602; see *Alumni Cantabrigenses*, Part 1, Vol. 1 (1922), 19. We need hardly hesitate to identify him also with the John Daus of Ipswich who translated John Sleidan's *Reign of Charles V, A Fameuse Cronicle of oure time called Sleidan's Commentaries . . .* published September 1560, and *A Hundred Sermons upon the Apocalips*, by Henry Bullinger, March, 1561. The dates of these substantial books may help to excuse Dawes if he failed to deliver a satisfactory manuscript of the *Institutes* as expected. From what is said it is quite possible, however, that the manuscript had been accidentally lost or destroyed.

^{ft21} There is a good article on Norton by Sidney Lee in *the Dictionary of National Biography*. Eighteen metrical psalms by him appeared in T. Sternhold and J. Hopkins, *The Whole Book of Psalms* collected into English Metre (London, 1562).

^{ft22} Norton married Margery Cranmer, third daughter of the archbishop, in 1555. Her mother, as is well known, was a niece of Andreas Osiander, leader of the Reformation in Nuremberg, who is sharply criticized by Calvin: 1. 15. 3, 5; 2. 12:5-7; 3. 11:5-12.

^{ft23} Alexander Nowell, dean of St. Paul's, London, one of whose three catechisms Norton translated from Latin in 1570, was highly pleased with Norton's version, regarding it as a model of good English. In this connection, however, Anthony a Wood remarks that Norton "tied himself" to the Latin words (R. Churton, *Life of Alexander Nowell*, p. 176). For this work, in Norton's translation with the spelling modernized, see *The Fathers of the English Church* 8. 1-141.

^{ft24} Referred to in note 8, above.

^{ft25} This society, founded in May, 1843, published (1845-1855) translations of *the Institutes, Commentaries, Tracts, and Letters* of Calvin.

^{ft26} Beveridge appends to his translation as a summary of the work, "One Hundred Aphorisms, containing, within a narrow compass, the substance and order of the four books of the *Institutes*." In a note he states that this material has been "furnished by the Reverend William Pringle of Auchterarder." No other source is mentioned. The "Aphorisms" consist, however, of a translation of the "*Centum Aphorismi*" found in the Geneva Latin editions by J. Le Preux, 1590 and 1607, the Elzevir Leiden edition of 1654, and the Amsterdam edition by J. J. Schipper, 1667. Le Preux, in his preface, tells us that they are "*ex tabulis Gulielmi Launaei in Anglia excusis collecti*" — gathered from the tables of Guillaume Delaune printed in England — and the ascription to this source is repeated in the Elzevir and Schipper editions. The reference is to the elaborate tabular exhibit of Calvin's doctrines in Delaune's *Epitome* (1583), to which attention is called below. A comparison of the documents at once confirms Le Preux's statement. Delaune's phrases have been edited into a sequence of one hundred propositions, and his chapter references are omitted. The quotation by D. Clement (op. cit., 6. 85) of Le Preux's preface first led the present editor to this identification. The One Hundred Aphorisms first appeared in English translation in 1596, in somewhat amplified phraseology. They are included in *The Contents of Scripture* by Robert Hill, published with two separately paged appendixes: *The Consent of the Foure Evangelists*, by "C. I.," and our Aphorisms under the title, *An Hundredth Aphorismes, Short sentences sumarily containing the matter and Method of Maister Calvines Institutions, in*

far other order than that set out by Piscator: taken out of the last and best edition. The “edition” referred to is not that of Piscator, but that of the *Institutio*, not improbably Le Preux’s of 1590. Piscator’s far more numerous “Aphorismi” actually bear no resemblance to this series derived from Delaune. The book by Hill and “C. I.” was printed in London by Adam Islip for Richard Jackson in 1596. The Hundred Aphorisms appeared also in French editions. Pitcairn, in his essay (cf. note 18, above), mentions the series in passing as a feature of Charles Icard’s edition of the French text, 1713, but this is overlooked in Beveridge’s note. A. Tholuck, in his Latin edition (Berlin, 1834, 1846), which Beveridge used, simply appends the *Centum Aphorismi* without explanation.

^{ft27} Vautrollier’s activities in Edinburgh and London are described in the article on him in the *Dictionary of National Biography*. A daughter of Vautrollier became the wife of Richard Field, printer of Valera’s Spanish edition of the *Institutes* and of many religious works in translation. After Vautrollier’s death, Field carried on his printing establishment in Blackfriars. His father’s connection with the Shakespeare family in Stratford and London is well known, and he himself printed several early works of Shakespeare.

^{ft28} In the preparation of Vautrollier’s edition of the Latin *Institutes* he had the editorial assistance of Edmund Bunney. A special feature of this excellent edition is the elaborate set of marginal references to the *Loci communes* and other works of Peter Martyr Vermigli. The *Loci communes* is a work put together in 1575 from notes left by Peter Martyr (d. 1562) and “arranged according to Calvin’s system” by Robert Masson, a French minister in London. It appeared in London in 1576; it was reprinted in 1580 and (by Vautrollier) in 1583. See Vautrollier’s preface (*Typographus Lectori*) to the 1576 *Institutio*, and C. Schmidt, Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Leben und ausgewählte Schriften*, p. 295.

^{ft29} This section is referred to in note 26, above, as the source of the “One Hundred Aphorisms” appended to the work by some modern editors.

^{ft30} Caspar Olevianus had studied under Calvin. He was associated with Zacharias Ursinus in the authorship of the Heidelberg Catechism (1563). From 1576 to 1584 he taught at Berleberg, later at Herborn,

where he died in 1585. On *his Institutionis Christianae religionis epitome* (Herborn, 1586), see P. Henry, *Das Leben Johann Calvins* 3. 188. Henry also refers to an anonymous German abridgment published in Herborn, 1586, and to the *Theatrum Sapientiae*, an analysis of the *Institutes* by Theodor Zwinger (Basel, 1652).

^{ft31} Apparently, the eighteenth century saw no new abridgments of the *Institutes*. The series is resumed with the appearance of H. P. Kalthoff's *Christliche Unterweisung in einem kernhaften Auszug*, published at Elberfeld, 1828. Samuel Dunn's *Christian Theology Selected and Systematically Arranged* is a book of the same class; it was published in a Welsh translation in 1840. A Dutch abridgment by G. Elzenga, *Calvijn's Institutie of onderwijzing in den Christlijken Godsdienst*, was published at Kampen in 1903 and B. Wielenga later used the same title (subtitles differ) for a larger book. More ample still is the admirable abridgment by E. F. K. Miller, *Unterricht in der Christlichen Religion*. H. T. Kerr's *A Compend of the Institutes of the Christian Religion by John Calvin* contains about one tenth of the material of the work, and consists of thoughtfully chosen selections from Allen's translation. Another, prepared in very free translation and excluding Book 4, by J.P. Wiles, *John Calvin's Instruction in Christianity, an Abbreviated Edition of the Institutes*, has been further abridged by D. O. Fuller. Allen's text is again used for a brief selection of extracts with connective comments in *John Calvin on the Christian Faith; Selections from the Institutes and Other Writings* (Library of Liberal Arts, No. 93), by J. T. McNeill. A larger set of extracts from the *Institutes*, with an introduction by J. T. McNeill, translated into Chinese by Ching Yu Hsu, has appeared in Hong Kong (2 vols.) (Christian Classics Library, published by the Board of Founders of Nanking Theological Seminary; General Editor, Francis P. Jones; 2d series, Nos. 4 and 5).

^{ft32} Preface to the Commentary on the Psalms, CR 31. 21. Cf. LCC 23. 52.

^{ft33} "*Non quis sit apud se, sed qualis erga nos.*" 1. 10:2. Cf. 1. 2. 2; 3. 2. 6.

^{ft34} "*Infantiae meae modulo.*" 4. 17:7.

^{ft35} "*Multo altius assurgere contendant quam meo ductu possint,*" *ibid.*

^{ft36} 1. 2:1.

^{ft37} *Jean Calvin*, 4. 29.

^{ft38} *The Teaching of Calvin*, 2d revised edition, p. 296.

^{ft39} P. Barth, “*Das Problem der natiirlichen Theologie bei Calvin*,” in the series *Theologische Existenz Heute*, No. 18; G. Gloede, *Theologia naturalis bei Calvin*; E. A. Dowey, Jr., *The Knowledge of God in Calvin’s Theology*, ch. 3 and appendix 3; W. M. Horton, *Contemporary Continental Theology: An Interpretation for Anglo-Saxons*; W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, translated by H. Knight, pp. 39-53.

^{ft40} 1. 3. 3; 1. 5:3-5, 8. Calvin’s stress on the point that man’s sin has impaired not only his will but his intellect should be remembered here: cf. 2. 2:12-25.

^{ft41} 1. 13:7.

^{ft42} 3. 4:4-6.

^{ft43} 1. 6:2.

^{ft44} 4. 8:9.

^{ft45} CR 69. 49. Similarly, Calvin’s own quotations of Scripture, while true to the sense, are often verbally free. Cf. J. A. Cramer, *De Heilige Schrift bij Calvijn*, pp. 116-141; J. Haroutunian in LCC 33. 31-35.

^{ft46} 4. 17:20. Another phrase here is “*literae exactores*,” exactors of the letter.

^{ft47} 1. 8:11.

^{ft48} 1. 8:2.

^{ft49} 1. 7:1-2.

^{ft50} 1. 7:5; 1. 8. 13.

^{ft51} On ^{<430539>}John 5:39; CR 68. 125.

^{ft52} Cf. Luther’s Preface to the Epistles of James and Jude: “And in this all genuine holy books agree, that they all together preach and stress *Christ [Christum predigen und treiben]*. Moreover, the true touchstone of criticism [*tadeln*] is when we see whether they stress Christ or not. What does not teach Christ is not apostolic, even if Peter or Paul teach it. Again, what preaches Christ would be apostolic even if Judas, Annas, Pilate, or Herod were to do it.” (*Dr. Martin Luther’s*

sammliche Werke 113. 156 f.) Cf. the translation in *Works of Martin Luther* 4. 478. See also 1. 9. 3.

^{ft53} 4. 17:25.

^{ft54} *Thomae Braduardini archiepiscopi olim Cantuariensis De causa Dei contra Pelagium et de virtute causarum, libri tres*, edited by Henry Saville (London, 1618). The work is analyzed in Joseph and Isaac Milner's *History of the Church* 4. 79-106. In *the Nun's Priest's Tale* of Chaucer, Bradwardine is ranked with Augustine and Boethius, in course of a passage in which the poet facetiously brings to notice, but declines to discuss, the issues involved in predestination:

*But I ne kan nat bulte it to the bren
As kan the hooly doctour Augustyn,
Or Boece, or bisshop Bradwardyn
I wil nat han to do of swich mateere.*

Bradwardine was distinguished as a mathematician, and his treatise remarkably combines mathematical logic with an eager personal faith. See Saville's edition, pp. 327, 420, and H. A. Oberman, *Archbishop Thomas Bradwardine, a Fourteenth-Century Augustinian*, chs. 1, 5, 7. Cf. G. Leff, *Bradwardine and the Pelagians: A Study of His De causa Dei and Its Opponents*.

^{ft55} Gregory of Rimini asserts that God has predestinated the elect gratis and in compassion, but he also affirms reprobation as without reference to divine foreknowledge of the individual's bad use of free will or resistance to grace. See P. Vigneau, *Justification et predestination au xive siecle: Duns Scot, Pierre d'Auriol, Guillaume d'Occam, Gregoire de Rimini*, ch. 4; Oberman, op. cit., pp. 211-223.

^{ft56} M. Spinka, *John Hus and the Czech Reform; Advocates of Reform: From Wyclif to Erasmus* (LCC 14), pp. 196 f., 249, 261 f.

^{ft57} Article, "Augustine," by B. B. Warfield, HDRE 2. 224.

^{ft58} It should be remembered, however, that nearly a century later Cornelius Jansen was to inaugurate a vehement controversy within Roman Catholicism by a fresh appropriation of Augustine's doctrines of sin and grace.

^{ft59} H. Barnikol, in *Die Lehre Calvins vom unfreien Willens und ihr Verhaltniszur Lehre der ubrigen Reformatoren, und Augustins*, views

Calvin as “the reimpristinator of Augustinian theology.” J. B. Mozley, in an old work that is still helpful, *A Treatise on the Augustinian Doctrine of Predestination*, acutely marks similarities and distinctions among numerous writers in the field of his title, with chief attention to Augustine, Aquinas, and Calvin. Cf. A.D. R. Polman, *De praedestinatieleer van Augustinus, Th. van Aquino, en Calvijn*. The references to Augustine are very abundant in the Institutes. In general, Calvin uses Augustine’s opinions only as corroboration of Scripture, but at some points, such as 3. 23, 1, 5, 11, 13, 14; 4. 6. 4, he seems to rely on Augustine for the substance of an argument. His debt to Augustine can best be realized from the evidence presented by L. Smits in *Saint Augustine dans l’oeuvre de Jean Calvin*: see esp. 1. 254-271. Smits has labored through the works of both theologians. The second of his two volumes consists of elaborate statistical tables. Other notable studies are J. Cadlet, “Calvin et Saint Augustine,” in *Augustinus Magister* (Communications du Congrès International Augustinien) 2. 1033-1056; D. Nauta, *Augustinus en de Reformatie*.

^{ft60} 3. 23. 7.

^{ft61} “*Quos Deus praeterit, reprobat.*” 3. 23. 1.

^{ft62} 3. 23. 14.

^{ft63} 3. 3. 8-10.

^{ft64} 3. 6. 5.

^{ft65} 3. 6-10, sometimes separately published and known as *The Golden Booklet of the Christian Life*. A separate printing of this material as it stood in the 1550 Latin edition was made in Geneva, 1550. Cf. note 19, above.

^{ft66} 3. 7. 6.

^{ft67} 3. 9, 10.

^{ft68} 3. 2. 7. E. A. Dowey, Jr., in *The Knowledge of God in Calvin’s Theology*, ch. 4, presents an acute discussion of Calvin’s doctrine of faith especially as this is related to the knowledge of God.

^{ft69} 3. 2. 9.

^{ft70} 3. 3. 1; 3. 11. 7.

^{ft71} 4. 1. 4.

^{ft72} 4. 1. 7-18.

^{ft73} 4. 2. 1-2, 9, 11-12.

^{ft74} 4. 5.

^{ft75} A voluminous history of the church to A.D. 1400, prepared by Lutheran theologians under the direction of Matthias Flacius and published at Basel (1559-1574).

^{ft76} This document, forged apparently at Rome between 753 and 775, represents Constantine the Great (306-337) as transferring the rule of a great part of the West to Pope Silvester I. Valla's *De falso credita et ementita Constantini donatione declamatio* was written in 1439 and printed at Basel in 1540. Cf. 4. 11. 12.

^{ft77} 4. 7. 26.

^{ft78} 4. 12. 6, 7.

^{ft79} 4. 12. 1.

^{ft80} 4. 12. 5.

^{ft81} 4. 12. 8-11.

^{ft82} 4. 14-19.

^{ft83} 4. 16. 7.

^{ft84} 4. 15. 20; 16. 20, 26.

^{ft85} 4. 17. 22, 30.

^{ft86} A typical confessional statement of this is that of the Belgic Confession, art. 35: "We... truly receive by faith... the true body and blood of Christ, our only Savior, in our souls for our spiritual life."

^{ft87} "*Exterior magis quam intelligam.*" 4. 17. 32.

^{ft88} 4. 17. 38, 42, 44.

^{ft89} 4. 18. 1-14; 19.

^{ft90} 4. 20.

^{ft91} *City of God* 5. 24.

^{ft92} A selection of other politically significant passages from Calvin's writings will be found in *John Calvin on God and Political Duty*, edited with an introduction by J. T. McNeill (Library of Liberal Arts, No. 23).

^{ft93} *The Theology of Calvin*, p. 230.

^{ft94} 4. 20. 3.

^{ft95} 4. 20. 8.

^{ft96} J. Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation*, pp. 163 f.; J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, pp. 162, 187. For the Ecclesiastical Ordinances of Geneva, *Project d'Ordonnances ecclésiastiques* (1541), see the edition in OS 2. 325-345, where it is followed by the revised Ordinances of 1561 and the laws of the Academy of Geneva, 1559; see tr. in LCC 22. 58-71. Cf. CR 10. 1. 15-30 and B. J. Kidd, *Documents of the Continental Reformation*, pp. 588-603.

^{ft97} Numerous writers, favorable and unfavorable to Calvin's theology, have paid glowing tributes to his style. Many of these are quoted along with general comments on his personality in the translation of the Commentary on Joshua, published by the Calvin Translation Society (Edinburgh, 1854), pp. 376-464. There is a Comparable collection of such appreciations in P. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* 8. 270-295. A number of these with some others are recited by J. Pannier in *Calvin écrivain, sa place et son rôle dans l'histoire de la langue et de la littérature française*. See also L. Wencelius, *L'Esthétique de Calvin*, pp. 344-373.

^{ft98} F. Brunetiere, "L'Oeuvre littéraire de Calvin," *Revue des Deux Mondes* 161 (Paris, 1900), 898-923; Pannier, op. cit.; Pannier, *Introduction to the Institution of 1541* 1. 22 ff.; A. Lefranc, *Calvin et l'éloquence française*.

^{ft99} Both Etienne Pasquier (d. 1615), French author and jurist, and the celebrated Bishop Bossuet (d. 1704) are among the many opposing writers who yet praised Calvin's Latin; they are quoted in the works cited in note 97, above. Cf. W. Leon, "Le Classicisme de Calvin," *Humanisme et Renaissance* 5 (1938). 231-246.

^{ft100} Dedicatory Epistle to Comm. 1 Thessalonians. (1550); J. Lecoultré, *Maturin Cordier et les origines de la pédagogie protestante dans les pays de langue française*.

^{ft101} Q. Breen, *John Calvin: A Study in French Humanism*, p. 146.

^{ft102} F. Wendel, *Calvin: Sources et évolution de sa pensée religieuse*, p. 21.

- ^{ft103} Breen, *op. cit.*, p. 148. In the Geneva Academy, Calvin required of the highest class that they “*exercent diligement leur style*” (CR 10. 1. 79; OS 2. 370).
- ^{ft104} A. Veerman, *De Stiff van Calvijn in de Institutio Christianae Religionis*, pp. 26 ff., 60 ff., 72 ff., 76 f., 92-110, 121 ff.
- ^{ft105} 1. 8. 1, 2.
- ^{ft106} See his Epistle to Simon Grynaeus, introducing Comm. Romans (CR 10. 2. 406; tr. LCC 23. 75).
- ^{ft107} Letter to Farel, Sept. 1, 1549 (CR 23. 374). The remark is incidental to his criticism of a book of Farel’s, apparently *La Glaive de la parole veritable*, then about to be published. His comparable judgment of Seneca’s style in the preface to the Seneca Commentary (1532) is also noteworthy: with all his elegance Seneca has “rather too much verbosity.” Cf. Pannier, Calvin ecivain, p. 10; A.M. Hugo, *Calvijn en Seneca*, pp. 177 ff., and Hugo’s English translation of the preface, *ibid.*, p. 231.
- ^{ft108} E. Faguet, *Seizieme siecle, etudes litteraires*, p. 190. In this work on sixteenth-century French writers, Faguet has an acute study of Calvin, pp. 127-197.
- ^{ft109} Q. Breen, “John Calvin and the Rhetorical Tradition,” *Church History* 26 (1957). 14 f.
- ^{ft110} Comm. <240924>Jeremiah 9:24 (tr. LCC 23. 125).

JOHN CALVIN TO THE READER

- ^{ft111} During his illness with this disease, a form of malaria, from October, 1558, to May, 1559, Calvin made the final major revision of the *Institutes* and of the Commentary on Isaiah. Beza, *Vita Calvini*, CR 21. 156 (tr. H. Beveridge, *Life of John Calvin by Theodore Beza*, pp. 82 f.).
- ^{ft112} “*Verum sat cito si sat bene.*” Apparently a memory of Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, Augustus II. 25: “*Sat celeriter fieri quidquid fiat satis bene*” (LCL Suetonius 1. 158). Petrarch repeats the sentence in *Epistolae rerum senilium* 16. 2 (*Opera*, Basel, 1581, 2. 965). It has been wrongly attributed to the Huguenot poet Guillaume du Bartas.

May it not have suggested Shakespeare's "If it were done when 'tis done, then 'twere well it were done quickly" (*Macbeth* 1. 7)?

- ^{ft113} The reference is to the Diet held at Augsburg, February 25 to March 28, 1558.
- ^{ft114} These words appeared in the second edition of the *Institutes*, published in August, 1539, and thus before Calvin's first Scripture commentary (Romans), which was dedicated October 18, 1539, and published in 1540.
- ^{ft115} Editions 1539-1554 insert here: "The Commentaries on the Letter to the Romans will furnish an example."
- ^{ft116} This sentence in the text is a Latin distich, evidently original with Calvin. No rendering of it is given in the French version (VG) of 1560, but it reappears as a quatrain in French in the edition of 1561, and its Latin form is there ascribed to "the author." Cf. Benoit, *Institution* 1. 24.
- ^{ft117} This quotation is really from Augustine, *Letters* 163. 2 (MPL 33. 585; tr. NPNF 1. 490 and FC 20. 150).

SUBJECT MATTER OF THE PRESENT WORK

- ^{ft118} The concept of a "Christian philosophy" is seen in the Greek and Latin fathers and in numerous medieval and Renaissance writers. It was given prominence by Erasmus. For instances in Byzantine writers, see F. Dolger, *Byzanz und die Europaischer Staatenwelt*, pp. 197 ff. Fourth-century writers often speak of Christian asceticism as the life of "philosophy," e.g., Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 2. 17; 3. 38. But the expression usually takes the wider meaning of the wisdom of true Christian piety. A study of the Christian philosophy as understood in ninth-century Byzantine theology is made on the basis of an utterance of Saint Constantine-Cyril (d. 869) by Thor Sevecenko, "The Definition of Philosophy in the Life of Saint Constantine," in the volume *For Roman Jakobson*, pp. 448-457. For Western writers on this theme, E. Gilson has an extended analytical bibliography at the conclusion of his Gifford Lectures, *L'Esprit de la philosophie medievale*, pp. 413-440. (This is omitted from the English edition.)

Augustine speaks of “our Christian philosophy” in the treatise *Against Julian the Pelagian* 4. 14. 72 (MPL 44. 774; tr. FC 35. 228), and in *City of God* 22. 22 (MPL 41. 784 ff.; tr. NPNF 2. 499) makes true philosophy dependent on the grace of God. John Scotus Erigena holds that “true philosophy is true religion and true religion is true philosophy,” *De divina praedestinatione* 1:1 (MPL 122. 357). Cf. H. Leclercq, “Pour l’histoire de l’expression Philosophie Chretienne,” *Melanges de sciences religieuses* 9. 221-226, and J. Bohatec, *Bude und Calvin*, pp. 33 ff. Erasmus, in his *Paracelsis, id est adhortatio ad Christianae philosophiae studium* (*Opera* [Leyden, 1704] V. 141 f.), thinks the Christian philosophy adopted only by a few, and “seated in emotions rather than in syllogisms, a life rather than an argument, inspiration (*afflatus*) rather than erudition, a transformation rather than a system of reason.” Calvin, in 3. 7. 1, sharply distinguishes the “Christian philosophy” from that of “the philosophers” as a life not ordered according to reason alone but renewed in Christ and directed by the Holy Spirit. Cf. 3. 6. 4; 1. 11. 7; 1. 12. 1; 3. 20. 1, note 1; Comm. 1 Cor. 13:8. W. Niesel points out that Calvin in “Christian philosophy” had in mind chiefly the exposition of Scripture: *The Theology of Calvin*, tr. H. Knight, pp. 23 ff.

^{ft119} Cf. note 4, above.

^{ft120} Cf. 3. 4. 29, note 62.

PREFATORY ADDRESS TO KING FRANCIS I OF FRANCE

^{ft121} The reference is to the persecutions in France following the incident of the Placards, October 18, 1534). See Introduction, p. 31, above. The charge that the Protestant reform party in France consisted of seditious extremists is illustrated in documents given by A.-L. Herminjard, *Correspondance* 3. A letter of Francis I to the Estates of the Empire, February 1, 1535, is especially pertinent (Herminjard, *Correspondance* 3. 249 ff.). The rumor had been circulated that the evangelicals plotted armed attacks on worshipping assemblies. The distressed condition of the French Waldenses was also in Calvin’s mind. On August 4, 1535, Farel and Viret wrote to the evangelicals of

Switzerland and Germany describing the “cruel and savage persecution” that the Waldenses were suffering. The reply of Capito from Strasbourg is of the same date as that of Calvin’s Address to the King, August 23, 1535 (Herminjard, *Correspondance* 3. 335 ff.).

^{ft122} For similar statements see 4. 20. 29, 31 and Comm. ^{<461301>}Romans 13:1-7. Cf. Augustine’s passage on the good emperor, traditionally called the “mirror of princes,” *City of God* 5. 24 (MPL 41. 170; tr. NPNF 2. 104 f.). The last sentence of this statement shows a recollection of Plautus, *Trinummus* 317: “*sarta tecta tua praecepta*” (LCL Plautus 5. 126).

^{ft123} “*Nec iam regnum ille sed latrocinium exercet.*” An echo of Augustine’s famous phrase: “When justice is taken away, what are kingdoms [*regna*] but a vast banditry [*magna latrocinia*]?” *City of God* 4. 4 (MPL 41. 115; tr. NPNF 2. 66).

^{ft124} Alfonsus de Castro (d. 1558), *Adversus omnes haereses* 1. 4 (1543 edition, fo. 7, 8). The heresies are arranged alphabetically. This author, an able controversialist, was a Spanish Franciscan who attended Philip II in England and the Netherlands.

^{ft125} “*Fidei analogia.*” Cf. 4. 17. 32. See also Comm. ^{<451206>}Romans 12:6, and the editor’s note in John Owen’s English edition, p. 461. William Bucanus, professor of theology at Lausanne, in his elaborate catechism, *Institutiones Theologicae* (Geneva, 1605), defines the analogy of faith as “the constant and perpetual sense of Scripture expounded in the manifest places of Scripture and agreeable to the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the general sentences and axioms of every main point of divinity.” (Tr. Robert Hill [1606], p. 44.) Cf. Heppe RD, pp. 34-36.

^{ft126} The authoritative doctrine of the treasury of merits and supererogatory works is well illustrated in the decretal of Clement 4, *Unigenitus* (1343) (*Extravagantes communes* 9. 2; Friedberg 2. 1304 ff.). Cf. 3. 5. 2-5.

^{ft127} The question of explicit and implicit faith is discussed in 3. 2. 2-5, and by Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theol.* 2 2ae. 2. 5-8. Aquinas rejects (art. 6) the view that all are bound to believe everything explicitly, but holds that those of higher degree, whose duty it is to teach others, “are bound to believe explicitly more things than others are.”

^{ft128} These were staple arguments against Luther and the other Reformers from the beginning. Numerous specific references to works against Luther are given in the notes in OS 3. 13-15. Characteristic is John Eck's *Enchiridion locorum communium adversus Lutheranos* (1526; enlarged edition, *Enchiridion locorum communium adversus Martinum Lutherum et asseclas eius*, 1532), dedicated to Henry VIII and Thomas More. This work was printed ninety-one times to 1600. Eck made use of writings against the Lutherans by John Fisher of Rochester, John Faber, Kaspar Schatzgeyer, Jerome Emser, Augustin Alveld, and others. In the first edition he deals with twenty-nine of the Lutheran positions, of which the first five are especially vital: the church and its authority; church councils; the primacy of the apostolic see; the Scriptures; faith and works. The other topics include a broad series of controverted points such as the Mass and other sacraments, excommunication, indulgences, purgatory, the burning of heretics, the baptism of infants. Prominent also in this class of writers were Alfonsus de Castro (cf. note 4, above) and Josse Clichtove (Judocus Clichtoveus, d. 1543), a Netherlander, professor in the College de Navarre, Paris, who, having earlier supported Lefevre, strongly opposed the Reformation in *Antilutherus*, 1525. This is an extended treatise in three books, presenting many arguments in defense of the medieval papacy, hierarchy, and theology. A more voluminous writer was John Cochlaeus (d. 1552), of Wendelstein (near Nuremberg), whose *De autoritate ecclesiae et scripture, adversus Lutheranos* (1524) was one of the earliest of weighty anti-Lutheran writings. His *De sacris reliquiis Christi et sanctorum eius* (1549) is a reply to Calvin's *Treatise on Relics* (1543). He also wrote against Melancthon and Bullinger. For a short account of recent literature and editions for the study of this class of writers, see "The Catholic Reform in the Sixteenth Century," by G. H. Tavard, *Church History* 26 (1957), 275-288. Cf. J. Bohatec, *Bude und Calvin*, pp. 128 ff., where it is charged that the weightiest opponents whom Calvin had in mind have been missed by Barth and Niesel. These include Bude, who exchanged writings with Cochlaeus. Bohatec shows that Bude, with Robert Cenau, bishop of Avranches, and Cardinal Sadoletto, had aroused the king against the evangelicals after the Placard incident, October 18, 1534.

- ^{ft129} “*Postliminii iure*.” A legal term for the recovery of property or privilege so as to have secure possession. *Postliminium* means literally “behind the threshold,” hence, in safekeeping.
- ^{ft130} Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 13:17 (MPL 35. 1501; tr. NPNF 7. 93). Augustine cites the magicians of Pharaoh, Exodus 7: 12.
- ^{ft131} Not found in Jerome, as indicated in the original annotation, but in Isidore of Seville (d. 636), *De ortu et obitu patrum* 33:74 (MPL 83. 143).
- ^{ft132} Calvin’s command of the patristic literature was already well developed in 1535 when he wrote this passage, which contains references even to works not generally familiar. At the Lausanne Disputation, on October 5, 1536, Calvin effectively replied to the charge that he and his associates rejected “the holy doctors of antiquity,” claiming for their doctrine of the Eucharist the support of Tertullian, Cyprian, Chrysostom, and Augustine. (Cf. 1522. 38 ff.) While he recognizes in general the authoritative position of the fathers in Christian thought, this is always under the limitation of their fallibility and mutual divergences, and of the superior authority of Scripture. These paragraphs invite comparison with the celebrated *Sic et Non* of Peter Abailard (d. 1142) (V. Cousin, *Ouvrages inddits d’Abelard*, pp. 1-169), in which are recited discordant opinions of the fathers on 157 topics. It does not appear that Calvin is indebted to Abailard. While he too points to individual judgments made by the ancient writers, his aim is to show their differences not from each other but from contemporary defenders of the medieval system. Alfonsus de Castro cites Cyprian, Ambrose, Chrysostom, Jerome, Augustine, Gelasius, Gregory, and Bede in opposition to Luther’s opinions, and says rhetorically: “*Nam si Lutherus ait, Cyprianus negat; Lutherus ait, Hieronymus abnuat; Lutherus ait, Augustinus contradicit; Lutherus ait, Ambrosius obstat.*” *Adversus omnes haereses* 1. 7 (1543 edition, fo. 13 F, G). Calvin here, as usual, does not name either Luther or his assailants, but shows familiarity with the controversy.
- ^{ft133} Cassiodorus, *De institutione divinarum literarum* 1 (MPL 70. 1112).
- ^{ft134} Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 24:3. 33 (Friedberg 1. 999; MPL 187. 1508).
- ^{ft135} Acacius, bishop of Amida, addressing his clergy as he was about to melt the gold and silver vessels of the church to obtain food for captive

Persians. Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 7:21 (MPG 67. 781-784; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 2. 164). Calvin derived his materials at this point from the *Tripartite History* compiled by Cassiodorus (d. 583), a mosaic in Latin of the three ecclesiastical histories of Socrates (for 305-409), Sozomen (for 323-425), and Theodoret (for 325-429). The passage in the *Historia tripartita* (11. 16) is in MPL 69. 1198; CSEL 71. 651 f.

^{ft136} Ambrose, *De officiis clericorum* 2:28 (MPL 16. 140; tr. [On the Duties of the Clergy] NPNF 2 ser. 10. 64).

^{ft137} From Sozomen's description of Spyridion, bishop of Trimithus in Cyprus, *Ecclesiastical History* 1.11; Cassiodorus, *Historia tripartita* 1. 10 (MPL 69. 895; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 2. 247).

^{ft138} Referring apparently to Serapion, head of a monastery near Arsinoe in Egypt, who required his monks to earn their food by labor. Sozomen, *op. cit.*, 6:28; Cassiodorus, *Historia tripartita* 8. 1 (MPL 69. 1103; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 2. 365).

^{ft139} Augustine, *On the Work of Monks* 14-17 (MPL 40. 560-564; tr. NPNF 3. 511-513).

^{ft140} "Epistle of Epiphanius to John of Jerusalem," translated by Jerome, in his *Letters* 51:9 (CSEL 54. 411; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 6. 89). Epiphanius, bishop of Salamis in Cyprus, tells how in a church at Anablatha he tore up a curtain bearing an image and replaced it by a plain curtain. He declares images in churches "contrary to our religion" (A.D. 394). Cf. 1. 11. 11, 16; 1. 12. 2.

^{ft141} Council of Elvira (Illiberitanum) in Spain, ca. A.D. 305, canon 36: "That there ought not to be images [*picturas*] in a church, that what is worshiped and adored should not be depicted on the walls." Hefele-Leclercq 1. 240; Mansi 2. 264.

^{ft142} Ambrose, *De Abraham* 1. 9. 80 (MPL 14. 472).

^{ft143} "*Et tamen esse non desinit substantia vel natura panis et vini.*" Gelasius, *De duabus naturis in Christo adversus Eutychem et Nestorium*, Tract. 3. 14 (*Epistolae Romanorum pontificum*, ed. A. Thiel, 1. 541).

^{ft144} Canon 1 of the Fourth Lateran Council, A.D. 1215, declares that in the sacrament of the altar the bread is by divine power transubstantiated into the body and the wine into the blood of Christ. (Mansi 22. 954;

Hefele-Leclercq 5. 1325; tr. H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, p. 338.)

- ^{ft145} Chrysostom, *Commentary on Ephesians*, ch. 1, hom. 3. 4, 5 (MPG 62.28-30; tr. NPNF 13. 63-65), and Calixtus as quoted by Gratian, *Decretum* (De consecratione) 3. 2:18 (Friedberg 1. 1320; MPL 187. 1759).
- ^{ft146} In a passage dubiously attributed to Pope Gelasius and found in Gratian (*Decretum* 3. 2:12; Friedberg 1. 1318; MPL 59. 141; 187, 1736), communicants are required to take the wine with the bread or abstain from both: “*aut integra sacramenta percipiant, aut ad integris arceantur.*” The withdrawal of the wine from the laity called forth the protests of Scriptural sects, especially the Hussites. Luther treats the subject in his *Babylonish Captivity* (1520), section “On the Sacrament of the Bread” (Werke WA 6. 502 ff.; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 179 ff.).
- ^{ft147} Cyprian, *Letters* 57. 2 (CSEL 3. 2. 651 f.; tr. ANF [letter 53. 2] 5. 337).
- ^{ft148} Council of Constance, session 13 (1415), definition on communion in both kinds. This was confirmed by Martin V’s bull *In eminentis* (1418) (Texts in Mansi 27. 727 f., 1215, 1219).
- ^{ft149} Augustine, *De peccatorum meritis et remissione et de baptismo parvulorum* 2. 36, 59 (MPL 44. 186; CSEL 60. 128; tr. NPNF 5. 67 f.): “In obscure matters where the Scriptures do not give guidance, rash judgment is to be avoided.” Cf. Augustine, *Letters* 140. 37. 85 (MPL 33. 576; tr. FC 20. 135).
- ^{ft150} Apollonius, cited in Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* 5. 18 (MPG 1:472; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 1. 235 ff.).
- ^{ft151} Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 3. 9 (MPL 187. 1734; Friedberg I. 1354 f.).
- ^{ft152} Sozomen (*Ecclesiastical History* 1:23) records that Paphnutius the Confessor, an ardent ascetic, swayed the decision of the Council of Nicaea (325) against requiring clerical celibacy by the declaration here reported. Calvin probably used Cassiodorus’ text, *op. cit.*, 2. 14 (MPL 69. 933; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 2. 256).
- ^{ft153} On the development of the law of clerical celibacy, see H. Leclercq’s excursus, “La Legislation conciliaire relatif au celibat ecclesiastique,”

Histoire des conciles 2. 1321-1348; Schroeder, *op. cit.*, pp. 105, 107, 192 f.; H. C. Lea, *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*.

^{ft154} Cyprian, *Letters* 63:14 (CSEL 3. 2. 712; tr. ANF [letter 62:14] 5. 362).

^{ft155} “*Non igitur debet ecclesia se Christo praeponere.*” Augustine, *Contra Cresconium Grammaticum Donatistam* 2:21 (MPL 43. 482; CSEL 52. 385).

^{ft156} This view, asserted by John Eck, *Enchiridion* (1526), ch. 1:(1541, fo. 76), and others, was repeatedly rejected by Zwingli and his associates. The opposing thesis that “the church is born of the Word of God” was affirmed at the Disputation of Ilanz, 1526, and at the Disputation of Bern, 1528. Cf. 1. 7:2, note 4.

^{ft157} Tertullian, *De praescriptione haereticorum* 7 (CCL Tertullianus 1. 192; tr. LCC 5. 35 f.); Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 2. 31 (MPL 34. 57; tr. NPNF 2 550; also FC 4. 102-103).

^{ft158} Cyprian, *Letters* 63. 17 (CSEL 3. 2. 715; tr. ANF [letter 62] 5. 363) and 73. 13 (CSEL 3. 2. 787; tr. ANF [letter 62] 5. 382).

^{ft159} Cf. 4. 1. 17. Reformed theology has strongly affirmed the doctrine that the Holy Catholic Church is imperishable and perpetual in the world. Thus Bullinger (*Fifth Decade* [1551], sermon 1) states: “But . . . the catholic church of God has continued with us from age to age . . . and . . . shall remain upon the earth to the world’s end” (LCC 24. 293). Cf. Second Helvetic Confession 17. 1: “*Semper fuisse, nunc esse, et ad finem usque seculi futuram esse ecclesiam*” (Schaff, *Creeds* 3. 271); J. H. Heidegger: “Christ’s church is of necessity in possession of constant existence in the world” (*Medulla theologiae Christianae* [1696] 26. 11); Westminster Confession 25. 5: “Nevertheless, there shall always be a church on earth to worship God according to his will.” See also Heppe RD, p. 664; J. T. McNeill, “The Church in Sixteenth-Century Reformed Theology,” *Journal of Religion* 22 (1942), 256 f.

^{ft160} Eck (*Enchiridion* [1526], ch. 1) answers the Lutheran charge that the church, which is the congregation of all believers, does not decide what the pope, cardinals, and bishops decide. Cf. De Castro, *Adversus omnes haereses* 1. 6 (1543 edition, fo. 9K-10E).

^{ft161} Cf. Augsburg Confession 2. 7 (Schaff, *Creeds* 3. 60) and 4. 1. 7, below.

- ^{ft162} Cf. 4. 1. 2 and Second Helvetic Confession 17. 15 (Schaff, *Creeds* 3. 276).
- ^{ft163} “*Male enim vos parietum amor cepit.*” Hilary of Poitiers, *Against the Arians or Auxentius of Milan* 12 (MPL 10. 616).
- ^{ft164} The protruding points of the miter worn by a bishop were called *cornua*, horns.
- ^{ft165} The facts referred to here include the following: Pope Eugenius IV was deposed by the Council of Basel June 25, 1439. On November 5, Amadeus VIII. Duke of Savoy, who had previously adopted a life of asceticism, was elected, and on January 1, following, he took office as Felix V. Eugenius, however, won the support of the new emperor, Frederick III (1440-1493), and, April 7, 1449, Felix abdicated, becoming cardinal-bishop of Sabina and vicar-apostolic for Savoy: L. Pastor, *History of the Popes from the End of the Middle Ages* (tr. F. J. Antrobus) 1. 328 f.; M. Creighton, *History of the Popes from the Great Schism to the Sack of Rome* 3. 20 ff., 109 f.; *Cambridge Medieval History* 8. 40 f.
- ^{ft166} Eck, *Enchiridion* (1526), ch. 2, *ad finem*, quoting ^{<402303>}Matthew 23:3 to urge reverence for the clergy.
- ^{ft167} Greek form of the name of Ashurbanipal, king of Assyria (668-626 B.C.). Legend (in contrast with fact) makes him spend years in indolence and indulgence and finally, in desperation, burn himself to death in his house.
- ^{ft168} Cf. Comm. ^{<230610>}Isaiah 6:10 and the discussion of Calvin’s view of this “satanic reaction to the inevitable advance of the Kingdom of Christ through the preaching of the word,” by R. S. Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, pp. 92 ff.
- ^{ft169} A term in common use for the Anabaptists, as the adversaries of traditional baptism.
- ^{ft170} The reference is to the Munster incident, 1534-1535.
- ^{ft171} The date here given is doubly erroneous. As first shown by A. Lefranc, it should be August 23, 1535 Beveridge was aware of the problem: see his edition of 1845, 1. 11 f. Calvin’s first edition, published March, 1536, gives at the end of the Address to the King the date, “10. Calendas Septembres” (i.e., August 23), without year. Obviously, the

preceding August is meant, and indeed the French editions of 1541 and 1545 have “vingttroysiesme D’aoust mil cinq cent trente cinq.” But August 1 was the date of the Preface (not the Address) in the 1539 Latin edition, and thereafter the Latin editions shifted this date to the Address itself. At the same time the year date 1536 was carelessly inserted, obviously from the publication date given at the end of the 1536 volume. A. Lefranc, *Jean Calvin: Institution de la religion Chrestienne* . . . 1541, Introduction, p. 4; OS 1. 283; 3. 30; Benoit, *Institution* 1. 49.

CHAPTER 1

^{ft172} The word “knowledge” in the title, chosen rather than “being” or “existence” of God, emphasizes the centrality of revelation in both the structure and the content of Calvin’s theology. Similarly, the term “Creator,” subsuming the doctrines of Trinity, Creation, and Providence, stresses God’s revealing work or acts rather than God in himself. The latter is more prominent in Scholastic doctrines of God, both medieval and later “Calvinist.” Despite the titles of Books 1 and 2, Calvin’s epistemology is not fully developed in the *Institutes* until Book 3, “The Way in Which We Receive the Grace of Christ.” Cf. especially the meaning of knowledge in faith, 3. 2, *passim*.

The Latin for “knowledge” is here *cognitio*, while in the title of ch. 1 following it is *notitia*. The words are used interchangeably by Calvin, and both are by him here translated into French (1541) as *cognoissance*. Knowledge, whatever the word employed, is for Calvin never “mere” or “simple” or purely objective knowledge. Cf. 3. 2:14, which is his most definitive, brief statement on the meaning of knowledge in a religious context. Probably “existential apprehension” is the nearest equivalent in contemporary parlance. Among other closely related words used by Calvin are *agnitio*, recognition or acknowledgment; *intelligentia*, primarily meaning perception; and *scientia*, primarily expert knowledge.

The knowledge of God is dealt with by B. B. Warfield in *Calvin and Calvinism*, pp. 29-130, and by P. Lobstein, “*La Connaissance religieuse d’apres Calvin*,” *Revue de theologie et de philosophie*

religieuses 62 (1909), 53-110. The most important recent analyses stress the problem of relating the knowledge of the Creator and of the Redeemer (see title, *Institutes*, Book 2). T. H. L. Parker does this briefly in *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God: A Study in Calvin's Theology*, and E. A. Dowey, Jr., more elaborately in *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*. See also W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, ch. 2.

^{ft173} Throughout editions 1539-1554, Calvin entitled the opening chapters, "Of the Knowledge of God," and "Of the Knowledge of Man." But in 1559, he shows more clearly the close interrelation of these by creating a separate ch. 1, and emphasizing, both in title and content, "how they are interrelated." The former ch. 2, much expanded, becomes finally the series of opening chapters of Book 2. Note the revealing echoes of the opening words in 1. 15. 1; 2. 1. 1; and 2. 8. 1.

^{ft174} This statement, thrice revised, stands at the beginning of every edition of the *Institutes*. The French version of 1560 expresses even more strongly the association of the two aspects of sound knowledge: "In knowing God, each of us also knows himself." These decisive words set the limits of Calvin's theology and condition every subsequent statement. They are echoed in the introductory words of Book 2 and at such important junctures as 1. 15. 1 and 2. 8. 1. Cf. Doumergue, Calvin 4. 245 ff.; J. Kostlin, "Calvins Institutio nach Form und Inhalt," *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* (1868), p. 55; Lobstein, *op. cit.*, p. 68. Calvin's basic concept here is discoverable in Clement of Alexandria's *Instructor* in. 1 (MPG 8. 555 f.; tr. ANF 2. 271: "If one knows himself, he will know God"), and finds frequent expression in Augustine. In his *Soliloquies* 1. 2. 7, Augustine has this dialogue: "I desire to know God and the soul." "Nothing more?" "Nothing whatever"; and in 2. 1.1 occurs the prayer, "Let me know myself, let me know thee" (MPL 32. 872, 886; tr. LCC 6. 26, 41). Cf. Aquinas: "Sacred doctrine is not concerned with God and the creatures equally. It is concerned with God fundamentally, and with the creatures in so far as they relate to God as their beginning or end." *Summa Theol.* 1. 1. 3 (tr. LCC 11. 38 f.). Calvin makes explicit the same order of importance between knowledge of God and of the creatures in the "Argument" preceding his Commentary on Genesis, English tr., p. 60. The passage may also be compared with William Farel's *Sommaire de*

la foi (1525), chs. 1 and 2, and with Calvin's own *Instruction et confession de foy* (1537), 1-4 (OS 1. 378-381; tr., with notes, P. T. Fuhrmann, *Instruction in Faith* (1537), pp. 17-21). It is worth noting that Descartes, in an important letter to Father Marin Mersenne, April 15, 1630, parallels Calvin's language here. Having referred to "human reason," Descartes continues: "I hold that all those to whom God has given the use of this reason are bound to employ it in the effort to know him and to know themselves." (*Oeuvres de Descartes*, edited by C. Adam and P. Tannery, 1. 144.) In his *Discourse on Method* (1637), he aims, unlike Calvin, to "demonstrate the existence of God and the soul," and he is concerned with the same issue in *his Meditations in Prime Philosophy* (1641); see especially *Meditations* in, 5, and 6. George Berkeley, in his *Treatise on the Principles of Human Knowledge* (1710), holds that existence can be predicated of God and the soul only.

^{ft175} The close relation of humility and self-knowledge constitutes an often repeated theme for Calvin. Cf. 2. 2. 10-11; 2. 16. 1; 3. 2. 23; 3. 12. 5, 6; 4. 17. 40 (end). Without humility, self-knowledge serves pride and is the root of all error in philosophy: 1. 5. 4; 2. 1. 1-3.

^{ft176} "*Sui notitiam.*" Our knowledge of ourselves may be construed to include both all mankind and all creation (of which man is a microcosm, 1. 5. 3). Hence, 1. 14 and 15 may be subsumed here along with 2. 1-4.

^{ft177} Cr. 1. 5. 3, note 11.

^{ft178} Calvin uses the words "nature," "natural," and "by nature" in two very different senses: (1) "Nature" may mean created perfection in which there is no evil (including even the created perfection of the devil), e.g., 1. 14. 3, 16; or (2) "nature" may mean the state of man and angels after having fallen from perfection, as here used, and clearly distinguished from the former in 2. 1. 10, 11. The opening sentence of 2. 1. 11 places the two uses side by side. This distinction is indispensable for understanding the relation of God to creation and to sin as well as the precise sense in which a doctrine of "total" depravity may be attributed to Calvin. Once this double use of "nature" is understood, Calvin's meaning at a given place is easily determined by context.

^{ft179} "*Horror ille et stupor.*" This basic component of the "saints' " knowledge of God appears close to what Rudolf Otto calls *mysterium*

tremendum in *Das Heilige* (tr. J. W. Harvey, *The Idea of the Holy*). Cf., below, 1. 2. 2; 1. 3. 2, where this inescapable apprehension is sheer terror to the wicked.

CHAPTER 2

^{ft180} It is a favorite emphasis in Calvin that *pietas*, piety, in which reverence and love of God are joined, is prerequisite to any true knowledge of God. Cf. 1. 4. 4. The brief characterization of *pietas* that follows here may be compared with his words written in 1537: “The gist of true piety does not consist in a fear which would gladly flee the judgment of God, but ...rather in a pure and true zeal which loves God altogether as Father, and reveres him truly as Lord, embraces his justice and dreads to offend him more than to die”; *Instruction in Faith* (1537), tr. P. T. Fuhrmann, pp. 18 f. (original in OS 1. 379). For an examination of “*pietas literata*” with reference to Erasmus, John Sturm, Melancthon, and Cordier, see P. R. Bolgar, *The Classical Heritage and Its Beneficiaries*, pp. 329-356. (In many contexts *pietas* is translated “godliness” in the present work.)

^{ft181} “*Si integer stetisset Adam.*” The controlling thought of 1. 2-5, which is the *locus classicus* for a discussion of “natural theology” in Calvin, is contained in this phrase. The revelation of God in creation, for Calvin, would have been the basis of a sound natural theology only “if Adam had remained upright.” Because of sin no sound theology of this type is possible. Scripture is the only medium of knowing the Creator, and of apprehending his revelation in creation (1. 6 ff.). Cf. Introduction, pp. 53 ff., above. Calvin expressed himself similarly at the beginning of his Preface to the New Testament, written in 1534 and published in Olivetan’s French Bible (1535) (CR 9. 791; tr. LCC 23. 58).

^{ft182} “*Duplex ... cognitio.*” The distinction, “twofold” knowledge, added to the *Institutes* in 1559, is basic to the structure of the completed work. Calvin calls attention to this repeatedly in a striking series of methodological statements, all added in 1559 to clarify the course of the argument. Cf. 1. 6. 1, 2; 10,1; 13. 9, 11, 23, 24; 14. 20, 21, and 2. 6. 1. Hence, nothing in Book 1 belongs to the knowledge of the

Redeemer, although everything after ch. 5 is based in the *special* revelation of Scripture.

^{ft183} What is called “the first” makes up the entire remainder of Book 1. “The second” broadly corresponds to the whole material of Books 2-4. Strictly speaking, the subject is taken up in 2. 6, which is a chapter entirely new in 1559, added to make the transition to the second element of twofold knowledge. The doctrine of sin, 2. 4, thus falls between the two books in subject matter, preceding redemption in such a way as to show the occasion for it.

^{ft184} “*Virtutum Dei sensus.*”

^{ft184} Cf. 1. 10. 2; 3. 2. 6, “knowing what is his will toward us.” In *Praelectiones* in Ezechielem, on ^{<260126>}Ezekiel 1:26 (CR 40. 57), and often elsewhere, Calvin criticizes speculative refinements in the treatment of aspects of the doctrine of God. The reference here is to Scholastic writers, but in a letter sent “*familiariter inter nos*” to Bullinger, January, 1552, he finds Zwingli at fault for his “knotted paradoxes” in the work *De Providentia* (CR 14. 253).

^{ft186} Epicurus (342-270 B.C.), whose extensive writings are extant in fragments only, seems to have been known to Calvin chiefly through Cicero’s *De finibus* and *De natura deorum*. Book 1 of the latter work is devoted mainly to an exposition and an animated criticism of the Epicurean conception of deity. This sentence of Calvin sums up the impression of Cicero’s dialogue. Cotta, the Academician, pours scorn upon the Epicurean notion of remote, idle, unloving gods, asserting that Epicurus has in effect abolished the gods. Calvin as a Scriptural theologian could not fail to share this adverse judgment. Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 1. 42. 117; 1. 43. 120 ff. (LCL edition, pp. 112 ff.); Calvin, *Instruction et confession de foy* (1537) 1, 2 (OS 1. 378 f.; tr. Fuhrmann, *Instruction in Faith*, pp. 17-19). Cf., below, 1. 4. 2; 1. 5. 4; 1. 5. 12. For the opinion, similarly reflecting Cicero, of William Bude, Paris Greek scholar well known to Calvin, see J. Bohatec, *Bude und Calvin*, p. 74.

CHAPTER 3

^{ft187} On faith joined with fear, see Melanchthon, *Loci communes* (1521), ed. H. Engelland, in the series *Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl*, ed. R. Stupperich, 2. 1. 119 ff.; tr. C. L. Hill (from Th. Kolde's 1910 edition), *The Loci Communes of Philip Melanchthon*, pp. 211 ff.

^{ft188} “*Horninum mentibus naturaliter. . . inditam.*” The revelation of God “within” man (ch. 3) is extinguished by human sin (ch. 4). The same is true of that which comes to man “from without” through God’s signs and tokens (*insignia, specimina*) in external nature (v. 14). Thus these chapters, 3-5, require for full understanding Calvin’s entire doctrine of man: as created, 1. 15; and as ravaged by sin, 2. 1-5.

^{ft189} “*Divinitatis sensum.*” This term and “seed of religion,” used immediately below (cf. 1. 4. 1), refer generally to a numinous awareness of God, and are closely related to conscience, which is a moral response to God. Cf. 1. 1. 3 and Comm. ^{<430105>} John 1:5, 9. On verse 5, Calvin writes: “There are two principal parts of the light which still remains in corrupt nature: first, the seed of religion is planted in all men; next, the distinction between good and evil is engraved on their consciences.”

^{ft190} Cf. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 2. 10 (LCL edition, pp. 172 ff.).

^{ft191} The pagan (*ethnicus*) is Cicero. Calvin’s view that all men have a natural sense or intimation of deity is in accord with the presupposition of all the characters of Cicero’s dialogue *On the Nature of the Gods*, including the Epicurean, Velleius, who asks: “Where is there to be found a race or tribe of men which does not hold, without instruction, some preconception of the gods?” *Nature of the Gods* 1. 16. 43 (A. S. Pease, *M. Tullii Ciceronis De natura deorum*, pp. 294 f.; LCL edition, pp. 44 f.).

^{ft192} This and the following section continue to reflect Cicero’s *Nature of the Gods* in which the Epicureans’ belief in gods is discounted by their critics. They are linked with those who escape superstition by denial and regard religion as an invention designed to subject men to government. Galvin, in *De scandalis* (1550), charges some of his contemporaries by name with atheism (CK 8. 44 ff., with footnote 5;

OS 2. 200 f.). J. Bohatec, in *Bude und Calvin*, pp. 149-240, examines this topic at length with specific references to Pierre Brunel, Agrippa von Nettesheim, Etienne Dolet, Simon Villanovanus, Bonaventure des Periers, Francois Rabelais, Antonius Goveanus, and Jacques Gruet.

^{ft193} Roman emperor, A.D. 37-41; grandnephew and successor of Tiberius Caesar. Suetonius says of this depraved emperor that he despised the gods but was so terrified when it thundered that he would leap from his bed and hide under it. (*Lives of the Caesars* 4. li; LCL Suetonius 1. 482.) Cf. Comm. Harmony of the Evangelists, ^{<402669>}Matthew 26:69-75 (tr. LCC 23. 322).

^{ft194} Diagoras of Melos, called “the atheist” (a contemporary of Socrates), Theodore of Cyrene, and Protagoras the Sophist are taken by Cicero as examples of atheistic impiety. (All three were for this obliged to leave Athens.) (*Nature of the Gods* 1. 1. 2; 1. 23. 63; LCL edition, pp. 4 f., 61 f.)

^{ft195} Dionysius, tyrant of Syracuse, 405-367 B.C. His reputed acts of sacrilege and pillage are related by Cicero in *Nature of the Gods* 3. 34. 83 (LCL edition, pp. 368 f.). Cf. Calvin’s reference in *Comm. Seneca On Clemency* 1. 12 (CR V. 92).

^{ft196} “*Sardonius risus*.” Calvin uses the expression probably with a recollection of Vergil’s proverbial allusion, “*Sardonius amarior ... herbis*,” more bitter than Sardonian (Sardinian) herbs. (Eclogues 7. 41; LCL Vergil 1. 51.)

^{ft197} Calvin dissents from the opinion expressed by Cotta, the Academician in Cicero’s *Nature of the Gods*, who refers to man’s belief in God “which is only strengthened with ongoing time and more firmly rooted with the ages and the generations of men.” (*Nature of the Gods* 2. 2. 5; LCL edition, pp. 126 f.)

^{ft198} Cf. 1. 4. 1.

^{ft199} Plato, *Theaetetus* 176. To escape evil and attain true wisdom, men must “become like God . . . righteous, holy, and wise” (LCL Plato 2. 128 f.). Cf. *Phaedo* 107 C (LCL Plato 1. 368-371).

^{ft200} Apparently a reference to Plutarch’s dialogue, *Bruta animalia ratione uti*. in which Gryllus, whom Circe has transformed into a beast,

indicates examples of the superiority of animal behavior to that of perverted humans (ch. 7) (LCL Plutarch, *Moralia* 12. 516 ff.).

^{ft201} Cf. 2. 2. 12, 17, where “reason” is said to be that which distinguishes men from the brutes.

CHAPTER 4

^{ft202} Calvin uses similar expressions in the Latin Catechism published in 1538 (CR V. 323-324).

^{ft203} Cf. 1. 2. 2, note 7.

^{ft204} Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 1. 20. 54; 1. 30. 85 f.; 1. 44. 123 (LCL edition, pp. 52 ff., 82 f., 118 f.).

^{ft205} Cr. 1. 11-12; 4. 8. 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, 13; 4. 9. 8; 4. 10. 8, 16-18. The rejection of human invention in worship is a consistent theme of Calvin against both paganism and the Roman Church.

^{ft206} Calvin does not here quote the words of Lactantius but summarizes much of his teaching in *Divine Institutes* 1. 2, 5, 6, 20 and 4. 5, where the test of “truth” is persistently applied to pagan beliefs (MPL 6. 120 f., 129 ff., 456 ff.; tr. ANF 8. 11, 13 ff., 32 ff., 104 f.).

^{ft207} “*Timorem primum, fecisse in orbe deos.*” Cf. Statius, *Thebaid* 3. 661: “*Primus in orbe deos fecit timor*” (LCL Statius 1. 500 f.).

^{ft208} “*Pietas, ex qua demum religio nascitur.*” See Introduction, pp. li f., above. Calvin has numerous emphatic statements of this view; cf. 1. 2. 1; 1. 4. 1; 1. 9, title; 2. 6. 4; 3. 3. 16; 4. 1. 5; 4. 1. 9; 4. 1. 12; 4. 20. 9, 10, 13, 15; Comm. ^{<241025>} Jeremiah 10:25; *Instruction in Faith* (tr. Fuhrmann, p. 19). Cf. Cicero, *Pro Plancio* 12:29; “*Pietas fundamentum est omnium virtutum*” (LCL edition, p. 442).

CHAPTER 5

^{ft209} Cf. the oft-quoted words of Aquinas: “The final felicity of man consists only in the contemplation of God” (*Contra gentes* 3. 37 [tr. A. C. Pegis, *Basic Writings of St. Thomas Aquinas* 2. 60]); Augustine,

Confessions 10. 20. 29: “When I seek thee, I seek a happy life” (MPL 32. 791; tr. LCC 10. 219).

- ft210 Calvin holds God’s purpose in all revelation to be blessedness (cf. 1. 10. 2), but because of human sin, the effect of this revelation in creation is to deepen man’s guilt. See 1. 6. 2 and cf. 1. 5. 24-25; 2. 2. 28.
- ft211 See 1. 3. 2, and cf. 1. 13. 21. Similarly, in the Catechism of 1538, it is said that God’s “nature is incomprehensible, and remotely hidden from human understanding” (CR 5. 324); and in that of 1542: “Our understanding is not capable of comprehending his essence” (CR 4. 16). He “accommodates” himself to our understanding in revelation; cf. Comm. ^{<010308>}Genesis 3:8; Comm. 1 Cor. 2:7.
- ft212 For a passage of lyrical delight in the manifestation of God in creation, see Calvin’s Preface to the New Testament, written in 1534 and published in Olivetan’s French Bible in June, 1585 (CR 9. 793; tr. LCC 23. 59 f.). Cf. J. T. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, p. 232. Such passages have basic significance for Calvin’s aesthetics, and they are also integral to his theology. Although the natural man derives from nature’s evidence no true knowledge of God, being “blind in this glorious theater,” yet Christians are enjoined to contemplate God in his works, on the pattern of Psalm 145 (1. 5. 8, 9; 1. 6. 2; 2. 6. 1). Many similar passages in Calvin are cited by L. Wencelius, *L’Esthétique de Calvin*, chs. 1 and 2.
- ft213 Cf. Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 2. 2. 4, where the view that contemplation of the heavens proves them to be governed by a supreme intelligence is taken as hardly requiring argument. (LCL edition, pp. 124 f.) In Comm. ^{<191904>}Psalm 19:4, Calvin refers to “the splendor of the heavens preaching the glory of God like a teacher in a seminary of learning.”
- ft214 “*Divinae sapientiae arcana.*” Possibly a recollection of Seneca’s words in a letter of urgent exhortation to Lucilius, assuring him that devotion to noble studies will bring him knowledge of the secrets of nature (*naturae arcana*) (*Epistulae morales* 102. 28; LCL Seneca 3. 184). To Calvin, liberal studies were an aid to comprehension of the divine wisdom conveyed in the Scriptures.

- ft215 Calvin has numerous references to the wisdom of God as exhibited in the human body. Cf. Comm. ^{<19D915>}Psalm 139:15: “The inconceivable skill which appears in the formation of the human body,” in which nothing can be altered without inconvenience, “even to the nails on our fingers.” Calvin reverts to this topic in his argument for the resurrection, 3. 25. 7 Cf. also 1. 15. 3; Wencelius, *op. cit.*, pp. 37 f.; Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 2. 56. 140 (LCL edition, pp. 256 ff.)
- ft216 Claudius Galenus of Pergamos (ca. 131-200), in whom ancient Greek medical learning reached its peak, was philosopher as well as physician and anatomist. The reference is to his *περὶ χρείας μορίων* (*De usu partium*) on the functions of the parts of the human body. An account of Galen’s work is contained in L. Thorndike’s *A History of Magic and Experimental Science* 1. 117-181.
- ft217 “*μικρόκοσμον*.” Aristotle’s thought of man as microcosmos over against, and analogous to, the macrocosmos, or universe as a whole, is expressed in his *Physics* 8. 2: “Now if this can occur in an animal, why should not the same be true of the universe as a whole? If it can occur in a small world (*ἐν μικρῷ κόσμῳ*), it can also occur in a great one.” (Tr. R. McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, p. 359; cf. LCL Aristotle, *Physics* 2. 286 f.) This notion recurs in many later writers. It was frequently utilized in the Renaissance and became a literary commonplace. See G. P. Conger, *Theories of Macrocosms and Microcosms in the History of Philosophy*, pp. 59-72.
- ft218 With this and the following section, cf. Comm. ^{<441726>}Acts 17:26-29.
- ft219 “*In se descendere*,” an expression frequently used by Calvin for the intense self-examination in which we are confronted by God and, at the same time, by our sinfulness. See 1. 1. 2; 1. 5. 10; 2. 8. 3; 3. 20. 6; 4. 17. 40; *Reply to Sadoleto* (tr. LCC 23. 251). Cf. Augustine, *Confessions* 7. 10: “I entered into my inmost soul, guided by thee” (MPL 32. 786; tr. LCC 8. 146).
- ft220 Aratus of Soli in Cilicia was a Greek poet and writer on astronomy who flourished about 270 B.C. It is from his poem *Phaenomena* that Paul quotes in ^{<441728>}Acts 17:28. This work was translated into Latin by Cicero. Cf. Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* II. xli. 104 f.; II. lxiii. 159 (LCL edition, pp. 222 f. 276 f.). See also I. xv 5.

- ft221 Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* II. Ii. 4, quoting the phrase of Ennius: "Father of gods and men: (LCL edition, pp. 124-125.)
- ft222 The French text substitutes for "*Cyclopes*," "*des geans ou hommes sauvages*." In Greek mythology Zeus was aided in his war on the Titans by arms furnished by the Cyclopes, the malformed giants whom he had liberated.
- ft223 Cf. Horace, *Epistles*, I. iv. 15: "a hog from Epicurus' herd" (LCL edition, *Satires, Epistles, and Ars Poetica*, pp. 276 f.).
- ft224 Cf. Aristotle, *De anima* II. 1. Having discussed the intimate co-ordination of soul and body, so that the soul is "the first grade of actuality of a natural body having life potentially in it," Aristotle goes on to assert that "the soul is inseparable from the body" (R. McKeon, *Basic Works of Aristotle*, pp. 555 f.; LCL Aristotle, *On the Soul*, pp. 68-73). Calvin here expressly denies the latter statement.
- ft225 This paragraph on Aristotelian unbelief may have reference to Pietro Pomponazzi's *De immortalitate animae* (1516) in which it is argued that immortality is philosophically indefensible and is to be accepted only on grounds of revelation. The work is translated with an introduction by J. H. Randall in *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, ed. E. Cassirer, P. O. Kristeller, and J. H. Randall, pp. 257-381. Cf. OS iii. 48 f.
- ft226 This whole passage reflects Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations* I. xxiv-xxvii (LCL edition, pp. 64-79), though Calvin has changed the argument.
- ft227 Vergil, *Aeneid* VI. 724-730 (translation adapted from H. R. Fairclough in LCL Vergil I. 556 f.)
- ft228 Vergil, *Georgics* IV. 219-227 (translation adapted from H. R. Fairclough in LCL Vergil I. 210 ff.).
- ft229 Lucretius, *De rerum natura* i. 54-79 (LCL edition, pp. 6 f.).
- ft230 These sentences reflect statement of Lactantius, who credits Seneca with being the best of the Stoics, since he "saw nature to be nothing else than God." *Divine Institutes* II. ix (CSEL 19. 134; MPL 6. 299; tr. ANF VII. 53). But Lactantius also points to the confusion arising from this identification; *op. cit.*, III. xxviii (CSEL 19. 264; MPL 6. 438; tr. ANF VII. 97).

- ft231 Calvin's traditional cosmology requires that water, "being an element, must be circular, and being the element heavier than air but lighter than earth, it ought to cover the latter in its entire circumference." Comm. Gen. 1:6-9. God who separated the waters at creation, so that dry land appeared, now restrains them by a "perpetual ordinance: beyond barriers of mere sand. "Whence we learn that there is nothing to hinder the sea from overflowing the whole earth but the command of God, which it obeys." Comm. Jer 5:22; cf. Comm. Ps. 33:7.
- ft232 Cf. I. xiv. 1-2, 20-22.
- ft233 This comment by Calvin on his method, which was added to the *Institutes* in 1559, makes clear that he is here arguing solely on the basis of human reason, and that such Biblical allusions as he makes are comparative and confirmatory (cf. I. x. 2), not constitutive of his argument.
- ft234 Cf. I. xvi-xviii, where the providence of God in the events of human life is discussed at large.
- ft235 Calvin has similar references to the heavens and the earth as a theater (*theatrum*) in which we may behold the Creator's glory in I. vi. 2; I. xiv. 20; II. Vi. I; III. ix. 2; Comm. Gen. 1:6; Comm. Ps. 138:1; and frequently elsewhere.
- ft236 Cf. I. iv. 1.
- ft237 Calvin here distinguishes between *cerebrum* and *cor*, brain and heart, in relation to the knowledge of God, characteristically giving the importance to the latter. Cf. I. ii. 1; III. ii. 36; III. vi. 4. On the existential character of his doctrine, see E. A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, pp. 24-28.
- ft238 Augustine, *Psalms*, Ps. 144. 6 (MPL 37. 1872; tr. LF *Psalms* VI. 319).
- ft239 Cf. III. ix.
- ft240 Augustine, *City of God* I. viii (MPL 41. 20; tr. NPNF II. 5).
- ft241 Cf. I. xvi. 6-9.
- ft242 "*Caeca fortunae temeritate*." Cf. Below in this section "*temeraria fortunae voluntate*" and similar language in I. xvi. 2; I. xvi. 8; xvii. 1. Personified and deified in the ancient world, Fortuna retained a fascination for the Western mind and was a common term of discourse

in the Renaissance, when ideas of chance and fate versus the divine ordering of events had a wide vogue. Here and in the other passages cited Calvin is probably thinking of the rejection of this notion by Cactantius in the *Divine Institutes* III. xxviii. 45 (CSEL 19. 264; tr. ANF VII. 97); and by Augustine, e.g. in *City of God* V. ix-xi (MPL 41. 447-450; tr. NPNF II. 90-93); *Retractations* I. i. 2 (MPL 32. 585). See also C. N. Cochrane, *Christianity and Classical Culture*, pp. 478 ff.; H. R. Patch, "The Tradition of the Goddess Fortuna," *Smith College Studies in Modern Languages* II, pp. 204-230; A. Doren, *Fortuna im Mittelalter und in der Renaissance*, pp. 71-144.

ft243 Plato, Timaeus 33 B (LCL Plato VII. 62 f.) Cf. Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* I. x. 24, where Velleus sarcastically prefers four other geometric figures to Plato's sphere (LCL edition, pp. 26 f.).

ft244 The pictorial figure of the labyrinth is in Calvin's writings frequently employed as a symbol of human frustration and confusion. Cf. I. vi.1; I. vi. 3; I. xiii. 21; III. ii. 2-3; III. vi. 2' III. viii. 1; III. xix. 7; III. xxi. 1; III. xxv. 11; IV. vii. 22. In religious literature the conception is most impressively elaborated in J. A. Comenius, *The Labyrinth of the World and the Paradise of the Heart* (1623) (tr. M. Spinka).

ft245 The disagreement among the learned about the gods was one of Cicero's reasons for writing his *Nature of the Gods* (see I. vi. 14; LCL edition, pp. 16 f.).

ft246 Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* III. iv. (MPG 21. 171 f.); Augustine, *City of God* VIII. xxiii, xxvii (MPL 41. 247 ff., 256; tr. NPNF II. 159 f., 165); Plutarch, *De Iside et Osiride* 11 (LCL Plutarch, *Moralia* V. 28-29).

ft247 No doubt the numerous passages in Cicero's *Nature of the Gods* (e.g. I. ii. 3; I. xxiii. 63; I. xxx. 85; I. xlii. 117; I. xliii. 121) charging the Epicureans with practical atheism are here in mind; but there is an implied censure of contemporaries such as Rabelais. Cf. J. Bohatec, *Bude und Calvin*, pp. 226 ff.

ft248 The anecdote is in Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* I. xxii. 60 (LCL edition, pp. 58-59).

ft249 Natural theology (human reasoning about God, under the conditions of sin, unaided by special revelation) has been the subject of this chapter

through section 12. All scholars agree that the above words present Calvin's verdict upon it, held consistently in all his writings. There is a sharp divergence of opinion, however, among interpreters as to Calvin's view of the usefulness of such natural theology to the Christian, especially its role in the Christian's observation of nature. Cf. I. x. 2-3. See also K. Barth and E. Brunner, r. P. Fraenkel, *Natural Theology*; W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 39 ff.; E. A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin's Theology*, pp. 64 ff. Barth again, in his Gifford Lectures, *The Knowledge of God and the Service of God According to the Teaching of the Reformation*, holds all natural theology alien to Reformed theology, e.g., lectures I, xx.

ft250 Xenophon, *Memorabilia* IV. iii. 16 (LCL edition, pp. 306 f.)

ft251 Cicero has Cotta say that it would be enough for him to accept the view that gods exist, merely because it is an opinion "handed down from our forefathers"; *Nature of the Gods* III. iv. 9 (LCL edition, pp. 294-295). This is cited by Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* II. Vii. (CSEL 19. 124; MPL 6. 285; tr. ANF VII. 50).

ft252 It is a favorite thought of Calvin that the creatures of God declare His glory. Cf. 1. 5: 1, 2.

CHAPTER 6

ft253 This simile, repeated in 1 14:1, in Comm. Genesis "Argument," and elsewhere, is probably Calvin's decisive utterance on the role of Scripture as related to the revelation of the Creator in creation. In modern Calvin study there has been much diversity in discussions of this expression and its implications. Cf. B. B. Warfield, *Calvin and Calvinism*, pp. 260 f.; P. Barth, *Das Problem der natuerlichen Theologie bei Calvin*; G. Gloede, *Theologia naturalis bei Calvin*; T. H. L. Parker, *The Doctrine of the Knowledge of God: A Study in Calvin's Theology*; and the titles in note 41 on 1 5:12.

ft254 Cf. 2:1-5.

ft255 Cf. 2:6,7, and 3, passim. On the covenant, see also 2. 8:21; 2. 10:1-5, 8; 2. 11:4, 11; 3. 17:6; 3. 21:5-7; 4. 14:6; 4. 15:22; 4. 16:5, 6,14; 4. 17:20.

ft256 Cf. 2. 5:7; 2. 16:5-12.

^{ft257} Calvin does not here offer an explanation of the manner of inspiration in the origin of the Scriptures. However, the suggestion his language conveys is not of a mechanical verbal dictation, but of an impartation of divine truth that enters the hearts of the Scripture writers. See also J. T. McNeill, “The Significance of the Word of God for Calvin,” *Church History* 28 (1959), 131-146.

^{ft258} Cf. 2. 7 and 8.

^{ft259} This sentence, “*Omnis recta cognitio Dei ab obedientia nascitur*,” is quoted by K. Barth in affirming that dogmatics must presuppose Christian faith (*Kirchliche Dogmatik* 1. 1:27; tr. G. T. Thomson. *The Doctrine of the Word of God* 1:29).

^{ft260} Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 31. 2:4 (MPL 36. 260; tr. LF *Psalms* 1. 253); *Sermons* 141. 4: “*Melius est in via claudicare quam praeter viam fortiter ambulare*” (MPL 38. 778; tr. LF *Sermons* 2. 656 f.). Cf. *Sermons* 169. 15 (MPL 38. 926; tr. LF *Sermons* 2. 870 f.).

CHAPTER 7

^{ft261} Cf. 4. 8 for a related treatment of the authority and inspiration of Scripture.

^{ft262} Chapters vii-ix form an excursus on Biblical authority. Both the doctrines of the deity of the Spirit (1. 13:14-15) and the rederuptive work of the Spirit (Book 3, throughout, especially chs. 1-2) form the immediate theological context of the doctrine of the “inner testimony.” Calvin refers the reader “elsewhere” (1. 7:5), but this has often been overlooked. It is crucial for the interpretation of Calvin whether this doctrine of Scripture is seen as complete in itself or in the larger epistemological context of 3. 2:Cf. Warfield, *Calvin and Calvinism*, p. 71, *et passim*; Doumergue, *Calvin* 4. 68, 247; Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin’s Theology*, pp. 87, 157-164, 174.

^{ft263} Cf. Bullinger, *De scripturae sacrae autoritate* (1538), fo. 4a. The claim of church authority in the interpretation of Scripture is defended by Cochlaeus in *De autoritate ecclesiae et scripture* (1524), and in *De canonicae scripture et catholicae ecclesiae autoritate, ad Henricum Bullingerium* (1543). In the latter work (ch. 3), he states that no claim

is made for the superior authority of the church over the Scripture, but holds (ch. 4) that the church has authority *circa scripturas*, and that such authority is most necessary. Cf. also John Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), ch. 1, fo. 4a-6b.

^{ft264} Cf. Introduction, pp. 61 if. This view of the antecedence of Scripture to the church was common to the Reformers. It appears in Luther's *Lectures on the Psalms* (*Werke* WA 3. 454), where he says, "The Scripture is the womb from which are born the divine truth and the church." Gr. K. Holl, *Gesammelte Aufsdtze zur Kirchengeschichte 1. Luther*, 288 ff.; R. E. Davies, *The Problem of Authority in the Continental Reformers*, pp. 41 f.; McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, pp. 73 if.

^{ft265} Cf. 1. 7:5.

^{ft266} Augustine, *Contra epistotam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* v (MPL 42. 176; tr. NPNF 4. 131): "For my part, I should not believe the gospel except as moved by the authority of the catholic church." Luther, in his tract *That the Doctrines of Men Are to Be Rejected* (1522), had largely anticipated Calvin's interpretation of Augustine's meaning in this passage (*Werke* W AX. 2:89; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 451 ff.).

^{ft267} Augustine, *Contra epistolam Manichaei quam vocant fundamenti* 14 (MPL 42. 183; tr. NPNF IV. 136).

^{ft268} Augustine, *De ordine* 2. 9:27-x. 28 (MPL 32.1007 f.; tr. R. P. Russell, *Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil: A Translation of Augustine's De ordine*, pp. 122-127); *Against Faustus the Manichee* 32:19 (MPL 42.509; tr. NPNF 4. 339).

^{ft269} Augustine, *The Usefulness of Belief* 1, 2, 3 (MPL 42.65 ff.; tr. 150 6. 292 ff.).

^{ft270} Referring to 1. 7:1.

^{ft271} Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 1. 1:10: "The author of Holy Scripture is God."

^{ft272} On Calvin's doctrine of the inner witness of the Holy Spirit to the truth of Scripture, see 1. 7:4; 3. 1:2; 3. 1:3 f.; 3. 2:15, 33-36; Geneva Catechism (1545) 14:91; 18:113 (OS 2. 88, 92; tr. 150 22. 102, 105);

Comm. ^{<550316>}2 Timothy 3:16; Doumergue, *Calvin* 4. 54-69; Dowey, *op. cit.*, pp. 106 ff.; Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 30-39; G. S. Hendry, *The Holy Spirit in Christian Theology*, pp. 72-95. The Westminster Confession 1. 5 succinctly states the Reformed doctrine.

^{ft273} Cf. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 3. 1 (CSEL 19. 178; tr. ANF 7. 69).

^{ft274} This passage is associated by Barth and Niesel with a letter sent by “Capnio” (Antoine Fumee) to Calvin from Paris, late 1542 or early 1543 (OS 3. 70, note 1). The letter may be read in Herminjard, *Correspondance* 8. 228 ff., and in CR 11. 490 ff. The writer, a counselor of the Parlement, expresses alarm over the dangerously negative opinions of a group in Paris who ridicule the doctrine of eternal punishment and other received teachings of Christianity. They have taken as their motto, “Live, drink, and be merry.” To gain adherents, “they stroke complacent ears with their blandishments,” and thus “entice many incautious persons.” J. Bohatec regards Rabelais as the leader of the group referred to, mentioning also Des Periers and Dolet. He shows that numerous phrases in the letter are reflected in Calvin’s *De scandalis* (1550). The views of Jacques Gruet, expressed in a manuscript hidden by him and found in April, 1550, resemble those reported by Fumee. (*Bude und Calvin*, pp. 221 f.; OS 3. 70, note 1; CR 8. 567-571.) Cf. 1. 8:5, note 6.

^{ft275} Cf. Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* I. 8: “For He whom we can know only through his own utterances is a fitting witness concerning himself” (MPL 10. 38; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 45).

^{ft276} αὐτόπιστον Cf. 1. 7:2 (end) and Hendry, *op. cit.*, pp. 76 ff.

^{ft277} Cf. *Summary of Doctrine Concerning the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments*, doubtfully attributed to Calvin (CK 9. 773-778; tr. 150 22. 171-177), esp. paragraphs 5, 6.

^{ft278} The topic of the secret operation and testimony of the Spirit is resumed in 3. 1:1, introducing the treatment of “the way in which we receive the grace of Christ,” which is the subject of Book 3. See also note 12, above.

CHAPTER 8

^{ft279} Calvin's language here reflects his experience when, after absorption in the classics, he entered upon the devout study of Scripture, and literary delight gave place to heartfelt conviction. Quoting this passage, H. Strohl refers to John Sturm's Strasbourg Academy and notes that the designation *divus* was applied by Sturm to Cicero, by Bucer to Plato, and to Seneca by Zwingli. (*La Pensée de la Réforme*, pp. 78 f.) On the same passage in the 1542 French edition, J. Pannier cites Lefevre's reference to a comparable experience (*Psalterium quintuplex*, 1509): "A light so brilliant met my gaze that human teachings seemed dark shadows in comparison with divine studies." (Pannier, *Institution* 1. 310, note b on p. 69.)

^{ft280} On the peculiar eloquence of the Bible writers, see Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 4. 6:9-7:21 (MPL 34. 92-98; tr. NPNF 2. 577-582).

^{ft281} Justin Martyr, *First Apology* liv-lx, holds that demons produced imitations of matters given in Scripture, such as are found in pagan tales, and that Plato borrowed from Moses. (MPG 6. 107-118; tr. 151. 277-281.)

^{ft282} Tatian, in his *Address to the Greeks* (ca. 170) 31, 36-41, argues that Moses was earlier than Homer and all known writers. Clement of Alexandria (*Stromata* 1. 15), Theophilus of Antioch (*To Autolychus* 3. 23), Eusebius (*Ecclesiastical History* 4. 30 and *Praeparatio evangelica* 2. 1), Augustine (*City of God* 8. 37 and *On Christian Doctrine* 4. 6), and other representative Christian writers follow this view. For the passage in Tatian, the earliest of these, see the edition by E. Schwartz in O. Gebhardt and A. Harnack, *Texte und Untersuchungen zur Geschichte der altchristlichen Literatur* 4. 1:31 f., 37-43 (tr. ANF 2. 77 f., 80 f.).

^{ft283} Augustine, *City of God* 18. 40 (MPL 41. 599; tr. NPNF 2. 384). Flavius Josephus, the Jewish historian, in his two books against Apion concerning the antiquity of the Jews, argues that the law of Moses is earlier, as well as more just and humane, than those of pagan lawgivers. For the points referred to, see *Contra Apionem* 1. 22; 2. 36; 2. 39 (CSEL 37. 36, 131, 137 ff.; LCL Josephus 1. 226 ff., 394 ff., 405 f.).

- ft284 In his *Harmony of the Four Last Books of Moses*, Calvin treats the passages here referred to and presents an animated discussion of the revolt against Moses (Num., ch. 16). From the miraculous vindication of Moses he argues that to harm God's servants is to war against God. The disposition of some of his contemporaries to question the authority of the Pentateuch was associated by Calvin with the spirit of the ancient detractors of Moses. Cf. the passages in *De scandalis*, found in OS 2. 186, 201 f., with the notes 1-5 on p. 201. For Bohatec's identifications of the contemporary opponents, see note 14 on 1. 7:4.
- ft285 The modern view of the late date of Isaiah, ch. 45, does not of course enter Calvin's mind in this argument.
- ft286 Cf. 1. 7:4, note 4; 1. 8:3, note 4; Bohatec, *op. cit.*, pp. 164, 178, 216-228, 239.
- ft287 Cf. Justinian, *Digest* 1. 2:2. *Corpus iuris civilis*, ed. P. Krueger, *Digesta*, 34; tr. C. H. Monro, *The Digest of Justinian* 1, p. 23.
- ft288 Antiochus IV, Epiphanes, of Syria (176-164 B.C.), oppressor of the Jews, whose tyranny led to the Maccabean revolt.
- ft289 The Septuagint version, completed about 150 B.C.
- ft290 "*Ecclesiae Christianae librariorum...appellat.*" Cf. Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 56.9: "*Librarii nostri facti sunt*" (MPL 36. 366). For the variant uses of the word *librarius* in medieval Latin, see Du Cange, *Glossarium*, s.v. Norton here translates: "keepers of the libraries."
- ft291 In this section there is a continued reference to the matter of 1. 8:5. Cf. also 1. 7:4 and OS 2. 201.
- ft292 Cf. 1. 7:5; 1. 8:1.
- ft293 Augustine, *The Usefulness of Belief* 18:36 (MPL 42. 92; tr. LCC 6. 322).

CHAPTER 9

- ft294 These opinions of the Libertines were assailed by Calvin in his tract *Contre la secte phantastique et lurieuse des Libertins* (1545) (CR 7. 147-248), especially chs. 9-11 (173-180.)

ft295 *Ibid.*, col. 174.

ft296 Calvin here comes close to the well-known dictum of Luther regarding Scripture books in his Preface to James and Jude, where the test of genuineness is whether they lay emphasis on Christ or not (“*ob sie Christum treiben, oder nicht*”). See Introduction, p. 56, note 52.

ft297 1. 7:4-5.

ft298 “*Tumidi isti ἐνθουσιασταὶ*

CHAPTER 10

ft299 This title applies strictly only to sec. 3. In secs. 1 and 2, Calvin is summing up, comparing, and signifying agreement between what Scripture and creation teach about God. In the remaining chapters of Book 1, he deals with that part of the knowledge of the Creator which cannot be derived from creation, or seen in creation even with the “spectacles” of Scripture, but is found solely in Scripture.

ft300 “*Mundi machina.*” Cf. Lucretius: “*Ruet moles et machina mundi,*” *De rerum natura* 5:96 (LCL edition, p. 346). Similar expressions are not infrequent, e.g., “*mundi fabrica,*” 1. 5. title; 2. 6:l; “*orbis machinam,*” 1. 16:1; 1. 16:4; 1. 17:2; “*caelestis machinae,*” 1. 14:21. Cf. Comm. Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew, ch. 25: “*tota mundi machina resonabit*” (CR 28. 685). Cf. Comm. ^{<196832>}Psalm 68:32-35 (CR 31. 636).

ft301 Cf. 1. 14-18.

ft302 εἰκονικῶς

ft303 καὶ αὐτονσίαν Cf. 1. 14:3.

ft304 Cf. 1. 2:2; 3. 2:6.

ft305 Justin, *De monarchia* 1:2 (MPG 6. 314 ff.; tr. ANF 1. 190 f.).

ft306 Tertullian, *The Testimony of the Soul* 2 (MPL 1. 611; CCL Tertullianus 1. 176; tr. ANF 3. 176).

ft307 Augustine, *Letters* 16, 17 (alias 43, 44) (MPL 33. 81-85; tr. FC 12. 37-43).

ft308 1. 5:11.

CHAPTER 11

- ^{ft309} Chapters 11 and 12, on the worship of God, form a significant prologue to the doctrines of Trinity, Creation, and Providence. Some of this material is taken verbatim from the analysis of the Second Commandment in earlier editions. Cf. 2. 8:17, where Calvin refers to this passage. True and acceptable worship thus is a basic ingredient of the “knowledge” of the Creator. “Frigid” speculation is precluded.
- ^{ft310} “For He whom we can know only through His own utterances is a fitting witness concerning Himself.” Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Trinity* 1. 18 (MPL 10. 38; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 45).
- ^{ft311} Maximus of Tyre (ca. A.D. 150), *Philosophoumena* 2 (ed. H. Hobein, pp. 18 ff.; tr. T. Taylor, *The Dissertations of Maximus Tyrius* 2. 188 ff.). (Taylor’s Dissertation 38 = No. 2 in Hobein.)
- ^{ft312} *City of God* 6. 10 (MPL 41. 190; tr. NPNF 2. 119). In opposing the use of images in Christian worship, Augustine here quotes a work of Seneca against superstitions that is not extant. It is noteworthy that, amid Western reverberations of the Iconoclastic Controversy, Bishop Agobard of Lyons wrote (ca. 826) his treatise *Against the Superstition of Those Who Think that Worship Ought to Be Offered to Pictures and Images of the Saints* (MPL 104. 199-228). For a brief description of this work, which relies on Augustine and other fathers, see A. Cabaniss, *Agobard of Lyons, Churchman and Critic*, pp. 54 f. Agobard’s opinions (which are related to the *Libri Carolini*: cf. sec. 14, note 28) bear a certain resemblance to Calvin’s: he would like to see the offending images “ground to powder” (MPL 104. 208).
- ^{ft313} Cf. 2. 11:2.
- ^{ft314} The phrase is from Juvenal, *Satires* V. 14:97: “*Nubes et caeli numen adorant*” (Calvin: *adorent*) (LCL edition, pp. 270 f., and note 3).
- ^{ft315} Eck, *Enchiridion* (1526), ch. 15. (1541, ch. 16). With Eck’s defense of images may be compared the treatment of the subject by the Paris theologian Josse Clichtove (see Prefatory Address to the King, note 8) in his *Propugnaculum ecclesiae adversus Lutheranos* 1. 10 (Paris, 1526) and in his *Compendium veritatum ad lidera pertinentium contra*

erroneas Lutheranorum assertiones (Paris, 1529), ch. 22, fo. 122b-127a. The latter work is an interpretation of the anti-Lutheran decisions of the Synod of Paris, 1528, and is prefaced by an address to Francis I, which shows alarm over the activities of “the Lutheran sect” in France.

^{ft316} Cf. 3. 9:2.

^{ft317} Horace, *Satires* I. 8:1-3 (LCL edition, pp. 96 f.). Cf. Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 2. 4:1 (CSEL 19. 107; tr. ANF 7. 44).

^{ft318} The reference is to the fact that the Eastern Orthodox Churches, unlike those of the West, use no solid statues of deity in worship. (HDRE 7. 81. Cf. L. Brehier, *La Sculpture et les arts mineurs byzantins*, pp. 7, 16.)

^{ft319} Gregory the Great, *Letters* 9. 105; 11. 13, both addressed to Serenus, bishop of Marseilles (MGH *Epistolae* 2. 112, 273f.; MPL 77. 1027f., 1128); Eck, *Enchiridion* (1526), ch. 16; Clichtove, *Compendium*, fo. 1242.

^{ft320} Lactantius, *Divine Institutes* 1. 8, 15, 18 (CSEL 19. 29 f., 55 f., 63-67; tr. ANF 7. 18, 26-30); Eusebius, *Praeparatio evangelica* 2. 4; 3. 2 (MPG 21. 163, 175); Augustine, *City of God* 6. 7:1; 6. 8:1; 8. 5, 26 (MPL 41. 184, 186, 229 f., 253 f.; tr. NPNF 2.115 f., 147, 163).

^{ft321} “It is sinful to set up an image of God in a Christian temple”: Augustine, *Faith and the Creed* 7:14 (MPL 40. 188; tr. LCC 6. 360); cf. *De diversis quaestionibus*, qu. 78 (MPL 40. 90).

^{ft322} Council of Elvira (ca. 305). See Prefatory Address, above, note 21.

^{ft323} Augustine, *City of God* 4. 9, 31 (MPL 41. 119, 138; tr. NPNF 2. 69, 74 f.). The work of Varro, here referred to by Augustine, is not extant.

^{ft324} Wisdom of Solomon 14:15-16.

^{ft325} Calvin uses a pun: “*Deum affigant ubicunque affingunt.*”

^{ft326} Augustine, *Psalms*, ^{<19B302>} Psalm 113:2:4-6 (on 5:5) (MPL 37. 1483 f.; tr. NPNF [Psalm 115] 8. 552).

^{ft327} Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 113. 2:4-6.

^{ft328} 1. 11:16; 1. 12:2.

^{ft329} Calvin uses the Greek words “*εἰδωλοδουλεία*,” “*εἰδωλολατρεία*,” The distinction discussed in earlier centuries between dulia, the

respectful service of a slave, and latria, the worship due to a deity, was used by John Cochlaeus in his reply to Calvin's *Inventory of Relics*, entitled *De sacris reliquiis Christi et sanctorum eius* (1549), chs. 2 and 3. Cf. note 27 and 1. 12:2-3.

ft330 1. 11:7.

ft331 Calvin here would seem to give countenance to the teaching of those “syncretists” who later, returning to the teaching of Vincent of Lerins, advocated “the consensus of the first five centuries” as a basis of Christian unity and reform. See J. T. McNeill, *Unitive Protestantism*, pp. 271 ff.; W. K. Ferguson, *The Renaissance in Historical Thought*, pp. 41 f., 49 f. In his Latin Catechism of 1538, Calvin, advocating unity and peace among Christians, exclaims that the devil’s darts ought to move us to seek a syncretism—“*ad syncretismum agendum admovere debet*” (OS 1. 431).

ft332 Augustine, *Letters* 102 (MPL 33. 377; tr. FC 18. 161); *City of God* 4. 31 (MPL 43. 337 f.; tr. NPNF 2. 81).

ft333 Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 333. 2:5 f. (MPL 37. 1483 f.; tr. NPNF [Psalm 115] 8.552 f.).

ft334 Irene ruled as empress in the Eastern Empire, 780-802. In the French version, Calvin here calls her “a wicked Proserpine named Irene.”

ft335 Second Council of Nicaea, 787, session 7. (Mansi 13. 377 f.; tr. H. Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, p. 132.) Bowing in veneration (προσκύνησις) before the images is enjoined, but actual worship (λατρεία) is forbidden as “proper only to the divine nature.” Cf. 1. 12:3; Hefele-Leclercq III. 2. 772 f. For a summary of the discussions in the Council, see E. J. Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Movement*, ch. 6.

ft336 In secs. 14-16, written in 1550, Calvin derives his data from the *Libri Carolini*, the four books prepared at Charlemagne’s direction in response to the action of the Second Council of Nicaea, 787, and adopted by the Synod of Frankfort, 794. An edition of the *Libri Carolini* by Jean du Tillet had appeared in 1549. The passages referred to are: *Libri Carolini* 1. 7, 9, 10, 13, 23, 24, 28, 30; 2. 5, 6, 10; 3. 7, 15, 17, 26, 31; 4. 6, 18. The work may be consulted in MPL 98, where these passages are in cols. 1022 f., 1027 ff., 1034 f., 1053 f., 1057 f.,

1061 f., 1065 f., 1071 ff., 1075 f., 1127 ff., 1142 f., 1148 f., 1170 ff., 1180 ff., 1197 ff., 1221 ff. The notes in OS 3. 103 f. provide the references to the text in *Monumenta Germaniae Historica, Leges* III. *Concilia* II. The editors here indicate two instances in which Calvin has erroneously ascribed to “John, the Eastern legate” (who spoke frequently at the council) words that should be attributed to others present. Calvin’s quotations are otherwise in accord with the text.

^{ft337} εἰκονομάχοι

^{ft338} Referring to the customary formal applause following the close of a play in the Roman theater. Cf. Horace, *Ars Poetica* 5. 154 f. (LCL edition, pp. 462f. and note e).

^{ft339} Cf. sec. 20 note 21, above, and Calvin, *On the Necessity of Reforming the Church* (1549) (CR 6. 463; tr. *Tracts* 1. 131).

CHAPTER 12

^{ft340} Cf. 1. 2:2; 1. 5:6, 9,10.

^{ft341} 2. 8:17-19; 4. 10:8-31.

^{ft342} *Nature of the Gods* 2. 28:72 (LCL edition, pp. 192 f. and note a).

Lactantius adopts this derivation, while criticizing Cicero’s way of distinguishing religion from the superstitious fear (*Divine Institutes* 4. 28; CSEL. 389; tr. ANF 7. 131).

^{ft343} In 1. 4:l; 1. 5:8.

^{ft344} See esp. 2. 8.

^{ft345} Augustine, *City of God* 4. 9 (MPL 41. 119; tr. NPNF 2. 69).

^{ft346} Cf. 1. 11: 9, 16.

^{ft347} Cf. 1. 11:1, note 21; P. Lombard, *Sentences* 3. 9:1 (MPL 192. 775 f.). Aquinas distinguishes latria, worship that is paid to God, from dulia, which is paid to excellent creatures, but also notes different kinds of dulia, including hyperdulia, which is accorded to the Blessed Virgin (*Summa Theol.* 2 Ilae. 84, 1; 103. 4). Cf. also Eck, *Enchiridion* (1526, 1533), ch. 15 (1541, ch.16): “*De imaginibus Crucifixi et sanctorum.*”

^{ft348} “προσκύνησις”

CHAPTER 13

^{ft349} 2. 7, 8.

^{ft350} Throughout all editions the doctrine of the Trinity stands prior to the analysis of the first article of the Apostles' Creed (the Creator), but up to 1559 it followed immediately the discussion of Christ as the sole object (*scopus*) of faith. Here, with faith deferred to 3. 2, under the redeeming work of the Spirit, the doctrine is presented without full epistemological preparation. Otherwise, and with many expansions, the sequence remains the same: Father, 1. 14 ff.; Son, 2. 6 ff.; and Spirit, 3. 1 ff. A systematically presented list of divine attributes ("*virtutes*," here ordinarily rendered "powers"), characteristic of both medieval theologians and Reformed orthodoxy, is notably absent from Calvin. The nearest approach is 1. 10:2, above, but it receives no systematic development. References to the *virtutes Dei* are found also in 1. 5:10; 1. 14:21; 3. 20:40-41; Comm. ^{<450121>}Romans 1:21. The reader will probably look in vain for the noun "sovereignty" applied to God in Calvin's writings (G. B. Beyerhaus, *Studien zur Staatsanschauung Calvins*, ch. in, "Calvins Souveranitätslehre," esp. p. 58), although the subject matter usually designated thereby appears in the doctrine of Providence, which makes frequent use of the traditional term "omnipotence" (cf. 1. 16:3). The Beveridge and Alien translations of the *Institutes* sometimes have introduced the terms "sovereign," "sovereignty," and even inserted the term "decree" in accord with orthodox usage, where Calvin's text does not contain it.

^{ft351} Seneca, *Natural Questions*, Prologue, 1. 13 (tr. J. Clarke, *Physical Science in the Time of Nero*, p. 7).

^{ft352} The dualistic sect founded by the Persian Manichaeus (or Mani) (d. 277). Cf. Augustine, *On Genesis in the Literal Sense* 11. 13:17 (MPL 34. 436); *De haeresibus* 46 (MPL 42. 34-38); *Contra Julianum, opus imperfectum* 1. 65-73.

^{ft353} This sect, founded by Audius (d. 372) in Mesopotamia, taught that since man was made in God's image (^{<010116>}Genesis 1:16), God has human form. Cf. Augustine, *De haeresibus* 1-50 (MPL 42. 39).

^{ft354} Calvin here and in sec. 3 alludes to numerous opinions found in the works of anti-Trinitarian writers of his time. Barth and Niesel have supplied detailed references to writings of Michael Servetus (d. 1553), Matthaeus Gribaldi (d. 1564), George Blandrata (d. 1585), Valentine Gentile (d. 1566), Gianpaulo Alciati (d. ca. 1573). (OS 3. 109 ff.) For the ideas and activities of these men, see E. M. Wilbur, , *A History of Unitarianism: Socinianism and Its Antecedents*. The charge that traditional orthodoxy affirmed “a threefold God,” or “three gods,” appears in Servetus, *De Trinitatis erroribus*, 1531, 1, fo. 21 (tr. E. M. Wilbur, *On the Errors of the Trinity* 1. 30, 3], pp. 33 f.; Harvard Theological Studies 16). The later literature of research in this field has been examined by G. H. Williams in 150 25. 185 ff. and in “Studies in the Radical Reformation: A Bibliographical Survey of Research Since 1939,” *Church History* 27 (1958), 46-69.

^{ft355} Servetus, *op. cit.*, 1, fo. 35, 36 (tr. Wilbur, *op. cit.*, 1. 50, 51, pp. 55 f.).

^{ft356} In these sentences Calvin has in mind the words of ^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3: ἡ χαρακτήρ τῆς ὑποστάσεως αὐτοῦ rendered in the Vulgate, *figura substantiae etus*, in KJV “the express image of his person,” and in RSV “the very stamp of his nature.” *Subsistentia* as against *substantia* in the Latin rendering of ὑπόστασις was adopted by the sixth-century writers Boethius and Cassiodorus, and was familiar in the Middle Ages. By this language Calvin affirms the distinctiveness of the Persons of the Trinity. Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theol. I. 29:2*. For this section consult also Origen, *De principiis* 1. 2:2 (GCS 22. 28; tr. G. W. Butterworth, *Origen On First Principles*, p. 16; Augustine, *On the Trinity* 5. 8:10; 8. 4:7 (MPL 42. 917, 939; tr. NPNF 3. 92, note 7; 109 f.); A. Blaise, *Dictionnaire Latin-Francais des auteurs chretiens*, and Du Cange, *Glossarium*, s.v. “*subsistentia*.”

^{ft356a} πρόσωπα sing. Πρόσωπον equivalent of Latin *persona*, with a range of meaning from “face,” “countenance,” or “mask” to “person”; used especially of the three manifestations, or Persons, of the Trinity. Cf. sec. 4, note 6.

^{ft357} Cf. sec. 2, note 6.

^{ft358} “*Morosi*.” If, as suggested in OS 3. 111, Calvin had in mind here Bullinger’s discussion of the two natures of Christ (*Utriusque in Christo naturae tam divinae quam humanae ... assertio orthodoxa*,

1534), it is remarkable that no edition of the *Institutes* prior to 1559 bears this allusion. The 1536 edition associates *morositas* with the *heretici*, and in his *Response to the Questions of George Blandrata*, 1557, Calvin applies to this and Trinitarian the adjective *morosus*, CR 9. 329. Cf. 4. 1:16, 20. It is certain, however, that Bullinger withheld approval from Calvin in the latter's dispute with Pierre Caroli, 1537. See Bullinger's letter to Oswald Myconius, July 23, 1537 (Herminjard, *Correspondance* 4. 264 f.; CR 10. 2. 1 16 f.; OS 3. 3, note 4).

- ft359 ὁμοουσίου consubstantial, the word of emphasis in the Creed of Nicaea, 325, by which Arianism was rejected.
- ft360 The chronological order is here inverted: Arius died in 337; Sabellius flourished about 250. His doctrine of the *πρόσωπα* has been compared with the view of the Trinity held by Schleiermacher: C. C. Richardson, *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, ch. 7.
- ft361 Hilary of Poitiers, *On the Councils* 12 ff. (MPL 10. 489 f. tr. NPNF 2 ser.9. 7 f.)
- ft362 Augustine, *On the Trinity* 7. 6. 11 (MPL 42. 945; tr. NPNF 3. 3 ff.
- ft363 Hilary, *On the Councils* 27. 67-71 (MPL 10. 525 ff.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 22).
- ft364 Jerome, *Letters* 15. 3,4 (CSEL 54. 64 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser 6. 19).
- ft365 Augustine, *On the Trinity* 5. 8-10 (MPL 42. 916 f. tr. NPNF 3 91 f).
- ft366 Cassiodorus, *Historia tripartita* 6. 21 (MPL 69. 1042), from Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 3. (tr. NPNF 2 ser. 2. 81).
- ft367 “The error of others compels us to err in daring to express in human terms truths which ought to be hidden in the silent veneration of the heart.” Hilary, *On the Trinity* 2. 2 (MPL 10. 51; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 52).
- ft368 Hilary, *On the Councils* 27:63 (MPL 10. 512 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 21).
- ft369 Augustine, *On the Trinity* 7. 4:7, 9 (MPL 42. 939; tr. NPNF 3. 109 ff.). Admitting the insufficiency of language to express the Trinity, Augustine resorts to homely illustrations from species of animals and trees.
- ft370 Barth and Niesel point out that Calvin's language here seems to have reference not only to Arius and Sabellius but also to Servetus. See OS 3. 105; *De Trinitatis erroribus* I, fo. 21ab, 22b, 23b; 3. 80ab (tr.

Wilbur, *op. cit.*, 1, pp. 38 ff., 125 f., 131 f.; Harvard Theological Studies 16).

ft371 Cf. sec. 2, note 6.

ft372 Tertullian, *Against Praxeas* 2, 9 (CCL Tertullianus 2. 1160, 1168f.; tr. ANF 3. 598, 603 f.). E. Evans, *Tertullian's Treatise Against Praxeas*, has critical text, pp. 90, 97 f., translation pp. 131, 140. Praxeas was an extreme representative of the Monarchian heresy, who held that God the Father suffered in the crucifixion (Patripassianism). K. Barth, discussing Calvin's doctrine of the eternal Son, treats theologically the suspicion cast upon the Reformer's orthodoxy on the Trinity at the time of his contention with Pierre Caroli, 1537 and 1540 (*Kirchliche Dogmatik* 1. 1:438 f.; tr. G. T. Thomson, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* 1. 477 ff.). During this dispute, Calvin, challenged by Caroli, refused, though with no heretical intent, to declare his acceptance of the Athanasian, and even of the Nicene, Creed. Cf. CR 7. 294 f.; Herminjard, *Correspondance* 4. 185 ff., 139 f.

ft373 The opinions censured in sections 7 and 8 are found in Servetus, *De Trinitatis erroribus* 2, fo. 47a (tr. Wilbur, *op. cit.*, 2. 4, P. 75).

ft374 Servetus, *op. cit.* Cf. 1. 13:22; Comm. <430101> John 1:1; also Bucer's treatment of this passage in his *In sacra quatuor Evangelia enarrationes*, 1553 edition, fo. 221ab.

ft375 The topic is discussed in 2. 12-17.

ft376 The references are to opinions expressed by the medieval Jewish commentators, Rashi (d. 1105), Abraham Ibn Ezra (d. 1167), and David Kimchi (d. 1235). Cf. L. I. Newman, *Jewish Influences in Christian Reform Movements*, 325 f., 350 f.

ft377 Servetus is here first named in the *Institutes*.

ft378 Justin, *Dialogue with Trypho* 56, 58, 127 (MPG 6. 595 ff., 607 ff., 771 ff.; tr. ANF 1. 123, 205, 263); Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 3. 9 (MPL 3. 333; CCL Tertullianus 1. 519 f.; tr. ANF 3. 318).

ft379 Cf. 1. 14:9; Comm. <440730> Acts 7:30.

ft380 Servetus, *op. cit.*, 3, fo. 77f. (tr. Wilbur, *op. cit.*, 3. 12 f., pp. 119 ff.).

- ft381 Cf. Melanchthon, *Loci communes* (1521), ed. H. Engelland, p. 6: “*Mysteria divinitatis rectius adoraverimus quam vestigaverimus*” (tr. C. L. Hill, *The Loci Communes of Philip Melanchthon*, p. 67).
- ft382 Cf. Comm. <442018> Acts 20:18. For comment on the topics of sections 14-20, see B. B. Warfield, *Biblical and Theological Studies* (ed. S. G. Craig), ch. 5.
- ft383 Augustine, *Letters* 170. 2 (MPL 33- 749; tr. FC 30. 62).
- ft384 Cf. Luther, *Enchiridion piarum precationum* (1529) (*Werke* WA X. 2:389).
- ft385 Supporters of Macedonius (d. ca. 360), Semi-Arian bishop of Constantinople, who rejected the doctrine of the deity of the Holy Spirit.
- ft386 Gregory of Nazianzus, *On Holy Baptism*, oration 40:41 (MPG 36. 418; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 7. 375). Calvin quotes the sentence in Greek and renders it into Latin.
- ft387 Servetus, *De Trinitatis erroribus*, fo. 7ab (tr. Wilbur, *op. cit.*, pp. 13 f.).
- ft388 Cf. Augustine, *Faith and the Creed* 9:17 (MPL 40. 189; tr. LCC 6. 362); *On the Trinity* 1. 1:1, 3 (MPL 42. 810 f.; tr. NPNF 3. 18).
- ft389 Cf. 1. 13:25; 1. 16:3; 1. 16:5.
- ft390 “*Et Filio*,” corresponding to “*Filioque*” in the Western form of the Nicene Creed.
- ft391 Augustine, *Psalms*, <19A913> Psalm 109:13 (MPL 37. 1457; tr. NPNF [Psalm 1 10] 8. 542 f.); *John’s Gospel* 1-5 (MPL 35. 1682 f.; tr. NPNF 7. 222); *Psalms*, Psalm 68. 5 (MPL 36. 895; tr. NPNF [Psalm 69] 8. 301).
- ft392 That the subsequent sentences in this section bear reference to the anti-Trinitarians is evident from their resemblance to a passage in Calvin’s *Response to the Questions of George Blandrata* (CR 9. 325 ff.; cf. CR 17. 169 ff.). Cf. OS 1. 134, note 1, where the date of this document is indicated as summer, 1557.
- ft393 CR 17. 169 ff.
- ft394 Cf. 1. 5:7.

ft395 Hilary, *On the Trinity* 1. 18 (MPL 10. 38; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 45). The sentences, “For how...his Word” are quoted by K. Barth (*Kirchliche Dogmatik* 1. 1:317; tr. G. T. Thomson, *The Doctrine of the Word of God* 1. 345).

ft396 Chrysostom, *Homiliae de incomprehensibili Dei natura, contra Anomoeos* v. 7 (MPG 48. 745 ff.). The Anomoeans taught, as the name suggests, the *unlikeness* of the Father and the Son.

ft397 Cf. 1. 5:12, note 36.

ft398 Calvin seems to have been surprised by Servetus’ application of the word “Trinitarian” to him and to other defenders of the received doctrine of the Trinity. This occurs frequently in *Christianismi restitutio, De Trinitate* 1. For Servetus’ statement, “*Athei vere sunt trinitarii omnes*,” see p. 31 of that work. I am indebted to Mr. Chalmers McCormick for the information that in his studies of John Campanus (ca. 1500-1575) he finds evidence of the use of the word *trinitarii* for *opponents* of the orthodox doctrine. This is indicated, for instance, in J. G. Schelhorn’s quotations from George Witzel of a text not later than 1537 (*Amoenitates literaria* 11 [1729]. 32-42). Cf. G. Richter, *Die Schriften Georg Witzels*, p. 383. Thus Servetus was reversing the meaning of *trinitarius* as it had been bandied in recent disputation. Perhaps its older use in the title of a monastic order (1197) was not forgotten.

ft399 λόγος

ft400 Valentine Gentile is meant. The documents for Gentile’s trial in Geneva have been edited by H. Fazy: *Proces de Valentin Gentilis et de Nicolas Gallo (1555)*. The essential materials are in CR 9.

ft401 “*Essentiator.*” Cf. Gentile’s second confession, August, 1558, CR 9. 393 f. For a brief account of the circumstances, see J. Mackinnon, *Calvin and the Reformation*, pp. 166 f.

ft402 κατ' ἐξοχήν

ft403 2. 11 ff.

ft404 By an inadvertence, the order of ^{<430423>} John 4:23 and 24 is reversed.

ft405 Cf. 1. 13:18, note 40; 1. 13:28, note 65; 1. 16:3, note 6; 1. 16:5, note 12. In a critical discussion of the orthodox doctrine, C. C. Richardson

uses for illustration secs. 24 and 25 here: *The Doctrine of the Trinity*, pp. 58 f.

^{ft406} Gentile, in *Epistola* 5 (CR 9. 390 f.; Fazy, *op. cit.*, pp. 65 f.). Vincent of Lerins charges Nestorius with teaching a “quaternity”: *Commonitory* 16 (MPL 50. 659; tr. LCC 9. 59).

^{ft407} 1. 13:20, 23.

^{ft408} Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 3. 6:4 (MPG 7. 863; tr. ANF 1. 419).

^{ft409} Irenaeus, *op. cit.* (in order of reference), 3. 6:1; 2. 27:2; 3. 9:1; 3. 12:13; 3. 15:3; 3. 20:4; 4. 5:2-3 (MPG 7. 860, 803, 868 f., 907, 919, 945, 984 f.; tr. ANF 1. 418, 398, 422, 435, 440, 451, 467).

^{ft410} Tertullian, *Against Praxeas* (in order of reference), 2, 7, 9, 144, 18, 20, 3, 1, 2, 11, 9, 26 (MPL 2. 157, 162 ff., 174, 177, 179, 154 ff., 166 f., 164, 189 f.; also in CCL Tertullianus 2. 1159-1196; tr. ANF 3. 598, 601 f., 603f., 609, 613, 599, 597, 598, 608 f., 603f., 622). E. Evans, *Tertullian's Treatise Against Praxeas*, has critical text of these sections, pp. 89-123, translation, pp. 130-172.

^{ft411} Justin, *Apology* 1. 6, 13; tr. ANF 1. 164, 166 f.; cited by Servetus, *Christianismi restitutio*, *De Trinitate* 1, p. 33.

^{ft412} Hilary, *On the Trinity* 1. 5; 2. 6 (MPL 10. ,8, 55; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 41, 53).

^{ft413} The canon of Ignatius' letters was not determined until the nineteenth century. Numerous spurious epistles were ascribed to him by Jacques Lefevre in an edition of 1498. These are translated from W. Cureton's *Corpus Ignatianum* (1849) in ANF 1. The spurious letter to the Philippians contains (ch. 8) the injunction, “Despise not the period of forty days” (Cureton, p. 155; tr. ANF 1. 119; Cf. LCC 1. 81 ff.; OS 3. 150, notes 6, 7).

^{ft414} Augustine, *On the Trinity* 1. 4:7; 6 (MPL 42. 824, 923-932; tr. NPNF 20, 97-203); *On Nature and Grace* 61:71-66. 79 (MPL 44. 282-286; tr. NPNF V. 146-149); *Against Julian* 2. 1.1-2, 9:32 (MPL 44. 671-696; tr. FC 35. 55-96).

^{ft415} “To all three belong the same eternity...the same power. In the Father is unity, in the Son equality, in the Holy Spirit the harmony of unity and equality.” Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 1. 5 (MPL 34. 21; tr. NPNF 2. 524). Again, noting that Christ said, not “whom the Father

will send” but “whom I shall send to you from the Father” (<431526>John 15:26), Augustine states that while the Persons of the Trinity are equal, the Father is the *principium totius deitatis*, the beginning of the whole deity. *On the Trinity* 4. 20:29 (MPL 42. 908; tr. NPNF 3. 85 [see there note 6]).

^{ft416} Lombard discusses the question “Whether the Son is always begotten” in *Sentences* 1. 9:10-15, citing the opinions of Gregory, Origen, and Hilary (MPL 192. 547 ff.).

CHAPTER 14

^{ft417} 1. 5:5 and Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 1. 13:33 (LCL edition, pp. 34-35).

^{ft418} Augustine, *Confessions* 11. 11 (MPL 32. 815; tr. LCC 7. 253).

^{ft419} Cf. 1. 5:12, 15 and the “spectacles” illustration in 1. 6:1.

^{ft420} Augustine, *On Genesis, Against the Manichees* 1. 2:4 (MPL 34. 175).

^{ft421} Augustine, *City of God* 11. 5 (MPL 41. 320; tr. NPNF 2. 107).

^{ft422} Cf. 1. 14:22.

^{ft423} 1. 13:22-24.

^{ft424} 1. 15 and 2. 1.

^{ft425} Cf. 1. 13:l, note 3.

^{ft426} αὐτουσία

^{ft427} Augustine asserts against the Manichees that “*natura, in qua nullum bonum est, non potest,*” *City of God* 19. 8 (MPL 41. 641; tr. NPNF 2. 409), and that the evil in man is not from nature but from its corruption, *Against Julian* 1. 5: 16, 17 (MPL 44. 650f.; tr. FC 35. 18 ff.); cf. also his *Contra Julianum, opus imperfectum* 1. 114 (MPL 45. 1124 f.).

^{ft428} Augustine, *City of God* 11. 9 (MPL 41. 323-325; tr. NPNF 2. 209 f.); Lombard, *Sentences* 2. 2:1 (MPL 192. 655).

^{ft429} ματαιώματα

^{ft430} “*Dionysium illum, quicumque fuerit.*” The reference is to Pseudo-Dionysius, *De coelesti hierarchia* (MPG 3. 119-368; tr. J. Parker, *The*

Celestial and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy of Dionysius Areopagitica).

Calvin probably had in mind Luther, *Babylonish Captivity*, section on Ordination: “But for my part...to accord so much credit to this Dionysius, whoever he was (*quisquis fuerit*), altogether displeases me, for there is virtually no sound learning in him” (Luther, *Werke* WA 6. 562, present editor’s translation; cf. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 275). Luther’s condemnation by the Sorbonne, April 15, 1521, was partly based on this passage. The pseudonymous character of the various (late fifth-century) works attributed to the Dionysius Areopagitica of ^{<441734>}Acts 17:34 was not universally recognized until the seventeenth century.

^{ft431} Cf. CR 52. 85; Dante, *Divine Comedy*, Paradise 28:97-139 (following Pseudo-Dionysius) and Milton’s line (*Paradise Lost* 5. 601, repeated 769): “Thrones, Dominations, Princedoms, Virtues, Powers.”

^{ft432} Cf. Comm. Harmony of the Evangelists, ^{<410509>}Mark 5:9: “Every man has many angels to act as his guardians.”

^{ft433} Origen ascribes certain special offices to the archangels Raphael, Gabriel, and Michael: *De principiis* 1. 8:1 (GCS 22. 228; MPG 11. 176; tr. ANF 4. 264 f.; Butterworth, *Origen On First Principles*, pp. 193 f.). In describing the ranks of angels and their various functions, medieval theology was under the influence of Pseudo-Dionysius, an authority rejected by Calvin. See Lombard, *Sentences* 2. 9 (MPL 192. 669), and the extended discussion in Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 1. 106-114. In the opening and closing sentences of this section, as in sec. 4 above, Calvin characteristically repudiates the elaborately speculative treatment of angels represented by Aquinas. Allusions to the latter can be readily identified on consulting *Summa Theol.* 1, questions 108, 113, on the hierarchy of angels and on guardian angels, respectively.

^{ft434} See Comm. ^{<193407>}Psalms 34:7, where Calvin affirms that many angels are appointed to care for each of God’s people.

^{ft435} See 1. 9:1, note 1. In *Contre la secte phantastique des Libertins* 11 (CR 7. 279 f.), Calvin recites the “pagan” notions of the Libertines about angels.

^{ft436} “*Spiritus naturae subsistentis*.”

^{ft437} Cf. secs. 6 and 7, above.

- ft438 Plato, *Epinomis* E 984 (LCL Plato 8. 462 f.), where the daemons are to be honored with prayers as intermediaries. Cf. *Symposium* 202 (LCL Plato 5. 178 f.). Calvin's citation of Cratylus here appears to Benoit to be in error (*Institution* 1. 196): "Cratylus 398" is cited in OS 3. 164, but the passage is hardly relevant.
- ft439 The warfare of the Kingdom of God against the kingdom of Satan is a theme frequently present to Calvin's mind. Cf. K. Frohlich, *Gottesreich, Welt und Kirche bei Calvin*, pp. 19 ff.
- ft440 "Socordia vel ignavia," probably suggested by Sallust's phrase found in his *War with Catiline* 52:29 and 58:4, and *Letter to Caesar* 10:9: "Quorum animos socordia atque ignavia invasit" (LCL edition, pp. 106, 118, 482).
- ft441 1. 14:9.
- ft442 *Contre la secte phantastique des Libertins* 12, 22, 23 (CR 7. 181, 228, 239).
- ft443 Cf. 1. 5:8, note 27; 1 6:2; 2. 6:1; 3. 9:2.
- ft444 1. 5:l-5.
- ft445 Basil, *Hexaemeron* (homilies on the six days of Creation) (MPG 29. 3-107; tr. NPNF a ser. 8. 52-107); Ambrose, *Hexameron* (CSEL 32 1:1-261; MPL 14. 133-288). The prevailing Christian view of creation is that God created the world out of nothing (*ex nihilo*). Cf. 1. 15:5. In antiquity the possibility of this was denied by the Epicureans: "Nil posse creari de nilo," wrote Lucretius (*De rerum naturai*. 155; LCL edition, p. 12). Augustine (apart from the doctrine of the origin of individual souls, on which his position is indeterminate) asserts *creatio ex nihilo*, e.g., in *Faith and the Creed* 2:2 (MPL 40. 182; tr. LCC 6. 354 f.). It is thus stated in the Westminster Confession 4. 1: "It pleased God...to create, or make of nothing, the world, and all things therein." Cf. E. Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of Creation* (tr. O. Wyon) 2. 9 ff.; L. B. Gilkey, *Maker of Heaven and Earth*, pp. 46 f., 88; H. A. Wolfsoil, "The Meaning of *ex nihilo* in the Church Fathers, Arabic and Hebrew Philosophy, and St. Thomas": *Medieval Studies in Honor of J. D. M. Ford*, pp. 355-367.
- ft446 1. 5:l-4.

ft447 “*Caelestis machinae*.” Cf. 1. 10:1, note 2. Joseph Addison’s stately hymn “The Spacious Firmament on High” has affinities with this and similar passages in Calvin.

ft448 This statement is substantially repeated in CR 26. 255; 28. 22, 232; 32. 89, 428; 33. 572; 36. 589; 41. 67; 43. 254; 44. 5. The belief that the material universe was made for the sake of man was espoused by the Stoics in opposition to the Epicureans. For its flat denial by Lucretius, see his *De rerum natura* 5:156 f. (LCL edition, pp. 350 f.). Cicero’s Stoic speaker Balbus, in *Nature of the Gods* 2. 62:154. 66. 167 (LCL edition, pp. 273-283), discourses at some length on the theme that “the world was created for the sake of gods and men, and the things that it contains were provided and contrived for the enjoyment of men.” In approval of this, Lactantius remarks: “God must have made the world for some use. The Stoics say that it was made for man, and rightly so.” *Epitome of the Divine Institutes* 68 (CSEL 19. 752; tr. ANF 7. 252).

ft449 1. 14:2.

CHAPTER 15

ft450 Calvin’s teaching about man is mainly in two separate parts of the *Institutes*. Here he is dealing with man as he was created. In 2. 1-4, he discusses man in his fallen state.

ft451 Cf. 1. 1:1; 1. 5:2-3; 1. 15:1; 2. 8:1.

ft452 2 1:3.

ft453 Cf. Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 2. 9 (CSEL 47. 346; CCL Tertullianus 1. 484 f.; tr. ANF 3. 304); Augustine, *Retractions* 1. 10:8 (MPL 82. 600).

ft454 Cf. Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 1. 27 (LCL edition, pp. 78 f.); *Nature of the Gods* 2. 54:133-111. 153 (LCL edition, pp. 251-271); Aristotle, *De partibus animalium* 686. 25- 35 (tr. Aristotle, *Selections*, ed. W. D. Ross, pp. 181 ff.). On the topic of sleep Tertullian recites and criticizes a variety of pagan opinions: *On the Soul* 42-49 (CCL Tertullianus 2. 845-855; Tertullian, *De anima*, ed., with commentary by J. H. Waszink, pp. 58-67, 461; tr. ANF 3. 221-227).

- ^{ft455} Peter Martyr Vermigli (d. 1562) has a parallel statement, *Loci communes* 1. 12:27-28 (1576 edition, pp. 101 f.).
- ^{ft456} Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 1. 84 if. (LCL edition, p. 8); cf. Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 2. 56:140 (LCL edition, pp. 256 ff.).
- ^{ft457} Andreas Osiander (1498-1552) was a prominent Lutheran pastor at Nuremberg and from 1549 professor at Königsberg. In 1550 he introduced an independent and startling doctrine of justification. Cf. 3. 11:5, 6 and notes appended. In the same year he published a short treatise, *An filius Dei fuerit incarnandus... (Whether the Son of God Would Have Had to Be Incarnated if Sin Had Not Entered the World)*, to which was appended an essay on the image of God, *De imagine Dei quid sit*. Calvin states here, and rejects, Osiander's doctrine in *An filius Dei* of the necessity of the incarnation regardless of Adam's sin. See Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 126, 133 ff., and the titles there cited (p. 126, note 1). It is noteworthy that Osiander contributed to the advance of science by his cautious preface introducing the epochal work of Copernicus, *De revolutionibus orbium coelestium*, 1543.
- ^{ft458} Text has plural "eos"; cf. VG, "selon leur reverie."
- ^{ft459} Servetus, *Christianismi restitutio* (1553), dial. 3 *On the Trinity*, p. 102.
- ^{ft460} Cf. Bernard, *Concerning Grace and Free Will* 9:28 (MPL 182. 1016).
- ^{ft461} Repeated 1. 15:8. Cf. Seneca, *Moral Epistles* 61:8: "Rationale enim animal est homo" (LCL Seneca, *Moral Epistles* 1. 276). In its Greek form this expression is attributed to Chrysippus (d. 206 B.C.). Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. "λογικός"
- ^{ft462} "In renovatione imaginis Dei." The use of words like *renovatio* and *reparatio* in this section (which was revised and expanded in 1559) has a methodological significance. Much of the picture of man at creation is derived from the account of the image of God as restored in redemption. Cf. 2. 2. 12; Comm. ^{<461544>}1 Corinthians 15:44-50; Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 67 ff., 129f.
- ^{ft463} Augustine, *On the Trinity* 10. 11, 12; 14. 4, 6, 8; 15. 21 (MPL 42. 982-984, 1040-1042, 1044 f., 1088 f.; tr. NPNF 3. 142 f., 186 if., 194; LCC 8. 88 f., 103 f., 168 f.); *City of God* 11. 26, 28 (MPL 41. 339, 342; tr. NPNF 2. 220 f.).

^{ft464} “*Si ex Dei essentia per traducem sit anima hominis.*” Cf. 1. 14:20, note 29; 2. 1:7, note 10; 2. 14:8. Calvin takes his position unequivocally against traducianism, the doctrine that all human souls are derived from an original transmission (*tradux*) to Adam from the divine essence. He asserts the opposing doctrine of creationism, that an act of divine creation out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) takes place each time a child is given life. Numerous passages from Augustine related to Calvin’s argument here are cited in Smits 2. 29. See esp. *City of God* 11. 22 (MPL 41. 336; tr. NPNF 2. 217).

^{ft465} Cf. 1. 5:3, note 12.

^{ft466} Plato, *Phaedo* 105-107; *Phaedrus* 105-109; *Alcibiades I.* 133 (LCL Plato 1. 364-373; 1. 468-481; 8. 210 f.); Cicero, *Tusculan Disputations* 1. 27:66 (LCL edition, pp. 76 f.).

^{ft467} Pietro Pomponazzi, *De immortalitate animae* (1516) 4 (tr. W. H. Hay in Cassirer, P.O. Kristeller, and J. H. Randall, *The Renaissance Philosophy of Man*, pp. 286-297). Cf. 1. 5:4, note 17.

^{ft468} Sec. 2, above.

^{ft469} Cf. 3. 9.

^{ft470} Cf. Plato, *Republic* 4. 439 CD (LCL Plato, *Republic* 1. 396 f.).

^{ft471} Plato, *Theaetetus* 184 D (LCL Plato 2. 156 f.).

^{ft472} Themistius, *In libros Aristotelis de anima paraphrasis* 2, 7 (ed. R. Heinze, pp. 36, 120-122).

^{ft473} Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 6. 2 (LCL edition, pp. 328 f.); Cicero, *De finibus* 2. 11:33 f.; 5. 6:17; 5. 13:36 (LCL edition, pp. 118 ff., 408 f., 432 f.).

^{ft474} Themistius, *op. cit.*, 7 (ed. Heinze, pp. 113 f.).

^{ft475} Plato, *Phaedrus* 253 D (LCL Plato 1. 492 f.).

^{ft476} Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, *loc. cit.*

^{ft477} Cf. 2. 2:12-26.

^{ft478} ἡγεμονικόν Cf. Plato, *Protagoras* 352 B (LCL Plato 4. 224); Plutarch, *De virtute morali* 441 C 3 (LCL Plutarch, *Moralia* 6. 22); Tertullian, *On the Soul* 14 (Waszink, *op. cit.*, pp. 17 ff.; CCL Tertullianus 2. 800; tr. ANF 3. 193).

ft479 Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, loc. cit.

ft480 2. 2: 2-4.

ft481 Augustine, *On Genesis, Against the Manichees* 2. 7:9 (MPL 34. 200 f.).

ft482 Augustine, *On Rebuke and Grace* 11:82 (MPL 44. 936; tr. NPNF 5. 484 f.).

CHAPTER 16

ft483 In editions 1539-1554, Calvin treated the topics of providence and predestination in the same chapter. In the final edition they are widely separated, providence being set here in the context of the knowledge of God the Creator, while predestination is postponed to 3. 21-24, where it comes within the general treatment of the redemptive work of the Holy Spirit. See Benoit, *Institution* 1. 221, note 2; P. Jacobs, *Pradestination und Verantwortlichkeit bei Calvin*, pp. 64-66, 71, et passim.

ft484 In 1. 5:14.

ft485 “*Orbis machinam.*” Cf. 1. 10:1, note 2.

ft486 “*Fortunae et casibus fortuitis.*” Cf. 1. 5:11; 1. 16:8, and accompanying notes.

ft487 “*Sophistae.*” The word is used by Calvin, in common with the other Reformers and with many Humanists, to designate the Scholastic writers when these are treated adversely.

ft488 Cf. 1. 13:18, note 39, and Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 1. 19:6: “An effect cannot possibly escape the order of the universal cause.”

ft489 Andreas Hyperius discusses this opinion adversely in his posthumously published *Methodus Theologiae* (Basel, 1568), pp. 232 ff., 252. Hyperius (1511-1564) was a Reformed scholar, and professor in Marburg.

ft490 This subject is treated by Calvin in relation to judicial astrology in *Avertissement contre l'astrologie judiciaire* (1549). (CR 7. 509-544, especially cols. 523, 525-583.) Cf. J. Bohatec, *Bude und Calvin*, pp. 270-280, where Calvin's opinions on the religious bearings of judicial astrology are seen to be in agreement with those of Pico della

Mirandola, the celebrated Christian Neoplatonist of Florence (d. 1494). On Pico's opinion, see also L. Thorndike, *A History of Magic and Experimental Science* 4. 534 ff. Cf. the first sentence of this section, and the similar language in 1. 2:2 and 1. 4:2.

^{ft491} Cf. 1. 2:2, note 7; 1. 4:2; Cicero, *Nature of the Gods* 1. 2:3; 1. 17:45; 1. 19:51; 1. 40:111 (LCL edition, pp. 4 f., 46 f., 50 f., 106 f.).

^{ft492} Pietro Pomponazzi's opinions may be alluded to here: cf. his *De fato, de libero arbitrio, et de praedestinatione* (1520) 2. 1, 4, 5, cited by Barth and Niesel (OS 3. 193) along with references to the thirteenth-century Averroists, Siger de Brabant and Boethius of Dacia, who denied the doctrine of providence.

^{ft493} Note that Calvin distinguishes the author of Hebrews from Paul. Cf. Comm. Heb., "Argument," where he says, "The manner of teaching and the style sufficiently show that Paul was not the author."

^{ft494} Cf. 1. 13:18, note 40.

^{ft495} Cf. 1. 14:22, note 32.

^{ft496} Cf. 3. 20:44.

^{ft497} Augustine, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* 2. 5:10 6. 12 (MPL 44. 577 ff.; tr. NPNF 5. 395 f.).

^{ft498} Basil, *Homilies on the Psalms*, ^{<193204>}Psalm 32:4 (MPG 29. 329 f.).

^{ft499} Augustine, *Retractations* 1. 1:2 (MPL 32, 585); *Against the Academics* 1,

1; 3. 2: 2-4 (MPL 32. 905, 935 f.; tr. ACW 12. 35 f., 98-101).

^{ft500} Augustine, *De diversis quaestionibus*, qu. 24, 27, 28 (MPL 40. 17 f.); *On the Trinity* 3. 4:9 (MPL 42. 873; tr. NPNF 3. 58 f.).

^{ft501} Cf. Comm. Harmony of the Evangelists, ^{<401029>}Matthew 10:29. Calvin holds all contingency within the operation of God's providence. So also Westminster Confession 5. 2: "...by the same providence, he ordereth... [all things] to fall out according to the nature of second causes, either necessarily, freely, or contingently." See the quoted statements on contingent events by Reformed theologians in Heppe RD, ch. 12, pp. 265 ff.

^{ft502} "*Eventus*."

^{ft503} Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 1. 19:3. Barth and Niesel, citing Bonaventura, Duns Scotus, Erasmus, and Eck in agreement, point out Luther's rejection of this view in his *De servo arbitrio* (*Werke* WA 18. 615 ff.). Melanchthon's position is not different from that of Aquinas and of Calvin: *Loci communes*, 1543 (CR Melanchthon 21. 649 f.); *Loci theologici*, 1559 (ed. Engelland, *op. cit.*, pp. 229 f., 233).

CHAPTER 17

^{ft504} Cf. 1. 5:11, note 34; Comm. ^{<193606>} Psalm 36:6; 73:1. C. Trinkhaus uses this passage to illustrate Calvin's stand "against the chaotic character of historical events and personal destinies": "Renaissance Problems in Calvin's Theology," *Studies in the Renaissance* 3, ed. W. Peery, p. 65.

^{ft505} For Calvin, every man in all circumstances has dealings with God (*negotium cum Deo*). Cf. 3. 3. 6; 3. 3. 16; 3. 7:2. This conviction was held by him in a very personal sense. For example, in his letter to Farel when in the stress of decision regarding his return to Geneva: "I am well aware that it is with God that I have to do [*mihi esse negotium cum Deo*]." The date of this letter is October 24, 1540, not as conjectured by Bonnet, August, 1541 (CR 11. 100; tr. Calvin, *Letters* 1. 281).

^{ft506} The reference is apparently to a criticism raised by Sebastian Castellio, or some advocate of his cause, against Calvin. Cf. Calvin's *Calumniarum nebulae cuiusdam...ad easdem responsio*, 1558 (CR 9. 269, 279). Cf. 1. 18. 1, note 3.

^{ft507} "*Aliam voluntatem absconditam*." Calvin does not delineate two wills in God, but thinks of the inaccessible abyss of God's inner being (cf. 1. 13:1-2) and the mysteries of revelation itself. Cf. 1. 18:2-3: "But even though his will is one and simple in him, it appears manifold to us" (sec. 3). Note also 1. 18, 1, 4 (the distinction between will and precept); 3. 20:43; 3. 24:17, note 31.

^{ft508} Cf. 1. 16:1; 3. 2:14.

^{ft509} Augustine, *On Diverse Questions*, qu. 27 (MPL 40. 18).

^{ft510} Cf. Calvin, *De aeterna Dei praedestinatione*, where he assails the "Sorbonnist dogma that ascribes to God absolute power" dissociated

from justice. “One might more readily take the sun’s light from its heat or its heat from its fire, than separate God’s power from his justice...He who severs God from law [*Deum exlegem qui facit*] despoils him of a part of his glory.” (CR 8. 361.) Similarly, in *Sermons on Job* 138, on ^{<182301>}Job 23:1-7: “What the Sorbonne doctors say, that God has an absolute power, is a diabolical blasphemy which has been invented in hell” (CR 34. 339 f.). Cf. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, p. 212. The opinion here censured was affirmed by Ockham: *Super quatuor libros sententiarum subtilissimae quaestiones* 1. 17:2; cf. Gabriel Biel, *Epythoma et collectorium circa quatuor sententiarum libros* 1. 17:2. Wendel indicates that Duns Scotus, usually cited as its originator, should be understood in a somewhat different sense (Wendel, *Calvin*, pp. 92 f.).

^{ft511} From Agamemnon’s address to the assembly of warriors in Homer, *Iliad* 19. 86 f. (LCL Homer, *Iliad* 2. 342 f.). (Calvin quotes the line in Greek without a translation.)

^{ft512} “*Deus impulsor fuit*,” etc. From a speech of Lyconides in Plautus, *Aulu laria* 737, 742: “*Deus impulsor mihi fuit...deos credo voluisse; nam nisi vellent, non fieret, scio*” (LCL Plautus 1. 310). The previous reference to the “youth” is to Pistoclerus in the *Bacchides* of Plautus.

^{ft513} The “profane men” are those of the Libertine sect. Cf. *Contre la secte phantastique des Libertins* 13-16 (CR 7. 183-198). Sections 3, 4, 7, 8 here employ a number of expressions found in this part of the tract.

^{ft514} Augustine, *Faith and the Creed* 4:10 (MPL 40. 187; tr. LCG VI. 359).

^{ft515} 1. 16:4.

^{ft516} Luther, in *Tesseradecas consolatoria* (*The Fourteen Comforts*), 1520, speaks impressively of God’s providential care of us even when we are unaware of it. *Werke* WA 6. 110f., 125f.; tr. B. Woolf, *Reformation Writings of Martin Luther* II. 28 ff., 55 ff. Calvin’s Commentaries on the Psalms abound in expressions of this sort.

^{ft517} “*Inaestimabilis piae roentis foelicitas*.” Cf. 1. 5:1, note 2.

^{ft518} Origen, *De principiis* 3. 1:17 (GCS 22. 228; MPG 11. 283 ff.; tr. ANF 4. 322; G. W. Butterworth, *Origen On First Principles*, pp. 193 f.).

^{ft519} Cf. Erasmus, *De libero arbitrio*, ed. J. von Walter (*Quellenschriften zur Geschichte des Protestantismus* 8), pp. 38, 79; Calvin, *Sermons sur le cantique du roi Ezekias* (on ^{<233809>}Isaiah 38:9-20) (CR. 25, 252-579),

CHAPTER 18

^{ft520} This chapter, new in 1559, treats many issues that appear incidentally in other contexts, e.g., 2. 4, 5; 3. 23, 24.

^{ft521} Lombard, *Sentences* 1. 45:11 (MPL 192. 643). Cf. Augustine, *De ordine* 1. 1-3 (MPL 32. 977 ff.; tr. R. P. Russell, *Divine Providence and the Problem of Evil*, pp. 6-11); *Enchiridion* 24:95 f. (MPL 40. 276; tr. LCC 7. 394 f.).

^{ft522} Cf. 1. 17:2, note 3. See also the tract *Calumniae nebulonis cuiusdam de occulta providentia Dei...ad easdem responsio* (1558). In the work, attributed to Sebastian Castellio, quoted and answered in this tract, Calvin is charged (sec. 7) with teaching that God has two contrary wills and is taunted with having two wills of his own, so that when he says one thing he thinks and wishes another. To this Calvin replies with some warmth (CR 9. 278 f., 302 ff.).

^{ft523} 2. 4. 1-4.

^{ft524} πολυπόκιλον

^{ft525} The two motifs of faith and human incapacity (*imbecillitas*) or sluggishness (*hebetudo*) are the basis on which Calvin, in secs. 3 and 4, consciously makes self-contradictory statements about God “willing” what he “forbids,” yet with a will that remains “one and simple.” Logic is thus subordinated to Scripture, and, characteristically for Calvin, is rejected as a device for understanding what is beyond the limits of the revealed mysteries. Cf. I. 8. 1-3; 3. 2:14; 3. 24:17; and the rejection of a logical conclusion on the same grounds in 3. 18:10.

^{ft526} Augustine, *Enchiridion* 26: 100f. (MPL 40. 279; tr. LCC 7. 399f.); Augustine, *Psalms*, ^{<19B102>}Psalms 111:2 (Latin, Psalm 110. 2) (MPL 37. 1464; Calvin, Comm. ^{<19B102>}Psalms 111:2).

^{ft527} Augustine, *Letters* 43. 2 (MPL 33. 324; tr. FC 18. 63).

^{ft528} Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will* 21:42 (MPL 44-907; tr. NPNF 5. 462).

^{ft529} Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 61. 22: “*Discutit Deus quid quisque voluerit; non quid potuerit*” (MPL 36. 746; tr. LF [Psalm 62] *Psalms* 3. 208); Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 7 (on ^{<430407>}John 4:7): “*Non quid faciat homo, sed quo animo et voluntate faciat*” (MPL 35. 2033; tr. NPNF 7. 503 f.).