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THEOLOGY

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BOOK 4

The External Means or Aims by Which God Invites Us Into the Society of Christ and Holds Us Therein

CHAPTER 1

THE TRUE CHURCH^{F1} WITH WHICH AS MOTHER OF ALL THE GODLY WE MUST KEEP UNITY

(The Holy Catholic Church, our mother, 1-4)

1. THE NECESSITY OF THE CHURCH

As explained in the previous book, it is by the faith in the gospel that Christ becomes ours and we are made partakers of the salvation and eternal blessedness brought by him. Since, however, in our ignorance and sloth (to which I add fickleness of disposition) we need outward helps to beget and increase faith within us, and advance it to its goal, God has also added these aids that he may provide for our weakness. And in order that the preaching of the gospel might flourish, he deposited this treasure in the church. He instituted “pastors and teachers” [^{<490411>}Ephesians 4:11] through whose lips he might teach his own; he furnished them with authority; finally, he omitted nothing that might make for holy agreement of faith and for right order. First of all, he instituted sacraments, which we who have experienced them feel to be highly useful aids to foster and strengthen faith. Shut up as we are in the prison house of our flesh, we have not yet attained angelic rank. God, therefore, in his wonderful providence accommodating himself to our capacity, has prescribed a way for us, though still far off, to draw near to him.

Accordingly, our plan of instruction now requires us to discuss the church, its government, orders, and power; then the sacraments; and lastly, the civil order.^{F2} At the same time we are to call back godly readers from those

corruptions by which Satan, in the papacy, has polluted everything God had appointed for our salvation.

I shall start, then, with the church, into whose bosom God is pleased to gather his sons, not only that they may be nourished by her help and ministry as long as they are infants and children, but also that they may be guided by her motherly care until they mature and at last reach the goal of faith. “For what God has joined together, it is not lawful to put asunder” [^{<411009>}Mark 10:9 p.], so that, for those to whom he is Father the church may also be Mother.^{F3} And this was so not only under the law but also after Christ’s coming, as Paul testifies when he teaches that we are the children of the new and heavenly Jerusalem [^{<480426>}Galatians 4:26].

2. WHAT IS THE RELATIONSHIP OF CHURCH AND CREED?

The article in the Creed in which we profess to “believe the church” refers not only to the visible church (our present topic) but also to all God’s elect, in whose number are also included the dead. The word “believe” is used because often no other distinction can be made between God’s children and the ungodly, between his own flock and wild beasts, There is no good reason why many insert the preposition “in.” I admit that it is more usual and is not without the support of antiquity, since the Nicene Creed, as reported in the *Ecclesiastical History*, adds the preposition?^{F4} Still, we should at the same time note from the writings of the fathers that in early times it was accepted as beyond controversy that people should say, “I believe the church,” not “*in* the church.” So spoke Augustine and that ancient writer (whoever he was) whose treatise *On the Exposition of the Creed* bears Cyprian’s name.^{F5} Besides, they clearly note that to add the preposition would make it an improper expression, which opinion they confirm by substantial reasoning. We testify that we believe *in* God because our mind reposes in him as truthful, and our trust rests in him. To say “*in* the church” would be as inappropriate as “*in* the forgiveness of sins” or “*in* the resurrection of the body.” Consequently, although I do not wish to dispute over words, I should prefer to use the proper phrase, one better fitted to express the matter, rather than to affect forms of speaking which needlessly obscure it.

But the purpose is for us to know that, even though the devil moves every stone to destroy Christ's grace, and though God's enemies also rage with the same savage fury, it cannot be extinguished; nor can Christ's blood be made barren, nay, even some good may come of it. We must thus consider both God's secret election and his inner call. For he alone "knows who are his" [^{<550219>} 2 Timothy 2:19], and, as Paul says, encloses them under his seal [^{<490113>} Ephesians 1:13], except that they bear his insignia by which they may be distinguished from the reprobate. But because a small and contemptible number are hidden in a huge multitude and a few grains of wheat are covered by a pile of chaff, we must leave to God alone the knowledge of his church, whose foundation is his secret election. It is not sufficient, indeed, for us to comprehend in mind and thought the multitude of the elect, unless we consider the unity of the church as that into which we are convinced we have been truly engrafted. For no hope of future inheritance remains to us unless we have been united with all other members under Christ, our Head.

The church is called "catholic," or "universal," because there could not be two or three churches unless Christ be torn asunder [cf. ^{<460113>} 1 Corinthians 1:13]—which cannot happen! But all the elect are so united in Christ [cf. ^{<490122>} Ephesians 1:22-23] that as they are dependent on one Head, they also grow together into one body, being joined and knit together [cf. ^{<490416>} Ephesians 4:16] as are the limbs of a body [^{<451205>} Romans 12:5; ^{<461017>} 1 Corinthians 10:17; 12:12, 27]. They are made truly one since they live together in one faith, hope, and love, and in the same Spirit of God. For they have been called not only into the same inheritance of eternal life but also to participate in one God and Christ [^{<490530>} Ephesians 5:30]. Although the melancholy desolation which confronts us on every side may cry that no remnant of the church is left, let us know that Christ's death is fruitful, and that God miraculously keeps his church as in hiding places.^{F6} So it was said to Elijah, "I have kept for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee before Baal" [^{<111918>} 1 Kings 19:18 p.].

3. "THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS"

This article of the Creed also applies to some extent to the outward church, in that each of us should keep in brotherly agreement with all

God's children, should yield to the church the authority it deserves, in short, should act as one of the flock. Accordingly, "the communion of saints" is added. This clause, though generally omitted by the ancients,^{F7} ought not to be overlooked, for it very well expresses what the church is. It is as if one said that the saints are gathered into the society of Christ on the principle that whatever benefits God confers upon them, they should in turn share with one another. This does not, however, rule out diversity of graces, inasmuch as we know the gifts of the Spirit are variously distributed. Nor is civil order disturbed, which allows each individual to own his private possessions, since it is necessary to keep peace among men that the ownership of property should be distinct and personal among them. But a community is affirmed, such as Luke describes, in which the heart and soul of the multitude of believers are one [^{<440432>} Acts 4:32]; and such as Paul has in mind when he urges the Ephesians to be "one body and one Spirit, just as" they "were called in one hope" [^{<490404>} Ephesians 4:4 p.]. If truly convinced that God is the common Father of all and Christ the common Head, being united in brotherly love, they cannot but share their benefits with one another.

Now, it is very important for us to know what benefit we shall gain from this. The basis on which we believe the church is that we are fully convinced we are members of it. In this way our salvation rests upon sure and firm supports, so that, even if the whole fabric of the world were overthrown, the church could neither totter nor fall. First, it stands by God's election, and cannot waver or fail any more than his eternal providence can. Secondly, it has in a way been joined to the steadfastness of Christ, who will no more allow his believers to be estranged from him than that his members be rent and torn asunder. Besides, we are certain that, while we remain within the bosom of the church, the truth will always abide with us. Finally, we feel that these promises apply to us: "There will be salvation in Zion" [^{<290232>} Joel 2:32; ^{<310117>} Obadiah 17, cf. Vg.]; "God will abide in the midst of Jerusalem forever, that it may never be moved" [^{<194605>} Psalm 46:5]. So powerful is participation in the church that it keeps us in the society of God. In the very word "communion"^{F8} there is a wealth of comfort because, while it is determined that whatever the Lord bestows upon his members and ours belongs to us, our hope is strengthened by all the benefits they receive.

Yet, to embrace the unity of the church in this way, we need not (as we have said)^{F9} see the church with the eyes or touch it with the hands. Rather, the fact that it belongs to the realm of faith should warn us to regard it no less since it passes our understanding than if it were clearly visible. And our faith is no worse because it recognizes a church beyond our ken. For here we are not bidden to distinguish between reprobate and elect—that is for God alone, not for us, to do—but to establish with certainty in our hearts that all those who, by the kindness of God the Father, through the working of the Holy Spirit, have entered into fellowship with Christ, are set apart as God’s property and personal possession; and that when we are of their number we share that great grace.

4. THE VISIBLE CHURCH AS MOTHER OF BELIEVERS

But because it is now our intention to discuss the visible church, let us learn even from the simple title “mother”^{F10} how useful, indeed how necessary, it is that we should know her. For there is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourish us at her breast, and lastly, unless she keep us under her care and guidance until, putting off mortal flesh, we become like the angels [^{<402230>}Matthew 22:30]. Our weakness does not allow us to be dismissed from her school until we have been pupils all our lives. Furthermore, away from her bosom one cannot hope for any forgiveness of sins or any salvation, as Isaiah [^{<233732>}Isaiah 37:32] and Joel [^{<290232>}Joel 2:32] testify. Ezekiel agrees with them when he declares that those whom God rejects from heavenly life will not be enrolled among God’s people [^{<261309>}Ezekiel 13:9]. On the other hand, those who turn to the cultivation of true godliness are said to inscribe their names among the citizens of Jerusalem [cf. ^{<235605>}Isaiah 56:5; ^{<198706>}Psalms 87:6]. For this reason, it is said in another psalm: “Remember me, O Jehovah, with favor toward thy people; visit me with salvation: that I may see the well-doing of thy chosen ones, that I may rejoice in the joy of thy nation, that I may be glad with thine inheritance” [^{<19A604>}Psalms 106:4-5 p.; cf. ^{<19A504>}Psalms 105:4, Vg., etc.]. By these words God’s fatherly favor and the especial witness of spiritual life are limited to his flock, so that it is always disastrous to leave the church.

(Her ministers, speaking for God, not to be despised, 5-6)

5. EDUCATION THROUGH THE CHURCH, ITS VALUE AND ITS OBLIGATION

But let us proceed to set forth what pertains to this topic. Paul writes that Christ, “that he might fill all things,” appointed some to be “apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, for the equipment of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ, until we all reach the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to perfect manhood, to the measure of the fully mature age of Christ” [^{<490410>}Ephesians 4:10-13, Comm., but cf. also Vg.]. We see how God, who could in a moment perfect his own, nevertheless desires them to grow up into manhood solely under the education of the church. We see the way set for it: the preaching of the heavenly doctrine has been enjoined upon the pastors. We see that all are brought under the same regulation, that with a gentle and teachable spirit they may allow themselves to be governed by teachers appointed to this function. Isaiah had long before distinguished Christ’s Kingdom by this mark: “My spirit which is upon you, and my words which I have put in your mouth, shall never depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your children, or... of your children’s children” [^{<235921>}Isaiah 59:21]. From this it follows that all those who spurn the spiritual food, divinely extended to them through the hand of the church, deserve to perish in famine and hunger. God breathes faith into us only by the instrument of his gospel, as Paul points out that “faith comes from hearing” [^{<451017>}Romans 10:17]. Likewise, the power to save rests with God [^{<450116>}Romans 1:16]; but (as Paul again testifies) He displays and unfolds it in the preaching of the gospel [*ibid.*].

By this plan He willed of old that holy assemblies be held at the sanctuary in order that the doctrine taught by the mouth of the priest might foster agreement in faith. The Temple is called God’s “resting place” [^{<19D214>}Psalm 132:14]; the sanctuary, his “dwelling” [^{<235715>}Isaiah 57:15], where he is said to sit among the cherubim [^{<198001>}Psalm 80:1]. Glorious titles, they are used solely to bring esteem, love, reverence, and dignity to the ministry of the heavenly doctrine. Otherwise, the appearance of a mortal and despised man would much detract from them.

To make us aware, then, that an inestimable treasure is given us in earthen vessels [^{<470407>} 2 Corinthians 4:7], God himself appears in our midst, and, as Author of this order, would have men recognize him as present in his institution.

Accordingly, after he forbade his people to devote themselves to auguries, divinations, magic arts, necromancy, and other superstitions [^{<051810>} Deuteronomy 18:10-11; ^{<031931>} Leviticus 19:31], he added that he would give what ought to suffice for all: that they should never be destitute of prophets [cf. ^{<051815>} Deuteronomy 18:15]. But as he did not entrust the ancient folk to angels but raised up teachers from the earth truly to perform the angelic office, so also today it is his will to teach us through human means. As he was of old not content with the law alone, but added priests as interpreters from whose lips the people might ask its true meaning [cf. ^{<390207>} Malachi 2:7], so today he not only desires us to be attentive to its reading, but also appoints instructors to help us by their effort. This is doubly useful. On the one hand, he proves our obedience by a very good test when we hear his ministers speaking just as if he himself spoke. On the other, he also provides for our weakness in that he prefers to address us in human fashion through interpreters in order to draw us to himself, rather than to thunder at us and drive us away. Indeed, from the dread with which God's majesty justly overwhelms them, all the pious truly feel how much this familiar sort of teaching is needed.

Those who think the authority of the Word is dragged down by the baseness of the men called to teach it disclose their own ungratefulness. For, among the many excellent gifts with which God has adorned the human race, it is a singular privilege that he deigns to consecrate to himself the mouths and tongues of men in order that his voice may resound in them.^{F11} Let us accordingly not in turn dislike to embrace obediently the doctrine of salvation put forth by his command and by his own mouth. For, although God's power is not bound to outward means, he has nonetheless bound us to this ordinary manner of teaching. Fanatical men, refusing to hold fast to it, entangle themselves in many deadly snares. Many are led either by pride, dislike, or rivalry to the conviction that they can profit enough from private reading and meditation; hence they despise public assemblies and deem preaching superfluous. But, since they do their utmost to sever or break the sacred bond of unity, no one escapes the

just penalty of this unholy separation without bewitching himself with pestilent errors and foulest delusions. In order, then, that pure simplicity of faith may flourish among us, let us not be reluctant to use this exercise of religion which God, by ordaining it, has shown us to be necessary and highly approved. No one—not even a fanatical beast—ever existed who would tell us to close our ears to God. But in every age the prophets and godly teachers have had a difficult struggle with the ungodly, who in their stubbornness can never submit to the yoke of being taught by human word and ministry. This is like blotting out the face of God which shines upon us in teaching. Believers were bidden of old to seek the face of God in the sanctuary [^{<19A504>}Psalm 105:4], as is oftentimes repeated in the law [^{<192708>}Psalm 27:8; 100:2; 105:4; ^{<131611>}1 Chronicles 16:11; ^{<140714>}2 Chronicles 7:14] for no other reason than that for them the teaching of the law and the exhortations of the prophets were a living image of God, just as Paul asserts that in his preaching the glory of God shines in the face of Christ [^{<470406>}2 Corinthians 4:6].

More detestable than this attitude is that of the apostates who have a passion for splitting churches, in effect driving the sheep from their fold and casting them into the jaws of wolves. We must hold to what we have quoted from Paul—that the church is built up solely by outward preaching, and that the saints are held together by one bond only: that with common accord, through learning and advancement, they keep the church order established by God [cf. ^{<490412>}Ephesians 4:12]. It was especially to this end that, as I have said, in ancient times under the law all believers were commanded to assemble at the sanctuary. For while Moses speaks of God's dwelling place, at the same time the place where God has put the memory of his name he calls the "place of God's name" [cf. ^{<022024>}Exodus 20:24]. He plainly teaches thereby that there can be no use of the place apart from the doctrine of godliness. Doubtless for the same reason David complains with great bitterness of spirit that he has been barred from the Tabernacle through the tyranny and cruelty of his enemies [^{<198402>}Psalm 84:2-3]. To many this seems almost a childish complaint, for to be denied access to the Temple would be a very slight loss, and would destroy but little pleasure, provided other delights were still at hand. Nevertheless, he laments that he burns, is tormented and well-nigh consumed, with this single trouble, vexation, and sorrow. Surely, this is

because believers have no greater help than public worship, for by it God raises his own folk upward step by step.

We must observe that God always revealed himself thus to the holy patriarchs in the mirror of his teaching in order to be known spiritually. Accordingly, the Temple is called not only “the face of God” [cf. ^{<194202>} Psalm 42:2] but (to remove all cause for superstition) his “footstool” [^{<19D207>} Psalm 132:7; 99:5; ^{<132802>} 1 Chronicles 28:2]. Happy indeed is that attainment of unity of faith [cf. ^{<490413>} Ephesians 4:13] when all—from the highest to the lowest—aspire toward the Head! Whatever temples the Gentiles built for God on any other principle were a mere profanation of his worship. To a degree the Jews fell into this, though not with equal grossness. Stephen upbraided them in the words of Isaiah: “God dwells not in temples made with hands,” etc. [^{<440748>} Acts 7:48 p.; ^{<236601>} Isaiah 66:1-2]. By his Word, God alone sanctifies temples to himself for lawful use. And if we rashly attempt anything without his command, strange inventions forthwith cling to the bad beginning and spread evil without measure.

Yet Xerxes, when he on the advice of his wise men rashly burned or destroyed all the temples of Greece, thought it absurd for gods, who ought to have free access to all things, to be shut up within walls and roofs.^{F12} As if it were not in God’s power somehow to come down to us, in order to be near us, yet without changing place or confining us to earthly means; but rather by these to bear us up as if in chariots to his heavenly glory, a glory that fills all things with its immeasurableness and even surpasses the heavens in height!

6. MEANING AND LIMITS OF THE MINISTRY

In our own day there has been great controversy over the efficacy of the ministry. Some exaggerate its dignity beyond measure. Others contend that what belongs to the Holy Spirit is wrongly transferred to mortal men—if we suppose that ministers and teachers penetrate into minds and hearts and so correct both blindness of mind and hardness of heart.^{F13} We must therefore correctly assess this controversy.

The points in dispute on both sides will be readily and easily resolved by expressly noting

(1) the passages in which God as the author of preaching, joining his Spirit with it, promises benefits from it;

(2) the passages in which God, separating himself from outward helps, claims for himself alone both the beginnings of faith and its entire course.

1. The task of the second Elijah was, according to Malachi, to enlighten the minds and “to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the unbelievers to the wisdom of the just” [^{<420117>}Luke 1:17; ^{<390405>}Malachi 4:5-6]. Christ declares that he sends the apostles to bring forth fruit from their labor [^{<431516>}John 15:16]. Peter briefly defines what that fruit is, saying that we are “born anew... of incorruptible seed” [^{<600123>}1 Peter 1:23 p.]. Paul therefore boasts that he “begat” the Corinthians “through the gospel” [^{<460415>}1 Corinthians 4:15], and that they are the “seal” of his “apostleship” [^{<460902>}1 Corinthians 9:2], nay, that he was no minister of the letter who only smote upon ears with the sound of his voice, but that the working of the Spirit was given him in order that his teaching might not be unprofitable [^{<470306>}2 Corinthians 3:6]. In this same sense he elsewhere denies that his gospel was so much in words as in power [^{<460204>}1 Corinthians 2:4]. He also affirms that the Galatians “received... the Spirit... by the hearing of faith”

[^{<480302>}Galatians 3:2]. Briefly, in many passages he not only makes himself a co-worker of God but also assigns himself the function of imparting salvation [^{<460309>}1 Corinthians 3:9 ff.].

2. In mentioning all these things Paul did not intend to credit to himself even a particle apart from God. This he briefly explains elsewhere: “Our labor in the Lord was not in vain” [^{<520305>}1 Thessalonians 3:5 p.], “with... the might which he mightily inspires within me” [^{<510129>}Colossians 1:29]. Likewise: “He who worked through Peter for the mission to the circumcised worked through me also for the Gentiles” [^{<480208>}Galatians 2:8]. Moreover, it is clear from other passages how he leaves nothing to ministers by themselves. “Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but it is God alone who gives the growth” [^{<460307>}1 Corinthians 3:7]. Likewise: “I worked more than all; not I, but the grace of God which was with me” [^{<461510>}1 Corinthians 15:10 p.]. Surely we ought to remember those statements in which God, ascribing to himself illumination

of mind and renewal of heart, warns that it is sacrilege for man to claim any part of either for himself.

Meanwhile, anyone who presents himself in a teachable spirit to the ministers ordained by God shall know by the result that with good reason this way of teaching was pleasing to God, and also that with good reason this yoke of moderation was imposed on believers.

(The visible church: its membership and the marks by which it is recognized, 7-9)

7. INVISIBLE AND VISIBLE CHURCH

“How we are to judge the church visible, which falls within our knowledge, is, I believe, already evident from the above discussion. For we have said that Holy Scripture speaks of the church in two ways. Sometimes by the term “church” it means that which is actually in God’s presence, into which no persons are received but those who are children of God by grace of adoption and true members of Christ by sanctification of the Holy Spirit. Then, indeed, the church includes not only the saints presently living on earth, but all the elect from the beginning of the world. Often, however, the name “church” designates the whole multitude of men spread over the earth who profess to worship one God and Christ. By baptism we are initiated into faith in him; by partaking in the Lord’s Supper we attest our unity in true doctrine and love; in the Word of the Lord we have agreement, and for the preaching of the Word the ministry instituted by Christ is preserved. In this church are mingled many hypocrites who have nothing of Christ but the name and outward appearance. There are very many ambitious, greedy, envious persons, evil speakers, and some of quite unclean life. Such are tolerated for a time either because they cannot be convicted by a competent tribunal or because a vigorous discipline does not always flourish as it ought.

Just as we must believe, therefore, that the former church, invisible to us,^{F14} is visible to the eyes of God alone, so we are commanded to revere and keep communion with the latter, which is called “church” in respect to men.

8. THE LIMITATION OF OUR JUDGMENT

Accordingly, the Lord by certain marks and tokens has pointed out to us what we should know about the church. As we have cited above from Paul, to know who are His is a prerogative belonging solely to God [^{<550219>}2 Timothy 2:19].^{F15} Steps were indeed thus taken to restrain men's undue rashness; and daily events themselves remind us how far his secret judgments surpass our comprehension. For those who seemed utterly lost and quite beyond hope are by his goodness called back to the way; while those who more than others seemed to stand firm often fall. "Therefore, according to God's secret predestination (as Augustine says), "many sheep are without, and many wolves are within."^{F16} For he knows and has marked those who know neither him nor themselves. Of those who openly wear his badge, his eyes alone see the ones who are unfeignedly holy and will persevere to the very end [^{<402413>}Matthew 24:13]—the ultimate point of salvation.

But on the other hand, because he foresaw it to be of some value for us to know who were to be counted as his children, he has in this regard accommodated himself to our capacity. And, since assurance of faith was not necessary, he substituted for it a certain charitable judgment whereby we recognize as members of the church those who, by confession of faith, by example of life, and by partaking of the sacraments, profess the same God and Christ with us.^{F17} He has, moreover, set off by plainer marks the knowledge of his very body to us, knowing how necessary it is to our salvation.

9. THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH AND OUR APPLICATION OF THEM TO JUDGMENT

From this the face of the church comes forth and becomes visible to our eyes. Wherever we see the Word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution, there, it is not to be doubted, a church of God exists [cf. ^{<490220>}Ephesians 2:20].^{F18} For his promise cannot fail: "Wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them" [^{<401820>}Matthew 18:20].

But that we may clearly grasp the sum of this matter, we must proceed by the following steps: the church universal is a multitude gathered from all

nations; it is divided and dispersed in separate places, but agrees on the one truth of divine doctrine, and is bound by the bond of the same religion. Under it are thus included individual churches, disposed in towns and villages according to human need, so that each rightly has the name and authority of the church. Individual men who, by their profession of religion, are reckoned within such churches, even though they may actually be strangers to the church, still in a sense belong to it until they have been rejected by public judgment.

There is, however, a slightly different basis for judgment concerning individual men and churches. For it may happen that we ought to treat like brothers and count as believers those whom we think unworthy of the fellowship of the godly, because of the common agreement of the church by which they are borne and tolerated in the body of Christ. We do not by our vote approve such persons as members of the church, but we leave to them such place as they occupy among the people of God until it is lawfully taken from them.

But we must think otherwise of the whole multitude itself. If it has the ministry of the Word and honors it, if it has the administration of the sacraments, it deserves without doubt to be held and considered a church. For it is certain that such things are not without fruit. In this way we preserve for the universal church its unity, which devilish spirits have always tried to sunder; and we do not defraud of their authority those lawful assemblies which have been set up in accordance with local needs.

(A church with these marks, however defective, is not to be forsaken: the sin of schism, 10-16)

10. MARKS AND AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH

We have laid down as distinguishing marks of the church the preaching of the Word and the observance of the sacraments?^{F19} These can never exist without bringing forth fruit and prospering by God's blessing. I do not say that wherever the Word is preached there will be immediate fruit; but wherever it is received and has a fixed abode, it shows its effectiveness. However it may be, where the preaching of the gospel is reverently heard and the sacraments are not neglected, there for the time being no deceitful or ambiguous form of the church is seen; and no one is permitted to spurn

its authority, flout its warnings, resist its counsels, or make light of its chastisements—much less to desert it and break its unity. For the Lord esteems the communion of his church so highly that he counts as a traitor and apostate from Christianity anyone who arrogantly leaves any Christian society, provided it cherishes the true ministry of Word and sacraments. He so esteems the authority of the church that when it is violated he believes his own diminished.

It is of no small importance that it is called “the pillar and ground of the truth” and “the house of God” [^{<540315>} 1 Timothy 3:15, KJV]. By these words Paul means that the church is the faithful keeper of God’s truth in order that it may not perish in the world. For by its ministry and labor God willed to have the preaching of his Word kept pure and to show himself the Father of a family, while he feeds us with spiritual food and provides everything that makes for our salvation. It is also no common praise to say that Christ has chosen and set apart the church as his bride, “without spot or wrinkle” [^{<490527>} Ephesians 5:27], “his body and... fullness” [^{<490123>} Ephesians 1:23]. From this it follows that separation from the church is the denial of God and Christ. Hence, we must even more avoid so wicked a separation. For when with all our might we are attempting the overthrow of God’s truth, we deserve to have him hurl the whole thunderbolt of his wrath to crush us. Nor can any more atrocious crime be conceived than for us by sacrilegious disloyalty to violate the marriage that the only-begotten Son of God deigned to contract with us. [Cf. Ephesians 5:23-32.]

11. THE INVIOLEABLE VALIDITY OF THE MARKS

Let us therefore carefully keep these marks imprinted upon our minds and esteem them in accordance with the Lord’s will. For there is nothing that Satan plots more than to remove and do away with one or both of these. Sometimes he tries by effacing and destroying these marks to remove the true and genuine distinction of the church. Sometimes he tries by heaping contempt upon them to drag us away from the church in open rebellion. By his craft the pure preaching of the Word has in some ages disappeared; and now with the same malice he is striving to overthrow the ministry, a ministry Christ so ordained in the church that, if destroyed, the upbuilding of the church would fail [^{<490412>} Ephesians 4:12]. But how dangerous—

may, how deadly—a temptation is it, when one is prompted to withdraw from that congregation wherein are seen the signs and tokens with which the Lord thought his church sufficiently marked? We see what great heed we are to take on either hand. For, in order that the title “church” may not deceive us, every congregation that claims the name “church” must be tested by this standard as by a touchstone?^{F20} If in Word and sacraments it has the order approved by the Lord, it will not deceive; let us, then, confidently pay to it the honor due to churches. But again, if, devoid of Word and sacraments, it advertises the name of church, we must just as scrupulously beware such deceits, as we must avoid rashness and pride on the other side.

12. HEEDING THE MARKS GUARDS AGAINST CAPRICIOUS SEPARATION

The pure ministry of the Word and pure mode of celebrating the sacraments are, as we say, sufficient pledge and guarantee that we may safely embrace as church any society in which both these marks exist. The principle extends to the point that we must not reject it so long as it retains them, even if it otherwise swarms with many faults.

What is more, some fault may creep into the administration of either doctrine or sacraments, but this ought not to estrange us from communion with the church. For not all the articles of true doctrine are of the same sort. Some are so necessary to know that they should be certain and unquestioned by all men as the proper principles of religion. Such are: God is one; Christ is God and the Son of God; our salvation rests in God’s mercy; and the like. Among the churches there are other articles of doctrine disputed which still do not break the unity of faith. Suppose that one church believes—short of unbridled contention and opinionated stubbornness—that souls upon leaving bodies fly to heaven; while another, not daring to define the place, is convinced nevertheless that they live to the Lord. What churches would disagree on this one point? Here are the apostle’s words: “Let us therefore, as many as are perfect, be of the same mind; and if you be differently minded in anything, God shall reveal this also to you” [^{<500315>}Philippians 3:15]. Does this not sufficiently indicate that a difference of opinion over these nonessential matters^{F21} should in no wise be the basis of schism among Christians? First and

foremost, we should agree on all points. But since all men are somewhat beclouded with ignorance, either we must leave no church remaining, or we must condone delusion in those matters which can go unknown without harm to the sum of religion and without loss of salvation.

But here I would not support even the slightest errors with the thought of fostering them through flattery and connivance. But I say we must not thoughtlessly forsake the church because of any petty dissensions. For in it alone is kept safe and uncorrupted that doctrine in which piety stands sound and the use of the sacraments ordained by the Lord is guarded. In the meantime, if we try to correct what displeases us, we do so out of duty. Paul's statement applies to this: "If a better revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent" [^{<461430>} 1 Corinthians 14:30 p.]. From this it is clear that every member of the church is charged with the responsibility of public edification according to the measure of his grace, provided he perform it decently and in order.^{F22} That is, we are neither to renounce the communion of the church nor, remaining in it, to disturb its peace and duly ordered discipline.

13. SCANDAL IN THE CHURCH NO OCCASION FOR LEAVING IT

In bearing with imperfections of life we ought to be far more considerate. For here the descent is very slippery and Satan ambushes us with no ordinary devices. For there have always been those who, imbued with a false conviction of their own perfect sanctity, as if they had already become a sort of airy spirits,^{F23} spurned association with all men in whom they discern any remnant of human nature. The Cathari of old were of this sort, as well as the Donatists, who approached them in foolishness. Such today are some of the Anabaptists who wish to appear advanced beyond other men.

There are others who sin more out of ill-advised zeal for righteousness than out of that insane pride. When they do not see a quality of life corresponding to the doctrine of the gospel among those to whom it is announced, they immediately judge that no church exists in that place.^{F24} This is a very legitimate complaint, and we give all too much occasion for it in this most miserable age. And our cursed sloth is not to be excused, for

the Lord will not allow it to go unpunished, seeing that he has already begun to chastise it with heavy stripes. Woe to us, then, who act with such dissolute and criminal license that weak consciences are wounded because of us! But on their part those of whom we have spoken sin in that they do not know how to restrain their disfavor. For where the Lord requires kindness, they neglect it and give themselves over completely to immoderate severity. Indeed, because they think no church exists where there are not perfect purity and integrity of life, they depart out of hatred of wickedness from the lawful church, while they fancy themselves turning aside from the faction of the wicked.

They claim that the church of Christ is holy [^{<490526>} Ephesians 5:26]. But in order that they may know that the church is at the same time mingled of good men and bad, let them hear the parable from Christ's lips that compares the church to a net bin which all kinds of fish are gathered and are not sorted until laid out on the shore [^{<401347>} Matthew 13:47-58]. Let them hear that it is like a field sown with good seed which is through the enemy's deceit scattered with tares and is not purged of them until the harvest is brought into the threshing floor [^{<401324>} Matthew 13:24-3-]. Let them hear finally that it is like a threshing floor on which grain is so collected that it lies hidden under the chaff until, winnowed by fan and sieve, it is at last stored in the granary [^{<400312>} Matthew 3:12]. But if the Lord declares that the church is to labor under this evil—to be weighed down with the mixture of the wicked—until the Day of Judgment, they are vainly seeking a church besmirched with no blemish.

14. PAUL AND THE NEEDS OF HIS CONGREGATIONS

But, they cry out, it is intolerable that a plague of vices rages far and wide. Suppose the apostle's opinion here again answers them. Among the Corinthians no slight number had gone astray; in fact, almost the whole body was infected. There was not one kind of sin only, but very many; and they were no light errors but frightful misdeeds; there was corruption not only of morals but of doctrine. What does the holy apostle—the instrument of the Heavenly Spirit, by whose testimony the church stands or falls—do about this? Does he seek to separate himself from such? Does he cast them out of Christ's Kingdom? Does he fell them with the ultimate thunderbolt of anathema? He not only does nothing of the sort; he even

recognizes and proclaims them to be the church of Christ and the communion of saints [^{<460102>} 1 Corinthians 1:2]! Among the Corinthians quarrels, divisions, and jealousies flare [^{<460111>} 1 Corinthians 1:11; 3:3; 5:1; 6:7; 9:1 ff.]; disputes and altercations burgeon together with greed; an evil deed is openly approved which even pagans would detest [^{<460501>} 1 Corinthians 5:1]; the name of Paul (whom they ought to have honored as a father) is insolently defamed; some mock the resurrection of the dead, to the destruction of the whole gospel as well [^{<461519>} 1 Corinthians 15:19]; God's free gifts serve ambition, not love [cf. ^{<461305>} 1 Corinthians 13:5]; and many things are done without decency or order. Yet the church abides among them because the ministry of Word and sacraments remains unrepudiated there. Who, then, would dare snatch the title "church" from these who cannot be charged with even a tenth part of such misdeeds? What, I ask, would those who rage with such churlishness against present-day churches have done with the Galatians, all but deserters of the gospel, among whom this same apostle still recognized churches [^{<480102>} Galatians 1:2]?

15. FELLOWSHIP WITH WICKED PERSONS

They also object that Paul severely rebuked the Corinthians for tolerating an infamous man in their fellowship [^{<460502>} 1 Corinthians 5:2]. Then he lays down a general principle wherein he declares it wrong even to eat bread with a man of shameful life [^{<460511>} 1 Corinthians 5:11]. Here they exclaim, "If it is not permitted to eat ordinary bread, how is it permitted to eat the Lord's bread?"

I confess it a great disgrace if pigs and dogs have a place among the children of God, and a still greater disgrace if the sacred body of Christ be prostituted to them. And indeed, if churches are well ordered, they will not bear the wicked in their bosom. Nor will they indiscriminately admit worthy and unworthy together to that sacred banquet. But because pastors are not always zealously on the watch, and are also sometimes more lenient than they should be, or are hindered from being able to exercise the severity they would like, the result is that even the openly wicked are not always removed from the company of the saints. This I admit to be a fault and I do not intend to excuse it, since Paul sharply rebukes it in the Corinthians. But even if the church be slack in its duty,

still each and every individual has not the right at once to take upon himself the decision to separate. Indeed, I do not deny that it is the godly man's duty to abstain from all familiarity with the wicked, and not to enmesh himself with them in any voluntary relationship. But it is one thing to flee the boon companionship of the wicked; another, in hating them, to renounce the communion of the church.

But in thinking it a sacrilege to partake of the Lord's bread with the wicked, they are much more rigid than Paul. For when Paul urges us to a holy and pure partaking of it, he does not require that one examine another, or every one the whole church, but that each individual prove himself [^{<461128>} 1 Corinthians 11:28]. If it were unlawful to partake of communion with an unworthy person, surely Paul would bid us investigate whether there is anyone in the multitude whose uncleanness pollutes us. But when he requires each one to prove himself alone, he shows that we are not at all harmed if anyone unworthy foists himself upon us. What follows agrees with this: "He who eats unworthily eats and drinks judgment upon himself" [^{<461129>} 1 Corinthians 11:29]. Paul does not say "upon others," but "upon himself." And justly. For individuals ought not to have the authority to determine who are to be received and who are to be rejected. This cognizance belongs to the church as a whole and cannot be exercised without lawful order, as will be stated more fully below. It will therefore be wicked for any individual to be soiled with another's unworthiness, whom he cannot and ought not to bar from access.

16. THE FALSE CLAIM OF PERFECTION COMES FROM DISTORTED OPINION

But though this temptation sometimes springs up even among good men from ill-advised zeal for righteousness, we shall perceive that this overscrupulousness^{F25} is born rather of pride and arrogance and false opinion of holiness than of true holiness and true zeal for it. Therefore, those who more boldly than others incite defection from the church, and are like standard-bearers, have for the most part no other reason than by their contempt of all to show they are better than the others. Augustine, then, speaks wisely and well: "The godly manner and measure of church discipline ought at all times to be concerned with 'the unity of the Spirit in

the bond of peace' [^{<490403>}Ephesians 4:3]. This precept of mutual forbearance the apostle ordered to be kept. When it is unkept, punishment as a remedy proves not only superfluous but even dangerous, and on that account no remedy at all. Not because of their hatred of others' iniquities but because of hankering after their own contentions, these sons of evil strive to drag along or at least to divide all the weak common folk who are entangled in boasting of their own name. Puffed up with pride, mad with obstinacy, deceitful in their slanders, troublesome in their seditions, these evil persons feign a rigid severity so they cannot be shown to lack the light of truth. Holy Scripture bids us correct our brothers' vices with more moderate care, while preserving sincerity of love and unity of peace. This principle they prostitute to the sacrilege of schism and the occasion for cutting off the brethren from the fellowship." But to godly and peaceable men Augustine gives this advice: "Mercifully to correct what they can; patiently to bear and lovingly to bewail and mourn what they cannot; until God either amends or corrects or in the harvest uproots the tares and winnows the chaff" [^{<401340>}Matthew 13:40; 3:12; ^{<420317>}Luke 3:17].^{F26}

Let all godly men strive to equip themselves with this armor, lest, while they seem strenuous and courageous vindicators of righteousness, they depart from the Kingdom of Heaven, which is the only kingdom of righteousness. For because God willed that the communion of his church be maintained in this outward society, he who out of hatred of the wicked breaks the token of that society treads a path that slopes to a fall from the communion of saints.

Let them ponder that in a great multitude there are many men, truly holy and innocent in the Lord's sight, who escape their notice. Let them ponder that even among those who seem diseased there are many who in no wise are pleased with, or flatter themselves in, their faults, but aroused again and again by a profound fear of the Lord, aspire to a more upright life. Let them ponder that a man is not to be judged for one deed, inasmuch as the holiest sometimes undergo a most grievous fall. Let them ponder how much more important both the ministry of the Word and participation in the sacred mysteries are for the gathering of the church than the possibility that this whole power may be dissipated through the guilt of certain ungodly men. Finally, let them realize that in estimating the true church divine judgment is of more weight than human.

(The imperfect holiness of the church does not justify schism, but affords occasion for the exercise within it of the forgiveness of sins, 17-22)

17. THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH

Because they also allege that the church is not without basis called holy, it is fitting to examine in what holiness it excels lest, if we are not willing to admit a church unless it be perfect in every respect, we leave no church at all. True, indeed, is Paul's statement: "Christ... gave himself up for the church that he might sanctify her; he cleansed her by the washing of water in the word of life, that he might present her to himself as his glorious bride, without spot or wrinkle," etc. [^{<490525>} Ephesians 5:25-27 p.]. Yet it also is no less true that the Lord is daily at work in smoothing out wrinkles and cleansing spots. From this it follows that the church's holiness is not yet complete. The church is holy, then, in the sense that it is daily advancing and is not yet perfect: it makes progress from day to day but has not yet reached its goal of holiness, as will be explained more fully elsewhere.^{F27}

The prophets prophesy that there will be a holy Jerusalem through which "strangers shall never pass" [^{<290317>} Joel 3:17], and a most holy temple wherein the unclean shall not enter [^{<233508>} Isaiah 35:8; cf. chapter 52:1]. Let us not understand this prophecy as if all the members of the church were without blemish; but because they zealously aspire to holiness and perfect purity, the cleanness that they have not yet fully attained is granted them by God's kindness. And although there are oftentimes few evidences of this sort of sanctification among men, still we must hold that from the creation of the world there was no time when the Lord did not have his church; and even until the consummation of the age, there will be no time when he will not have it. For even though the whole human race has from the very beginning been corrupted and vitiated by Adam's sin, from this polluted mass, as it were, He ever sanctifies certain vessels unto honor [cf. ^{<450923>} Romans 9:23 ff.] that there may be no age that does not experience his mercy. This he has attested by sure promises such as these: "I have made a covenant with my chosen ones, I have sworn to David my servant: 'I will perpetuate your seed forever and build your throne for all generations'" [^{<198903>} Psalm 89:3-4 p.]. Also: "The Lord has chosen Zion; he has chosen it for his habitation; this is my resting place forever," etc.

[<19D213> Psalm 132:13-14]. Also: “Thus says the Lord, who gives the sun for light by day, and... the moon and stars for light by night.... If these laws fail before me,... then shall the seed of Israel fail” [<243135> Jeremiah 31:35-36 p.].

18. THE EXAMPLE OF THE PROPHETS

Christ himself, the apostles, and almost all the prophets have furnished us examples of this. Fearful are those descriptions with which Isaiah, Jeremiah, Joel, Habakkuk, and others bewail the afflictions of the Jerusalem church. In people, in magistracy, and in priesthood all things had been so far corrupted that Isaiah does not hesitate to liken Jerusalem to Sodom and Gomorrah [<230110> Isaiah 1:10]. Religion was in part despised, in part besmirched. In morals one frequently notes theft, robbery, treachery, slaughter, and like evil deeds. Still the prophets did not because of this establish new churches for themselves, or erect new altars on which to perform separate sacrifices. But whatever men were like, because the prophets considered that the Lord had set his word among them and had instituted rites wherewith he was worshiped there, they stretched out clean hands to him in the midst of the assembly of the wicked. Surely, if they had thought they would become contaminated from these rites, they would have died a hundred times rather than allow themselves to be dragged thither. Nothing, consequently, kept them from creating a schism save their zeal to maintain unity. But if the holy prophets had scruples against separating themselves from the church because of many great misdeeds, not of one man or another but of almost all the people, we claim too much for ourselves if we dare withdraw at once from the communion of the church just because the morals of all do not meet our standard or even square with the profession of Christian faith.

19. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST AND OF THE APOSTLES

Now what was the world like in the time of Christ and the apostles? Even then the desperate impiety of the Pharisees and the dissolute life which commonly prevailed could not prevent them from practicing the same rites along with the people, and from assembling in one temple with the rest for public exercises of religion. How did this happen, except that those who

participated in these same rites with a clean conscience knew that they were not at all contaminated by association with the wicked?

If anyone is not convinced by prophets and apostles, let him at least yield to Christ's authority. Cyprian, then, has put it well: "Even though there seem to be tares or unclean vessels in the church, there is no reason why we ourselves should withdraw from the church; rather, we must toil to become wheat; we must strive as much as we can to be vessels of gold and silver. But the breaking of earthen vessels belongs solely to the Lord, to whom has also been entrusted an iron rod [^{<190209>}Psalm 2:9; ^{<660227>}Revelation 2:27]. And let no one so claim for himself what is the Son's alone, that it is enough to winnow the chaff and thresh the straw [cf. ^{<400312>}Matthew 3:12; ^{<420317>}Luke 3:17] and by human judgment to separate out all the tares [cf. ^{<401338>}Matthew 13:38-41]. Proud, indeed, is this stubbornness and impious presumption, which wicked madness takes upon itself," etc.^{F28}

Let the following two points, then, stand firm. First, he who voluntarily deserts the outward communion of the church (where the Word of God is preached and the sacraments are administered) is without excuse. Secondly, neither the vices of the few nor the vices of the many in any way prevent us from duly professing our faith there in ceremonies ordained by God. For a godly conscience is not wounded by the unworthiness of another, whether pastor or layman; nor are the sacraments less pure and salutary for a holy and upright man because they are handled by unclean persons.

20. FORGIVENESS OF SINS AND THE CHURCH

Their surliness and arrogance go even farther: for they do not recognize the church unless it be free of even the slightest blemish.^{F29} In fact, they are angry against upright teachers because these, by urging believers to improvement, teach them to groan throughout life under a burden of vices and to take refuge in pardon. Our adversaries object that by this means people are led away from perfection.

I admit that in urging men to perfection we must not toil slowly or listlessly, much less give up. However, I say it is a devilish invention for our minds, while as yet we are in the earthly race, to be cocksure about our

perfection. Thus in the Creed forgiveness of sins appropriately follows mention of the church. For, as one reads in the prophet, only the citizenry and household of the church obtain this [^{<233314>}Isaiah 33:14-24]. Therefore, the building of the heavenly Jerusalem ought to come first, and in it the kindness of God should then have a place in order that the iniquity of all who come to it may be blotted out. Now I say that it ought first to be built up, not that there can be any church without forgiveness of sins, but because the Lord has promised his mercy solely in the communion of saints.^{F30} Forgiveness of sins, then, is for us the first entry into the church and Kingdom of God. Without it, there is for us no covenant or bond with God. bFor thus he speaks through the prophet: “In that day I will make for you a covenant with the beasts of the field, with the birds of the air, and the reptiles of the ground. I will break the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make men lie down without fear. I will betroth you to me forever. I will (I say) betroth you to me in righteousness and in judgment, in mercy and in compassion” [^{<280218>}Hosea 2:18-19, Cf. Vg.]. We see how the Lord reconciles us to himself through his mercy. So also elsewhere, when he proclaims that the people whom he scattered in his wrath are to be gathered together again, he says, “I will cleanse them from all the iniquity with which they have sinned against me” [^{<243308>}Jeremiah 33:8, cf. Vg.]. Accordingly, we are initiated into the society of the church by the sign of baptism, which teaches us that entrance into God’s family is not open to us unless we first are cleansed of our filth by his goodness.

21. LASTING FORGIVENESS FOR THE MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH!

Not only does the Lord through forgiveness of sins receive and adopt us once for all into the church, but through the same means he preserves and protects us there. For what would be the point of providing a pardon for us that was destined to be of no use? Every godly man is his own witness that the Lord’s mercy, if it were granted only once, would be void and illusory, since each is quite aware throughout his life of the many infirmities that need God’s mercy. And clearly not in vain does God promise this grace especially to those of his own household; not in vain does he order the same message of reconciliation daily to be brought to

them.^{F30x} So, carrying, as we do, the traces of sin around with us throughout life, unless we are sustained by the Lord's constant grace in forgiving our sins, we shall scarcely abide one moment in the church. But the Lord has called his children to eternal salvation. Therefore, they ought to ponder that there is pardon ever ready for their sins. Consequently, we must firmly believe that by God's generosity, mediated by Christ's merit, through the sanctification of the Spirit, sins have been and are daily pardoned to us who have been received and engrafted into the body of the church.

22. THE POWER OF THE KEYS

To impart to us this benefit, the keys of the church have been given. When Christ gave the command to the apostles and conferred upon them the power to forgive sins [^{<401619>} Matthew 16:19; 18:18; ^{<432023>} John 20:23], he did not so much desire that the apostles absolve from sins those who might be converted from ungodliness to the faith of Christ, as that they should perpetually discharge this office among believers. Paul teaches this when he writes that the mission of reconciliation has been entrusted to the ministers of the church and that by it they are repeatedly to exhort the people to be reconciled to God in Christ's name [^{<470518>} 2 Corinthians 5:18,20]. Therefore, in the communion of saints, our sins are continually forgiven us by the ministry of the church itself when the presbyters or bishops to whom this office has been committed strengthen godly consciences by the gospel promises in the hope of pardon and forgiveness. This they do both publicly and privately as need requires. For very many, on account of their weakness, need personal consolation. And Paul mentions that not only in public preaching, but from house to house as well, he has attested his faith in Christ, and has individually admonished each man concerning the doctrine of salvation [^{<442020>} Acts 20:20-21].

We should accordingly note three things here. First, however great the holiness in which God's children excel, they still—so long as they dwell in mortal bodies—remain unable to stand before God without forgiveness of sins. Secondly, this benefit so belongs to the church that we cannot enjoy it unless we abide in communion with the church. Thirdly, it is dispensed to us through the ministers and pastors of the church, either by the preaching of the gospel or by the administration of the sacraments; and

herein chiefly stands out the power of the keys, which the Lord has conferred upon the society of believers. Accordingly, let each one of us count it his own duty to seek forgiveness of sins only where the Lord has placed it. Public reconciliation, which has to do with discipline, will be discussed in its place.^{F31}

*(Incidents illustrating forgiveness within the community
of believers, 23-29)*

23. ALL BELIEVERS ARE TO SEEK FORGIVENESS OF THEIR SINS

But since those delirious spirits of whom I have spoken are trying to snatch away from the church the sole anchor of salvation, we must fortify our consciences more strongly against such a pestilential opinion. Once the Novatianists stirred up the churches with this teaching,^{F32} but our own age has certain Anabaptists (not very different from the Novatianists) who are lapsing into the same madness. For they feign that in baptism God's people are reborn into a pure and angelic life, unsullied by any carnal filth. But if after baptism anyone falls away, they leave him nothing but God's inexorable judgment. In short, to the sinner who has lapsed after he has received grace they hold out no hope of pardon. For they recognize no other forgiveness of sins than that by which they were first reborn.^{F33}

Although no falsehood is more clearly refuted by Scripture, because these fellows find persons on whom to impose it (just as once Novatus had very many followers), let us briefly show how madly intent they are upon their own and others' destruction.

First, since at the Lord's command the saints daily repeat this prayer, "Forgive us our debts" [^{<400612>} Matthew 6:12], they doubtless confess themselves debtors. And their petition is not in vain, for the Lord has laid down that they are to seek only what he will give them. Indeed, although the Father attests that he will hear every prayer, this absolution he has sealed with a special promise. What more do we wish? The Lord requires the saints to confess their sins—and that indeed continually throughout life; and he promises pardon. What boldness is it either to exempt them from sin, or, if they have stumbled, utterly to exclude them from grace? Whom, now, would he have us forgive seventy times seven? Is it not our

brethren [^{<401821>} Matthew 18:21-22]? For what purpose did he command this except that we should emulate his kindness? He therefore forgives not once or twice, but as often as men, stricken with the awareness of their transgressions, cry out to him.

24. GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE TO SINFUL BELIEVERS UNDER THE OLD COVENANT: THE LAW

To begin with the very swaddling clothes of the church: the patriarchs had been *circumcised*, chosen to participate in the covenant, doubtless taught righteousness and integrity by their fathers' diligence—when they conspired to murder their brother [^{<013718>} Genesis 37:18]. Here was a crime that even the most depraved thieves should have loathed. Softened at last by Judah's advice, they sold him [^{<013728>} Genesis 37:28]; but this too was an unbearable cruelty. Simeon and Levi, illicitly avenging [their sister's defilement], an act condemned also by their father's judgment, raged against the Shechemites [^{<013425>} Genesis 34:25]. Reuben fouled his father's bed with vilest lust [^{<013522>} Genesis 35:22]. Judah, wanting to indulge in fornication, beyond the law of nature goes in to his son's wife [^{<013816>} Genesis 38:16]. Yet far from being banished from the chosen people, these men were raised up as heads!

What about David? When he was chief administrator of justice, how wickedly did he open the way for his blind lust by the shedding of innocent blood [^{<101104>} 2 Samuel 11:4,15]! He had already been reborn, and among the reborn was adorned with the Lord's excellent praises. Still, he committed that crime (horrible even among the Gentiles) and yet received pardon [^{<101213>} 2 Samuel 12:13].

And (not to tarry over individual examples) as often as promises of divine mercy are manifested in the Law and the Prophets toward the Israelites, so often does the Lord prove that he shows himself willing to forgive the offenses of his people! For what does Moses promise will take place when the people fallen into apostasy shall return to the Lord? "The Lord will lead you back from captivity, and will take pity on you, and will gather you from the people among whom you are scattered. If you were scattered to the uttermost parts of heaven, from there I shall gather you." [^{<053003>} Deuteronomy 30:3-4, cf. Vg.]

25. GOD’S ABUNDANT GRACE TO SINFUL BELIEVERS UNDER THE OLD COVENANT: THE PROPHETS

But I do not want to begin a never-ending enumeration. For the prophets are full of promises of this kind, which offer mercy to a people though they be covered with infinite crimes. What graver iniquity is there than rebellion? For it is called divorce between God and the church; yet it is outstripped by God’s goodness. “What man is there” (he says through Jeremiah) “who, if his wife prostitute her body to adulterers, can bear to return to her embrace? By your fornications all your ways are polluted, O Judah; the earth has been filled with your filthy loves. Return yet to me and I will receive you” [^{<240301>} Jeremiah 3:1 p., cf. Vg.]. “Return, you who turn away, I shall not avert my face from you, for I am holy, and I will not be angry forever” [^{<240312>} Jeremiah 3:12, Vg.]. Surely, there can be no other feeling in him who affirms that he does not desire the death of the sinner, but rather that he be converted and live [^{<261823>} Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11]. Accordingly, when Solomon dedicated the Temple, he intended it also to be used so that thereby the prayers offered to obtain pardon of sins might be answered. “If thy children,” he said, “sin against thee—for there is no man who does not sin—and thou in anger deliverest them to their enemies... and they repent in their hearts... and turn again and make supplication unto thee in their captivity, saying, ‘We have sinned and acted perversely,’ and pray to thee toward their land, which thou gavest to their fathers,... and toward this holy Temple,... thou wilt hear their prayers... in heaven... and be appeased unto thy people who have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions that they have committed against thee” [^{<110846>} 1 Kings 8:46-50 p., cf. Vg.]. And not in vain has the Lord ordained in the law daily sacrifices for sins [^{<042803>} Numbers 28:3 ff.]. For if the Lord had not foreseen that his people would be continually burdened with diseases of sins, he would never have established this remedy.

26. GOD’S ABUNDANT GRACE TO SINFUL BELIEVERS UNDER THE NEW COVENANT

Has this benefit been so taken away from believers by Christ’s coming, in which the fullness of grace was revealed, in order that they dare not pray for pardon of sins and, if they have offended the Lord, that they may obtain no mercy? What else will this be but to say that Christ has come

for the destruction, not the salvation, of his people, if God's kindness, which in the Old Testament had been unfailingly ready for the saints for the forgiveness of sins, is now said to be completely taken away? But if we have faith in the Scriptures—which expressly proclaim that in Christ the grace and gentleness of the Lord have fully appeared, the riches of his mercy have been poured out [^{<560109>} Titus 1:9; 3:4; ^{<550109>} 2 Timothy 1:9], and the reconciliation of God and men fulfilled [^{<470518>} 2 Corinthians 5:18 ff.]—let us not doubt that the Heavenly Father's clemency flows forth to us much more abundantly, rather than that it is cut off or curtailed.

And proofs of this are not lacking. Peter, who had heard that anyone not confessing Christ's name among men would be denied in the presence of the angels of God [^{<401033>} Matthew 10:33; ^{<410838>} Mark 8:38], denied him thrice one night and not without cursing [^{<402674>} Matthew 26:74]; yet he was not deprived of pardon [^{<422232>} Luke 22:32; John 21:15 ff.]. Those who lived disorderly among the Thessalonians are chastised in such a way as to be invited to repentance [cf. ^{<530314>} 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; also chapter 3:6]. Not even Simon the Magician is cast into despair, but is rather bidden to have good hope, when Peter urges him to take refuge in prayer [^{<440822>} Acts 8:22].

27. GOD'S ABUNDANT GRACE TOWARD DELINQUENT CHURCHES

What of the fact that, while the most heinous sins have sometimes possessed entire churches, Paul has nevertheless gently freed them from these, rather than cursed their leaders? The defection of the Galatians was no slight transgression [^{<480106>} Galatians 1:6; 3:1; 4:9]. The Corinthians were less excusable than they, for they abounded in more and not less heinous misdeeds. Still, neither were barred from the Lord's mercy. Indeed, the very ones who, in uncleanness, fornication, and licentiousness, had sinned more than the others are expressly invited to repentance [^{<471221>} 2 Corinthians 12:21]. For the Lord's covenant remains, and shall remain forever inviolable, which he solemnly ratified with Christ, the true Solomon, and his members in these words: "If his children forsake my law and walk not in my judgments, if they profane my righteousnesses... and keep not my commandments,... I will visit their transgressions with the rod, their iniquities with stripes. But my mercy will I not utterly take

from him” [^{<198930>} Psalm 89:30-33, RV, cf. Vg.]. Finally, by the very order^{F34} of the Creed we are taught that continual grace for sins remains in Christ’s church. For once the church has, so to speak, been established, forgiveness of sins is added to it.

28. ARE ONLY UNCONSCIOUS SINS FORGIVABLE?

Certain men, somewhat more prudent, when they see the teachings of Novatus refuted by the great clarity of Scripture, do not deem every sin unpardonable, but only voluntary transgression of the law, into which one knowingly and willingly falls.^{F35} Now those who speak thus allow pardon for no sin, except one that is an error of ignorance. But in the law the Lord commanded one sort of sacrifice to be offered to atone for the voluntary sins of believers [^{<030601>} Leviticus 6:1 ff.], another sort to redeem their acts of ignorance [^{<030401>} Leviticus chapter 4]. Consequently, what depravity it is not to grant any expiation for voluntary sin! I say that nothing is more apparent than that Christ’s sacrifice is alone sufficient to forgive the voluntary sins of the saints inasmuch as the Lord has attested this by carnal sacrifices as seals.

Again, who can excuse David on grounds of ignorance when he clearly was so well versed in the law? Did not David, who daily punished adultery and murder in his subjects, know what great crimes they were [^{<101101>} 2 Samuel chapter 11]? Did murder of a brother seem a lawful thing to the patriarchs [^{<013718>} Genesis 37:18 ff.]? Had the Corinthians profited so ill as to think lust, impurity, fornication, hatreds, and contentions pleasing to God [^{<460501>} 1 Corinthians chapter 5]? Did Peter, so carefully warned, not know what an enormity it was to renounce his Master [^{<402674>} Matthew 26:74]? Therefore, let us not by our unkindness bar the way to God’s mercy, which manifests itself so generously.

29. THE QUESTION OF “SECOND REPENTANCE” IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH

Indeed, I am aware that the ancient writers interpreted the sins which are daily remitted to believers as rather slight errors, creeping in from weakness of the flesh; the solemn penitence then exacted for more heinous crimes, it seemed to them, should no more be repeated than baptism.^{F36}

We must not interpret this opinion to mean that they wished either to cast into despair those who have fallen away from their first repentance, or to make light those other errors as if they were small in God's sight. For the church fathers well knew that the saints often totter in unbelief, sometimes give vent to superfluous oaths, now and then flare into anger, indeed, even break out into open railing, and besides are troubled with other ills that the Lord thoroughly abominates. But these writers called them "slight errors" in order to distinguish them from public crimes, which with great scandal came under the church's cognizance. Moreover, they made pardon very difficult for those who had committed anything deserving churchly correction. This they did, not because they considered pardon for their sins hard to obtain before the Lord; rather, with this severity they intended to deter others from rashly plunging into iniquities that would merit their being cut off from the communion of the church. Albeit the Lord's Word, which here ought to be our sole rule, surely prescribes a greater moderation. For it teaches that disciplinary rigor is not to be pushed so far that that man for whom it ought to be chiefly concerned becomes overwhelmed with sorrow [^{<470207>} 2 Corinthians 2:7]. This we have discussed more fully above.^{F37}

CHAPTER 2

A COMPARISON OF THE FALSE AND THE TRUE CHURCH

(Departure from true doctrine and worship invalidates the Roman Church's claim to be the true church, 1-6)

1. THE BASIC DISTINCTION

It has already been explained how much we ought to value the ministry of the Word and sacraments, and how far our reverence for it should go, that it may be to us a perpetual token by which to distinguish the church.^{F38} That is, wherever the ministry remains whole and uncorrupted, no moral faults or diseases prevent it from bearing the name “church.” Secondly, it is not so weakened by trivial errors as not to be esteemed lawful. We have, moreover, shown that the errors which ought to be pardoned are those which do not harm the chief doctrine of religion,^{F39} which do not destroy the articles of religion on which all believers ought to agree; and with regard to the sacraments, those which do not abolish or throw down the lawful institution of the Author. But, as soon as falsehood breaks into the citadel of religion and the sum of necessary doctrine is overturned and the use of the sacraments is destroyed, surely the death of the church follows—just as a man’s life is ended when his throat is pierced or his heart mortally wounded. And that is clearly evident from Paul’s words when he teaches that the church is founded upon the teaching of the apostles and prophets, with Christ himself the chief cornerstone [^{<490220>} Ephesians 2:20]. If the foundation of the church is the teaching of the prophets and apostles, which bids believers entrust their salvation to Christ alone—then take away that teaching, and how will the building continue to stand? Therefore, the church must tumble down when that sum of religion dies which alone can sustain it. Again, if the true church is the pillar and foundation of truth [^{<540315>} 1 Timothy 3:15], it is certain that no church can exist where lying and falsehood have gained sway.

2. THE ROMAN CHURCH AND ITS CLAIM

Since conditions are such under popery, one can understand how much of the church remains there.^{F40} Instead of the ministry of the Word, a perverse government compounded of lies rules there, ewhich partly extinguishes the pure light, partly chokes it. The foulest sacrilege has been introduced in place of the Lord's Supper. The worship of God has been deformed by a diverse and unbearable mass of superstitions. Doctrine (apart from which Christianity cannot stand) has been entirely buried and driven out. Public assemblies have become schools of idolatry and ungodliness. In withdrawing from deadly participation in so many misdeeds, there is accordingly no danger that we be snatched away from the church of Christ. The communion of the church was not established on the condition that it should serve to snare us in idolatry, ungodliness, ignorance of God, and other sorts of evils, but rather to hold us in the fear of God and obedience to truth.

They indeed gloriously extol their church to us to make it seem that there is no other in the world. Thereupon, as if the matter were settled, they conclude that all who dare withdraw from the obedience with which they adorn the church are schismatics; that all who dare mutter against its doctrine are heretics. But what are their reasons to prove that they have the true church? From ancient chronicles they allege what once took place in Italy, France, and Spain. They claim to take their origin from those holy men who with sound doctrine founded and raised up churches, and by their blood established the very doctrine and upbuilding of the church. Moreover, they say that the church was so consecrated both by spiritual gifts and by the blood of martyrs among them, and preserved by an unending succession of bishops, in order that it should not perish. They recall how much Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Augustine, and others made of this succession.^{F41}

But I shall easily enable those willing to consider these claims for a moment with me to understand how trifling and plainly ludicrous they are. Indeed, I would urge them also to give serious attention to this, if I were confident that I could benefit them by so teaching. But since their one purpose is to defend their own cause in any way they can without regard

for truth, I shall say only a few things by which good men and those zealous for truth can extricate themselves from their deceits.

First, I ask them why they do not mention Africa, Egypt, and all Asia. The reason is that in all these districts this sacred succession of bishops, by virtue of which they boast that the churches have been maintained, has ceased to be. They therefore revert to the point that they have the true church because from its beginning it has not been destitute of bishops, for one has followed another in unbroken succession. But what if I confront them with Greece? I therefore ask them once more why they say that the church perished among the Greeks, among whom the succession of bishops (in their opinion the sole custodian and preserver of the church) has never been interrupted. They make the Greeks schismatics; with what right? Because in withdrawing from the apostolic see, they lost their privilege.^{F42} What? Would not they who fall away from Christ deserve to lose it much more? It therefore follows that this pretense of succession is vain unless their descendants conserve safe and uncorrupted the truth of Christ which they have received at their fathers' hands, and abide in it.

3. THE FALSE CHURCH, DESPITE ITS HIGH PRETENSIONS, SHOWS THAT IT DOES NOT HEAR GOD'S WORD

The Romanists, therefore, today make no other pretension than what the Jews once apparently claimed when they were reproved for blindness, ungodliness, and idolatry by the Lord's prophets. For like the Romanists, they boasted gloriously of Temple, ceremonies, and priestly functions, and measured the church very convincingly, as it seemed to them, by these. So in place of the church the Romanists display certain outward appearances which are often far removed from the church and without which the church can very well stand. Accordingly, we are to refute them by the very argument with which Jeremiah combatted the stupid confidence of the Jews. That is, "Let them not boast in lying words, saying, 'This is the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord'" [^{<240704>} Jeremiah 7:4]. For the Lord nowhere recognizes any temple as his save where his Word is heard and scrupulously observed. So, although the glory of God sat between the cherubim in the sanctuary [^{<261004>} Ezekiel 10:4], and he promised his people that this would be his abiding seat; when the priests corrupt his

worship with wicked superstitions, he moves elsewhere and strips the place of holiness. If that Temple, which seemed consecrated as God's everlasting abode, could be abandoned by God and become profane, there is no reason why these men should pretend to us that God is so bound to persons and places, and attached to external observances, that he has to remain among those who have only the title and appearance of the church [^{<450906>}Romans 9:6].

And this is Paul's contention in chapters 9 to 12^{F43} of the letter to the Romans [Romans chapters 9 to 11]. For this fact sorely troubled weak consciences, that, while the Jews seemed to be God's people, they not only rejected the teaching of the gospel but also persecuted it. Accordingly, after Paul has expounded the doctrine, he disposes of this difficulty, denying those Jews (as enemies of truth) to be the church, even though they lacked nothing which could otherwise be desired for the outward form of the church. He denies it, then, because they would not embrace Christ. He speaks somewhat more explicitly in the letter to the Galatians, where, in comparing Ishmael with Isaac, he states that many have a place in the church to whom the inheritance does not apply, for they are not the offspring of a free mother [^{<480422>}Galatians 4:22 ff.]. From this, Paul goes on to the comparison of the two Jerusalems. For just as the law was given on Matthew Sinai, so the gospel came forth from Jerusalem. Thus, many born and brought up as slaves boast without hesitation that they are children of God and of the church. Indeed, they haughtily despise God's real children, even though they themselves are bastards. We also, on the contrary, while we once heard it declared from heaven, "Cast out this slave woman with her son" [^{<012110>}Genesis 21:10], rely on this inviolable decree and stoutly reject their insipid boastings. For if they boast of outward profession, Ishmael also was circumcised; if they contend for antiquity, he was the first-born: yet we see him repudiated. If a reason be sought, Paul points out that only those born of the pure and lawful seed of doctrine are accounted God's children [^{<450906>}Romans 9:6-9].

According to this reasoning, God denies that he is bound to wicked priests by the fact that he covenanted with their father Levi to be His angel or interpreter. Indeed, he turns back upon them that false glorying with which they habitually rose up against the prophets—that the dignity of

the priesthood was to be held in peculiar esteem. God willingly admits this and disputes with them on the ground that he is ready to keep the covenant, but that when they do not reciprocate, they deserve to be repudiated. See what value this succession has, unless it also include a true and uninterrupted emulation on the part of the successors! For they, as soon as they are convicted of degenerating from their origin, are deprived of all honor [^{<390201>} Malachi 2:1-9]. Unless, perhaps, because Caiaphas succeeded many devout priests (indeed, from Aaron to him there was an unbroken succession), that wicked assembly deserved the name “church”! Yet not even in earthly dominions was it tolerable that the tyranny of Caligula, Nero, Heliogabalus, or the like should be considered a true state of the commonwealth just because they succeeded a Brutus, a Scipio, or a Camillus.^{F44} But especially in the organization of the church nothing is more absurd than to lodge the succession in persons alone to the exclusion of teaching.

Nothing was farther from the minds of the holy doctors (whom they falsely thrust upon us) than to prove absolutely, as if by right of inheritance, that the church exists wherever bishops succeed one another. But while it was uncontroverted that no change in doctrine had occurred from the beginning down to that age, they adopted this principle as sufficient to guard against all new errors; that is, they opposed them with the teaching firmly and with unanimous agreement maintained since the time of the apostles. Accordingly, there is no reason why men should any longer endeavor to deceive in the name of the church, which we reverently honor as we ought. But when they come to the definition of it, not only does water (as the saying goes) cleave to them,^{F45} but they are stuck in their mire, for they put a foul harlot in place of Christ’s sacred bride. That this substitution may not deceive us, let this admonition of Augustine’s (besides others) come to mind. Speaking of the church, he says, “She herself is sometimes obscured, as if beclouded by a multitude of scandals; sometimes appears quiet and free in a time of tranquillity; sometimes is covered and tossed by waves of tribulations and temptations.” He brings forward examples to show that often the strongest pillars valiantly suffered exile for the faith, or lay in hiding throughout the world.^{F46}

4. THE CHURCH IS FOUNDED UPON GOD'S WORD

In this same way the Romanists vex us today and frighten the uneducated with the name of the church,^{F47} even though they are Christ's chief adversaries. Therefore, although they put forward Temple, priesthood, and the rest of the outward shows, this empty glitter which blinds the eyes of the simple ought not to move us a whir to grant that the church exists where God's Word is not found. For this is the abiding mark with which our Lord has sealed his own: "Everyone who is of the truth hears my voice" [^{<431837>} John 18:37]. Likewise: "I am the Good Shepherd; I know my sheep, and they know me." [^{<431014>} John 10:14.] "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." [^{<431027>} John 10:27.] But a little before, he had said: "The sheep follow their shepherd, for they know his voice. A stranger they do not follow but flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers" [^{<431004>} John 10:4-5]. Why do we willfully act like madmen in searching out the church when Christ has marked it with an unmistakable sign, which, wherever it is seen, cannot fail to show the church there; while where it is absent, nothing remains that can give the true meaning of the church? Paul reminds us that the church was founded not upon men's judgments, not upon priesthoods, but upon the teaching of apostles and prophets [^{<490220>} Ephesians 2:20]. Nay, Jerusalem is to be distinguished from Babylon, Christ's church from Satan's cabal, by the very difference with which Christ distinguishes between them. He says: "He who is of God hears the words of God. The reason why you do not hear them is that you are not of God." [^{<430847>} John 8:47.]

To sum up, since the church is Christ's Kingdom, and he reigns by his Word alone, will it not be clear to any man that those are lying words [cf. ^{<240704>} Jeremiah 7:4] by which the Kingdom of Christ is imagined to exist apart from his scepter (that is, his most holy Word)?

5. DEFENSE AGAINST THE CHARGE OF SCHISM AND HERESY

Now they treat us as persons guilty of schism and heresy because we preach a doctrine unlike theirs, do not obey their laws, and hold our

separate assemblies for prayers, baptism and the celebration of the Supper, and other holy activities.

This is indeed a very grave accusation but one that needs no long and labored defense. Those who, by making dissension, break the communion of the church are called heretics and schismatics. Now this communion is held together by two bonds, agreement in sound doctrine and brotherly love. Hence, between heretics and schismatics Augustine makes this sort of distinction: heretics corrupt the sincerity of the faith with false dogmas; but schismatics, while sometimes even of the same faith, break the bond of fellowship.^{F48}

But it must also be noted that this conjunction of love so depends upon unity of faith that it ought to be its beginning, end, and, in fine, its sole rule. Let us therefore remember that whenever church unity is commended to us, this is required: that while our minds agree in Christ, our wills should also be joined with mutual benevolence in Christ. Paul, therefore, while urging us to it, takes it as his foundation that “there is... one God, one faith, and one baptism” [^{<490405>} Ephesians 4:5]. Indeed, wherever Paul teaches us to feel the same and will the same, he immediately adds, “in Christ” [^{<500201>} Philippians 2:1,5] or “according to Christ” [^{<451505>} Romans 15:5]. He means that apart from the Lord’s Word there is not an agreement of believers but a faction of wicked men.

6. CHRIST’S HEADSHIP THE CONDITION OF UNITY

Cyprian, also following Paul, derives the source of concord of the entire church from Christ’s episcopate alone. Afterward he adds: “The church is one, which is spread abroad far and wide into a multitude by an increase of fruitfulness. As there are many rays of the sun but one light, and many branches of a tree but one strong trunk grounded in its tenacious root, and since from one spring flow many streams, although a goodly number seem outpoured from their bounty and superabundance, still, at the source unity abides. Take a ray from the body of the sun; its unity undergoes no division. Break a branch from a tree; the severed branch cannot sprout. Cut off a stream from its source; cut off, it dries up. So also the church, bathed in the light of the Lord, extends over the whole earth: yet there is one light diffused everywhere.”^{F49} Nothing more fitting could be said to express this

indivisible connection which all members of Christ have with one another. We see how he continually calls us back to the Head himself. Accordingly, Cyprian declares that heresies and schisms arise because men return not to the Source of truth, seek not the Head, keep not the teaching of the Heavenly Master.

Now let them go and shout that we who have withdrawn from their church are heretics, since the sole cause of our separation is that they could in no way bear the pure profession of truth. I forbear to mention that they have expelled us with anathemas and curses^{F50}—more than sufficient reason to absolve us, unless they wish to condemn the apostles also as schismatics, whose case was like our own. Christ, I say, forewarned his apostles that they would be cast out of the synagogues for his name's sake [^{<431602>} John 16:2]. Now those synagogues of which he speaks were then considered lawful churches. Since, therefore, it is clear that we have been cast out, and we are ready to show that this happened for Christ's sake, surely the case ought to be investigated before any decision is made about us, one way or the other. But I willingly grant them this point, if they so desire. For it is enough for me that it behooved us to withdraw from them that we might come to Christ.

*(The Roman Church compared with ancient Israel as to
worship and jurisdiction, 7-11)*

7. THE CONDITION OF THE ROMAN CHURCH RESEMBLES THAT OF ISRAEL UNDER JEROBOAM

But it will appear even more clearly how we ought to esteem all the churches which are in subjection to that Roman idol's tyranny if they be compared with the ancient church of Israel, described by the prophets. The true church existed among the Jews and Israelites when they kept the laws of the covenant. That is, by God's beneficence they obtained those things by which the church is held together. They had the doctrine of truth in the law; its ministry was in the hands of priests and prophets. They were initiated into religion by the sign of circumcision; for the strengthening of their faith they were exercised in the other sacraments. There is no doubt that the titles with which the Lord honored his church applied to their society. Afterward, having forsaken the law of the Lord,

they sank into idolatry and superstition and partly lost that privilege. For who has dared to take the name of church away from those among whom God entrusted the preaching of his Word and the observance of his sacraments? Again, who has without exception dared to call that assembly “church” where the Lord’s Word is openly and with impunity trodden under foot? where his ministry, the church’s chief sinew, indeed its very soul, is destroyed?

8. DESPITE THE IDOLATRY OF THE JEWS, THEIR CHURCH REMAINED

What, then, someone will ask—did, therefore, no trace of the church remain among the Jews after they fell away into idolatry? The answer is easy. First, I say that in falling away there were certain degrees. For we shall not say that there was the same decline in Israel as in Judah at the time when both first turned aside from the pure worship of God. Jeroboam, when he first fashioned calves against God’s express prohibition, and dedicated an unlawful place for worship, utterly corrupted religion [^{<111228>} 1 Kings 12:28 ff.]. The people of Judah contaminated themselves with wicked and superstitious customs before they falsified the outward form of their religion. For although under Rehoboam they had already commonly adopted many perverted rites, still because the teaching of the law, the priestly order, and such rites as God had ordained continued in Jerusalem, the godly there had a church in passable condition. Among the Israelites, to Ahab’s reign things got not a whit better, and then got even worse. The kings who came after, until the destruction of the kingdom, were partly like Ahab, partly (when they wanted to be a little better) followed the example of Jeroboam. But all without exception were ungodly and idolaters. In Judah, there were from time to time various changes: while some kings perverted the worship of God with false and contrived superstitions, others restored the decadent religion. Finally, even the priests themselves befouled God’s Temple with profane and loathsome ceremonies.

9. THE PAPAL CHURCH CORRUPT AND TO BE REPUDIATED

Come now, let the papists deny if they can—however much they extenuate their faults—that the condition of religion among them is as

corrupt and debased as it was in the Kingdom of Israel under Jeroboam. But they have a grosser idolatry. And in doctrine they are not one droplet purer, but actually even more impure in this! God, and indeed all men endowed with average judgment, will be my witnesses; and even the thing itself declares that I am not exaggerating here.

Now when they wish to constrain us to the communion of their church, they demand two things of us. The first is that we should participate in all their prayers, sacraments, and ceremonies. The second, that we should grant to their church every honor, power, and jurisdiction that Christ gives to his church.

As to the first point, I admit that all the prophets who were at Jerusalem when things were absolutely corrupt neither sacrificed privately nor had separate assemblies from the others for prayer. For they had God's command by which they were bidden to assemble in Solomon's Temple [^{<051213>}Deuteronomy 12:13,11]. They knew that the Levitical priests, although unworthy of that office, because ordained ministers of sacred rites by the Lord [^{<022909>}Exodus 29:9] and not yet deposed, still held that office by right. But—the chief point of the whole question—they were not compelled to any superstitious worship; indeed, they were obligated to nothing that had not been instituted by God.

But among these men—I mean the papists—where is the resemblance? For we can scarcely have any meeting with them in which we do not pollute ourselves with manifest idolatry. Surely, their chief bond of communion is in the Mass, which we abominate as the greatest sacrilege. And whether we do this rightly or recklessly will appear elsewhere.^{F51} Now it is enough to show that in this respect our case is different from that of the prophets, who, although present at the ceremonies of the wicked, were compelled neither to look at nor to take part in any rites save those established by God.

And, if we wish to have an example parallel in every respect, let us take it from the Israelite Kingdom. According to Jeroboam's decree, circumcision remained, sacrifices were offered, the holy law was observed, the God whom their fathers had received was invoked; but, because of counterfeit and forbidden forms of worship, God disapproved and condemned whatever was done there [^{<111231>}1 Kings 12:31]. Let anyone show me one

prophet or any godly man who once worshiped or sacrificed in Bethel. For they knew that they could not do it without contaminating themselves with some sacrilege. We therefore conclude that among the godly the communion of the church ought not to extend so far that, if it degenerates into profane and corrupted rites, they have to follow it headlong.

10. WHY WE MUST SEPARATE FROM THE CORRUPTED CHURCH

Over the second point, however, we contend even more. For if we think of the church in this way—that we should reverence its judgment, defer to its authority, obey its warnings, be moved by its chastisements, and keep its communion scrupulously in all respects—then we cannot admit that they have a church without the necessity of subjection and obedience to it awaiting us. Yet we shall willingly concede to them what the prophets granted to the Jews and Israelites of their own age, when equal or even better conditions prevailed there. But we see how the prophets again and again proclaim that their assemblies are profane [^{<230114>} Isaiah 1:14], and that it was no more lawful to consent to them than to deny God. And surely if those were churches, it follows that in Israel, Elijah, Micah, and the like, and in Judah, Isaiah, Jeremiah, ttosea, and others of that mark (whom the prophets, priests, and people of their age hated and cursed as worse than the uncircumcised) were strangers to the church of God. If those were churches, then the church is not the pillar of truth [^{<540315>} 1 Timothy 3:15], but the prop of falsehood; not the Tabernacle of the living God, but a receptacle of idols. The prophets, then, had to depart from agreement with those assemblies, which were nothing but a wicked conspiracy against God.

In the same way if anyone recognizes the present congregations—contaminated with idolatry, superstition, and ungodly doctrine—as churches (in full communion of which a Christian man must stand—even to the point of agreeing in doctrine), he will gravely err. For if they are churches, the power of the keys is in their hands; but the keys have an indissoluble bond with the Word, which has been destroyed from among them. Again, if they are churches, Christ’s promise prevails among them; “Whatever you bind,” etc. [^{<401619>} Matthew 16:19; 18:18; ^{<432023>} John 20:23]. But on the contrary, they disown from their communion all that

genuinely profess themselves servants of Christ. Accordingly, either Christ's promise is vain, or they are not, at least in this regard, churches. Finally, instead of the ministry of the Word, they have schools of ungodliness and a sink of all kinds of errors. Consequently, by this reckoning either they are not churches or no mark will remain to distinguish the lawful congregations of believers from the assemblies of Turks.

11. VESTIGES OF THE CHURCH UNDER THE PAPACY

Of old, certain peculiar prerogatives of the church remained among the Jews. In like manner, today we do not deprive the papists of those traces of the church which the Lord willed should among them survive the destruction. God had once for all made his covenant with the Jews, but it was not they who preserved the covenant; rather, leaning upon its own strength, it kept itself alive by struggling against their impiety. Therefore—such was the certainty and constancy of God's goodness—the Lord's covenant abode there. Their treachery could not obliterate his faithfulness, and circumcision could not be so profaned by their unclean hands as to cease to be the true sign and sacrament of his covenant. Whence the Lord called the children born to them his children [^{<261620>}Ezekiel 16:20-21], when these belonged to him only by a special blessing. So it was in France, Italy, Germany, Spain, and England after the Lord established his covenant there. When those countries were oppressed by the tyranny of Antichrist, the Lord used two means to keep his covenant inviolable. First, he maintained baptism there, a witness to this covenant; consecrated by his own mouth, it retains its force despite the impiety of men. Secondly, by his own providence he caused other vestiges to remain, that the church might not utterly die. And just as often happens when buildings are pulled down the foundations and ruins remain, so he did not allow his church either to be destroyed to the very foundations by Antichrist or to be leveled to the ground, even though to punish the ungratefulness of men who had despised his word he let it undergo frightful shaking and shattering, but even after this very destruction willed that a half-demolished building remain.

12. THE SOUND ELEMENTS DO NOT MAKE THE CORRUPTED CHURCH A TRUE CHURCH

However, when we categorically deny to the papists the title of *the* church, we do not for this reason impugn the existence of churches among them.^{F52} Rather, we are only contending about the true and lawful constitution of the church, required in the communion not only of the sacraments (which are the signs of profession) but also especially of doctrine, Daniel [^{<270927>} Daniel 9:27] and Paul [^{<530204>} 2 Thessalonians 2:4] foretold that Antichrist would sit in the Temple of God. With us, it is the Roman pontiff we make the leader and standard bearer of that wicked and abominable kingdom.^{F53} The fact that his seat is placed in the Temple of God signifies that his reign was not to be such as to wipe out either the name of Christ or of the church. From this it therefore is evident that we by no means deny that the churches under his tyranny remain churches. But these he has profaned by his sacrilegious impiety, afflicted by his inhuman domination, corrupted and well-nigh killed by his evil and deadly doctrines, which are like poisoned drinks. In them Christ lies hidden, half buried, the gospel overthrown, piety scattered, the worship of God nearly wiped out. In them, briefly, everything is so confused that there we see the face of Babylon rather than that of the Holy City of God. To sum up, I call them churches to the extent that the Lord wonderfully preserves in them a remnant of his people, however woefully dispersed and scattered, and to the extent that some marks of the church remain—especially those marks whose effectiveness neither the devil's wiles nor human depravity can destroy. But on the other hand, because in them those marks have been erased to which we should pay particular regard in this discourse, I say that every one of their congregations and their whole body lack the lawful form of the church.

CHAPTER 3

THE DOCTORS AND MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH, THEIR ELECTION AND OFFICE

(The ministry given by God: its high and necessary functions, 1-3)

1. WHY DOES GOD NEED MEN'S SERVICE?

Now we must speak of the order by which the Lord willed his church to be governed. He alone should rule and reign in the church as well as have authority or pre-eminence in it, and this authority should be exercised and administered by his Word alone. Nevertheless, because he does not dwell among us in visible presence [^{<402611>}Matthew 26:11], we have said that he uses the ministry of men to declare openly his will to us by mouth, as a sort of delegated work, not by transferring to them his right and honor, but only that through their mouths he may do his own work—just as a workman uses a tool to do his work.

I am constrained once more to repeat what I have already explained.^{F54} He could indeed do it either by himself without any sort of aid or instrument, or even by the angels; but there are many reasons why he prefers to do it by means of men.

For by this means he first declares his regard for us when from among men he takes some to serve as his ambassadors in the world [cf. ^{<470520>}2 Corinthians 5:20], to be interpreters of his secret will and, in short, to represent his person. And by this evidence he proves it to be no idle speaking that he often calls us his temples [^{<460316>}1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19; ^{<470616>}2 Corinthians 6:16], since from the lips of men, as from the sanctuary, he gives his answers to men.^{F55}

Again, this is the best and most usefull exercise in humility, when he accustoms us to obey his Word, even though it be preached through men like us and sometimes even by those of lower worth than we. If he spoke from heaven, it would not be surprising if his sacred oracles were to be

reverently received without delay by the ears and minds of all. For who would not dread the presence of his power? Who would not be stricken down at the sight of such great majesty? Who would not be confounded at such boundless splendor? But when a puny man risen from the dust speaks in God's name, at this point we best evidence our piety and obedience toward God if we show ourselves teachable toward his minister, although he excels us in nothing. It was for this reason, then, that he hid the treasure of his heavenly wisdom in weak and earthen vessels [^{<470407>}2 Corinthians 4:7] in order to prove more surely how much we should esteem it.

Further, nothing fosters mutual love more fittingly than for men to be bound together with this bond: one is appointed pastor to teach the rest, and those bidden to be pupils receive the common teaching from one mouth. For if anyone were sufficient to himself and needed no one else's help (such is the pride of human nature), each man would despise the rest and be despised by them. The Lord has therefore bound his church together with a knot that he foresaw would be the strongest means of keeping unity, while he entrusted to men the teaching of salvation and everlasting life in order that through their hands it might be communicated to the rest. Paul had this in view when he wrote to the Ephesians: "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, who is above all and through all and in all. But grace was given to each of us according to the measure of Christ's gift" [^{<490404>}Ephesians 4:4-7]. On this account he says: "When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive and gave gifts to men.... He who descended is the same one who ascended... that he might fill all things. And he gave some to be apostles, and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of full adulthood; so that we may no longer be children... carried about by every wind of doctrine... but seeking truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the Head, into Christ, in whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every joint with which it is

supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and upbuilds itself in love” [^{<490408>}Ephesians 4:8, 10-16].

2. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MINISTRY FOR THE CHURCH

Paul shows by these words that this human ministry which God uses to govern the church is the chief sinew by which believers are held together in one body. He then also shows that the church can be kept intact only if it be upheld by the safeguards in which it pleased the Lord to place its salvation. “Christ ascended on high,” Paul says, “that he might fill all things.” [^{<490410>}Ephesians 4:10.] This is the manner of fulfillment: through the ministers to whom he has entrusted this office and has conferred the grace to carry it out, he dispenses and distributes his gifts to the church; and he shows himself as though present by manifesting the power of his Spirit in this his institution, that it be not vain or idle. Thus the renewal of the saints is accomplished; thus the body of Christ is built up [^{<490412>}Ephesians 4:12]; thus “we grow up in every way into him who is the Head” [^{<490415>}Ephesians 4:15] and grow together among ourselves; thus are we all brought into the unity of Christ, if prophecy flourishes among us, if we receive the apostles, if we do not refuse the doctrine administered to us. Whoever, therefore, either is trying to abolish this order of which we speak and this kind of government, or discounts it as not necessary, is striving for the undoing or rather the ruin and destruction of the church. For neither the light and heat of the sun, nor food and drink, are so necessary to nourish and sustain the present life as the apostolic and pastoral office is necessary to preserve the church on earth.

3. THE PRESTIGE OF THE PREACHING OFFICE IN SCRIPTURE

I have accordingly pointed out above^{F56} that God often commended the dignity of the ministry by all possible marks of approval in order that it might be held among us in highest honor and esteem, even as the most excellent of all things. God testifies that, in raising up teachers for them, he bestows a singular benefit upon men when he bids the prophet exclaim, “Beautiful are the feet and blessed the coming of those who announce peace” [^{<235207>}Isaiah 52:7], and when he calls the apostles “the light of the world” and “the salt of the earth” [^{<400513>}Matthew 5:13-14]. And this

office could not be more splendidly adorned than when he said, “He who hears you hears me, and he who rejects you rejects me” [^{<421016>} Luke 10:16].

But no passage is clearer than that of Paul in the second letter to the Corinthians, where he, as if purposely, discusses this question. He therefore contends that there is nothing more notable or glorious in the church than the ministry of the gospel, since it is the administration of the Spirit and of righteousness and of eternal life [^{<470406>} 2 Corinthians 4:6; 3:9]. The purport of these and like passages is that the mode of governing and keeping the church through ministers (a mode established by the Lord forever) may not be ill esteemed among us and through contempt fall out of use.

How great the necessity of the ministry is, he has declared not only in words but also by examples. When God willed that the light of his truth should shine more fully upon Cornelius, he sent an angel from heaven to direct him to Peter [^{<441003>} Acts 10:3-6]. When he willed to call Paul to the knowledge of himself and to engraft him into the church, he does not address him with his own voice, but sends him to a man from whom he is to receive both the doctrine of salvation and the sanctification of baptism [^{<440906>} Acts 9:6]. It is not by chance that the angel, who is God’s interpreter, abstains from declaring God’s will, but orders a man to be sent for to declare it. It is not without reason that Christ, the sole teacher of believers, entrusts Paul to the teaching of a man—that very Paul whom he had determined to catch up into the third heaven and make worthy to receive a wonderful revelation of things unspeakable [^{<471202>} 2 Corinthians 12:2-4]. Who, then, would dare despise that ministry or dispense with it as something superfluous, whose use God willed to attest with such proofs?

(The Scriptural offices of the ministry described, 4-9)

4. THE SEVERAL SORTS OF OFFICERS ACCORDING TO EPHESIANS CHAPTER 4

Those who preside over the government of the church in accordance with Christ’s institution are called by Paul as follows: first apostles, then prophets, thirdly evangelists, fourthly pastors, and finally teachers

[<490411> Ephesians 4:11]. Of these only the last two have an ordinary office in the church; the Lord raised up the first three at the beginning of his Kingdom, and now and again revives them as the need of the times demands.

The nature of the apostles' function is clear from this command: "Go, preach the gospel to every creature" [<411615> Mark 16:15]. No set limits are allotted to them, but the whole earth is assigned to them to bring into obedience to Christ, in order that by spreading the gospel wherever they can among the nations, they may raise up his Kingdom everywhere, Accordingly, Paul, in desiring to prove his apostleship, recalls that he did not gain any one city for Christ but propagated the gospel far and wide, and did not put his hands to another man's foundation but planted churches where the name of the Lord was unheard [<451519> Romans 15:19-20]. Apostles, then, were sent out to lead the world back from rebellion to true obedience to God, and to establish his Kingdom everywhere by the preaching of the gospel, or, if you prefer, as the first builders of the church, to lay its foundations in all the world [<460810> 1 Corinthians 8:10].

Paul applies the name "prophets" not to all those who were interpreters of God's will, but to those who excelled in a particular revelation [<490411> Ephesians 4:11]. This class either does not exist today or is less commonly seen.

"Evangelists" I take to be those who, although lower in rank than apostles, were next to them in office and functioned in their place. Such were Luke, Timothy, Titus, and others like them; perhaps also the seventy disciples, whom Christ appointed in the second place after the apostles [<421001> Luke 10:1].

According to this interpretation (which seems to me to be in agreement with both the words and opinion of Paul), these three functions were not established in the church as permanent ones, but only for that time during which churches were to be erected where none existed before, or where they were to be carried over from Moses to Christ. Still, I do not deny that the Lord has sometimes at a later period raised up apostles, or at least evangelists in their place, as has happened in our own day.^{F57} For there was need for such persons to lead the church back from the rebellion of

Antichrist. Nonetheless, I call this office “extraordinary,” because in duly constituted churches it has no place.

Next come pastors and teachers, whom the church can never go without. There is, I believe, this difference between them: teachers are not put in charge of discipline, or administering the sacraments, or warnings and exhortations, but only of Scriptural interpretation—to keep doctrine whole and pure among believers.^{F58} But the pastoral office includes all these functions within itself.

5. TEMPORARY AND PERMANENT OFFICES

We have now in mind which ministries in the government of the church were temporary and which ones were so instituted as to endure permanently. But if we group evangelists and apostles together, we shall then have two pairs that somehow correspond with each other. For as our teachers correspond to the ancient prophets, so do our pastors to the apostles. The prophetic office was more eminent on account of the singular gift of revelation in which they excelled. But the office of teachers is very similar in character and has exactly the same purpose. So the Twelve chosen by the Lord to publish the new preaching of the gospel to the world surpassed the rest in order and rank [^{<420613>}Luke 6:13; ^{<480101>}Galatians 1:1]. Now, by the meaning and derivation of the word all ministers of the church can properly be called “apostles,” because all are sent by the Lord and are his messengers. Nevertheless, because it was very important that men should have sure knowledge of the mission of those who were to put forth a new and unheard-of thing, it was necessary for those twelve (to whose number Paul was afterward added) to be distinguished above the rest by some special title. Paul, indeed, applied this name in another place to Andronicus and Junias, whom he calls “men of note among the apostles” [^{<451607>}Romans 16:7]. But when he wishes to speak with strict accuracy, he applies the term only to that first order. And this is the common usage of Scripture [^{<401001>}Matthew 10:1]. Yet pastors (except that they each govern the several churches assigned to them) have the same charge as the apostles. Now let us hear more clearly what its nature is.

6. APOSTLES AND PASTORS

The Lord, when he sent out the apostles, gave them (as has just now been said^{F59}) the command to preach the gospel and to baptize those who believe unto forgiveness of sins [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19]. But he had previously commanded that they distribute the sacred symbols of his body and blood after his example [^{<422219>} Luke 22:19]. Here is the holy, inviolable, and perpetual law imposed upon those who took the place of the apostles, by which they receive the command to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments. From this we infer that those who neglect both of these pretend falsely to be apostles.

But what about the pastors? Paul is speaking not only of himself but of them all when he says, “This is how men should regard us, as ministers of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” [^{<460401>} 1 Corinthians 4:1]. Likewise elsewhere: “The bishop must hold to the faithful word, which is, according to the teaching, that he may be able to give instruction in sound doctrine and also to confute those who contradict it” [^{<560109>} Titus 1:9]. From these and similar passages which frequently occur, we may infer that in the office of the pastors also there are these two particular functions: to proclaim the gospel and to administer the sacraments. The manner of teaching not only consists in public discourses, but also has to do with private admonitions. So Paul calls the Ephesians to witness that he shrank from nothing that was in their best interest, but warned and taught them publicly and from house to house, testifying, to Jews and Greeks alike, repentance and faith in Christ [^{<442020>} Acts 20:20-21]; likewise, a little later, that he did not cease to admonish them one and all with tears [^{<442031>} Acts 20:31]. Yet it is not my present intention to set forth in detail the gifts of the good pastor, but only to indicate what those who call themselves pastors should profess. That is, they have been set over the church not to have a sinecure but, by the doctrine of Christ to instruct the people to true godliness, to administer the sacred mysteries and to keep and exercise upright discipline. To all who have been appointed watchmen in the church the Lord announces: if, by their neglect, anyone perish through ignorance, he “will require the blood at their hand” [^{<260317>} Ezekiel 3:17-18]. To them all applies what Paul said of himself: “Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel.... [since] I am entrusted with a commission” [^{<460916>} 1 Corinthians 9:16-17]. Finally, what the apostles performed for

the whole world, each pastor ought to perform for his own flock, to which he is assigned.

7. THE PASTOR IS BOUND TO HIS CHURCH

Although we assign to each pastor his church, at the same time we do not deny that a pastor bound to one church can aid other churches—either if any disturbances occur which require his presence, or if advice be sought from him concerning some obscure matter, about to keep peace in the church, this order is necessary: that to each be assigned his task to keep all from being in confusion, at the same time dashing about aimlessly without an assignment, rashly gathering together in one place, and forsaking their churches at pleasure, because they are more concerned about their own advantage than about the upbuilding of the church. Consequently, this arrangement ought to be observed as generally as possible: that each person, content with his own limits, should not break over into another man's province.

This is not of human devising but ordained by God himself. For we read that Paul and Barnabas created presbyters in the individual churches of Lystra, Antioch, and Iconium [^{<441422>} Acts 14:22-23]; and Paul himself bade Titus appoint presbyters in every town [^{<560105>} Titus 1:5]. So in one place Paul speaks of the bishops of the Philippians [^{<500101>} Philippians 1:1]; in another, of Archippus the bishop of the Colossians [^{<510417>} Colossians 4:17]. And in Luke there is a notable sermon of Paul's to the presbyters of the church at Ephesus [^{<442018>} Acts 20:18-19].

Whoever, then, would take upon himself the government and care of a church should know that he is bound by this law of divine call. He is not bound, as it were, to the glebe (to use the lawyers' term), ^{F60} that is, bound over and fastened to it so that he cannot move his foot from it though public welfare demand it, even if the demand be made duly and in order. But he who is called to one place ought not to think of leaving or to seek release (considering it to be to his advantage). Then, if it be expedient for anyone to be transferred to another place, still he ought not to attempt this on his own private resolve, but to await public authority.

8. THE DESIGNATION OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD: PRESBYTERS

But in indiscriminately calling those who rule the church “bishops,” “presbyters,” “pastors,” and “ministers,” I did so according to Scriptural usage, which interchanges these terms.^{F61} For to all who carry out the ministry of the Word it accords the title of “bishops.” So in Paul, when he has bidden Titus to appoint presbyters for each town [^{<560105>} Titus 1:5], there follows immediately, “for a bishop... must be blameless” [^{<560107>} Titus 1:7; cf. ^{<540301>} 1 Timothy 3:1], etc.^{F62} Elsewhere he greets a number of bishops in one church [^{<500101>} Philippians 1:1]. And in The Acts it is related that he convened the Ephesian presbyters [^{<442017>} Acts 20:17], whom he calls “bishops” in his speech [^{<442018>} Acts 20:18].

Here it must now be noted that to this point we have considered only those offices which are engaged in the ministry of the Word; nor does Paul mention the others in the fourth chapter of the letter to the Ephesians, which we have cited [^{<490411>} Ephesians 4:11].^{F63} But in the letter to the Romans [^{<451207>} Romans 12:7-8] and in the first letter to the Corinthians [^{<461228>} 1 Corinthians 12:28], he lists others, as powers, the gift of healing, interpretation, government, and caring for the poor. Two of these I omit as being temporary, for it is not worthwhile to tarry over them. But two of them are permanent: government and caring for the poor.

Governors [^{<461228>} 1 Corinthians 12:28] were, I believe, elders chosen from the people, who were charged with the censure of morals and the exercise of discipline along with the bishops. For one cannot otherwise interpret his statement, “Let him who rules act with diligence” [^{<451208>} Romans 12:8, cf. Vg.]. Each church, therefore, had from its beginning a senate, chosen from godly, grave, and holy men, which had jurisdiction over the correcting of faults. Of it we shall speak later.^{F64} Now experience itself makes clear that this sort of order was not confined to one age. Therefore, this office of government is necessary for all ages.

9. THE DEACONS

The care of the poor was entrusted to the deacons. However, two kinds are mentioned in the letter to the Romans: “He that gives, let him do it with simplicity;... he that shows mercy, with cheerfulness”

[<451208> Romans 12:8, cf. Vg.]. Since it is certain that Paul is speaking of the public office of the church, there must have been two distinct grades. Unless my judgment deceive me, in the first clause he designates the deacons who distribute the alms. But the second refers to those who had devoted themselves to the care of the poor and sick. Of this sort were the widows whom Paul mentions to Timothy [<540509> 1 Timothy 5:9-10]. Women could fill no other public office than to devote themselves to the care of the poor. If we accept this (as it must be accepted), there will be two kinds of deacons: one to serve the church in administering the affairs of the poor; the other, in caring for the poor themselves. But even though the term [*διακονία*], itself has a wider application, Scripture specifically designates as deacons those whom the church has appointed to distribute alms and take care of the poor, and serve as stewards of the common chest of the poor. Their origin, institution, and office are described by Luke in the Acts [<440603> Acts 6:3]. For when the Greeks started a rumor that their widows were being neglected in the relief of the poor, the apostles, making the excuse that they were unable to fulfill both functions (preaching the Word and serving at table), asked the multitude to choose seven upright men to whom they might entrust this task^{F65} [<440601> Acts 6:1 ff.]. Here, then, is the kind of deacons the apostolic church had, and which we, after their example, should have.

(The calling, authorization, and ordination of ministers, 10-16)

10. ORDERLY CALLING IS REQUISITE

But while “all things should be done decently and in order” [<461440> 1 Corinthians 14:40] in the holy assembly, there is nothing in which order should be more diligently observed than in establishing government; for nowhere is there greater peril if anything be done irregularly. Therefore, in order that noisy and troublesome men should not rashly take upon themselves to teach or to rule (which might otherwise happen), especial care was taken that no one should assume public office in the church without being called. Therefore, if a man were to be considered a true minister of the church, he must first have been duly called [<580504> Hebrews 5:4], then he must respond to his calling, that is, he must undertake and carry out the tasks enjoined. We can often note this in Paul, who, when he wishes to commend his apostleship, almost always alludes

to his call along with his faithfulness in carrying out his office from. 1:1; ^{<460101>} 1 Corinthians 1:1]. If so great a minister of Christ dare not claim authority for himself to be heard in the church—save on the ground that he has been ordained to it by the Lord’s command and faithfully carries out what has been committed to him—what shamelessness will it be in any mortal, devoid of one or both of these, to claim this sort of honor for himself? But because we have touched above on the necessity of fulfilling the office, let us now deal with the call alone.

11. OUTER AND INNER CALL

The treatment of this matter involves four points: that we may know

- (1) what sort of ministers they should be,
- (2) how, and
- (3) by whom they should be appointed, and
- (4) by what rite or ceremony they should be installed.

I am speaking of the outward and solemn call which has to do with the public order of the church. I pass over that secret call,^{F66} of which each minister is conscious before God, and which does not have the church as witness. But there is the good witness of our heart that we receive the proffered office not with ambition or avarice, not with any other selfish desire, but with a sincere fear of God and desire to build up the church. That is indeed necessary for each one of us (as I have said) if we would have our ministry approved by God.

Yet, though one comes to it with an evil conscience, he is nonetheless duly called in the presence of the church, provided his wickedness is not open. Men also commonly say of lay persons that they are called to the ministry when they see that they are fit and competent to exercise it. For, to be sure, learning joined with piety and the other gifts of the good pastor are a sort of preparation for it. Those whom the Lord has destined for such high office, he first supplies with the arms required to fulfill it, that they may not come empty-handed and unprepared. Accordingly, Paul, in his letter to the Corinthians, when he undertook to discuss these offices, first reviewed the gifts in which those who perform the offices ought to

excel [^{<461207>} 1 Corinthians 12:7-11]. But since this is the first of the four headings which I have set forth, let us now proceed to it.

12. WHO CAN BECOME A MINISTER OF THE CHURCH? HOW THIS TAKES PLACE

In two passages [^{<560107>} Titus 1:7; ^{<540301>} 1 Timothy 3:1-7] Paul fully sets forth what sort of bishops ought to be chosen. To sum up, only those are to be chosen who are of sound doctrine and of holy life, not notorious in any fault which might both deprive them of authority and disgrace the ministry [^{<540302>} 1 Timothy 3:2-3; ^{<560107>} Titus 1:7-8]. The very same requirements apply to deacons and presbyters [^{<540308>} 1 Timothy 3:8-13]. We must always see to it that they be adequate and fit to bear the burden imposed upon them, that is, that they be instructed in those skills necessary for the discharge of their office. Thus Christ, when he was about to send out the apostles, equipped them with the arms and tools which they had to have [^{<422115>} Luke 21:15; 24:49; ^{<411615>} Mark 16:15-18; ^{<440108>} Acts 1:8]. And Paul, having painted a picture of a good and true bishop, admonishes Timothy not to defile himself by choosing anyone different from it [^{<540522>} 1 Timothy 5:22].

I refer the adverb “how” not to the ceremony of choosing, but to religious awe, which ought to be observed in the act of choosing.

Hence, fasting and prayers, which Luke relates the believers used when they created presbyters [^{<441423>} Acts 14:23, etc.]. For, since they understood that they were doing the most serious thing of all, they dared attempt nothing but with the highest reverence and care. But they especially applied themselves to prayers, in which they besought from God the Spirit of counsel and discretion [cf. ^{<231102>} Isaiah 11:2].

13. WHO SHOULD CHOOSE MINISTERS?

The third point in our discussion is: who should choose the ministers? The election of the apostles provides no sure rule in this matter, for it was somewhat different from the calling of the rest. Because it was an extraordinary ministry, to render it conspicuous by a more notable mark, those who were to discharge it had to be called and ordained by the mouth of the Lord himself. Ordained, then, by no human choice but by the

command of God and Christ alone, they girded themselves for their task. Hence it is that when the apostles wish to put another man in place of Judas, they dare not name one for certain, but bring forward two, that the Lord may declare by lot which of these two he would have succeed [^{<440123>} Acts 1:23-26]. In this sense also ought to be understood Paul's statement that he was not created "an apostle by men or through a man, but through Christ and God the Father" [^{<480101>} Galatians 1:1; cf. 5:12]. The first point—"by men"—he had in common with all godly ministers of the Word; for no one could duly perform this ministry unless he had been called by God. The other point was proper and peculiar to him. Therefore, when he glories in this, he not only boasts that he has what belongs to a lawful pastor, but he also wears the badge of his apostleship. For since there were those among the Galatians who, endeavoring to diminish his authority, made him out to be some ordinary disciple substituted by the original apostles, Paul, to protect the dignity of his preaching, which he knew to be secretly under attack, of necessity had to show that in every respect he was no whit inferior to the other apostles. Accordingly, he declares that he was chosen not by men's decision like any common bishop, but by the mouth and manifest oracle of the Lord himself.

14. HUMAN AGENCY

No sober person will deny that for men to appoint bishops is in every respect consonant with a lawful calling, since there are many Scriptural passages that attest this practice. Nor is this contravened by Paul's statement, just quoted, that he was "sent not by men or through men" [^{<480101>} Galatians 1:1], seeing that he is speaking there not of the ordinary choosing of ministers, but is claiming for himself what was peculiar to the apostles. Still, of himself the Lord in the exercise of his singular prerogative, designated Paul also but in such a way as in the meantime to make use of the discipline of a churchly call. For such is Luke's account: "The Holy Spirit speaks to the apostles as they fast and pray: 'Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" [^{<441302>} Acts 13:2]. What was the purpose of that setting apart and laying on of hands after the Holy Spirit attested his choice, except to preserve church discipline in designating ministers through men? God, then, could not approve this sort of order by a clearer example than, after having

declared that he had appointed Paul apostle to the Gentiles, he nevertheless would have him designated by the church. The same point may be noted in the choosing of Matthias [^{<440123>} Acts 1:23]. For because the apostolic office was of such great importance that they dare not choose any one man for that rank, they brought forward two, on one of whom the lot should fall. Thus the choice had an open testimony from heaven, yet church order was in no respect neglected.

15. THE VOTE OF THE PEOPLE

Someone now asks whether the minister ought to be chosen by the whole church,^{F67} or only by his colleagues and the elders charged with the censure of morals, or whether he ought to be appointed by the authority of a single person.

Those who give this authority to one man quote what Paul says to Titus: “This is why I left you in Crete, that you might... appoint presbyters in every town” [^{<560105>} Titus 1:5]. Likewise to Timothy: “Lay not your hands hastily upon anyone” [^{<540512>} 1 Timothy 5:12]. But they are deceived if they think that Timothy so ruled in Ephesus or Titus in Crete that each arranged everything according to his own decision. For they were over the rest only to give good and salutary advice to the people, not that they alone, in disregard of all the rest, might do what they pleased!

And lest I seem to forge my evidence, I shall make my point plain by a similar example. For Luke relates that presbyters were appointed through the churches by Paul and Barnabas; but at the same time he notes the manner, or means, when he says that it was done by votes—“presbyters elected by show of hands in every church,”^{F68} he says [^{<441423>} Acts 14:23]. Therefore, these two apostles “created” them, but the whole group, as was the custom of the Greeks in elections, declared whom it wished to have by raising hands. In like manner, the Roman historians frequently say that the consul who convened the assemblies “created” new magistrates for no other reason than that he received the votes and acted as moderator of the people in the election.

Surely it is not likely that Paul granted more to Timothy and Titus than he claimed for himself. But we see that it was his custom to “create” bishops by vote of the people. Therefore, the above passages are to be so

understood as not to diminish any part of the common right and freedom of the church. Cyprian, then, puts it well when he contends that the choosing of the bishop in the presence of the people before the eyes of all, and the proof of his worth and fitness by public decision and testimony, descend from divine authority. Indeed, we see that this was observed by the Lord's command in the case of the Levitical priests, that before consecration they were brought into the presence of the people [^{<030804>}Leviticus 8:4-6; ^{<042026>}Numbers 20:26-27]. In the same way Matthias is appointed to the company of the apostles; in the same way the seven deacons are created—with the people looking on and approving [^{<440115>}Acts 1:15 ff.; 6:2-7]. “These examples,” says Cyprian, “show that the ordination of a priest must take place only in the presence and with the knowledge of the people, in order that the ordination, which has been examined by the witness of all, may be just and lawful.”^{F69} We therefore hold that this call of a minister is lawful according to the Word of God, when those who seemed fit are created by the consent and approval of the people; moreover, that other pastors ought to preside over the election in order that the multitude may not go wrong either through fickleness, through evil intentions, or through disorder.

16. ORDINATION

There remains the rite of ordination, to which we have given the last place in the call. It is clear that when the apostles admitted any man to the ministry, they used no other ceremony than the laying on of hands, I judge that this rite derived from the custom of the Hebrews, who, as it were, presented to God by the laying on of hands that which they wished to be blessed and consecrated. So Jacob, about to bless Ephraim and Manasseh, laid his hands on their heads [^{<014814>}Genesis 48:14]. Our Lord followed this practice when he prayed over the children [^{<401915>}Matthew 19:15]. With the same meaning, I suppose, the Jews laid their hands upon their sacrifices according to the prescription of the law [^{<040812>}Numbers 8:12; 27:23; ^{<030104>}Leviticus 1:4; 3:2, 8, 13; 4:4, 15, 24, 29, 33; etc.]. The apostles, accordingly, signified by the laying on of hands that they were offering to God him whom they were receiving into the ministry. However, they used it also with those upon whom they conferred the visible graces of the Spirit [^{<441906>}Acts 19:6]. Anyway, this was the

solemn rite used whenever they called anyone to the ministry of the church. In this way they consecrated the pastors and teachers, and the deacons.

Although there exists no set precept for the laying on of hands, because we see it in continual use with the apostles, their very careful observance ought to serve in lieu of a precept. And surely it is useful for the dignity of the ministry to be commended to the people by this sort of sign, as also to warn the one ordained that he is no longer a law unto himself, but bound in servitude to God and the church. Moreover, it will be no empty sign if it is restored to its own true origin. For if the Spirit of God establishes nothing without cause in the church, we should feel that this ceremony, since it has proceeded from him, is not useless, provided it be not turned to superstitious abuse. Finally, we must understand that the whole multitude did not lay hands upon its ministers, but pastors alone did so. It is uncertain, however, whether several always laid on their hands or not. But it is clear that this was done in the case of the deacons, of Paul and Barnabas, and of a few others [^{<440606>} Acts 6:6; 13:3]. But Paul elsewhere recalls that he himself, not a number of others, laid hands upon Timothy. “I remind you,” he says, “to rekindle the gift of God that is in you through the laying on of my hands.” [^{<550106>} 2 Timothy 1:6.] For what he says in the second letter about the laying on of hands of the presbytery^{F70} [^{<540414>} 1 Timothy 4:14], I do not understand as if Paul were speaking of the company of elders, but I understand by this expression the ordination itself, for it is as if he said, “See to it that the grace which you received by the laying on of hands, when I created you presbyter, is not void.”

CHAPTER 4

THE CONDITION OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH, AND THE KIND OF GOVERNMENT IN USE BEFORE THE PAPACY^{F71}

*(Historical development of the ministry; three classes of ministers:
teaching and ruling presbyters: one presbyter selected to be bishop:
the archbishop, 1-4)*

1. FIDELITY OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH TO THE SCRIPTURAL ARCHETYPE

Up to this point we have discussed the order of church government as it has been handed down to us from God's pure Word, and also those ministries established by Christ.^{F72} Now to make all these matters clearer and more familiar, and also to fix them better in our minds, it will be useful to recognize in those characteristics of the ancient church the form which will represent to our eyes some image of the divine institution. For even though the bishops of those times promulgated many canons, by which they seemed to express more than was expressed in Scripture, still they conformed their establishment with such care to the unique pattern of God's Word that you may readily see that it had almost nothing in this respect alien to God's Word. But though something might be wanting in their arrangements, yet because they tried with a sincere effort to preserve God's institution and did not wander far from it, it will be most profitable here briefly to ascertain what sort of observance they had.

We have stated that Scripture sets before us three kinds of ministers. Similarly, whatever ministers the ancient church had it divided into three orders. For from the order of presbyters

(1) part were chosen pastors and teachers;

(2) the remaining part were charged with the censure and correction of morals;

(3) the care of the poor and the distribution of alms were committed to the deacons.

“Readers” and “acolytes,” however, were not the names of definite offices; it was these whom they called “clerics,” and whom through definite exercises they trained from youth to serve the church in order that they might better understand the purpose for which they had been appointed and might, in time, be more ready to step into office. This I shall soon show more fully.^{F73}

Therefore, Jerome, in setting forth five church orders, lists bishops, presbyters, deacons, believers, and catechumens; he gives no special place to the remaining clergy and monks.^{F74}

2. THE POSITION OF THE BISHOP

All those to whom the office of teaching was enjoined they called “presbyters.” In each city these chose one of their number to whom they specially gave the title “bishop” in order that dissensions might not arise (as commonly happens) from equality of rank. Still, the bishop was not so much higher in honor and dignity as to have lordship over his colleagues. But the same functions that the consul has in the senate—to report on business, to request opinions, to preside over others in counseling, admonishing, and exhorting, to govern the whole action by his authority, and to carry out what was decreed by common decision—the bishop carried out in the assembly of presbyters.

And the ancients themselves admit that this was introduced by human agreement to meet the need of the times. “Thus Jerome, commenting on the letter to Titus, says: “Bishop and presbyter are one and the same. And before, by the devil’s prompting, dissensions arose in religion and it was said among the people, ‘I am of Paul, I of Cephas’ [^{<460112>} 1 Corinthians 1:12; cf. chapter 3:4], churches were governed by the common counsel of presbyters.” Afterward, to remove seeds of dissensions, all oversight was committed to one person. Just as the presbyters, therefore, know that they are, according to the custom of the church, subject to him who presides, so the bishops recognize that they are superior to the presbyters more according to the custom of the church than by the Lord’s actual arrangement, and that they ought to govern the church in cooperation with

them.^{F75} Jerome, however, tells us in another place what an ancient arrangement it was. For he says that at Alexandria from the time of the Evangelist Mark to that of Heraclas and Dionysius, the presbyters always elected one of their number and set him in a higher rank, calling him “bishop.”^{F76}

Each city, then, had a college of presbyters, who were pastors and teachers. For all exercised among the people the office of teaching, exhorting, and correcting, which Paul enjoins on bishops [^{<560109>}Titus 1:9]; and, to leave successors after them, they labored hard to teach the younger men who had enlisted in the sacred army.

A certain area was assigned to each city from which its presbyters were drawn, and it was thought of as belonging to the body of that church. Each college was under one bishop for the preservation of its organization and peace. While he surpassed the others in dignity, he was subject to the assembly of his brethren. But if the field under his episcopate was too large for him to be able to fulfill everywhere all the duties of bishop, presbyters were assigned to certain places in the field, and carried on his duties in lesser matters. These they called “country bishops”^{F77} because they represented the bishop throughout the province.

3. THE CHIEF DUTY OF BISHOP AND PRESBYTERS

But as far as concerns the office with which we are now dealing, both bishops and presbyters had to devote themselves to the dispensing of Word and sacraments. For at Alexandria alone (since Arius had disturbed the church there) it was ordained that no presbyter should preach to the people, as Socrates says in Book 9 of the *Tripartite History*.^{F78} Yet Jerome does not hide his displeasure at this fact.^{F79}

Surely it would have been considered a monstrous thing for anyone to claim to be a bishop who had not in fact shown himself a true bishop. Such, therefore, was the severity of the times, that all ministers were compelled to discharge the office which the Lord required of them. I do not refer to the custom of a single age only. For even in Gregory’s time, when the church had well-nigh collapsed (surely it had deteriorated much from its ancient purity), it was not tolerable for any bishop to refrain from preaching. “A bishop,” he says somewhere, “dies, if no sound is heard

from him; for he calls upon himself the wrath of the hidden Judge, if he goes about without the sound of preaching.” And in another place: “When Paul testifies that he is clean of the blood of all [^{<442026>} Acts 20:26], by this statement we are convicted, we are constrained, we are shown guilty—we who are called bishops, we who (besides possessing our own evils) add also the deaths of others. For we kill as many as we, lukewarm and silent, see going to their death each day.^{F80} He calls himself and others “silent,” for they were less constant in their work than they should have been. Since he spares not even those who half fulfilled their office, what do you think he would have done if anyone had ceased entirely? Therefore, it was a principle of long standing in the church that the primary duties of the bishop were to feed his people with the Word of God, or to build up the church publicly and privately with sound doctrine.

4. ARCHBISHOPS AND PATRIARCHS

That each province had one archbishop among the bishops, and that at the Council of Nicaea patriarchs were ordained to be higher in rank and dignity than archbishops,^{F81} were facts connected with the maintenance of discipline. However, in this discussion it cannot be overlooked that this was an extremely rare practice. These ranks, therefore, were established so that any incident in any church whatever that could not be settled by a few might be referred to a provincial synod. If the magnitude or difficulty of the case demanded larger discussion, the patriarchs, together with a synod, were summoned, from whom there was no appeal except to a general council. Some called the government thus constituted a “hierarchy,” an improper term (it seems to me), certainly one unused in Scripture. For the Holy Spirit willed men to beware of dreaming of a principality or lordship as far as the government of the church is concerned.^{F82} But if, laying aside the word, we look at the thing itself, we shall find that the ancient bishops did not intend to fashion any other form of church rule than that which God has laid down in his Word.

(Deacons and archdeacons: the administration of property and alms: minor clerics, 5-9)

5. THE OFFICE OF DEACON

At that time the character of the diaconate was the same as that under the apostles.^{F83} For they received the daily offerings of believers and the yearly income of the church. These they were to devote to proper uses, that is, to distribute some to feed the ministers, some to feed the poor, but according to the decision of the bishop, to whom they rendered an account annually of their distribution. The fact that the canons everywhere make the bishop the steward of all the possessions of the church is not to be understood as if he personally handled the task. Rather, it was his duty to designate to the deacon the ones to receive public support from the church, and with regard to what was left, to specify to whom it should be given and how much to each. For he had to investigate whether the deacon faithfully executed his responsibility. So we read in the canons ascribed to the apostles: "We decree that the bishop have in his power the affairs of the church. For if the souls of men (which are more precious) have been entrusted to him, it is much more fitting that he have to do with the care of funds, so that on his authority all things may be distributed to the poor through the presbyters and deacons, and be administered with fear and all carefulness."^{F84} And in the Council of Antioch it was decreed that the bishops who administer the affairs of the church without the presbyters' and deacons' knowledge be restrained.^{F85} But we need not discuss this point any longer, since it is clear from very many letters of Gregory that, at that time, when many other ordinances of the church had been vitiated, this observance still remained, that the deacons were, under the bishop, the stewards of the poor.

It is likely that subdeacons were at first assigned to deacons to assist them in poor relief; but that distinction was gradually confused.

Moreover, archdeacons began to be created when the wealth of possessions demanded a new and more exact kind of administration, although Jerome relates that they already existed in his day.^{F86} In their charge were the whole of the revenues, possessions, and equipment, and the collection of the daily offerings. Accordingly, Gregory declares to the

archdeacon of Salona, that he is to be held guilty if any goods of the church be lost due to anyone's negligence or fraud.^{F87} But they were entrusted with the reading of the gospel to the people and with the exhortation to pray, and were given as well the office of extending the cup in the Sacred Supper.^{F88} These tasks were enjoined to enhance their office that they might therefore fulfill it with greater scrupulousness, since by such signs they were admonished that it was not secular management that they were undertaking, but a spiritual function dedicated to God.

6. THE USE OF CHURCH POSSESSIONS

From this we may also judge what use was made of church possessions and how they were dispensed. You will frequently find both in the decrees of synods and in ancient writers that all that the church possesses, either in lands or in money, is the patrimony of the poor. And so this song is often sung there to bishops and deacons, that they should remember that they are not handling their own goods but those appointed for the need of the poor; and if in bad faith they suppress or waste them, they shall be guilty of blood. Accordingly, they are admonished to distribute these goods to whom they are owed, with the greatest awe and reverence, as if in God's presence, without partiality. Hence arise those grave protestations in Chrysostom, Ambrose, Augustine, and other bishops like them, by which they affirm their uprightness among the people.

But it is fair and sanctioned also by the law of the Lord, that those who work for the church be supported at public expense [^{<460914>} 1 Corinthians 9:14; ^{<480606>} Galatians 6:6]; and some presbyters in that age also consecrating their inheritances to God made themselves voluntarily poor. Consequently, the distribution was then such that the ministers did not lack food, and the poor were not neglected. Yet provision was meanwhile made that the very ministers, who ought to give others an example of frugality, should not have so much as to abuse it to the point of luxury and indulgence, but only enough to meet their needs. For those clergy who can be supported by their parents' possessions, says Jerome, if they receive anything belonging to the poor, commit sacrilege, and by such an abuse they eat and drink judgment upon themselves [^{<461129>} 1 Corinthians 11:29].^{F89}

7. FOURFOLD DIVISION OF REVENUES

At first, the administration was free and voluntary, since the bishops and deacons were faithful of their own free will, and integrity of conscience and innocence of life stood in place of laws.^{F90} Then, after evil examples sprang up from the greed or wicked efforts of certain ones, to correct these vices canons were enacted, which divided the income of the church into four parts: one for the clergy, another for the poor, a third for the repair of churches and other buildings, a fourth for the poor, both foreign and indigenous.

While other canons assign this last part to the bishop, this does not differ from the division which I have spoken of. For they do not mean it to be his private income, that he alone should either devour it, or pour it upon whom he pleases, but that it may suffice for the hospitality which Paul requires of that rank [^{<540302>} 1 Timothy 3:2]. And so Gelasius and Gregory interpret it; for Gelasius brings forward no other reason why the bishop should claim anything for himself except to bestow it upon prisoners and wayfarers. And Gregory speaks even more clearly: “It is the custom of the apostolic see to command the bishop, once ordained, to divide into four portions all the revenue that comes in: that is, one for the bishop and his household, for hospitality and maintenance; another for the clergy; a third for the poor; and a fourth for the repair of churches.”^{F91} Therefore, the bishop was not allowed to take anything for his own use, except what was sufficient for moderate and frugal food and clothing. If anyone began to go to excess, either in luxury, or ostentation and pomp, he was reprimanded at once by his colleagues; if he did not obey, he was deprived of his office.

8. CHURCH TREASURE DISTRIBUTED TO THE POOR

At first they spent very little on the embellishment of sacred things; afterward, although the church became gradually richer, they still kept moderation in this respect. Whatever money was given to it still remained intact for the poor, should any great need arise. Thus Cyril, when famine seized the province of Jerusalem and the distress could not otherwise be relieved, sold vessels and vestments, and spent the money on poor relief. Similarly, Acacius, bishop of Amida, when a great multitude of Persians

was well-nigh dying from famine, calling together his clergy, delivered this famous speech: “Our God needs neither plates nor cups, for he neither eats nor drinks.” Then he melted the vessels to obtain both food and the price of ransom for the pitiable folk.^{F92} Jerome also, when he inveighs against excessive splendor of churches, honorably mentions Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse in his day, who carried the Lord’s body in a wicker basket and his blood in a glass vessel, but suffered no poor man to hunger.^{F93} What I just now said of Acacius, Ambrose states about himself, for when the Arians reproached him for having broken the sacred vessels to ransom prisoners, he used this wonderful excuse: “He who sent out the apostles without gold also gathered churches without gold. The church has gold not to keep but to pay out, and to relieve distress. What need to keep what helps not? Or are we ignorant of how much gold and silver the Assyrians carted off from the Temple of the Lord [^{<121815>}2 Kings 18:15-16]? Would it not be better for the priest to melt it to sustain the poor, if other aid is lacking, than for a sacrilegious enemy to bear it away? Will not the Lord say, ‘Why have you allowed so many needy to die of hunger? Surely you had gold with which to minister sustenance. Why were so many prisoners carried off and not ransomed? Why were so many killed by the enemy? It were better for you to preserve vessels of living men than of metals.’ To these you cannot give reply, for what would you say? ‘I was afraid lest the temple of God lack ornament.’ He would reply: ‘The sacraments do not require gold, nor do those things please with gold that are not bought with gold. The ornament of the sacraments is the ransom of prisoners.’” To sum up, what the same man said in another place we see to be very true: “Whatever, then, the church had was for the support of the needy.” Likewise: “The bishop had nothing that did not belong to the poor.”^{F94}

9. THE PREPARATORY STAGES OF THE OFFICE

These which we have listed were the ministries of the ancient church. There were others, mentioned by writers of the church, which were more exercises and preparations than distinct functions. For those holy men, that they might leave a seedbed for the church after them, received into their keeping and protection, and also instruction, youths who, with the consent and authority of their parents, enlisted in the spiritual army.

These they so formed from tender age that they might not come uninstructed and raw to the performance of their office. All who were steeped in this preliminary training were called by the general name “clerics.” I would have preferred them to be given a more proper name; for this appellation arose from error or at least from a wrong attitude, since Peter calls the whole church “the clergy,” that is, the inheritance of the Lord [^{<600508>} 1 Peter 5:8]. But the institution itself was particularly holy and profitable, for by it those who wished to consecrate themselves and their service to the church were brought up under the bishop’s care. It also ensured that only well-prepared persons might minister to the church, for from early youth under sacred instruction and strict training they took on an exemplary life of gravity and holiness; and, separated from worldly cares, they became accustomed to spiritual cares and studies. But, just as army recruits are instructed through sham battles for real and earnest conflict, so were there definite rudiments in which they were trained as clerics before they were promoted to the offices proper. First, then, they were entrusted with the opening and closing of the church, and were called “doorkeepers.” Afterward they were called “acolytes,” to assist the bishop in household tasks and continually to accompany him, first for honor’s sake, then that no suspicion might arise. Moreover, that they might gradually become known to the people and acquire commendation for themselves, and at the same time learn to be seen by all and to speak before all; that, when made presbyters, they might not be covered with shame when they came forward to teach—they were given opportunity to read from the pulpit. In this way, to prove their diligence in individual exercises, they were promoted by degrees until they were made subdeacons.^{F95} All I mean is that these were more the rudiments of recruits than functions to be considered as true ministries of the church.

*(History of changes in the election and ordination of ministers:
consent of the magistrates, clergy, and people in the
election of bishops, 10-15)*

10. PAUL’S DIRECTIONS MAINLY FOLLOWED: CONSENT OF THE PEOPLE

We have stated that the first and second considerations in the calling of ministers are: what kind of men to choose, and how much care must be

exercised in this matter. In this the ancient church followed Paul's prescription and the examples of the apostles. Their custom was, with the highest reverence and with earnest calling upon God's name, to meet to choose pastors.^{F96} Moreover, they had a form of examination in which they tested by the standard of Paul the life and teaching of those to be chosen. But they sinned here somewhat in their excessive severity, because they wished to require more in a bishop than Paul would require [^{<540302>}1 Timothy 3:2-7], and especially, after the passage of time, celibacy.^{F97} But in other respects their observance was in agreement with Paul's description.

As for our third point—who ought to ordain ministers—they did not always follow one procedure. In ancient times no one was even received into the assembly of clergy without the consent of all the people. Cyprian, therefore, painstakingly makes excuses for appointing a certain Aurelius as reader without consulting the church, for it was not according to custom, even though he did it with good reason. He introduces the matter as follows: "In ordaining clerics, dearly beloved brethren, it is our custom to consult with you and to weigh the morals and merits of each individual in common counsel."^{F98} But because there was not much danger in these minor functions, and because the men were taken under long probation and no great responsibility, the consent of the people ceased to be asked.

Afterward in the remaining orders also, except the episcopate, the people commonly left it to the bishop and presbyters to select and recognize those who were suitable and worthy, except perhaps when new presbyters were assigned to parishes, for then the inhabitants of the place had to give their express consent. No wonder that the people were less concerned' about retaining their right in this matter; for no one was made subdeacon without long experience as a cleric, under the severe discipline then in force. After he had proved himself in that rank, he was made deacon; from that he advanced to the office of presbyter, if he had behaved faithfully. So no one was promoted without actually undergoing for many years examination under the eyes of the people. And there were many canons to punish their shortcomings, so that a church need not suffer evil presbyters or deacons unless it neglected the remedies. However, for the presbyters also agreement of the citizens was always required. This is attested by Canon I, Dist. 67, attributed to Anacletus.^{F99} Finally, all

ordinations took place at stated times of the year in order that no one might creep in secretly without the consent of the believers, or be too readily promoted without witnesses.

11. CONSENT IN EPISCOPAL ELECTIONS, TO THE TIME OF THEODORET

The freedom of the people to choose their own bishops was long preserved: no one was to be thrust into office who was not acceptable to all. It was therefore forbidden at the Council of Antioch that anyone be intruded upon the people against their will.^{F100} This Leo I earnestly confirms. Hence these statements: "Let him be chosen whom the clergy and people, or the greater number, have demanded." Likewise: "Let him who is to be set over all be chosen by all. For the unknown and untried appointee has to be thrust in by force." Likewise: "Let him be chosen who has been elected by the clergy and desired by the people. And let him be consecrated by the bishops of that province with the decision of the metropolitan."^{F101} Moreover, the holy fathers took care that this freedom of the people should in no way be diminished. Consequently, when the universal synod which was gathered at Constantinople ordained Nectarius, it refused to do so without the approval of all clergy and people, as was attested in its letter to the Roman synod. Accordingly, when any bishop designated his own successor, the designation was valid only if all the people confirmed it. You have not only an example of this thing but also the form in Augustine in the naming of Eraclius.^{F102} And Theodoret, when he refers to Peter as the successor named by Athanasius, immediately adds that the priestly order considered it valid, and that the magistrates and leading citizens and all the people approved it by their acclamation.^{F103}

12. BALANCE BETWEEN PEOPLE AND CLERGY

It was with very good reason, I confess, that the Council of Laodicea decided not to leave election to the multitude.^{F104} For it scarcely ever happens that so many heads can unanimously settle any matter; and it is generally true that "the uncertain crowd is divided into contrary interests."^{F105} But an excellent remedy was applied to this peril. First the clergy alone made their choice; they then offered the one they had chosen to the magistrates or senate and leading citizens. The latter, after

deliberation, ratified the election if it seemed just; if not, they chose another whom they preferred. Then they brought the matter before the people, who, although not bound by the previous decisions, nevertheless could not raise a tumult. Or if they began with the people, this was done only to find out whom they especially desired. After the people's desires were heard, the clergy then made their choice. Thus, neither were the clergy allowed to appoint whom they wished, nor was it necessary for them to follow the foolish desires of the people. Leo elsewhere lays down this order when he says: "The desires of the citizens, the testimonies of the people, the decision of the honorable, and the choice of the clergy must be looked for." Likewise: "Let the testimony of the honorable, the concurrence of the clergy, the consent of officials and people be held to." "Reason does not," he says, "permit it to be done otherwise."^{F106} The decree of the Synod of Laodicea means only that clergy and leaders should not allow themselves to be carried away by the heedless multitude, but rather, by their prudence and seriousness, should repress, if need be, the multitude's foolish desires.^{F107}

13. CLERGY AND POLITICAL RULERS

This method of choice was in force until the time of Gregory, and it probably lasted for a long time after. There are extant very many letters of his that clearly attest this fact. For whenever the question of creating a new bishop arises anywhere, he customarily writes to clergy, officials, and people, sometimes also to the ruler, depending upon the form of the city government. But if, because of disturbed conditions in the church, Gregory entrusts to some nearby bishop the investigation of the election, he still always requires a solemn decree, supported by the signatures of all. However, when a certain Constantius was made bishop of Milan, and on account of the incursions of the barbarians many Milanese had fled to Genoa, Gregory thinks that the election will not be lawful unless they also, convened together, assent to it.^{F108} Indeed, five hundred years have not yet passed since Pope Nicholas established the election of the Roman pontiff in this manner; that the cardinal bishops should go first, then the remaining clergy should be associated with them, and finally the election be confirmed by the consent of the people. And lastly he quotes that decree of Leo which we just cited, and enjoins that it remain in force for

posterity. But if for an honest election the clergy are forced by the malice of wicked men to leave the city, he still commands that some of the people be present with them.^{F109}

The emperor's consent, to the best of our knowledge, was required in only two churches, those of Rome and Constantinople, because these were the two imperial capitals. When Valentinian sent Ambrose to Milan with power to supervise the election of a new bishop, that was an unusual proceeding, due to the fact that grave conflicts were raging among the citizens.^{F110} But at Rome of old the emperor's authority so prevailed in the naming of the bishop that Gregory says he was established in the government of the church by the emperor's command, even though he had already in a solemn rite been called by the people.^{F111} But the custom was this: when officials, clergy, and people had designated anyone, he would at once report to the emperor, who would confirm the election with his approval or abrogate it by his disapproval. And the decretals that Gratian has collected do not disagree with this practice. There nothing else is said than that a king must by no means be allowed to set aside a canonical election and appoint a bishop according to his whim, and that the metropolitans must not consecrate one thus promoted by violent powers.^{F112} For it is one thing to deprive the church of its own right, so that the whole is transferred to one man's whim; it is another to yield this honor to a king or emperor, that he may confirm a lawful election by his own authority.

14. THE PROCEDURE IN ORDINATION

Now it follows that we should discuss the rite by which after election the ministers of the ancient church were initiated into their office. The Latins called this "ordination" or "consecration"; the Greeks called it "raising of hands," sometimes also "laying on of hands"—although "raising of hands" properly refers to that kind of election wherein voting is indicated by raising of the hands.^{F113} There is extant a decree of the Council of Nicaea, that the metropolitan, together with all bishops of his province, should meet to ordain the person elected; but if some of them be hindered by length of journey or health, or other necessity, at least three should meet, while the absent ones attest their consent by letter. Although this canon lapsed through disuse, it was later renewed by many synods.^{F114} But all,

or at least those who had no excuse, were bidden to be present in order that a deeper examination might be made into the doctrine and morals of the one ordained, for the action was not taken without examination. And it is clear from Cyprian's words that it was formerly usual for them not to be called after the election but to be present at the election. The purpose was to have them act as moderators, lest any disturbance arise in the crowd. For when he has said that the people had the power either to choose worthy priests, or to reject unworthy ones, he adds a little later: "On this account we must diligently observe and hold fast to the divine and apostolic tradition—which is held among us and in almost all the provinces—that for the regular celebration of ordinations all neighboring bishops of the same province should assemble before the people for whom a leader is being ordained, and that the bishop be chosen in the presence of the people."^{F115} But when they sometimes assembled rather slowly, and there was danger that some would abuse this delay as an opportunity for electioneering, it seemed that it would be enough if they should meet after the election had been made, and, having approved him in a lawful examination, consecrate him.^{F116}

15. CONSECRATION BY THE METROPOLITAN

This was done everywhere without exception. Then a different custom gradually grew up, that those elected repair to the metropolitan city to seek ordination. This occurred more because of ambition and the deterioration of the old order than for any good reason. Not much later, after the authority of the Roman see had increased, another custom, still worse, prevailed, that the bishops of almost all Italy sought their consecration from Rome. This we may note in the letters of Gregory.^{F117} The ancient right was kept by only a few cities, which did not yield so easily; Milan is an example of this. Possibly only the metropolitan cities retained this privilege. For all the bishops of the province commonly assembled in the principal city to consecrate the archbishop.

But the ceremony was the laying on of hands.^{F118} For I read of no other ceremonies being used, except that the bishops in solemn assembly wore certain trappings to distinguish them from the rest of the presbyters. They ordained presbyters and deacons also by the laying on of hands alone; but each bishop, with his college of presbyters, ordained his presbyters.^{F119}

Although all acted in common, yet, because the bishop presided and things were done under his auspices, the ordination was called “his.” Accordingly, ancient writers often state that presbyter differs from bishop only in that the former does not have the power to ordain.^{F120}

CHAPTER 5

THE ANCIENT FORM OF GOVERNMENT WAS COMPLETELY OVERTHROWN BY THE TYRANNY OF THE PAPACY

(Appointment of unqualified persons without vote of the people, 1-3)

1. SCANDALOUS NEGLECT OF REQUIREMENTS FOR THE EPISCOPATE

Now it behooves us to turn our attention to the order of church government adhered to today by the Roman see and all its satellites, and the whole picture of that hierarchy which they are always talking about; also, to compare with it our description of the first and ancient church. From such a comparison will appear the nature of that church which these men have who are raging to oppress—or rather to destroy—us by its mere title.

It is best to begin with the call, that we may see who and what type are called to this ministry and in what manner. Then we shall consider how faithfully they discharge their office.

We shall give first place to bishops. Would that it were an honor to give them first place in this discussion! But the reality does not allow me to touch even lightly upon this matter, without great shame to them. Still, I shall remember in what sort of writing I am presently engaged, and not allow my discourse, which ought to be framed to simple teaching, to exceed its limits.

But let any one of them who has not utterly lost shame answer me what sort of bishops are commonly elected today!

The practice of having an examination of learning has, to be sure, become too old-fashioned. But if learning is held in any regard, they choose a lawyer who knows how to plead in a court rather than how to preach in a

church. This is certain, that for a hundred years scarcely one man in a hundred has been elected who has comprehended anything of sacred learning. I spare the previous centuries not because they were much better, but because our question concerns only the present church. If their morals are appraised, we shall find few or almost none whom the ancient canons would not have judged unworthy. He who was not a drunkard was a fornicator; he who was also free of this crime was a dice player or hunter, or dissolute in some part of life. For there are less serious faults which, according to the ancient canons, exclude a man from the episcopate. But this is by far the most absurd thing—that boys scarcely ten years old, by the pope’s dispensation, are made bishops. And they have reached such lengths of shamelessness and stupidity that they do not bristle with horror even at this extreme and monstrous transgression which is repulsive to the very feeling of nature. From this it is evident how scrupulous were the elections where there was such heedless negligence.^{F121}

2. THE COMMUNITY DEPRIVED OF THE RIGHT TO ELECT ITS BISHOP

Now all the people’s right in electing a bishop has been taken away. Votes, assent, subscriptions, and all their like have vanished; the whole power has been transferred to the canons alone. They confer the episcopate on whom they please; they introduce him directly before the people, but to be adored, not to be examined.

Yet Leo cries out that no reason allows this, and declares it a violent imposition.^{F122} Cyprian, in testifying that only election by the people’s consent flows from divine right, shows that the contrary custom conflicts with God’s Word.^{F123} Very many decrees of synods stringently forbid its being done otherwise, and, if it be done otherwise, declare it void.^{F124} If these things are true, no canonical election remains today in the entire papacy either by divine or by ecclesiastical right.

But even if this be the only evil, who could excuse the fact that they have thus despoiled the church of its right? But, they say, the corruption of the times required that, since among people and magistrates hatred and party spirit prevailed more in selecting bishops than did right and sound judgment, the decision of this matter should be delegated to a few.^{F125}

Obviously, this was an extreme remedy for evil in deplorable circumstances! But when the medicine has seemed more deadly than the disease itself, why is this new evil not also remedied? But, they say, the canons have exactly prescribed the procedure that ought to be followed in elections.^{F126} But do we doubt that the people of old, when they met to choose a bishop, understood that they were bound by most holy laws, since they saw the rule laid down for them by God's Word? Indeed, that single utterance of God, with which he describes the true likeness of a bishop, justly ought to be of more weight than countless tens of thousands of canons. Nonetheless, corrupted by a most ignoble passion, they had no regard for law or equity. Thus today, even if the best laws are written, they remain buried in documents. Sometimes, the promotion of drunkards, fornicators, and most frequently gamblers to this office is for the most part condoned, and even approved (as if it were done by design)! I am not exaggerating: bishoprics are the rewards for adulteries and panderings. For when they are given to hunters and falconers, we are to suppose that things have turned out admirably! To excuse such indecency in any way is a very shameful thing. The people once had an excellent canon, I say, to whom the Word of God prescribed that a bishop ought to be above reproach, a teacher, not contentious, etc.

[<540301> 1 Timothy 3:1-7; cf. <560107> Titus 1:7-9]. Why, then, has the responsibility of choosing been removed from the people to such fellows? Obviously, because the Word of God was not being heeded among tumults and factions of the people. And why is it not today transferred back from such fellows, who not only violate all laws, but, casting away shame, wantonly, selfishly, and ambitiously mingle and confuse human things with divine?

3. NEGLECT HAS LED TO THE INTERVENTION OF PRINCES

But when they say that this was devised as a remedy they are lying. We read that in old times cities were often in tumult over the choice of bishops; yet no one ever dared think of taking away the right from the citizens. For they had other ways of avoiding these faults or, once they had occurred, of correcting them. The truth shall be told.

When the people began to be more negligent in holding elections, and cast that responsibility upon the presbyters as not applying to themselves, the latter abused this opportunity to usurp a tyranny for themselves which they afterward confirmed by issuing new canons.

Ordination, moreover, is nothing but pure mockery. For the kind of examination which they display there is so empty and thin that it even lacks every outward trapping.

Therefore, what the princes in some places have obtained by agreement with the Roman pontiffs—the right to nominate bishops—has caused no new loss to the church,^{F127} because the election was taken away only from the canons, who had seized it without right or had actually stolen it. Here—forsooth!—is a very foul example: bishops are sent from the court to occupy churches, while it should be the part of godly princes to abstain from such corruption! For it is a wicked spoliation of the church to force upon any people a bishop whom they have not desired or have not at least approved with free voice! But that disorderly practice which had long been in the churches gave the princes occasion to appropriate to themselves the presentation of bishops. For they preferred it to be their own gift, rather than to belong to persons who had no more right to it than they, and who abused it just as wickedly.

(A buses associated with collation to clerical benefices, 4-7)

4. ABUSES IN THE APPOINTMENT OF THE PRESBYTER ("PRIEST") AND DEACON

Here is a noble calling, by reason of which bishops boast that they are the apostles' successors. But they say that the right to create presbyters belongs to them alone.^{F128} In this they very wickedly corrupt the ancient institution, because they create by their ordination not presbyters to lead and feed the people, but priests to perform sacrifices. Similarly, when they consecrate deacons, they do nothing about their true and proper office, but ordain them only for certain rites concerned with chalice and paten.

But in the Council of Chalcedon, on the contrary, it was enacted that there should be no ordinations free of pastoral obligations, that is, that a place

be assigned to the person ordained where he is to exercise his office.^{F129} This decree is very valuable for two reasons. First, that the church may not be burdened with needless expense, and spend upon idle men what ought to be distributed to the poor. Secondly, that those ordained are not to think themselves promoted to an honor but charged with an office which they are with solemn attestation obligated to discharge.

But the Roman masters (who think that nothing ought to be taken care of in religion except the belly) first interpret title as meaning an income sufficient for their support, whether it be from their own patrimony or from their priestly office. Therefore, when they ordain a deacon or presbyter, unconcerned as to where they ought to minister, they confer holy orders upon them, if only they be rich enough to support themselves. But what man can accept this, that the title which the decree of the council requires as the annual income for support? The more recent canons,^{F130} to check indiscriminate ordinations, condemned the bishops to support those clergy whom they had ordained without proper title. To circumvent this regulation a new subterfuge has been devised: the one ordained promises, whatever title is named, that he will be content with it. By this agreement he is deprived of suing for support. I do not speak of the thousand frauds that take place here, as when some lie about empty titles to benefices, from which they cannot earn five asses^{F131} a year; others under a secret agreement borrow benefices, which they promise to return immediately, but they sometimes do not return them. And there are other mysteries of this sort.

5. ORDINATION IS TRAVESTIED

But even if these crasser abuses were removed, is it not always absurd to appoint a presbyter to whom you assign no place?^{F132} For they ordain no one, except to perform sacrifice. But the proper ordination of a presbyter is a call to govern the church; of a deacon, to gather alms. They disguise their action, indeed, with much pomp so that by the very show it may hold the veneration of simple folk. But among the same, what value can these masks have when nothing solid or true underlies them? For they employ ceremonies either from Judaism or devised from among themselves, which it were better to eschew.

But of the true examination (not to tarry over that shadow which they retain) of the people's consent, of other necessary things, there is no mention. I call "a shadow" those ridiculous gesticulations, composed in inept and lifeless imitation of antiquity. The bishops have their vicars who inquire concerning the candidates' learning before ordination. But what do they ask? Whether they can read their masses, whether they can decline some common noun that occurs in the lesson, whether they can conjugate a verb, whether they know the meaning of one word; for it is not necessary that they even know how to render the meaning of a single verse. Still, those who are deficient even in these childish elements are not barred from the priesthood, provided they bear some commendation of money or favor. It is the same sort of concoction when they are led to the altar for ordination, and someone asks three times, in a language they cannot understand, whether they are worthy of that honor. Someone answers (who has never seen them, but that nothing should be lacking to the form, has his part in the play), "They are worthy."^{F133} What do you blame in such reverend fathers, except that, in the mockery of such open sacrileges, they shamelessly laugh at God and men? But because they have been in possession of this for a long time, they think it now legally belongs to them. For whoever dares open his mouth against those manifest and hideous misdeeds is seized by them to be adjudged to death, like one who in ancient times disclosed the sacred rites of Ceres.^{F134} Would they do this if they thought there were a god?

6. THE NATURE OF BENEFICES

Now how much better do they conduct themselves in collation of benefices, a matter formerly joined with ordination but now quite separate from it? Among them, however, things are variously done. Bishops are not the only ones who confer priesthoods, and even over those offices of which they are called "collators,"^{F135} they do not always have full jurisdiction; but others have the right of presentation, while the bishops retain the honorary title of collation. There are also nominations made by schools, resignations—either simple or done for the sake of exchange—rescripts, preventions, and the like. But all so conduct themselves that no one of them could reproach another for anything. I contend that nowadays in the papacy scarcely one benefice in a hundred is conferred without

simony—as the ancients defined simony.^{F136} I do not say that all buy them at a price, but show me one out of twenty who comes to a benefice without some indirect commendation. Some are advanced by kinship or affinity; others, by parental influence; still others obsequiously curry favor for themselves. In short, priestly livings are conferred for this purpose: not to benefit the churches but those men who receive them. These are accordingly called “benefices,” for by this name they sufficiently declare that they regard them as nothing but the largess^{F137} of princes, who thus either court the knights’ favor, or reward their labors. I pass over the fact that these prizes are conferred upon barbers, cooks, muleteers, and such dregs of humanity. Today the courts resound with more lawsuits over priestly offices than almost anything else, so that you may say that they are little more than prey cast to dogs to hunt. Is it tolerable even to hear the name “pastor” applied to those who have rushed into possession of a church as upon enemy booty, who have obtained it by lawsuits, who have bought it for a price, who have earned it by sordid currying of favor, who as children scarcely able to babble^{F138} have received it as an inheritance from their uncles and relatives, and even sometimes illegitimate sons from their fathers?

7. MONSTROUS ABUSES

Would the licentiousness of the lay folk—corrupt and lawless as they were—ever have gone so far as this? But here is something even more monstrous—that one man (I do not say what kind, but surely one who cannot rule himself) is appointed to govern five or six churches! In the courts of princes one may see today youths having three abbacies, two bishoprics, one archbishopric.^{F139} Indeed, it is common to find canons laden with five, six, or seven benefices, for which they have absolutely no care except to receive their revenues. I shall not urge as an objection that God’s Word everywhere cries out against this practice, for the Word has long ceased to be of slightest significance to them. I shall not object that many severe decrees have been passed in numerous councils against this disorder; these also they vigorously reject whenever they please. But I say that these are both monstrous abuses, which are utterly contrary to God, nature, and church government—that one robber occupy several churches at once, and that a man be named pastor who, even though he wish to, is

unable to be present with his flock.^{F140} And yet (such is their shamelessness) they cloak such abominable foulness with the name of church in order that they may escape from all rebuke! But also, if it please God, in this villainy is contained that most holy “succession,” whose merit—they boast—ensures that the church does not perish!

*(Negligence and idleness of monks, canons,
and others holding clerical office, 8-10)*

8. MONKS AS “PRESBYTERS”

Now let us see how faithfully they exercise their office, the second mark in judging a lawful pastor.

Of the priests created in the Roman Church, some are monks, others what they call “seculars.”

The first-mentioned of these two flocks was unknown to the ancient church, and it is so out of harmony with the monastic profession to have such a place in the church that originally when men were admitted from monasteries into the clergy, they ceased to be monks. And even Gregory, whose time was very corrupt, did not allow this confusion to be made. For he wishes those who have been made abbots to leave clerical office, on the ground that no one can properly be both a monk and a cleric, since the one would be a hindrance to the other.^{F141} Now if I should ask how one declared unsuitable by the canons fulfills his office, well, what, I pray, will they reply? They will, of course, cite to me those abortive decrees of Innocent and Boniface, whereby monks are received into the honor and power of the priesthood though they remain in their monasteries.^{F142} But what sort of reason is this—that every ignorant ass, as soon as he has occupied the see of Rome, may overthrow all antiquity with one little word? But of this matter later. Let this now be enough: in the purer church it was considered a great absurdity for a monk to function in the priesthood. For Jerome denies that he is carrying out the priestly office while living among monks; and he considers himself one of the people who are governed by priests.^{F143} But—to grant them this—still what part of the office are they fulfilling? Some of the mendicants preach; all the rest of the monks either chant or mutter masses in their dens. As if either Christ willed or the nature of the office allowed presbyters to be created for this

purpose! Since Scripture openly testifies that the presbyter's duty is to rule his own church [^{<442028>} Acts 20:28], is it not an impious profanation to transfer it to another, indeed, utterly to change God's sacred institution? For when they are ordained they are expressly forbidden to do the things that God has enjoined upon all presbyters. For this song is sung to them: let the monk, content with his cloister, not presume either to administer the sacraments or to carry out anything pertaining to public office.^{F144} Let them deny, if they can, that it is an open mockery of God when anyone is made a presbyter with the purpose of abstaining from his true and genuine office, and when he who has the name cannot have the reality.

9. BENEFICED AND HIRED PRIESTS

I come now to the seculars, some of whom are beneficed (as they say), that is, have priestly livings that support them;^{F145} while some hire out their daily labor in celebrating masses or chanting, and earn a living, so to speak, by the fees they collect for this.

Benefices either have cure of souls, such as bishoprics and parishes, or are the salaries of elegant men who earn their keep by singing, such as prebends, canonries, parsonages, dignities,^{F146} chaplaincies, and the like. Notwithstanding, having already turned things upside down, they confer abbacies and priories not only upon secular priests but also upon boys. This they do "by privilege," that is, by common and ordinary custom.

As regards mercenary priests who seek their living by the day, what else could they do than they are now doing? What else than to prostitute themselves to gain in a selfish and shameful manner, especially amid such a great multitude as now overruns the world? Therefore, since they dare not beg openly, or suppose they will be little beneficed in this way, they go about like hungry dogs, and by their importunity, like barking, extort from unwilling men something to thrust into an empty stomach. Here if I try to express in words what great shame it is to the church that the honor and office of presbyter have come to this pass, there will be no end. There is therefore no reason for my readers to expect a discourse from me that corresponds to such nefarious infamy. I say briefly: if it be the presbyter's office (as God's Word prescribes [^{<460401>} 1 Corinthians 4:1;

cf. John 10:f ff.] and the ancient canons require) to feed the church, and administer the spiritual Kingdom of Christ, all such sacrificers who have work or wages only in the hawking of masses not only fail in their office, but have no lawful office to exercise. For no place is given them for teaching; they have no people to govern. In short, nothing is left to them but the altar on which they sacrifice Christ, which is to make an offering not to God but to demons [cf. ^{<461020>} 1 Corinthians 10:20], as we shall elsewhere see.^{F147}

10. PRETENSES OF THE CLERICAL ORDERS

I am not touching upon the outward abuses here, but only upon inward evil which is rooted in their institution. I shall add a statement which will sound ill in their ears; but because it is true, I must make it: canons, deans, chaplains, provosts, and all who are fed by idle benefices must be considered to be of the same class. For what ministry to the church can they perform? They have cast off as burdens too troublesome the preaching of the Word, the care of discipline, and the administering of the sacraments. For what do they have left by which to boast that they are true presbyters? Well, they have singing and ceremonial pomp. But what has this to do with the matter? If they claim custom, use, or long-standing authorization, I confront them with Christ's definition, in which he has expressed to us what true presbyters are, and what they who wish to be considered such ought to have. But if they cannot bear this hard requirement to submit to Christ's rule, let them at least allow this question to be settled by the authority of the primitive church. Their condition will be no better if their status be judged according to the ancient canons. Those who have degenerated into canons ought to have been presbyters, as they were of old, to rule the church in common with the bishop, and to serve as his colleagues in the pastoral office.^{F148} What they call "chapter" dignities have utterly nothing to do with the true church government, much less the chaplaincies, and the other trash of such titles. At what rank, then, shall we account all these? Assuredly, Christ's word and the observance of the ancient church exclude them from the office of presbyter. Nevertheless, they contend that they are presbyters, but this mask must be torn away. Thus we shall find their whole profession to be utterly alien and remote from that office of presbyters which is both described to us by

the apostles, and was required in the primitive church. All such orders, by whatever titles they are designated, are innovations, surely not of God's institution, nor supported by ancient church observance. Consequently, they ought to have no place in the description of spiritual government, which, when it was consecrated by the Lord's own words, the church received. Or (if they prefer me to speak more simply and baldly), inasmuch as chaplains, canons, deans, provosts, and idle bellies of this sort do not touch even with their little finger any particle of this office, which is a prime requirement in presbyters, we cannot bear to have them falsely usurp honor for themselves and thus violate Christ's holy institution.

(Corruption and covetousness prevail in the ranks of bishops, pastors, and deacons, 11-19)

11. BISHOPS AND PARISH PRIESTS

There remain bishops and parish rectors. Would that they strove to preserve their office! For I willingly grant them that they have a godly and excellent office, if only they would fulfill it. But when, forsaking the churches committed to them and casting the care of them upon others, they still wish to be counted pastors, they act just as if the pastor's function were to do nothing. If a usurer who never set foot out of a city were to claim to be a plowman or vinedresser; if a soldier who has been continually in battle and in camp, and has never seen a law court or books, were to claim to be a lawyer—who could abide such disgusting absurdities? Yet somewhat more ridiculous are those who wish to seem and be called lawful pastors of the church, and yet do not wish to be such. For how many cases are there of one who even in show exercises government over his church? Many throughout life devour the revenues of the churches without ever coming to the point of even taking a look at them. Others either come once a year or send a steward, so that nothing in their revenues should be lost. When this corruption first crept in, those who wished to enjoy this sort of idleness exempted themselves by privileges. Now it is a rare exception for anyone to reside in his own church. For they deem them farms which they have put in charge of their vicars as stewards or tenant farmers. But natural sense itself also repudiates the notion that he who has never seen a sheep of his flock is the shepherd of it.^{F149}

12. EARLY STAGES OF THIS EVIL: GREGORY AND BERNARD

As early as the age of Gregory there existed, evidently, some seeds of this evil, so that the rectors of the churches began to be more negligent in teaching, for in one place he strongly complains of it. "The world," he says, "is full of priests, but in the harvest a worker is rarely found; for we indeed take upon us the priestly office but do not fulfill the work of that office." Likewise: "Because they do not have the bowels of charity, they wish to seem lords; they do not recognize themselves as fathers at all. They change the place of humility into pride of lordship." Likewise: "But we, O pastors, what do we do, who obtain pay and are not laborers?" "We have fallen into outward busyness, and we undertake one thing, but perform another. We forsake the ministry of preaching; and to add to our punishment, as I see, we are called 'bishops,' who have the name of an honorable office, not its power."^{F150} Since Gregory uses such extremely harsh words against those who were only less constant or painstaking in office, what, I beg of you, would he say if he saw almost none of the bishops, or at least very few, and of the other clergy scarcely one man in a hundred who once in his whole life mounted any pulpit? For men have become so insane as to consider it beneath the bishop's dignity to preach to the people. In the time of Bernard, matters got somewhat worse, but we see with what sharp rebukes he inveighs against the whole order, an order that likely was then considerably purer than it is now.^{F151}

13. CLAIM AND ACTUALITY

But if anyone should duly weigh and examine this outward form of church government which exists today under the papacy, he will not find a robbers' den in which thieves riot more brazenly without law and restraint. Surely everything there is so unlike, indeed, so alien to, Christ's institution, has so degenerated from the ancient ordinances and customs of the church, and so conflicts with nature and reason, that no greater injury can be done to Christ than when they put forward his name to defend such a disordered government. We, they say, are the pillars of the church, the leaders of religion, the vicars of Christ, the heads of the believers; for the apostolic power has come to us by succession. They are incessantly bragging of these follies as if they were speaking to stocks. But whenever they will boast of this, I shall ask them in turn what they have in common

with the apostles. For we are not concerned about some hereditary honor which can be given to men while they are sleeping, but about the office of preaching, from which they so strenuously flee. Likewise, when we declare that their rule is the despotism of Antichrist, they unfailingly mention that it is that venerable hierarchy often praised by great and holy men.^{F152} As if the holy fathers, when they commended the church hierarchy or spiritual government as it had been handed down to them from the apostles, dreamed of this formless chaos, full of desolation, where bishops are for the most part rude asses who do not grasp even the first and commonplace rudiments of faith, or sometimes big boys fresh from their nursemaid; and if any are more learned (of this, however, instances are rare), they deem the bishopric nothing but a title of splendor and magnificence; where the rectors of churches no more think of feeding the flock than a shoemaker of plowing; where everything is so confused with more than Babylonian dispersion [^{<01111>}Genesis 11:11] that no single trace of that ordination of the fathers is seen.

14. THE PRIESTS' MORAL CONDUCT

What if we proceed to their morals? Where will that “light of the world” be that Christ requires? Where that “salt of the earth” [^{<400514>}Matthew 5:14, 13]? Where that holiness which is, so to speak, an abiding standard of life? Today there is no order of men more notorious in excess, effeminacy, voluptuousness, in short, in all sorts of lusts; in no order are there masters more adept or skillful in every deceit, fraud, treason, and treachery; nowhere is there as great cunning or boldness to do harm. I say nothing about their arrogance, pride, greed, and cruelty. I say nothing about the dissolute license of their entire life. The world is so wearied with bearing these abuses that there is no danger that I should seem to exaggerate unduly. I say one thing that even they cannot deny. There is scarcely a bishop, and not one in a hundred parish priests, who, if his conduct were to be judged according to the ancient canons, would not be subject either to excommunication or at least to deposition from office. I seem to be saying something unbelievable—so far has that former discipline fallen into disuse which enjoined a more exacting censure of the conduct of clergy; but this is entirely so. Let those who serve under the banners and protection of the Roman see go now and boast among

themselves of the priestly order! The order that they have, it is clear, is neither from Christ, nor from his apostles, nor from the fathers, nor from the ancient church.

15. THE DEACONS

Now let the deacons come forth, with their most holy dispensing of church goods. But the Romanists today do not create their deacons for that purpose; for they charge them only with ministering at the altar, reading or chanting the gospel, and goodness knows what other trifles.^{F153} There is nothing of alms, nothing of the care of the poor, nothing of that whole function which they once performed. I am speaking of the institution itself. For if we look at what they are doing, it is not really an office for them but only a step toward the priesthood. In one respect those who occupy the place of deacon in the Mass present an empty semblance of antiquity—they receive the offerings before consecration. But the ancient custom was that the believers before taking communion would kiss one another and offer alms at the altar; thus they declared their love first symbolically, then by their beneficence. The deacon, who was the steward of the poor, received what was given in order to distribute it.^{F154} Today the poor get nothing more of those alms than if they were cast into the sea. Therefore, they mock the church with a false diaconate. Surely in it they have nothing like the apostolic institution or like ancient practice. Indeed, they have transferred the very distribution of goods elsewhere, and have so arranged it that nothing more disordered can be conceived. For, as thieves slit men's throats and divide the spoils among themselves, so these men, after putting out the light of God's Word, as if slitting the church's throat, supposed that everything dedicated to holy uses was laid out for booty and spoils. Therefore, a division has been made, and each has snatched as much as he could for himself.

16. DISTRIBUTION OF CHURCH INCOME

All these ancient customs which we have set forth here^{F155} have been not only disturbed but completely erased and hidden. The city bishops and presbyters who, made rich by this booty, were turned into canons, seized the largest part for distribution among themselves. Nevertheless, the partition was disorderly, as is evident from the fact that even to this day

they have been quarreling about the limits. Whatever it be, this decision provided that not one penny of all the church's goods should come to the poor, to whom at least one half belonged. For the canons expressly assign one fourth to them, but they earmark another fourth for the bishops to distribute in hospitality and other offices of generosity. I say nothing of what the clergy should do with their portion, and to what use they ought to apply it. For it has been sufficiently demonstrated that the remainder (assigned to churches, buildings, and other expenses) ought to be made available to the poor in time of need. If they had one spark of the fear of God in their hearts, I ask, would they bear the thought that all they eat and all they wear comes from theft—nay, from sacrilege? But little moved as they are by God's judgment, they should at least realize that those whom they would persuade that they have as beautiful and duly arranged an order in the church as they are wont to boast are men, endowed with sense and reason. Let them answer me briefly whether the diaconate is license to steal and rob. If they deny this, they will be also compelled to admit that they have no diaconate left, inasmuch as the entire administration of church property has plainly turned into sacrilegious plundering.

17. FALSE AND TRUE SPLENDOR OF THE CHURCH

But here they use a most beautiful deception. They say that the dignity of the church is decently sustained by this magnificence. And they have certain ones of their sect so shameless as to dare openly to boast that only thus are those prophecies fulfilled with which the ancient prophets describe the splendor of Christ's Kingdom, when that kingly magnificence is beheld in the priestly order. God has not, they say, promised these things in vain to his church. "The kings will come; they shall worship before thee; they shall bring thee gifts." [¹⁹⁷²¹⁰ Psalm 72:10-11 p., cf. Vg. and Comm.] "Arise, arise, put on your strength, O Zion, put on the garments of your glory, O Jerusalem." [²³⁵²⁰¹ Isaiah 52:1, cf. Vg.] "They all shall come from Sheba, bringing gold and frankincense, and proclaiming praise to the Lord. All the flocks of Kedar shall be gathered together unto you." [²³⁶⁰⁰⁶ Isaiah 60:6-7, cf. Vg.] If I should tarry long over refuting this shamelessness, I fear I might seem foolish. Therefore, I prefer not to waste words pointlessly. Still, I ask: If any Jew were to misuse these testimonies, what answer would they give? Surely, they would rebuke his

stupidity, because he transferred to flesh and the world the things spiritually spoken of Christ's spiritual Kingdom. For we know that the prophets sketched for us under the image of earthly things God's heavenly glory, which ought to shine in the church. For the church never abounded less with these blessings which their words express than under the apostles; and yet all admit that the force of Christ's Kingdom flourished most at that time. What, then, do those statements mean in themselves? Whatever anywhere is precious, lofty, or noble must be subjected to the Lord. But what is said expressly of kings—that they shall submit their scepters to Christ, shall cast their crowns at his feet, shall consecrate their resources to the church—will they say that this was more truly and fully realized at any other time than when Theodosius, having cast away his purple robe and laid down the insignia of rule, like any one of the common folk, submitted himself before God and the church to solemn penance?^{F156} Than when he and other godly princes like him dedicated their endeavors and their care to keep pure doctrine in the church and to foster and protect sound teachers? But how priests at that time did not abound in superfluous possessions is sufficiently declared by that one statement of the Synod of Aquileia, presided over by Ambrose: "Glorious is poverty in the priests of the Lord."^{F157} Surely the bishops then had some riches, with which they could have rendered conspicuous honor to the church, if they had thought these the true ornaments of the church. But since they knew nothing to be more contrary to the pastoral office than to glow with pride in the delicacies of the table, splendor of apparel, a great retinue of servants and magnificent palaces, they followed and cultivated humility and modesty, indeed that very poverty which Christ consecrated among his ministers.

18. FRAUDULENT AND HONEST EXPENDITURE OF CHURCH FUNDS

But, not to linger over this point, let us again briefly summarize how far this present dispensation—or rather dissipation—of church resources is from the true diaconate, commended to us by God's Word and observed by the ancient church. What is bestowed upon the adornment of churches I say is wrongly applied if that moderation is not used which both the nature of sacred things prescribes and the apostles and other holy fathers

have prescribed both by teaching and by example. But what like this is seen in churches today? Whatever is made to conform—I do not say to that early frugality—to any honest moderation is rejected. Nothing at all pleases except what savors of excess and the corruption of the times. Meanwhile, so far are they from taking due care of living temples that they would rather let many thousands of the poor die of hunger than break the smallest cup or cruet to relieve their need. And in order that I may not on my part judge too harshly, I should like pious readers to consider this alone: if it now happened that Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse (whom I have mentioned), or Acacius, or Ambrose, or anyone like them were raised from the dead, what would they say?^{F158} Surely, in the very dire need of the poor, they would not allow wealth to be taken away from them, as though superfluous. Not to speak of the fact that the ends for which it is spent (even though there were no poor) are harmful in many ways but useful in no respect.

But I pass over men. These goods are dedicated to Christ; therefore, they are to be distributed in accordance with his will. But they shall vainly account as Christ's this part which they have squandered contrary to his command, although (to confess the truth) not much of the ordinary income of the church is cut away by these costs. For no bishoprics are so wealthy, no abbacies so rich, lastly no number of benefices so large and well endowed, as to be able to satisfy the voraciousness of the priests. But while they try to spare themselves, they induce the people by superstition to apply what should have been distributed to the poor, to constructing churches, erecting statues, buying vessels, and providing sacred vestments. Thus are daily alms consumed in this abyss.

19. CLERICAL POSSESSIONS AND POWER

Concerning the revenue they receive from fields and properties, what else shall I say than what I have already said, and what is before the eyes of all? We see with what faithfulness the great part is administered by those who are called bishops and abbots. How foolish it is to seek church order here! Was it fitting that they whose life ought to have been a singular example of frugality, modesty, continence, and humility should rival the magnificence of princes in number of retainers, splendor of buildings, elegance of apparel, and banquets? And how much did this disagree with

the office of those whom God's eternal and inviolable decree forbids to be seekers of filthy lucre, and bids be content with simple fare [^{<560107>}Titus 1:7]—not only to lay hands on villages and castles, but to carry off vast provinces, finally to seize whole kingdoms! If they despise the Word of God, what will they reply to those ancient decrees of synods, which establish that the bishop should have a little house not far from his church, with inexpensive fare and furnishings?^{F159} What will they reply to that statement of the Synod of Aquileia, where poverty is proclaimed glorious in the priests of the Lord?^{F160} For perhaps they will repudiate as too rigorous the command laid upon Nepotianus by Jerome, that poor men and strangers, and with them Christ as guest, should frequent his little table. But they will be ashamed to disavow what Jerome adds immediately: that the glory of the bishop is to provide for the poor; the disgrace of all priests, to seek after their own riches.^{F161} Yet they cannot receive this without all condemning themselves to dishonor. Still it is not necessary to pursue them too harshly here, since my sole intention was to show that the lawful order of the diaconate has long since been removed from their midst, so that they may no longer boast of this title to the commendation of their church. This, I believe, I have fully accomplished.

CHAPTER 6

THE PRIMACY OF THE ROMAN SEE^{F162}

(Refutation of assumptions regarding the primacy of Peter, 1-7)

1. THE REQUIREMENT OF SUBMISSION TO ROME

To this point we have reviewed those orders of the church which existed in the government of the ancient church but were afterward corrupted by the times, then more and more perverted, and which now keep only their name in the papal church and are actually but masks. This we have done that the godly reader might judge from comparison what sort of church the Romanists have, for the sake of which they make us guilty of schism, since we have separated from it.

But we have not discussed the capstone of the whole structure, that is, the primacy of the Roman see, from which they strive to prove that the church catholic is their exclusive possession. The reason why we have not discussed this primacy is that it originated neither in Christ's institution, nor in the practice of the ancient church, as those former offices which, as we have shown, so arose from antiquity that they utterly degenerated through corruption of the times, indeed, took on a completely new form.

Yet they try to persuade the world that the chief and almost sole bond of church unity is that we cleave to the Roman see and remain in obedience to it.^{F163} When, I say, they wish to take the church away from us and claim it for themselves, they lean especially upon this prop, that they keep the head upon which church unity depends and without which the church must fall apart and be shattered. For so they reason: the church is a maimed and decapitated body unless it be subject to the Roman see as its head. Therefore, when they discuss their hierarchy, they always start from this principle: the Roman pontiff (as the vicar of Christ, who is Head of the church) presides over the whole church in Christ's place; and the church cannot otherwise be well constituted unless that see hold primacy over all others. For this reason we must also examine the nature of the

primacy, that we may overlook nothing that pertains to the right government of the church.

2. THE OFFICE OF HIGH PRIEST OF THE OLD COVENANT CANNOT BE CITED AS EVIDENCE FOR PAPAL SUPREMACY

Here, then, let us state what the question is: whether it is necessary for the true form of the hierarchy (as they call it) or of the ecclesiastical order, that any one see stand above the rest in dignity and power, so as to be head of the whole body. But we subject the church to too unjust laws, if we, apart from God's Word, impose this necessity upon it. If, therefore, our foes would prove what they claim, they must first show that this arrangement was established by Christ.

On this point they refer to the high priesthood of the law, likewise the supreme tribunal which God established at Jerusalem.^{F164} But the answer is easy, and there are many forms of it, if one form does not satisfy them. First, there is no reason why what has been useful in one nation should be extended to the whole earth; indeed, the constitution of one nation and that of the whole earth will be far different. Because the Jews were hedged about on all sides with idolaters, in order to prevent their being distracted by the variety of religions, God put the seat of his worship at the mid-point of the earth;^{F165} there he appointed one high priest, to whom all should look, the better to preserve unity among them. Now when true religion was spread over the whole earth, who cannot see the utter absurdity of giving the rule of East and West to one man?

It is as if someone should argue that the whole world ought to be ruled by one governor because one district has but one governor. But there is another reason, too, why that ought not to be imitated. No one is ignorant of the fact that the high priest was a type of Christ; with the priesthood transferred, the right should be transferred [^{<580712>} Hebrews 7:12]. But to whom was it transferred? Obviously, not to the pope (as he dare shamelessly boast) when he takes the title unto himself, but to Christ, who, as he alone keeps that office without vicar or successor, consequently resigns that honor to no one else. For this priesthood consists not in teaching only but in appeasing God, which Christ by his

death has accomplished, and in that intercession which he now makes in his father's presence.

3. JESUS' WORD TO PETER DID NOT ESTABLISH THIS LORDSHIP OF THE CHURCH

There is, then, no reason why they should bind us by this example as by a perpetual law, when we see that it was temporary only.

They have nothing from the New Testament to confirm their opinion except that it was said to one man: "You are Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my church" [^{<401618>} Matthew 16:18]. Likewise: "Peter, do you love me? Feed my sheep" [^{<432115>} John 21:15].^{F166}

But that these proofs should be well founded, they must first of all show that power over all churches has been committed to him who is ordered to feed Christ's flock, and that to bind and loose is nothing else but to rule the whole world.

But as Peter had received the command from the Lord, so he exhorts all other presbyters to feed the church [^{<600502>} 1 Peter 5:2]. We must infer from this that by those words of Christ's nothing has been given to Peter above the rest; or that Peter equally shared with others the right that he had received. But, not to quarrel pointlessly, in another passage we have a clear explanation from Christ's lips of what binding and loosing mean—to retain and forgive sins [^{<432023>} John 20:23]. The manner of binding and loosing is not only shown repeatedly in the whole of Scripture, but Paul best states it when he says that the ministers of the gospel have the command to reconcile men to God and at the same time to exercise vengeance upon those who shall reject this benefit [^{<470518>} 2 Corinthians 5:18; 10:6].

4. PERVERSE CLAIM CONCERNING THE KEYS

How shamefully they twist those passages which refer to binding and loosing (a point I have touched on slightly elsewhere)^{F167} I shall have to explain more fully a little later.^{F168} Now it behooves us to look only at what they adduce from that famous reply of Christ to Peter. He has promised him the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven. He said that whatever

he bound on earth would be bound in heaven [^{<401619>}Matthew 16:19]. If we agree among ourselves on the word “keys” and on the manner of binding, all contention will cease at once. For the pope will willingly overlook the function enjoined upon the apostles, which, being full of toil and trouble, would deprive him of his pleasures without bringing him any gain.^{F169}

Since heaven is opened to us by the doctrine of the gospel, the word “keys” affords an appropriate metaphor. Now men are bound and loosed in no other way than when faith reconciles some to God, while their own unbelief constrains others the more. If the pope took only this to himself, I think there would be no one either to envy him or to start a quarrel.

But, because this succession, toilsome and of slight profit, does not please the pope, there now arises from it the beginning of a contention over what Christ promised Peter. I gather from the promise itself that nothing but the dignity of the office of apostle is meant, which cannot be separated from the burden of it. For if the definition that I have set forth be accepted (which it would be but shameless to reject), nothing is here given to Peter which was not also common to his colleagues. For otherwise not only would injury be done to their persons, but the very majesty of doctrine would be impaired.

Loudly do they protest! But what good does it do them, I ask, to dash against this rock? For they will only prove that, as the preaching of the same gospel has been entrusted to all the apostles, so also the apostles have been furnished with a common power to bind and loose. Christ, they say, appointed Peter as prince of the whole church when he promised that the keys would be given him. But what he then promised to one, he elsewhere confers at the same time upon all the rest and, so to speak, delivers it into their hands [^{<401818>}Matthew 18:18; ^{<432023>}John 20:23]. If the same right was granted to all that was promised to one, in what respect will Peter be superior to his colleagues? He excels, they say, in that he receives both in common and separately what is given the others only in common.^{F170} What if I reply with Cyprian and Augustine, that Christ did not do it to prefer one man to the others, but that he might so commend unity to the church? For so speaks Cyprian: “In the person of one man the Lord gave the keys to all, to signify the unity of all; the rest were the

same as Peter was, endowed with an equal share both of honor and of power; but the beginning arose from unity that the church of Christ may be shown to be one.”^{F171} Augustine says: “If the mystery of the church had not been in Peter, the Lord would not have said to him, ‘I shall give you the keys’; for if this was said to Peter alone, the church does not have them. But if the church has them, Peter, when he received the keys, was a symbol of the whole church.” And another passage: “After all had been asked, only Peter answers, ‘Thou art Christ,’ and it is said to him, ‘I shall give you the keys,’ as if he alone received the power of binding and loosing; since, being one, he said the former for all and received the latter with all, impersonating unity itself. Hence, one for all, because the unity is in all.”^{F172}

5. HONOR, NOT POWER, ACCORDED TO PETER

But we nowhere read that the statement “You are Peter, and upon this rock I shall build my church” [^{<401618>} Matthew 16:18] was spoken to another. As if Christ would there say anything else about Peter than what Paul, and Peter himself, say of all Christians. For Paul makes “Christ... the chief cornerstone, in whom are built those who grow into a holy temple unto the Lord” [^{<490220>} Ephesians 2:20-21 p., cf. Vg.]. Peter bids us be living stones, who, laid upon that chosen and precious stone [^{<600205>} 1 Peter 2:5-6], by this bond and juncture with our God also cleave together among ourselves [cf. ^{<490416>} Ephesians 4:16; ^{<510219>} Colossians 2:19]. He (they say) before the others, for he especially has the name. Of course, I willingly yield this honor to Peter, that he be placed among the first in the building of the church; or (if they would have this also), the first of all believers; but I shall not allow them to deduce from this that he has primacy over the others. For what sort of deduction is this? He excelled others in fervor of zeal, in doctrine, and in courage; therefore, he has power over them. As if we might not more plausibly infer that Andrew is above Peter in rank because he preceded him in time and brought him to Christ [^{<430140>} John 1:40, 42]! But I pass over this. Let Peter, then, surpass the others; still, honor of rank is greatly different from power. We see that the apostles generally yielded this to Peter, that he should speak in the congregation and, as it were, precede the rest in discussion, exhortation,

and admonition [^{<440214>} Acts 2:14 ff.; 4:8 ff.; 15:7 ff.]; but we read nothing at all about power.

6. THE ONE FOUNDATION

Although we have not yet entered that dispute,^{F173} for the present I wish to make this point only, that they argue very ineffectively when they wish to establish upon the sole name of Peter sovereignty over the whole church. For those old follies with which they attempted at the beginning to deceive are unworthy of mention, much less of refutation: the church is founded upon Peter because it is said, “Upon this rock,” etc. Yet, they say, some of the fathers have so interpreted it. But since all Scripture cries out against it, why is their authority claimed against God? Indeed, why do we contend over the meaning of these words, as if they were obscure or ambiguous, while nothing clearer or more certain can be said? Peter, in his own and his brethren’s name, had confessed that Christ was the Son of God [^{<401616>} Matthew 16:16]. Upon this rock Christ builds his church. For there is but one foundation, as Paul says, apart from which no other can be laid [^{<460311>} 1 Corinthians 3:11]. And I do not here repudiate the authority of the fathers as if^{F174} I would be abandoned by their testimonies if I wished to quote them to prove what I am saying. But, as I have said, I would not needlessly trouble my readers by contending over so clear a matter, especially since this matter was long ago treated and explained diligently enough by our proponents.^{F175}

7. THE PLACE OF PETER AMONG THE APOSTLES ACCORDING TO THE ACCOUNT OF SCRIPTURE

Nevertheless, no one can actually solve this question better than does Scripture itself, if we gather together all the passages where it teaches what office and power Peter had among the apostles, how he conducted himself, and also how he was received by them. Run over all that is extant: you will find nothing but that he was one of the Twelve, the equal of the rest, and their companion, not their master. He indeed refers to a council anything that is to be done, and advises what needs to be done. But at the same time he listens to the others, and he not only lets them express their views, but leaves the decision to them; when they have decreed, he follows and obeys [^{<441505>} Acts 15:5-12]. When he writes to the pastors, he does not

command them from his authority, as a superior, but makes them his colleagues and gently urges them, as is customarily done among equals [^{<600501>} 1 Peter 5:1 ff.]. When he is accused of having gone over to the Gentiles, even though the charge is undeserved, he still answers it and clears himself [^{<441103>} Acts 11:3-18]. Bidden by his colleagues to go with John to Samaria, he does not refuse [^{<440814>} Acts 8:14]. The apostles, by sending him, declare that they by no means count him their superior; he, in obeying and undertaking the mission enjoined upon him, admits that he is in fellowship with them, not in authority over against them.

But if none of these passages existed, still the letter to the Galatians alone can easily banish all doubt from us. There for almost two chapters Paul contends solely that he is Peter's equal in the office of apostle. Hence, he recalls that he came to Peter, not to profess subjection, but only to attest their agreement in doctrine before all; that Peter also demanded no such thing, but gave him the right hand of fellowship so that they might labor together in the Lord's vineyard; and that no less grace was conferred upon him among the Gentiles than upon Peter among the Jews [^{<480118>} Galatians 1:18; 2:8]. Finally, he recalls that when Peter did not act faithfully, he corrected him, and Peter obeyed his reproof [^{<480211>} Galatians 2:11-14]. All these things reveal either that there was equality between Paul and Peter, or at least that Peter had no more power over the rest than they had over him. Now, as I have already said, Paul expressly argues that no one may put either Peter or John ahead of him in the apostolate, for they were his colleagues, not his masters.

(Monarchy in the church to be accorded to Christ alone, 8-10)

8. THE CHURCH CAN HAVE NO HUMAN HEAD

But, to grant them what they claim concerning Peter—that he was indeed the prince of the apostles, and excelled the rest in dignity—there is nevertheless no reason why they should make a universal rule out of a particular example and extend to perpetuity what happened once—a far different matter! One was chief among the apostles, that is, because they were few in number. If one man was over twelve men, does it follow from this that one ought to be put over a hundred thousand men? No wonder that twelve men had one to rule them all! For nature bears this, man's

natural constitution demands it, that in any assembly, even though all are equal in power, one should be the moderator, as it were, to whom the others look. There is no meeting of the Senate without a consul, no session of judges without a praetor or prosecutor, no committee without a chairman, no association without a president. Thus there would be nothing absurd in our confessing that the apostles yielded primacy of this sort to Peter.^{F176}

But what prevails among the few is not to be applied directly to the whole earth, over which no one person is competent to rule. On the contrary (they say), no less in the whole of nature than in its individual parts, there should be one supreme head of all. And, if it please God, they prove this from cranes and bees, which always choose one leader for themselves, not many! Indeed, I accept the examples that they bring forward, but do the bees come together from the whole world to elect one ruler? Every ruler is content with its own hive. So among cranes each flock has its own ruler. What else will they prove from this fact but that individual churches ought to have their own bishop? Then they cite us political examples; they quote that saying of Homer's, "The rule of many is not good,"^{F177} and statements of secular writers in commendation of monarchy, read in the same sense.

The answer is easy: monarchy is not praised in this sense either by Homeric Ulysses or by others, as if one man ought to hold sway over the whole earth; but they mean to indicate that a kingdom cannot have two kings; and power (as he says) is impatient of a consort.^{F178}

9. CHRIST'S HEADSHIP NOT TRANSFERABLE

But suppose, as the Romanists would have it, that it were good and profitable for the whole world to be embraced within one monarchy—something utterly absurd—but suppose this were so. I will still not on that account concede that the same thing should prevail in the government of the church. For it has Christ as its sole Head, under whose sway all of us cleave to one another, according to that order and that form of polity which he has laid down. They do signal injury to Christ when they would have one man set over the church universal, on the pretext that the church cannot be without a head. For Christ is the Head, "from whom the whole

body, joined and knit through every bond of mutual ministry (insofar as each member functions) achieves its growth” [^{<490415>} Ephesians 4:15-16]. Do you see how he includes all mortals without exception in the body, but leaves the honor and name of the Head to Christ alone? Do you see how he assigns to each member a certain measure, and a definite and limited function, in order that perfection of grace as well as the supreme power of governing may remain with Christ alone?

And I am aware of their usual quibble when the objection is made to them that Christ is indeed properly called the sole Head, for he alone rules by his own authority and his own name. This is no hindrance, they say, to the existence of another ministerial head under him, to be his vicegerent on earth.^{F179} But this quibble does not help them unless they first show that this ministry was ordained by Christ. For the apostle teaches that the whole supply is spread through the members, and that power flows from that one heavenly Head [^{<490416>} Ephesians 4:16]. Or, if they wish it said more plainly: since Scripture attests that Christ is Head and claims this honor for him alone, it ought not to be transferred to anyone else except to one whom Christ himself has appointed his own vicar. But this is nowhere read, and can, in fact, be abundantly refuted from many passages [^{<490122>} Ephesians 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; ^{<510118>} Colossians 1:18; 2:10].

10. UNITY IN CHRIST, NOT IN A HUMAN MONARCH

Paul several times paints a living image of the church for us. No mention is made there of one head. Rather, one may infer from his description that it is foreign to Christ’s institution. By his ascension Christ took away from us his visible presence [^{<440109>} Acts 1:9]; yet he ascended to fill all things [^{<490410>} Ephesians 4:10]. Now, therefore, the church still has, and always will have, him present. When Paul wishes to show the way in which he manifests himself, he calls us back to the ministries which he uses. The Lord (he says) is in us all, according to the measure of grace which he has bestowed upon each member [^{<490407>} Ephesians 4:7]. For that reason, “he appointed some to be apostles,... others pastors, others evangelists, still others teachers,” etc. [^{<490411>} Ephesians 4:11 p.]. Why does Paul not say that Christ has set one over all to act as his vicegerent? For that the occasion especially demanded, and it ought in no way to have been omitted, if it had been true. Christ (he says) is present with us. How? By

the ministry of men, whom he has set over the governing of the church. Why not, rather, through the ministerial head, to whom he has entrusted his functions? Paul mentions unity, but in God and in faith in Christ. To men he assigns nothing but the common ministry, and a particular mode to each. Why did he, in that commendation of unity, after he had mentioned “one body, one Spirit,... one hope of calling, one God, one faith, one baptism” [^{<490404>} Ephesians 4:4-5 p.], not immediately also add, one supreme pontiff, to keep the church in unity?^{F180} For nothing more appropriate could have been said, if indeed it had been an actual fact. Let that passage be diligently pondered. No doubt Paul deeply meant to represent here the sacred and spiritual government of the church, which his successors have called “hierarchy.” He not only lays down no monarchy among the ministers but also points out that there is none. No doubt Paul meant to express the manner of connection, by which believers cleave to Christ, the Head. There he not only mentions no ministerial head, but assigns particular functions to each member [^{<490416>} Ephesians 4:16], according to the measure of grace bestowed upon each [^{<490407>} Ephesians 4:7]. Nor is there reason for our opponents to philosophize subtly over a comparison of heavenly and earthly hierarchies;^{F181} for it is not safe to be wise beyond measure concerning the former, and in establishing the latter we should not follow any other pattern than that which the Lord himself has sketched in his Word.

(Admission that Peter was bishop in Rome does not establish Rome's perpetual primacy, 11-13)

11. IF PETER HIMSELF HAD HAD SUPREMACY, ROME COULD NOT CLAIM IT

Now, suppose I should concede them another point which they never will gain among men in their right minds: that the primacy of the church was so established in Peter that it should always abide in unbroken succession. Still, how will they prove that his see was established at Rome in such a way that whoever may be bishop of the city should preside over the whole world? By what right do they bind to a place this dignity which has been given without mention of place? Peter, they say, dwelt in Rome and died there. What did Christ himself do? Did he not, while dwelling in Jerusalem, exercise his bishopric, and by dying fulfill his priestly office?

The Prince of Shepherds, the Sovereign Bishop, the Head of the church, could not acquire honor for a place—could Peter, far inferior to him, do so? Are not these more-than-childish follies? Christ conferred the honor of the primacy upon Peter; Peter sat at Rome; therefore, he placed the primate's see there. That is, by this reasoning the Israelites of old ought to have established the primate's see in the desert, where Moses, the supreme teacher and prince of prophets, had carried out his ministry and died [^{<053405>}Deuteronomy 34:5].

12. ALLEGED TRANSFER OF THE PRIMACY FROM ANTIOCH

Let us, nevertheless, see how delightfully they reason. Peter, they say, had supremacy among the apostles; therefore, the church in which he had his see ought to have it as a privilege.^{F182} But where was his first see? At Antioch, they say. Therefore the church of Antioch rightfully claims the primacy for itself. They admit that Antioch was once first but assert that Peter, emigrating from that place, transferred to Rome the honor that he had brought with him. For there is extant under the name of Pope Marcellus a letter to the presbyters of Antioch in which he speaks as follows: "Peter's see was at first with you, but afterward, at the Lord's command, he transferred it here. Thus the church of Antioch, which was once first, yielded to the Roman see."^{F183} But what oracle revealed to that good man that the Lord so commanded? For if this case has to be decided by law, they must answer whether they want this privilege to be personal, or real, or mixed.^{F184} For it has to be one of these three. If they say personal, then it does not belong to the place; if real, then when it has once for all been given to a place, it is not taken away on account of either the death or the departure of a person. It remains, therefore, that they say that it is mixed; but then it will not be a simple consideration of place unless the person corresponds. Let them choose whatever they will—I will immediately infer and easily prove that Rome can in no way claim the primacy for itself.

13. RANKING OF THE OTHER PATRIARCHATES

Let us assume that (as they fancy) the primacy was transferred from Antioch to Rome. Why, then, did not Antioch retain second place? For if Rome has the primacy for the reason that Peter presided there to the very

end of his life, to what city shall the second place be granted other than where he had his first see? How did it happen, then, that Alexandria took precedence over Antioch? How fitting is it that the church of a mere disciple be superior to Peter's see? If honor is due each church according to the dignity of its founder, what shall we say also of the remaining churches? Paul names three disciples who seem to be pillars, James, Peter, and John [^{<480209>} Galatians 2:9]; if in Peter's honor first place is assigned to the Roman see, do not the churches of Ephesus and Jerusalem deserve second and third place, where John and James presided? Yet among the patriarchates Jerusalem of old had last place;^{F185} Ephesus could not even cling to the last corner. And other churches were passed over, both some founded by Paul, and some presided over by other apostles. The see of Mark, who was a mere disciple, received the honor. Let them either confess that order was preposterous, or grant us it is not a perpetual principle that to each church is due the same degree of honor as to its founder.

(Peter's presence in Rome unproved, while Paul's is beyond doubt, 14-15)

14. ON THE SOJOURN OF PETER IN ROME

However, I do not see how their account of Peter's presiding over the church at Rome has any credibility. Surely, what is said in Eusebius—that he ruled there for twenty-five years—is easily refuted. For it is clear from the first and second chapters of Galatians that for about twenty years after the death of Christ he was at Jerusalem [^{<480118>} Galatians 1:18; 2:1 ff.], then came to Antioch [^{<480211>} Galatians 2:11], where it is uncertain how long he remained. Gregory figures seven, Eusebius twenty-five years.^{F186} Yet the period from the death of Christ to the end of Nero's reign (under whom they relate that he was killed) totals only thirty-seven years. For the Lord suffered under Tiberius, in the eighteenth year of his reign. If you subtract twenty years, during which, according to Paul's testimony, Peter dwelt in Jerusalem, that will leave seventeen at the most, which must now be divided between two episcopates. If he remained for long at Antioch, he could have been bishop at Rome but for a short time. This may be demonstrated still more clearly. Paul wrote the letter to the Romans while on his way to Jerusalem [^{<451525>} Romans 15:25], where he was seized and taken to Rome. It is therefore likely that this letter was

written four years before he came to Rome. Here there is still no mention of Peter, though this would not at all have been omitted if he had been ruling that church! And lastly, when he recites a long list of the godly to whom he sends greetings and includes in it all known to him [^{<451603>}Romans 16:3-16], of Peter he is as yet utterly silent. And no long and subtle proof is needed here among men of sounder judgment; for the thing itself and the whole argument of the letter cry out that Peter ought not to have been passed over if he had been at Rome.^{F187}

15. SLENDER AND INCONCLUSIVE EVIDENCE

Paul was later brought to Rome as a prisoner [^{<442816>}Acts 28:16]. Luke states that Paul was received by his brethren [^{<442815>}Acts 28:15]. Of Peter he says nothing. From there Paul writes to many churches. Also, in some letters he writes greetings in the name of certain ones; by not one word does he indicate that Peter was then there. Is it likely, I ask, that he could have remained silent, had Peter been there? What is more, in the letter to the Philippians, where he said that he has no one who so faithfully takes care of the Lord's work as Timothy, Paul complains that everyone seeks his own [^{<505920>}Philippians 2:20-21]. And to the same Timothy he makes a graver complaint, that no one was with him at his first defense, but all forsook him [^{<550416>}2 Timothy 4:16]. Where, therefore, was Peter then? For if they say he was at Rome, with what great shame does Paul charge him, that he was a forsaker of the gospel? Indeed, he is speaking of believers, for he adds, "May God not charge it against them" [^{<550416>}2 Timothy 4:16, cf. KJV]. How long, then, and at what time did Peter occupy that see? Someone will say, the opinion of writers is consistent, that at least he governed the church even to his death. I shall reply, the writers themselves do not agree on who succeeded him: some make it Linus; others, Clement.^{F188} And they tell many absurd tales about a disputation that took place between Peter and Simon Magus.^{F189} And Augustine, discussing superstitions, admits that the custom at Rome of not fasting on the day that Peter was victorious over Simon Magus arose from a rashly conceived opinion.

Finally, the affairs of that time are so involved in a variety of opinions that we should not believe without question everything we read. And yet, on account of this agreement of writers, I do not quarrel with the notion that

he died there; but I cannot be persuaded that he was bishop, especially for a long time. Nor do I tarry long over it, since Paul attests that Peter's apostolate applies especially to the Jews, but his own to us Gentiles [^{<480207>}Galatians 2:7-8]. Therefore, that the fellowship which they covenanted among themselves [^{<480209>}Galatians 2:9] may be in force among us, indeed, that the ordination of the Holy Spirit may be held firm among us, it becomes us to pay more attention to Paul's apostolate than to Peter's. Indeed, the Holy Spirit so divided the responsibilities between them that he destined Peter for the Jews, Paul for us.

Now, let the Romanists seek their primacy elsewhere than in God's Word, where it finds precious little foundation!

(Roman Church honored but not as unifying head, 16-17)

16. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE CHURCH AT ROME DURING THE EARLIEST PERIOD

Now let us consider the ancient church, to make plain that our opponents no less rashly and falsely boast of its support than of the testimony of God's Word. When, therefore, they vaunt that axiom of theirs, that the unity of the church can be maintained only if there is one supreme head on earth for all members to obey, and that the Lord accordingly gave the primacy to Peter and then by right of succession to the Roman see to reside therein even to the end, they declare that this practice has always been observed from the very beginning. But since they maliciously distort many testimonies, I wish first to say this: I do not deny that ancient writers everywhere give great honor to the church of Rome, and speak reverently of it. There are three particular reasons why this happened.

- 1.** The opinion (which had in some manner or other become prevalent) that it was founded and established by Peter's ministry was of very great value in obtaining favor and authority for it; therefore, in the West it was called for honor's sake, "apostolic see."
- 2.** Because Rome was the capital city of the Empire, the men there were probably more excellent in doctrine, prudence, skill, and breadth of experience, than in any other place. This fact was duly taken into

account in order that the renown of the city and also the other much more excellent gifts of God might not seem to be despised.

3. Besides these, there is a third reason: when the churches of the East, Greece, and even Africa were agitated with much dissension among themselves over opinions, Rome was calmer and less troubled than they. So it came about that godly and holy bishops, deposed from their sees, often betook themselves to Rome as an asylum and haven. For as the Westerners are less sharp and quick of wit than the Asiatics and Africans,^{F190} they are for that reason also less enamored of novelty. The fact that the Roman Church was less troubled in those doubtful times than the others and was more tenacious of the doctrine once delivered than were all the rest added a great deal to its authority—as we shall better explain directly. For these three reasons, I say, Rome was held in no slight honor and commended by many notable testimonies of ancient writers.

17. ACCORDING TO EARLY CHURCH TEACHING, THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH PLAINLY REQUIRED NO UNIVERSAL BISHOP

But when our opponents wish on this account to ascribe to Rome primacy and supreme power over other churches, they are acting very wrongly, as I have said. To make this clearer, first I shall briefly show what the ancient writers thought of this unity which they so strongly urge. Jerome, writing to Nepotianus, after recounting many examples of unity, proceeds at last to the church hierarchy. Each church has its own bishop, he tells us, its archpresbyter, its archdeacon, and every church order depends upon its rulers.^{F191} Here a Roman presbyter is speaking; he commends unity in church order. Why does he not mention that one head is, as it were, the bond that unites all churches together? For nothing would have better served the immediate argument. Nor can it be said that he overlooked this point out of forgetfulness, for he would have used nothing more willingly if the facts had allowed it. Therefore, he no doubt saw that the true basis of unity was what Cyprian most beautifully described in these words: “The episcopate is one, a ‘whole’ of which a part is held by each bishop. And the church is one, which is spread abroad far and wide into a multitude by an increase of fruitfulness. As there are many rays of the

sun, but one light; and many branches of a tree, but one strong trunk grounded in its tenacious root; and since from one spring flow many streams, although a goodly number seem outpoured from their bounty and superabundance, still at the source unity abides undivided.... So also the church, bathed in the light of the Lord, extends its rays over the whole earth: yet there is one light diffused everywhere. Nor is the unity of the body severed; it spreads its branches through the whole earth; it pours forth its overflowing streams; yet there is one head and one source,” etc. Again: “The Bride of Christ cannot be an adulteress; she knows one house; with chaste modesty she guards the sanctity of one marriage bed.” You see that he makes the universal bishopric Christ’s alone, who takes the whole church under himself. He says that the parts of this whole are held by all who discharge the bishop’s office under this Head.^{F192} Where is the primacy of the Roman see, if the unbroken episcopate rests in Christ’s hands alone, and each bishop holds his part of it? The aim of these citations is to inform the reader, by the way, that that principle which the Romanists take to be generally acknowledged and undoubted—of the unity of the hierarchy under an earthly head—was utterly unknown to the ancient fathers.

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**

(Modest position of the Roman see in early times, 1-4)

1. POSITION OF THE ROMAN SEE IN THE COUNCILS OF NICAEA AND EPHESUS

As to the antiquity of the primacy of the Roman see, there is nothing pertaining to its establishment earlier than that decree of the Council of Nicaea, in which first place among the patriarchs was granted to the Roman bishop, and he was ordered to take care of the suburbicarian churches.^{F193} When the council made such a division between him and the other patriarchs as to assign to each his own boundaries, surely it did not establish him as head of all, but made him one of the chiefs. Vitus and Vincentius were present in the name of Julius, who was then governing the Roman Church. The fourth place was given to them.^{F194} I ask, if Julius had been recognized as head of the church, why were his delegates relegated to fourth place? Should Athanasius have presided over this universal council, which ought particularly to reflect the hierarchical order?^{F195} In the Council of Ephesus it appears that Celestine (who was then Roman pontiff) used a trick to ensure the dignity of his see. For when he sent his delegates thither, he made Cyril of Alexandria (who would have presided anyway) his proxy.^{F196} What was the purpose of this mandate, but in some way or other to attach his name to the first seat? For his delegates sit in a lower place, are asked their opinion along with the rest, and subscribe in their order. Meanwhile, the patriarch of Alexandria joins Celestine's name with his own.

What shall I say of the second Council of Ephesus, where, though Leo's legates were present, Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, presided as if by his own right?^{F197} The Romanists will object that this was no orthodox council, since it condemned the saintly Flavian but acquitted Eutyches and condoned his impiety. But when the synod was convened, when the bishops apportioned the seats among themselves, there surely the legates of the Roman Church were sitting with the others just as if in a holy and lawful council. Yet they do not contend over the first place, but yield it to another;^{F198} they would not have done this if they had believed their place to be first by right. For the bishops of Rome were never ashamed to raise the greatest contentions for their own honors, and for this sole reason to harass and disturb the church with dangerous conflicts; but because Leo saw that it would be a too unreasonable demand if he were to seek the first seat for his own legates, he let it pass.

2. IN THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON AND THE FIFTH OF CONSTANTINOPLE

There followed the Council of Chalcedon, in which, by the emperor's concession, the representatives of the church of Rome occupied the first seat. But Leo himself admits that this was an extraordinary privilege; for when he seeks it from Emperor Marcian and Empress Pulcheria, he does not contend that it is his due, but only pretends that the Eastern bishops who had presided over the Council of Ephesus then stirred up everything and wickedly abused their power. Since, therefore, a grave moderator was needed and it was unlikely that those who had once been so fickle and disorderly would be fitted for this task, he asks that, on account of the others' shortcomings and incapacity, the governing function be transferred to himself.^{F199} What is sought by special privilege and apart from normal procedure is certainly not of customary law. Where it is pretended only that there is need of another new president because previous ones have acted badly, it is clear that it neither had been done before nor ought to be perpetuated, but is done only in view of present danger. In the Council of Chalcedon the Roman pontiff accordingly has first place not because it belongs to that see, but because the synod has need of a grave and competent moderator, while those who ought to have presided exclude themselves from that place by their intemperance and wantonness.

What I am saying, a successor of Leo has by action approved. In sending his legates to the Fifth Council at Constantinople (which took place long after), he did not wrangle for the first seat but readily allowed Mennas, patriarch of Constantinople, to preside. So in the Council of Carthage, at which Augustine was present, we observe that not the legates of the Roman see but Aurelius, archbishop of the place, presided, even when the authority of the Roman pontiff was under debate. Indeed, a universal council (the Council of Aquileia) was held in Italy itself, at which the Roman bishop was not present. Ambrose presided, who then wielded great influence with the emperor; no mention is made there of the Roman pontiff. It therefore happened through the prestige of Ambrose that the see of Milan was at that time more illustrious than that of Rome.^{F200}

3. THE PROUD TITLES OF THE LATER ROMAN BISHOPS NOT YET KNOWN IN THE EARLY PERIOD

As for the very title of “primate” and other proud titles with which the Romanists wonderfully vaunt themselves, it is not difficult to judge when and how they crept in. Cyprian often mentions Cornelius; he calls him by no other name than “brother,” or “fellow bishop,” or “colleague.” But when he writes to Stephen, Cornelius’ successor, Cyprian not only makes him equal to himself and to the rest but even speaks rather sternly to him, objecting now to his arrogance, now to his ignorance.^{F201} After Cyprian we are aware how the whole African church views this matter. For the Council of Carthage forbade that anyone be called “prince of priests,” or “first bishop,” but only “bishop of the prime see.” Yet if anyone unroll the more ancient records, he will find that the Roman bishop was then content with the common appellation of “brother.” Surely as long as the true and pure form of the church has lasted, all these prideful names, with which the Roman see afterward began to grow insolent, were utterly unheard of; what the titles “supreme pontiff,” and “sole head of the church on earth” might be, was unknown. But if the Roman bishop had dared take such title to himself, there were stouthearted men who would soon have suppressed his folly. Jerome, since he was a Roman presbyter, was not disinclined to proclaim the dignity of his own church, as much as the facts and the state of the times allowed; yet we see how he also reduces it to its rank. “If authority is sought,” he says, “the world is

greater than a city. Why do you proffer me the custom of one city? Why do you vindicate the claims of a mere handful, from whom has arisen an arrogance contrary to the laws of the church? Wherever a bishop may be, at Rome, or Gubbio, or Constantinople, or Reggio, he is of the same merit and the same priesthood. Power of wealth and lowliness of poverty do not make a higher or lower bishop.”^{F202}

4. GREGORY I REFUSED THE TITLE “UNIVERSAL BISHOP”

Not until the time of Gregory did contention arise over the title of “universal bishop”: the ambition of John of Constantinople furnished the occasion for the quarrel. For he wished to make himself universal—something no one else had ever tried before. In that quarrel Gregory does not take the ground that the right which belonged to him was taken away, but stoutly protests that the appellation is profane, in fact, sacrilegious, the very precursor of Antichrist. “The whole church falls from its condition,” he says, “if anyone who is called ‘universal’ falls.” Elsewhere: “For our brother and fellow bishop to take the name of sole bishop, despising all others, is a very sad thing to bear patiently. But what else does this pride of his signify except that the times of Antichrist are already near at hand? For he is obviously imitating him who, spurning fellowship with the angels, tried to climb to the pinnacle of uniqueness!” In another letter he writes to Eulogius of Alexandria and Anastasius of Antioch: “None of my predecessors ever wished to use this profane word. For clearly if one patriarch is called ‘universal,’ then the name ‘patriarchs’ is taken away from the rest. But let this be far from the Christian mind, that anyone should wish to claim for himself an advantage by which to threaten the honor of his brethren in the slightest degree.” “To consent to this wicked word is nothing less than to destroy the faith.” “It is one thing,” he says, “that we should preserve unity of faith; another, that we ought to repress self-exaltation. But I say it confidently, because whoever calls himself ‘universal bishop,’ or wishes to be so called, is in his self-exaltation Antichrist’s precursor, for in his swaggering he sets himself before the rest.” Likewise, he writes again to Anastasius of Alexandria: “I have said that he cannot have peace with us unless he correct his pride over a superstitious and proud word which the first apostate invented. And (that I may forbear to speak of the injury to your honor) if one

bishop is called ‘universal,’ the universal church goes down when that universal bishop falls.”

But his statement that this honor had been offered to Leo in the Council of Chalcedon has no semblance of truth, for no such thing is to be read in the acts of that synod. And Leo himself, who in many epistles impugns the decree passed there in favor of the see of Constantinople, would doubtless not have passed over this proof which was the most plausible of all if it had been true that he had repudiated what was given him; and being a man otherwise too desirous of honor, he would not willingly have

overlooked what would redound to his praise. Gregory was therefore deceived in thinking that this title had been offered to the Roman see by the Council of Chalcedon. I forbear mentioning how ridiculous it is that he testifies that it proceeded from a holy synod, and at the same time calls it wicked, profane, abominable, proud, and sacrilegious, indeed devised by the devil, and published by the herald of Antichrist. And yet he adds that his predecessor refused it lest when something was given exclusively to one, all bishops should be deprived of their due honor. Another passage: “No one ever wished to be called by such a name; no one seized upon this presumptuous title lest, by snatching to himself in the pontifical rank the glory of uniqueness, he should seem to deny it to all his brethren.”^{F203}

(Limitations of its authority in relation to that of emperors and metropolitans, 5-10)

5. ORIGIN OF ROMAN JURISDICTION

I come now to the jurisdiction which the Roman pontiff asserts he incontrovertibly holds over all churches. I know how many contentions there once were over this: for there was no time when the Roman see did not seek to gain control over other churches. And it will not be out of place here to investigate by what means it gradually emerged into some power. I am not yet speaking of that unbounded sway which it not so long ago took upon itself. That we shall postpone to its proper place.^{F204} But here it is worthwhile to sketch how at an early period, and in what ways, it advanced itself to usurp some right over other churches.

When the Eastern churches were divided and troubled by the Arian factions, under the Emperors Constant,us and Constans, sons of Constantine the Great, Athanasius, the chief defender then of the orthodox faith, was expelled from his see. This calamity compelled him to come to Rome, that by the authority of the Roman see he might both, as it were, repress the fury of his enemies and strengthen the pious in their distress. He was honorably received by Julius, the then bishop, and succeeded in getting the Western bishops to take up the defense of his cause. Since, therefore, the pious had great need of outside help, and they discerned in the Roman Church their best help, they willingly granted to it as much authority as they could. But the whole point was only that they greatly esteemed communion with it, from which they thought it shameful to be cut off.

Afterward, evil and wicked men also added greatly to the dignity of the Roman Church; for to flee lawful judgments, they betook themselves to its asylum. Any presbyter condemned by his bishop, or any bishop by a synod of his province, immediately appealed to Rome. And the Roman bishops received these appeals more avidly than they should have, because it seemed a form of extraordinary power to meddle in business far and wide. So, when Eutyches was condemned by Flavian, bishop of Constantinople, he complained to Leo that injustice had been done him. Leo, without delay, and no less rashly than suddenly, undertook the support of this evil cause. He grievously inveighed against Flavian, as if the latter had condemned an innocent man without a hearing, and by this ambition of his succeeded in confirming Eutyches' impiety for a time.^{F205}

It is evident that this often happened in Africa; for as soon as any rascal came under regular judgment, he fled at once to Rome and heaped many calumnies upon his countrymen; moreover, the Roman see was always ready to intervene. This audacity compelled the African bishops to decree that no one, under penalty of excommunication, should appeal beyond the sea.^{F206}

6. THE PECULIAR FEATURES OF THE ROMAN POWER OF THAT TIME

Still, whatever it was, let us investigate what right and power the Roman see then had. Church power is comprised under these four headings: ordination of bishops, calling of councils, hearing of appeals or jurisdiction, and motions of chastisement or censures.^{F207} All the ancient councils order bishops to be ordained by their metropolitans; nowhere do they order the Roman bishop to do this except in his own patriarchate. But gradually the custom prevailed that all Italian bishops should come to Rome to seek consecration, except metropolitans, who did not allow themselves to be reduced to this servitude. But when any metropolitan was to be ordained, the Roman bishop sent one of his presbyters thither to be present, not to preside. Among Gregory's letters there is an example of this in the consecration of Constantius of Milan after the death of Laurentius. However, I do not think this was a very ancient regulation; but when, for the sake of honor and of courtesy, they at first sent their legates hither and thither to witness ordinations in testimony of fellowship, what had been voluntary began afterward to be considered obligatory. However this may be, it is evident that formerly the power to ordain belonged to the Roman bishop only in the province of his own patriarchate, that is, in the suburbicarian churches, as a canon of the Council of Nicaea states.

To ordination was annexed the sending of a synodical epistle, in which the bishop of Rome was in no respect superior to the others. Immediately after their consecration the patriarchs customarily declared their faith in a solemn document, in which they professed to subscribe to the holy and orthodox councils. Thus, when they gave an accounting of their faith, they mutually approved themselves to one another. If the Roman bishop had received this confession from the others, not given it, he would thereby have been recognized as superior, but that he was obliged no less to give it to, than to exact it from, the others, and to be subject to the common law, surely was a sign of fellowship, not of lordship. This practice is exemplified in Gregory's letters to Anastasius, to Cyriacus of Constantinople, and elsewhere to all the patriarchs together.^{F208}

7. MUTUAL ADMONITION

There follow admonitions or censures. Just as the Roman bishops formerly used them toward others, so they bore them in turn. Irenaeus severely rebuked Victor, because he rashly disturbed the church with dangerous contention over something unimportant. Victor obeyed without a protest.^{F209} Such freedom was then customary among the holy bishops to use their brotherly right toward the Roman prelate, admonishing and chastising him whenever he sinned. He, in turn, when occasion demanded, reminded the others of their duty and rebuked any fault. For Cyprian, when he urges Stephen to warn the bishops of Gaul, does not base his argument upon fuller power but upon the authority that bishops have in common. I ask, if Stephen had then been in charge of Gaul, would not Cyprian have said, “Compel them, as they are yours”? But he spoke far otherwise. “The brotherly fellowship,” he says, “by which we are bound together among ourselves requires that we admonish one another.”^{F210} And we see also with what very harsh words this man of otherwise gentle disposition inveighs against Stephen himself when he thinks he has grown too haughty. Therefore, in this respect also it does not yet seem that the Roman bishop was endowed with any jurisdiction over those who were not of his province.

8. AUTHORITY IN THE CONVENING OF SYNODS

As to the convening of synods, it was the duty of each metropolitan to summon a provincial synod at stated times. In this matter the bishop of Rome had no jurisdiction. Moreover, only the emperor could call a universal council.^{F211} For if any of the bishops had tried this, not only would those outside his province not have heeded his summons, but a tumult would have broken out at once. Therefore, the emperor impartially summoned them all to be present. Socrates, indeed, relates that Julius expostulated with the Eastern bishops because they had not called him to the Synod of Antioch, although it was forbidden by the canons that anything should be decreed without the knowledge of the Roman pontiff.^{F212} But who does not see that this is to be understood of such decrees as bind the church universal? Now it is no wonder if such allowance is made both for the antiquity and greatness of the city and then for the dignity of the see, as that no universal decree concerning religion is

to be passed in the absence of the Roman bishop—unless, indeed, he should refuse to be present!

But what has this to do with lordship over the whole church? We do not deny that the bishop of Rome was one of the chief bishops, but we refuse to accept what the Romanists now contend—that he had dominion over all.

9. USE OF FORGED DOCUMENTS

The fourth kind of power remains, that which lies in appeals. Clearly the supreme authority rests with him to whose judgment seat appeals are made. Many often appealed to the Roman pontiff; he also tried to take over the hearing of cases; but he was always laughed at whenever he exceeded his limits. I shall say nothing of the East or of Greece; but it is clear that the bishops of Gaul stoutly resisted when he seemed to usurp authority over them.^{F213}

In Africa there was a long debate over the matter; for after those who appealed across the sea had been excommunicated in the Council of Milevis, at which Augustine was present, the Roman pontiff attempted to get the decree revised. He sent legates to make it appear that he had been given this as a privilege by the Council of Nicaea. The legates brought forth the acts of the Council of Nicaea which they had taken from the archives of their own church. The Africans resisted, denying that the Roman bishop ought to be believed when pleading his own cause. Accordingly, they said that they would send to Constantinople, and to other cities of Greece, where less suspect copies were available. It was found that no such thing as the Romans had pretended was written in these. Thus was the decree ratified which denied to the Roman pontiff the supreme jurisdiction.^{F214} In this infamous affair the shamelessness of the Roman pontiff himself appeared; for when by fraud he substituted the Synod of Sardica for that of Nicaea, he was caught red-handed in a manifest falsehood.

But even greater and more shameful was the wickedness of those who added a forged epistle to the council, wherein some bishop or other of Carthage, condemning the arrogance of his predecessor, Aurelius, because the latter dared withdraw from obedience to the apostolic see, and making

submission for himself and his church, begs pardon as a suppliant.^{F215} These are the extraordinary records of antiquity upon which the majesty of the Roman see has been founded. So childishly do they bear false witness under the pretense of antiquity that even blind men are able to sense it. “Aurelius,” the forged epistle says, “puffed up with devilish boldness and obstinacy, rebelled against Christ and St. Peter; accordingly, he ought to be condemned by anathema.” What about Augustine? What about the many fathers who were present at the Council of Milevis? But why need we refute that stupid writing with many words, which even the Romanists, if they have any modesty left, cannot look upon without great shame? Thus Gratian, whether out of malice or naivete I do not know, in referring to that decree, “That those who appeal across the sea be cut off from communion,” adds the exception, “Unless perchance they should appeal to the Roman see.”^{F216} What can you do with these beasts, so lacking in common sense that they except from the law that one thing for whose sake, as everyone sees, the law was made? For the council, in condemning appeals across the sea, precisely forbids appeals to Rome! This good interpreter excepts Rome from the common law!

10. CONSTANTINE, BISHOP MELCHIADES, AND THE SYNOD OF ARIES

But, to settle this question once for all, one historical incident will make plain what the jurisdiction of the Roman bishop was in the early period. Donatus of Casae Nigrae had accused Caecilian, bishop of Carthage. The accused man was condemned, his case unheard. For when he knew that the bishops had conspired against him, he would not appear. The case then came to the Emperor Constantine. Since he wished the case to be settled by judgment of the church, the emperor committed the hearing of it to Melchiades, bishop of Rome, to whom Constantine added some colleagues from Italy, Gaul, and Spain. If it was under the ordinary jurisdiction of the Roman see to hear an appeal in a church case, why does Melchiades allow others to be associated with him by the emperor’s command rather than on his own authority? Indeed, why does he undertake judgment on the emperor’s command rather than as his own official duty? But let us hear what took place afterward. Caecilian wins there; Donatus of Casae Nigrae falls by his slanderous action; he appeals; Constantine commits the

judgment of the appeal to the bishop of Arles; he sits as judge to review as seems best to him, the Roman pontiff's decision. If the Roman see has the supreme power without appeal, why does Melchiades allow such a terrible indignity to be inflicted upon himself, that the bishop of Arles^{F217} be preferred to him? And what emperor does this? It is Constantine, who, they boast, devoted not only all his effort, but almost all the resources of his empire to enhancing the prestige of the Roman see. We therefore see how far the Roman pontiff then was from that supreme dominion which he declares to have been given him by Christ over all churches, and which he falsely asserts that he held in all ages by the consent of the whole world.^{F218}

*(Attitude of fifth- and sixth-century popes:
Rome vs. Constantinople, 11-16)*

11. FALSIFICATION AND USURPATION

I know how many letters there are, how many rescripts and decrees, on which the pontiffs allot everything to their see and confidently claim it. But all men even of small wit and learning know this: most of these documents are so insipid that at first taste it is easy to detect from what shop they came. For what sane and sober man can suppose that the famous interpretation which is referred to in Gratian under Anacletus' name belongs to Anacletus, that is, that *Cephas* is "head"? To defend their see, the Romanists today misuse against us many trifles of this sort which Gratian has patched together without discrimination; yet in today's bright light they still wish to peddle the same smoke with which in an age of darkness they formerly deluded the simple-minded.^{F219} But I do not wish to expend much labor in refuting these things, which in their utter absurdity openly refute themselves.

I admit that true epistles of the early popes are also extant in which they claim with grandiose titles the greatness of their see. Such are certain letters of Leo. For that man was as immoderately fond of glory and dominion as he was learned and eloquent. But the question is whether the churches then believed his testimony when he thus exalted himself. It seems, moreover, that many were offended by his ambition, and also resisted his greed for power. At one time he makes the bishop of

Thessalonica his vicegerent for Greece and other neighboring regions; at another, the bishop of Arles or someone else for Gaul. Thus he appoints Hormisdas, bishop of Seville, as his vicar in Spain: but everywhere he makes this exception, that he gives appointments of this sort on condition that the ancient privileges of the metropolitan remain whole and untouched. Yet Leo himself declares that one of those privileges is that if doubt arises over anything, the metropolitan is to be consulted in the first place.^{F220} Therefore, these vicariates were bestowed on the condition that no bishop be hindered in his ordinary jurisdiction, nor metropolitan in hearing appeals, nor provincial council in dealing with churches. What was this but to abstain from all jurisdiction, yet to interfere in order to settle disagreements only as far as law and the nature of the church fellowship allow?

12. PAPAL POWER AT THE TIME OF GREGORY I

By Gregory's time that ancient method was already much changed. For the Empire was shaken and torn apart, the provinces of Gaul and Spain were stricken with repeated calamities, Illyricum laid waste, Italy harried, Africa almost destroyed by continual disasters. In order that, amid such chaotic political conditions, the faith at least might remain whole, or surely might not utterly perish, all bishops on every side allied themselves more closely to the Roman pontiff. This resulted in the marked increase not only of the prestige of the see but also of its power. I do not, however, care so much about the reasons why it happened. It is at least evident that the power of the Roman see was greater than in previous ages. And yet it differed greatly from an unbridled domination in which one man could command others according to his pleasure. But the Roman see was held in such reverence that it could by its authority subdue and repress the wicked and obstinate who could not be kept within their duty by their own colleagues. Thus Gregory often earnestly attests that he no less faithfully preserves for others their rights, than requires his own of them. "Nor do I," he says, "deprive any man, when he is pricked by ambition, of what is his of right; but I desire to honor my brothers in all things." There is no statement in his writings that boasts more proudly of the greatness of his primacy than this: "I know of no bishop who would not be subject to the apostolic see, where he is found at fault." Yet he immediately adds,

“When there is no fault, all are equal according to the order of humility.” He takes upon himself the right to correct those who have sinned; if all do their duty, he makes himself equal to the rest. Moreover, he takes this upon himself as a right: those who wished assented to it; others who disliked it could protest against it with impunity, and it is well known that most of them did so. Besides, he speaks there of the Byzantine primate who, after being condemned by a provincial synod, repudiated the whole decision. His colleagues reported this stubbornness of his to the emperor. The emperor directed Gregory to act as judge.^{F221} We see, then, that Gregory is attempting nothing that violates ordinary jurisdiction, and what he does to help others he does only at the emperor’s command.

13. LIMITATIONS OF THE OFFICE UNDER GREGORY

This, then, was the entire power of the Roman bishop, to take a stand against obstinate and unrestrained prelates where there was need of some extraordinary remedy—and that to help, not hinder, the other bishops. He therefore assumes no more power over others than he elsewhere yields to all over himself, when he admits that he is ready to be corrected by all, to be amended by all. In another letter he actually bids the bishop of Aquileia come to Rome to plead his case in a doctrinal controversy that had arisen between himself and others; yet not on his own authority does the pontiff bid him come but because the emperor had ordered it. Nor does he declare that he will be the sole judge, but he promises to convene a synod in order to decide the whole matter. But moderation was still such that the power of the Roman see had its definite limits which it could not exceed, and the Roman bishop himself did not stand any more above than beneath the rest.

Nevertheless, such a state of affairs evidently displeased Gregory very much. For he repeatedly complains that under the guise of the bishop’s office he was drawn back into the world, and that he was more entangled in worldly cares than he had ever served as a layman; that in that high office he is pressed by the bustle of secular affairs. In another passage: “Such great administrative burdens,” he says, “weigh me down that my mind cannot at all rise to heavenly things. I am tossed by many waves of causes; and after that quiet leisure I am afflicted with the storms of a troubled life; so that I may rightly say, ‘I have come into the depths of the sea, and the storm has engulfed me.’”^{F222} From this you may infer what he

would have said if it had happened in these times! If he was not fulfilling the office of pastor, still he was filling it! He abstained from civil administration, and confessed himself subject to the emperor as others were. He did not interfere in the care of other churches unless compelled by need. Yet, because he cannot simply devote his whole self to the office of bishop, he seems to himself to be in a labyrinth.

14. ROME AND CONSTANTINOPLE IN CONFLICT OVER SUPREMACY

At that time, as has already been said,^{F223} the bishop of Constantinople was quarreling with the bishop of Rome over the primacy. For after the throne had been established at Constantinople, the majesty of empire seemed to demand that the church should also have a place of honor second to the church of Rome. Surely, to begin with, nothing did more to bestow the primacy upon Rome than the fact that the capital of the Empire was then there. There is in Gratian a rescript under the name of Pope Lucius in which he states that cities where metropolitans and primates ought to preside have been marked out according to the scheme of civil government that previously existed. There is also another similar rescript under the name of Pope Clement in which he states that the patriarchs were established in those cities which of old possessed chief flamens.^{F224} Though this is illusory, it was taken over from what was true. For it is evident that, in order to make the least possible change, provinces were organized in accordance with the condition of things which then existed, and primates and metropolitans were allocated to those cities which exceeded the rest in honors and power. Therefore, it was decreed in the Council of Turin that the cities which had been first in the civil government of each province were prime sees of bishops. But if precedence of civil rule happened to be transferred from one city to another, the right of metropolitan was to be transferred from the one to the other.^{F225} The Roman pontiff Innocent saw the ancient dignity of his city in decline after the seat of empire was transferred to Constantinople; fearing for his see, he promulgated a contrary law in which he states that it is unnecessary for ecclesiastical metropolitan sees to be changed whenever imperial metropolitan cities are changed. But the authority of a synod is rightly to be preferred to the opinion of one man. So, then, we ought to

mistrust Innocent himself in his own case.^{F226} However it may be, he shows by his own provision that the arrangement from the beginning was that the metropolitans should be disposed according to the temporal order of the Empire.

15. HOW LEO RESENTED THE RECOGNITION OF CONSTANTINOPLE

Following this ancient ordinance, it was decreed at the first Council of Constantinople that the bishop of that city should have privileges of honor after the Roman pontiff, since Constantinople was new Rome.^{F227} But long after, when a similar decree was passed at Chalcedon, Leo vehemently protested. Not only did he take upon himself to deem worthless what six hundred or more bishops had decreed but also bitterly reproached them with having deprived other sees of that honor which they had dared to confer upon the church of Constantinople. What but sheer ambition, I pray, could stir the man to trouble the world with such a trifle? He says that what the Council of Nicaea once promulgated ought to be inviolable. As though the Christian faith were imperiled if one church were preferred over another; or as though the patriarchates had there been marked out for any other purpose than church organization. But we know that church organization admits, nay requires, according to the varying condition of the times, various changes. Futile, therefore, is Leo's claim that the honor given the see of Alexandria by the authority of the Council of Nicaea ought not to be conferred upon the see of Constantinople.^{F228} For common sense dictates that this decree was such as could be abrogated according to the condition of the times. Why did none of the Eastern bishops oppose it, though they were the ones chiefly concerned? Proterius was surely present, whom they had set over Alexandria in place of Dioscorus; other patriarchs were present, whose dignity was lessened.

It was for them to protest, not Leo, who remained untouched in his place. But when all of them remain silent, indeed when all agree, the Roman is the only one to object. It is easy to judge what moves him: obviously, he foresaw what happened not much later—with the eclipse of the glory of old Rome, it would come to pass that Constantinople, not content with second place, would contend with Rome over the primacy. By his outcry Leo did not prevail, so as to prevent confirmation of the council's decree.

His successors, therefore, seeing themselves beaten, quietly desisted from that stubbornness; for they granted that he should be considered second patriarch.

16. PRIDE OF JOHN THE FASTER, AND MODESTY OF GREGORY

But a little later, John, who ruled the church of Constantinople in Gregory's day, burst forth with the claim that he was "the universal patriarch." Here Gregory, not to fail in defending the just cause of his see, steadfastly opposed him. The pride as well as the madness of John was truly intolerable: he wanted the boundaries of his bishopric to be the same as the boundaries of the Empire. Yet Gregory does not claim for himself what he denies to another: rather, he abominates as wicked, impious, and execrable that title, by whomever it is assumed. He is even in another place angry with Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria, who had honored him with a similar title. "See here," he says, "by calling me 'universal pope' in the preface to the letter you have sent me, you have taken care to inscribe a word of proud address that I have forbidden. I beg your holiness not to do this henceforth, because when more is given to another than reason requires, it is withdrawn from you. I consider it no honor to see the honor of my brethren diminished. For my honor is the honor of the church universal, and the life and vigor of my brethren. But if your holiness calls me 'universal pope,' that is to deny to yourself what you attribute wholly to me."^{F229} Gregory's case was indeed just and honorable; but John, aided by the favor of the Emperor Maurice, could never be turned aside from his purpose. Also, Cyriacus, his successor, never allowed himself to be prevailed upon in this matter.

*(Rome's jurisdiction enhanced through relations with the usurpers
Phocas and Pepin, and thereafter established to the injury
of the church, 17-18)*

17. THE EVENTUAL ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PAPAL SUPREMACY

Finally, Phocas, who after the murder of Maurice succeeded him (I know not why he was friendlier to the Romans—probably because he had been

crowned there without strife)—granted to Boniface III what Gregory had never sought, that Rome should be head of all the churches. In this way the controversy was terminated.

Yet this benefit of the emperor would have done the Roman see no good, except for what happened thereafter. For Greece and all Asia were a little later cut off from communion with Rome. Gaul revered the bishop of Rome to the point of obeying him only in so far as it pleased. But after Pepin occupied the kingdom it was first reduced to subjection. For when Zacharias, Roman pontiff, had assisted him in his perfidy and robbery in order that, having expelled the lawful king, he might seize the kingdom as plunder, the pope received as his reward the Roman see's jurisdiction over the churches of Gaul. As robbers are accustomed to divide up the common spoil, so these good gentlemen arranged between themselves that Pepin should be allowed the earthly and civil lordship after the true king had been deprived, while Zacharias should become the head of all the bishops and hold the spiritual power.

Although this power was at first weak (as commonly happens with innovations), it was subsequently strengthened by the authority of Charlemagne for almost the same reason: he also was beholden to the Roman pontiff because he came to the imperial rank by the pope's efforts.

Now, although it is likely that churches had already everywhere deteriorated, it is clear that in Gaul and Germany the old form of the church was at that time utterly wiped out. In the archives of the Court of Paris there are still extant brief notes of those times which, when they deal with church matters, make mention of arrangements both of Pepin and of Charlemagne with the Roman pontiff.^{F230} From this, one may infer that at that time a change was made in the previous arrangement.

18. THE DECAY OF THE CHURCH UNTIL THE TIME OF BERNARD OF CLAIRVAUX

Since that time, as things daily worsened, the tyranny of the Roman see was continually strengthened and increased. This was partly due to the bishops' ignorance, partly to their sloth. For when one bishop was taking all things unto himself and more and more hastening to advance himself against law and right, the others did not strive to restrain his ambition as

zealously as they should have. And, though they did not lack courage, they were destitute of true learning and knowledge, so that they were quite unfit to attempt so great a task. We accordingly see the character and prodigious extent of Rome's profanation of all things sacred, and the dissolution of the whole church order in Bernard's day. He complains that there converge upon Rome from the whole earth the ambitious, the greedy, the simoniacs, the sacrilegious, the keepers of concubines, the incestuous, and all such monsters, to obtain or retain churchly honors by apostolic authority; and that fraud, deception, and violence have prevailed. He declares the method of judgment then in use abominable and unseemly for church and law court alike. He cries out that the church is full of ambitious men, and that there is no one who shudders more at committing crimes than do thieves in a cave when they divide among themselves the loot taken from travelers. "Few," he says, "pay attention to the mouth of the lawgiver; all, to his hands. And not without reason! For those hands do all the pope's business. What thing is this, that those who say to you, 'Well done, well done,' are bought from the spoils of the churches? The life of the poor is sown in the streets of the rich; silver glitters in the mud; men rush to it from all sides; not the poorer man but the stronger carries it off, or perhaps he who runs more swiftly. Yet this morality—or rather, this mortality—comes not from you. Would that it might end in you! Amid these things you perform your pastoral duties, surrounded by much and costly array. If I dare say it, these are pastures of devils rather than of sheep. Of course, Peter made a practice of this; Paul played at this! Your court is accustomed to receive goods rather than make men good. For evil men do not profit there; but good men fail there." Now no godly person can read without great horror the abuses of appeals to which he refers. Lastly, on the unbridled covetousness of the Roman see in usurping jurisdiction, he concludes as follows: "I voice the murmur and common complaint of the churches. They cry out that they are mangled and dismembered. There are either none or few churches that do not lament or fear these cruel blows. You ask what blows? Abbots are pulled away from their bishops; bishops from their archbishops, etc. Strange, indeed, if this can be excused! By behaving in this way you prove that you have fullness of power, but not of righteousness. This you do because you can, but the question is whether you also ought. You have been appointed to preserve for each his honor and rank, not to covet them."^{F231}

I have chosen to mention these few instances from many, partly that my readers may see how gravely the church had wasted away, partly that they may also recognize into what great sorrow and anguish all the godly were cast by this calamity.

*(Later papal claims contrary to the principles of
Gregory I and Bernard, 19-22)*

19. THE PRESENT-DAY PAPACY IN ITS CLAIMS TO POWER

But now, though we today grant the Roman pontiff that eminence and wideness of jurisdiction, which in the middle period (the time of Leo and Gregory) this see had, what is this to the papacy today? I am not yet speaking of earthly dominion, nor of civil power, which we shall look at afterward in their place;^{F232} but what similarity does that spiritual government of which they boast have to the condition of these times? For they define the pope simply as the supreme head of the church on earth, and the universal bishop of the whole world.^{F233} But the pontiffs themselves, when they speak of their authority, with great arrogance declare that the power to command is in their hands while with others rests the necessity to obey; that all their pronouncements are to be so received as if confirmed by Peter's divine voice; that provincial synods, because they do not have the pope present, have no force; that they themselves have power to ordain clergy for any church whatsoever; and to summon to their see those ordained elsewhere. There are innumerable things of this sort in Gratian's farrago which I do not recount, lest I bore my readers unduly. But they amount to this: the supreme jurisdiction of all cases is in the possession of the Roman pontiff alone, whether in adjudicating and defining doctrines, or in laying down laws, or in establishing discipline, or in rendering judgments.

It would also be long and superfluous to recount the privileges which they take upon themselves in what they call "reservations." But what is most unbearable of all, they leave no jurisdiction on earth to control or restrain their lust if they abuse such boundless power. Because of the primacy of the Roman Church, they say, no one has the right to review the judgments of this see. Likewise: as judge it will be judged neither by emperor, nor by kings, nor by all the clergy, nor by the people. This is the very height of

imperiousness for one man to set himself up as judge of all, and suffer himself to obey the judgment of none. But what if he exercise tyranny over God's people? If he scatter and lay waste Christ's Kingdom? If he throw the whole church into confusion? If he turn the pastoral office into robbery? Nay, though he be utterly wicked, he denies he is bound to give an accounting. For these are the popes' words: "God willed that other men's cases be settled by men, but he has without question reserved the bishop of this see to his own judgment." Likewise: "The subjects' deeds are judged by us but ours by God alone."^{F234} 20. *New forgeries support extravagant claims*

That edicts of this sort might have more weight, they have falsely substituted the names of ancient pontiffs, as if things had been so established from the very beginning; while it is perfectly certain that whatever more is attributed to the Roman pontiff than we have reported to have been granted to him by ancient councils, is new and recently invented. Nay more, their impudence has reached the point that they have put forth a rescript under the name of Anastasius, patriarch of Constantinople, in which he attests as a thing sanctioned by ancient rules, that nothing should be done even in the most distant provinces which had not previously been referred to the Roman see.^{F235} Apart from the plain fact that this is wholly groundless, what man will believe that an adversary and rival in honor and dignity uttered such a commendation of the Roman see? But it was fitting that these Antichrists be carried to the point of madness and blindness, so that to all persons of sound mind who will only open their eyes the wickedness of these men should be obvious. But the decretal epistles gathered by Gregory IX, as also the Clementines, and the Extravagantes of Martin, still more openly and boisterously breathe out everywhere an unrestrained fury and tyranny like that of barbarian kings. Yet these are the oracles by which the Romanists wish their papacy esteemed! Hence arose those famous sayings, which today carry the force of oracles everywhere in the papacy: that the pope cannot err, that the pope is above councils, that the pope is the universal bishop of all churches and the supreme head of the church on earth.^{F236} I forebear to mention their much more absurd follies, which the stupid canonists babble in their schools, and which the Romanist theologians, to flatter their idol, not only assent to, but even applaud.

21. GREGORY CONDEMNED WHAT POPES NOW ALARM

I shall not deal with them with utmost rigor, as I might. Against this great insolence someone else would quote the statement employed by Cyprian before the bishops over whose council he presided: “None of us says he is the bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror compels his colleagues to obey him.” He would raise as an objection what was decreed a little later at Carthage: “Let none be called prince of priests or first bishop.”^{F237} He would gather from these historical incidents many testimonies, from synods many canons, from the books of the ancients many opinions, which would put the Roman pontiffs in their place!

But I pass over these, that I may not seem to press them too closely. Still, let these excellent patrons of the Roman see answer me with what shamelessness they dare defend the title “universal bishop,” which, as they see, was often anathematized by Gregory. If Gregory’s testimony ought to prevail, by making their pontiff universal they declare him to be Antichrist.

Also, no more was the name “head” in use. For Gregory elsewhere says this: “Peter was the chief member in the body; John, Andrew, and James were heads of particular groups of people. Yet all members of the church are under one Head. Indeed, the saints before the law, the saints under the law, the saints in grace, all perfecting the body of the Lord, have been constituted as its members. And no one ever wished himself to be called ‘universal.’”

The fact that the pontiff claims for himself the power to command is little consonant with what Gregory elsewhere says. For when Eulogius, bishop of Alexandria, had said that he was “commanded by him,” Gregory replied in this way: “Remove, I beg of you, this word ‘command’ from my hearing; for I know who I am and who you are: in degree you are my brothers; in moral character, my fathers. Therefore, I have not commanded but have taken care to indicate what things seemed useful.”^{F238}

In thus extending his jurisdiction without limit, the bishop of Rome does a grave and frightful injury not only to the other bishops but also to the several churches. For in this way he mangles and slashes them so that he may build up his see from the ruins of theirs.

He exempts himself from all judgments and wishes to rule in such a tyrannical fashion that he regards his own whim as law—such conduct is surely so unbecoming and so foreign to the ecclesiastical order that it can in no way be borne. For it is utterly abhorrent not only to a sense of piety but also of humanity.

22. THE CORRUPTION OF THE PRESENT-DAY PAPACY

But that I may not be compelled to pursue and examine individual points, I again appeal to those who today wish to be thought the best and most faithful patrons of the Roman see, whether they are not ashamed to defend the present state of the papacy. For it clearly is a hundred times more corrupt than it was in the times of Gregory and Bernard, though even then it greatly displeased those holy men. Gregory repeatedly complains that he is excessively distracted by alien occupations; that under the guise of the bishop's office he is drawn back into the world; that there he is enslaved to greater earthly cares than he ever remembered serving as a layman; that he is pressed by the bustle of secular affairs, so that his mind cannot at all rise to heavenly things; that he is tossed by many waves of causes and afflicted by the storms of a troubled life, so that he may rightly say, "I have come into the depths of the sea."^{F239} It is true that amid those secular occupations he could still teach the people through sermons, privately admonish and correct those who needed it, govern the church, give counsel to his colleagues, and exhort them to their duty. Beyond all this, there remained some time for writing; and yet he laments his calamity, that he is drowned in the very depths of the sea. If the administration of that time was a "sea," what is to be said of the present papacy? What likeness do they have between them? Here there is no preaching, no care for discipline, no zeal toward the churches, no spiritual activity—in short, nothing but the world. Yet this labyrinth^{F240} is praised as if nothing better ordered and disposed could be found.

What complaints does Bernard pour out, what groanings does he utter, when he gazes upon the vices of his age?^{F241} What if he could look upon this iron—and, if such can be, worse than iron—age of ours? What depravity is this, not only stubbornly to look upon as sacred and divine what all the saints have unanimously disapproved, but also to misuse their testimony to defend the papacy, which clearly was utterly unknown to

them? However, I admit that in Bernard's time the corruption of all things was so great that it was not much different from our own. But those who seek any pretext from that middle period (of Leo and Gregory and the like) lack all shame. For they are doing just as anyone who, to establish the monarchy of the Caesars, would praise the ancient condition of the Roman republic; that is, they would borrow the praises of freedom to adorn their tyranny.^{F242}

(Arraignment of the later papacy, 23-30)

23. DOES THERE EXIST IN ROME ANY CHURCH OR BISHOPRIC AT ALL?

Finally, even though all these things were conceded, a brand-new conflict with them arises when we say that there is no church at Rome in which benefits of this sort can reside; when we deny that any bishop exists there to sustain these privileges of rank. Suppose all these things were true (which we have already convinced them are false): that by Christ's word Peter was appointed head of the whole church; that he deposited in the Roman see the honor conferred upon him; that it was sanctioned by the authority of the ancient church and confirmed by long use; that the supreme power was always given to the Roman pontiff unanimously by all men; that he was the judge of all cases and of all men; and that he was subject to no man's judgment. Let them have even more if they will. I reply with but one word: none of these things has any value unless there be a church and bishop at Rome. This they must concede to me: what is not a church cannot be the mother of churches; he who is not a bishop cannot be the prince of bishops. Do they, then, wish to have the apostolic see at Rome? Let them show me a true and lawful apostolate. Do they wish to have the supreme pontiff? Let them show me a bishop. What then? Where will they show us any semblance of the church? They call it one indeed and have it repeatedly on their lips. Surely a church is recognized by its own clear marks; and "bishopric" is the name of an office. Here I am not speaking of the people but of government itself, which ought perpetually to shine in the church. Where in their church is there a ministry such as Christ's institution requires? Let us remember what has already been said of the presbyters' and bishop's office.^{F243} If we test the office of cardinals by that rule, we shall admit that they are

nothing less than they are presbyters. I should like to know what one episcopal quality the pontiff himself has. The first task of the bishop's office is to teach the people from God's Word. The second and next is to administer the sacraments. The third is to admonish and exhort, also to correct those who sin and to keep the people under holy discipline. What of these offices does he perform? Indeed, what does he even pretend to do? Let them say, therefore, in what way they would have him regarded a bishop, who does not even in pretense touch any part of this office with his little finger.

24. THE APOSTASY

It is not with a bishop as it is with a king. For a king, even though he does not fulfill his kingly responsibility, nonetheless retains the honor and title. But in judging a bishop we take into account Christ's command, which ought always to be in force in the church. Let the Romanists then untie this knot for me. I deny that their pontiff is the chief of the bishops, since he is no bishop. They must prove this last point false if they would triumph in the first. What about the fact that he has no characteristic of a bishop, but rather all things contrary to one? But here, O God, at what point shall I begin? With his doctrine or his morals? What shall I say or what shall I leave unsaid? Where shall I end? This I say: since the world today is flooded with so many perverse and impious doctrines, full of so many kinds of superstitions, blinded by so many errors, drowned in such great idolatry—there is none of these evils anywhere that does not flow

from the Roman see, or at least draw strength there. There is no other reason why the pontiffs rage with such madness against the reviving doctrine of the gospel, and stretch every nerve to suppress it; why they incite all kings and princes to persecute it—except that they see that their whole kingdom will fall and crumble as soon as Christ's gospel gains sway. Leo was cruel; Clement was bloodstained; Paul is truculent.^{F244} But these men are driven to contend against truth not so much by nature as because this was the only way to look after their power. Therefore, since they cannot be safe until they have put Christ to flight, they strive in this cause just as if they were fighting for altar, hearth, and their very lives. What then? Where we see nothing but horrid apostasy there will be no apostolic see, will there? He will be no vicar of Christ, who, by

persecuting the gospel with furious efforts, openly professes himself to be Antichrist, will he? He will be no successor of Peter, who strives with fire and sword to demolish all that Peter built up, will he? He will be no head of the church, who, by cutting off and dismembering the church from Christ its own true Head, tears and mangles it in itself, will he? Of old, Rome was indeed the mother of all churches; but after it began to become the see of Antichrist, it ceased to be what it once was.

25. THE KINGDOM OF ANTICHRIST

To some we seem slanderers and railers when we call the Roman pontiff “Antichrist.”^{F245} But those who think so do not realize they are accusing Paul of intemperate language, after whom we speak, indeed, so speak from his very lips. And lest anyone object that we wickedly twist Paul’s words (which apply to another) against the Roman pontiff, I shall briefly show that these cannot be understood otherwise than of the papacy. Paul writes that Antichrist will sit in God’s temple [^{<530204>} 2 Thessalonians 2:4]. In another place, also, the Spirit, describing his image in the person of Antiochus, shows that this kingdom will consist in boasting and blaspheming of God [^{<270725>} Daniel 7:25; ^{<660310>} Revelation 3:10; 13:5]. Hence, we infer that this is a tyranny more over souls than over bodies, which is raised up against the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Secondly, that this tyranny is such as does not wipe out either the name of Christ or of the church but rather misuses a semblance of Christ and lurks under the name of the church as under a mask. All the heresies and sects which have been from the beginning belong to the kingdom of Antichrist. Nevertheless, when Paul foretells a falling away that is to come [^{<530203>} 2 Thessalonians 2:3] by this description, he means that that seat of abomination will be raised up when a universal apostasy seizes the church, even though many scattered members of the church persevere in the true unity of faith. But Paul adds that in his time Antichrist began to undertake his work in the mystery of iniquity [^{<530207>} 2 Thessalonians 2:7], which he was afterward to complete openly; by this we understand that this calamity was to be neither caused by one man, nor finished in one man. Now, he designates Antichrist by this mark, that he will deprive God of his honor in order to take it upon himself [2 Thessalonians 2:4]. We ought consequently to follow this as the chief indication in searching out Antichrist, especially

when such pride leads even to the public scattering of the church. Since, therefore, it is clear that the Roman pontiff has shamelessly transferred to himself what belonged to God alone and especially to Christ, we should have no doubt that he is the leader and standard-bearer of that impious and hateful kingdom.

26. THE PAPACY FAR REMOVED FROM A TRUE CHURCH ORDER

Now let those Romanists go and set up antiquity against us. As if in so great an overturning of everything, the honor of the see could stand where there is no see! Eusebius tells that God, to carry out his vengeance, transferred the church that was at Jerusalem to Pella.^{F246} What we hear happened once could happen more often. Therefore, so to bind the honor of primacy to a place, that he who is Christ's most hateful enemy, the supreme foe of the gospel, the greatest waster and scatterer of the church, the cruelest slaughterer and butcher of all the saints, should be considered nonetheless Christ's vicar, Peter's successor, the first bishop of the church, merely because he occupies the see which was once the first see of all—this, indeed, is utterly ridiculous and stupid. I leave unsaid how much difference there is between the pope's chancery and a right ordering of the church. Yet this one thing can very well take away all doubt over this question. For no one of sound mind confines the office of bishop within lead and seals—much less within that headquarters^{F247} of all frauds and deceits—in which matters the spiritual government of the pope is reckoned! Someone, therefore, has aptly stated that the Roman Church of which men boast was long ago turned into a court, the only thing which is now seen at Rome. Here I am not blaming the vices of men, but I am showing that the papacy itself is directly contrary to church order.

27. THE WICKED BEHAVIOR AND THE HERETICAL TEACHINGS OF THE POPES STAND IN STARK CONTRAST TO THEIR CLAIMS

Now, if we come to actual men, it is well known what kinds of vicars of Christ we shall find: Julius, Leo, Clement, and Paul will, to be sure, be pillars of the faith, foremost interpreters of religion, who never grasped anything of Christ except what they had learned in Lucian's school.^{F248}

But why do I list three or four pontiffs? As if there were doubt what kind of religion the pontiffs, with the whole college of cardinals, long ago professed, and profess today! This is the first article of that secret theology which reigns among them: there is no God. The second: everything written and taught about Christ is falsehood and deceit.^{F249} The third: the doctrines of a life to come and of a final resurrection are mere fables. Not all think so, and few speak thus, I admit. But this long ago began to be the customary religion of the pontiffs. Although this is very familiar to all who know Rome, the Romanist theologians do not cease to boast that by Christ's privilege it has been provided that the pope cannot err because it was said to Peter, "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail" [^{<422232>}Luke 22:32]. What benefit, I beg of you, do they get by a mockery so shameless, except to let the whole world understand they have come to the utmost limit of wickedness, so that they neither fear God nor reverence men?

28. APOSTASY OF JOHN XXII

But let us imagine that the impiety of the pontiffs whom I mentioned is hidden, because they have neither published it by preaching nor by writings, but have betrayed it only in table, in bedchamber, or at least within walls. However, if they wish this privilege (which they allege) to hold good, let them expunge from the list of the popes John XXII, who openly asserted that souls are mortal and die along with bodies until the day of resurrection. And that you may mark that the whole see with its chief props was then utterly fallen, none of the cardinals opposed this great madness, but the School of Paris impelled the king of France to force him to recant. The king forbade his subjects to communicate with John unless he should promptly repent, and published this by herald in the usual way. Compelled by this necessity, the pope abjured his error, as Jean Gerson, who was then living, testifies.^{F250} This example relieves me from having to dispute with my opponents any longer over their statement that the Roman see and its pontiffs cannot err in faith, because it was said to Peter: "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail" [^{<422232>}Luke 22:32]. Surely with such a foul kind of fall did John XXII fall from the true faith that here is a notable proof to posterity that not all are Peters who succeed Peter in the bishop's office. Yet of itself this claim is

also so childish it needs no answer. For if they wish to apply to Peter's successors everything that was said to Peter, it will follow that they are all Satans, since the Lord also said this to Peter: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me" [^{<401623>}Matthew 16:23]. Indeed, it will be as easy for us to turn back this latter saying upon them as for them to cast the other against us.

29. MORAL ABANDONMENT OF THE POPES

But I have no inclination to vie with them at playing the fool. Therefore, I return whence I had digressed. To bind Christ, the Spirit, and the church to a place, so that whoever may rule there, even if he be a devil, is still considered the vicar of Christ and head of the church because it was once Peter's see—this, I say, is not only impious and insulting to Christ, but extremely absurd and alien to common sense! The Roman pontiffs either have for a long time been quite devoid of religion or have been its greatest enemies. Therefore, they no more become vicars of Christ because of the see which they occupy than an idol, when it is set in God's temple, is to be taken for God [^{<530204>}2 Thessalonians 2:4]. Now, if their morals be brought under judgment, let the pontiffs answer for themselves what one recognizable characteristic of a bishop they possess. First, that men live at Rome in such fashion while the pontiffs not only wink at it and say nothing but also approve it, as it were, with a silent nod—is utterly unworthy of bishops. For their office is to curb the people's license with severe discipline.

But I shall not be so hard upon them as to charge them with other men's transgressions. Yet because they themselves, together with their household, with almost the whole college of cardinals, and with the whole flock of their clergy, have been prostituted to all wickedness, filthiness, and uncleanness, and to all kinds of crimes and misdeeds, so that they resemble monsters rather than men—in this they, of course, reveal themselves to be anything but bishops! Yet they ought not to fear lest I further uncover their wickedness.^{F251} For it is disagreeable to traverse such a filthy mire, and one must spare chaste ears. And it seems to me I have quite sufficiently proved what I intended: even if Rome had once been the head of churches, today it is not worthy of being regarded among the smallest toes of the church's feet.

30. THE CARDINALS

As for the cardinals (as they call them), I do not know how it has come about that they have suddenly loomed so huge. In Gregory's time this title belonged to bishops alone. For whenever Gregory mentions cardinals, he assigns them not exclusively to the Roman Church but to all others as well. Consequently, in brief, a cardinal priest is nothing but a bishop.^{F252} I do not find this title among writers of the earlier period. Still, I see that they were then less than bishops, while they now far exceed them. Augustine's statement is well known: although, according to the names of offices already in use in the church, the office of bishop is greater than that of presbyter, yet in many things Augustine is less than Jerome.^{F253} This, surely, by no means distinguishes a presbyter of the Roman Church from others, but all equally come under bishops. And this was observed to the extent that in the Council of Carthage, while two representatives of the Roman see were present, one a bishop, the other a presbyter—the latter was relegated to the last place.^{F254} But, not to pursue old things too far, a council is held in Rome under Gregory, in which the presbyters sit in the last place and sign by themselves; the deacons have no place to sign. In fact, they then had no function except to be present and be under the bishop in the ministering of doctrine and sacraments. Now their lot is so changed that they have become the cousins of kings and emperors. And there is no doubt that they grew up gradually along with their head until they were carried to this pinnacle of dignity.

Well, I have decided to touch this also briefly in passing, so my readers may better understand that the Roman see as it exists today is very different from that ancient see, with whose privilege it protects and defends itself. But whatever they once were, inasmuch as they now have no true and lawful office in the church, they retain only the color and empty shell; indeed, inasmuch as they have everything clean contrary to the church, what Gregory so often writes about had to happen to them. "Weeping, I speak," he says; "groaning, I declare: since the priestly order has fallen within, it cannot long stand without."^{F255} Rather, there must be fulfilled what Malachi says of such priests: "You have turned aside from the way, you have caused many to stumble in the law. You have therefore voided the covenant of Levi, says the Lord.... So I have rendered you despised and abased to all the people" [^{<390208>}Malachi 2:8-9]. I now leave

to all the godly to ponder how lofty is the pinnacle of the Roman hierarchy to which the papists hesitate not, in their wicked shamelessness, to subject even the Word of God, which ought to have been venerable and holy in heaven and on earth, to men and to angels.

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

(Ecclesiastical power limited by the Word of God, 1-9)

1. TASK AND LIMITS OF THE CHURCH'S DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY

There now follows the third section, on the power of the church, which resides partly in individual bishops, and partly in councils, either provincial or general. I speak only of the spiritual power, which is proper to the church. This, moreover, consists either in doctrine or in jurisdiction^{F256} or in making laws.^{F257} The doctrinal side has two parts: authority to lay down articles of faith, and authority to explain them.

Before we begin to discuss each of these in particular, I should like to warn pious readers that they should remember to refer whatever is taught about the power of the church to the purpose for which, according to Paul, it is given, that is, for up-building and not for destruction [^{<471008>} 2 Corinthians 10:8; 13:10]. Those who use it lawfully deem themselves no more than servants of Christ, and at the same time servants of the people in Christ [^{<460401>} 1 Corinthians 4:1]. Now the only way to build up the church is for the ministers themselves to endeavor to preserve Christ's authority for himself; this can only be secured if what he has received from his Father be left to him, namely, that he alone is the schoolmaster of the church. For it is written not of any other but of him alone, "Hear him" [^{<401705>} Matthew 17:5].

The power of the church is therefore to be not grudgingly manifested but yet to be kept within definite limits, that it may not be drawn hither and

thither according to men's whim. For this reason it will be of especial benefit to observe how it is described by the prophets and apostles. For if we simply grant to men such power as they are disposed to take, it is plain to all how abrupt is the fall into tyranny, which ought to be far from Christ's church.

2. THE DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY OF MOSES AND THE PRIESTS

Accordingly, we must here remember that whatever authority and dignity the Spirit in Scripture accords to either priests or prophets, or apostles, or successors of apostles, it is wholly given not to the men personally, but to the ministry to which they have been appointed; or (to speak more briefly) to the Word, whose ministry is entrusted to them. For if we examine them all in order, we shall not find that they have been endowed with any authority to teach or to answer, except in the name and Word of the Lord. For, where they are called to office, it is at the same time enjoined upon them not to bring anything of themselves, but to speak from the Lord's mouth. And he himself does not bring them forth to be heard by the people before teaching them what to speak: they are to speak nothing but his Word.

Moses himself, the prince of all the prophets, was to be heard above the rest; but he was previously instructed on his orders and could proclaim nothing at all except from the Lord [^{<020304>}Exodus 3:4 ff.]. The people, therefore, embracing his teaching, "believed," it is said, "in God and in his servant Moses" [^{<021431>}Exodus 14:31].

That the authority of the priests also might not be held in contempt, it was sanctioned with the heaviest penalties [^{<051709>}Deuteronomy 17:9-13]. But the Lord at the same time shows under what condition they were to be heard when he says that he has made his covenant with Levi, that the law of truth might be on his lips [^{<390204>}Malachi 2:4,6]. And a little later he adds: "The lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek the law from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts" [^{<390207>}Malachi 2:7]. Therefore, if the priest wishes to be heard, let him show himself to be God's messenger; that is, let him faithfully communicate the commands which he has received from his Author. And

as far as the hearing of them is concerned, it is expressly laid down that they are to answer according to God's law. [^{<051710>}Deuteronomy 17:10-11.]

3. THE DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY OF THE PROPHETS

Ezekiel felicitously describes the general character of the prophets' power: "'O Son of man,' says the Lord, 'I have appointed you as a watchman for the house of Israel; you will therefore hear a word of my mouth and will declare it to them from me'" [^{<260317>}Ezekiel 3:17 p.]. Is not he who is bidden to hear a word from the Lord's mouth forbidden to invent anything of his own? What is it to bring tidings from the Lord? So to speak that one dare confidently boast that the word he brings is not his own, but the Lord's. Jeremiah expresses the same thought in other words: "Let the prophet who has a dream tell the dream, and let him who has my word speak my true word" [^{<242328>}Jeremiah 23:28 p.]. Surely, he is stating a law for them all. Moreover, it is such that God does not allow anyone to teach more than he has commanded. And he afterward calls whatever has not come forth from himself alone, "chaff" [^{<242328>}Jeremiah 23:28]. Therefore, none of the prophets opened his mouth unless the Lord had anticipated his words. Hence, it comes that these expressions are so often found among them: "the Word of the Lord," "the burden of the Lord," "Thus saith the Lord," "The mouth of the Lord has spoken." And rightly! For Isaiah exclaimed that his lips were unclean [^{<230605>}Isaiah 6:5]; Jeremiah admitted that he knew not how to speak, for he was a child [^{<240106>}Jeremiah 1:6]. What could come forth from the defiled mouth of Isaiah and the foolish mouth of Jeremiah but filth and folly, if they spoke their own word? But they had holy and pure lips when they began to be instruments of the Holy Spirit. When the prophets are bound by this reverence not to deliver anything but what they have received, then they are adorned with extraordinary power and excellent titles. For when the Lord testifies that he has "set them over nations and kingdoms, to pluck up and to root out, to destroy and to overthrow, to build and to plant" [^{<240110>}Jeremiah 1:10], he immediately adds the reason: because he has put his words in their mouth [^{<240109>}Jeremiah 1:9].

4. THE DOCTRINAL AUTHORITY OF THE APOSTLES

Now if you look upon the apostles, they are indeed commended with many notable titles. They are “the light of the world” and “the salt of the earth” [^{<400513>} Matthew 5:13-14]; they are to be heard for Christ’s sake [^{<421016>} Luke 10:16]; whatever they “bind or loose on earth shall be bound or loosed in heaven” [^{<401619>} Matthew 16:19; 18:18; cf. ^{<432023>} John 20:23]. But they show by their name how much is permitted to them in their office. That is, if they are “apostles,” they are not to prate whatever they please, but are faithfully to report the commands of Him by whom they have been sent. And Christ’s words, with which he has defined their mission, are plain enough: he commanded them to go and teach all nations everything he had enjoined [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19-20]. But he also received this law in himself and applied it to himself so that it would be unlawful for anyone to reject it. “My teaching is not mine but his who sent me,” the Father’s [^{<430716>} John 7:16]. He was the sole and eternal counselor of the Father, and was appointed Lord and Master of all by the Father. Yet, because he performs the ministry of teaching, by his own example he prescribes for all his ministers what rule they ought to follow in teaching. The power of the church, therefore, is not infinite but subject to the Lord’s Word and, as it were, enclosed within it.

5. UNITY AND MULTIPLICITY OF REVELATION

But although this principle has prevailed in the church from the beginning and ought to prevail today, that the servants of God should teach nothing which they have not learned from him, still, according to the diversity of the times, they have had divers ways of learning. But the present order differs very much from what existed in former times.

First, if what Christ says is true—“No one sees the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him” [^{<401127>} Matthew 11:27]—surely they who would attain the knowledge of God should always be directed by that eternal Wisdom. For how could they either have comprehended God’s mysteries with the mind, or have uttered them, except by the teaching of him to whom alone the secrets of the Father are revealed? Therefore, holy men of old knew God only by beholding him in his Son as in a mirror (cf. ^{<470318>} 2 Corinthians 3:18). When I say this, I

mean that God has never manifested himself to men in any other way than through the Son, that is, his sole wisdom, light, and truth. From this fountain Adam, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and others drank all that they had of heavenly teaching. From the same fountain, all the prophets have also drawn every heavenly oracle that they have given forth.

For this Wisdom has not always manifested itself in one way. Among the patriarchs God^{F258} used secret revelations, but at the same time to confirm these he added such signs that they could have no doubt that it was God who was speaking to them. What the patriarchs had received they handed on to their descendants. For the Lord had left it with them on this condition, that they should so propagate it. The children and children's children knew when God dictates within that what they heard was from heaven, not from earth.

6. SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION OF THE WORD OF GOD IN THE OLD COVENANT

But where it pleased God to raise up a more visible form of the church, he willed to have his Word set down and sealed in writing,^{F259} that his priests might seek from it what to teach the people, and that every doctrine to be taught should conform to that rule. Therefore, after the law has been published, the priests are bidden to teach “from the mouth of the Lord” [^{<390207>}Malachi 2:7, cf. Vg. and Comm.]. This means that they should teach nothing strange or foreign to that doctrine which God included in the law; indeed, it was unlawful for them to add to it or take away from it [^{<050402>}Deuteronomy 4:2; 13:1].

There then followed the prophets, through whom God published new oracles which were added to the law—but not so new that they did not flow from the law and hark back to it. As for doctrine, they were only interpreters of the law and added nothing to it except predictions of things to come. Apart from these, they brought nothing forth but a pure exposition of the law. But because the Lord was pleased to reveal a clearer and fuller doctrine in order better to satisfy weak consciences, he commanded that the prophecies also be committed to writing and be accounted part of his Word. At the same time, histories were added to these, also the labor of the prophets, but composed under the Holy

Spirit's dictation. I include the psalms with the prophecies, since what we attribute to the prophecies is common to them.^{F260}

Therefore, that whole body, put together out of law, prophecies, psalms, and histories, was the Lord's Word for the ancient people; and to this standard, priests and teachers, even to the coming of Christ, had to conform their teaching. And it was not lawful for them to turn aside either to the right or to the left [^{<050532>}Deuteronomy 5:32], for their whole office was limited to answering the people from the mouth of God. This is inferred from a well-known passage of Malachi, where the Lord bids them remember the law and give heed to it, even until the preaching of the gospel [^{<390404>}Malachi 4:4]. For thus he shields them from all novel doctrines, and does not allow them to turn aside even a hairsbreadth from the way which Moses had faithfully shown them. And here is the reason why David so eloquently proclaims the excellence of the law, and recounts so many praises of it [^{<191907>}Psalm 19:7 ff.]; that the Jews should yearn for no foreign thing, since all perfection was contained in it.

7. "THE WORD BECAME FLESH"

But when the Wisdom of God was at length revealed in the flesh, that Wisdom heartily declared to us all that can be comprehended and ought to be pondered concerning the Heavenly Father by the human mind. Now therefore, since Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, has shone,^{F261} while before there was only dim light, we have the perfect radiance of divine truth, like the wonted brilliance of midday. For truly the apostle meant to proclaim no common thing when he wrote, "In many and various ways God spoke of old to the fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has begun to speak to us through his beloved Son" [^{<580101>}Hebrews 1:1-2 p., Cf. Comm.]. For Paul means, in fact, openly declares, that God will not speak hereafter as he did before, intermittently through some and through others; nor will he add prophecies to prophecies, or revelations to revelations. Rather, he has so fulfilled all functions of teaching in his Son that we must regard this as the final and eternal testimony from him. In this way this whole New Testament time, from the point that Christ appeared to us with the preaching of his gospel even to the Day of Judgment, is designated by "the last hour"^{F262} [^{<620218>}1 John 2:18], "the last times" [^{<540401>}1 Timothy 4:1; ^{<600120>}1 Peter 1:20], "the last days"

[^{<440217>} Acts 2:17; ^{<550301>} 2 Timothy 3:1; ^{<610303>} 2 Peter 3:3]. This is done that, content with the perfection of Christ's teaching, we may learn not to fashion anything new for ourselves beyond this or to admit anything contrived by others.

It was therefore with good reason that the Father by a singular privilege ordained the Son as our teacher, commanding him, and not any man, to be heard. He has, indeed, in few words commended Christ as our teacher when he says, "Hear him" [^{<401705>} Matthew 17:5]. But in these words there is more weight and force than is commonly thought. For it is as if, leading us away from all doctrines of men, he should conduct us to his Son alone; bid us seek all teaching of salvation from him alone; depend upon him, cleave to him; in short (as the words themselves pronounce), hearken to his voice alone. And what, indeed, ought we now either to expect or to hope from man, when the very Word of life has intimately and openly disclosed himself to us? But the mouths of all men should be closed when once he has spoken, in whom the Heavenly Father willed all the treasures of knowledge and wisdom to be hid [^{<510203>} Colossians 2:3], and has, indeed, so spoken as befitted the wisdom of God (which is in every part seamless [cf. ^{<431923>} John 19:23]) and the Messiah (from whom the revelation of all things was awaited [^{<430425>} John 4:25]); that is, after himself he left nothing for others to say.

8. THE APOSTLES AUTHORIZED TO TEACH WHAT CHRIST COMMANDED

Let this be a firm principle: No other word is to be held as the Word of God, and given place as such in the church, than what is contained first in the Law and the Prophets, then in the writings of the apostles; and the only authorized way of teaching in the church is by the prescription and standard of his Word.

From this also we infer that the only thing granted to the apostles was that which the prophets had had of old. They were to expound the ancient Scripture and to show that what is taught there has been fulfilled in Christ. Yet they were not to do this except from the Lord, that is, with Christ's Spirit as precursor in a certain measure dictating the words.^{F263} For by this condition Christ limited their embassy awwhen he ordered them to go and

teach not what they had thoughtlessly fabricated, but all that he had commanded them [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19-20]. And nothing could be said more clearly than what he says in another place: “But you are not to be called rabbi, for you have one teacher... the Christ” [^{<402308>} Matthew 23:8,10]. Then, to fix this more deeply upon their minds, he repeats it twice in the same place [^{<402309>} Matthew 23:9-10]. And because, on account of their ignorance, they could not grasp what they had heard and learned from the Master’s lips, the Spirit of truth is promised to them, to guide them into a true understanding of all things [^{<431613>} John 16:13]. For that restriction must be carefully noted in which he assigns to the Holy Spirit the task of bringing to mind all that he has previously taught by mouth [^{<431426>} John 14:26].

9. NOT EVEN THE APOSTLES WERE FREE TO GO BEYOND THE WORD: MUCH LESS THEIR SUCCESSORS

Accordingly, Peter, who was well instructed by the Master as to how much he should do, reserves nothing else for himself or others except to impart the doctrine as it has been handed down by God. “Let him who speaks,” he says, “speak only the words of God” [^{<600411>} 1 Peter 4:11]; that is, not hesitatingly and tremblingly as evil consciences are accustomed to speak, but with the high confidence which befits a servant of God furnished with his sure commands. What is this but to reject all inventions of the human mind (from whatever brain they have issued) in order that God’s pure Word may be taught and learned in the believers’ church? What is it but to remove the ordinances, or rather inventions of all men (whatever their rank), in order that the decrees of God alone may remain in force? These are those spiritual “weapons... with power from God to demolish strongholds”; by them God’s faithful soldiers “destroy stratagems and every height that rises up against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” [^{<471004>} 2 Corinthians 10:4-5, Comm.]. Here, then, is the sovereign power with which the pastors of the church, by whatever name they be called, ought to be endowed. That is that they may dare boldly to do all things by God’s Word; may compel all worldly power, glory, wisdom, and exaltation to yield to and obey his majesty; supported by his power, may command all from the highest even to the last; may build up Christ’s household and

cast down Satan's; may feed the sheep and drive away the wolves; may instruct and exhort the teachable; may accuse, rebuke, and subdue the rebellious and stubborn; may bind and loose; finally, if need be, may launch thunderbolts and lightnings; but do all things in God's Word.

Yet this, as I have said,^{F264} is the difference between the apostles and their successors: the former were sure and genuine scribes of the Holy Spirit,^{F265} and their writings are therefore to be considered oracles of God; but the sole office of others is to teach what is provided and sealed in the Holy Scriptures. We therefore teach that faithful ministers are now not permitted to coin any new doctrine, but that they are simply to cleave to that doctrine to which God has subjected all men without exception. When I say this, I mean to show what is permitted not only to individual men but to the whole church as well. As far as individual men are concerned, by the Lord, Paul was surely ordained apostle to the Corinthians, but he denies that he has dominion over their faith [^{<470124>} 2 Corinthians 1:24]. Now who would dare claim a dominion that Paul attests does not belong even to him? But if he had recognized such license to teach that a shepherd could by right require men to subscribe with unquestioning faith to all that he might teach—he would never have communicated to these same Corinthians the regulation that when two or three prophets speak “let the others discriminate. But if a revelation is made to another sitting by, let the first be silent” [^{<461429>} 1 Corinthians 14:29-30 p.]. For he thus spared no one, and subjected the authority of all to the judgment of God's Word.

But someone will say, for the church universal, the case is different. My reply is that Paul also anticipates this doubt in another passage, when he says: “Faith comes from what is heard, but what is heard comes from God's Word” [^{<451017>} Romans 10:17 p.]. Well, then, if faith depends upon God's Word alone, if it applies to it and reposes in it alone, what place is now left for the word of the whole world? And anyone who well knows what faith is cannot be in doubt here. For faith ought to be upheld with such firmness as to stand unconquered and unwavering against Satan and all the devices of hell, and the whole world. We shall find this firmness solely in God's Word. Then here is a universal rule that we ought to heed: God deprives men of the capacity to put forth new doctrine in order that he alone may be our schoolmaster in spiritual doctrine as he alone is true

[<450304> Romans 3:4] who can neither lie nor deceive. This rule pertains as much to the whole church as to individual believers.

(Rejection of claims of doctrinal infallibility apart from the Word, 10-16)

10. THE ROMAN CLAIM

But suppose we compare this power of the church, of which we have spoken, with that power by which those spiritual tyrants who have falsely called themselves bishops and prelates of religion have commended themselves now for some centuries among the people of God. Their agreement will be no better than that of Christ with Belial [<470615> 2 Corinthians 6:15]. It is not my purpose here to explain how and in what unworthy ways they have exercised their tyranny. I shall only refer to their teaching, which they today defend first with writings, then with sword and fire.

They take it for granted that a universal council is the true image of the church. Having accepted this principle, they presently conclude without hesitation that such councils are governed directly by the Holy Spirit, and therefore cannot err.^{F266} But since these men rule, and even constitute, the councils, they actually claim for themselves everything they contend to be due the councils. Therefore, they would have our faith stand and fall on their decision: so that whatever they have determined on either side may be firmly established in our minds; and so that either what they have approved may be approved by us beyond question, or what they have condemned may also be regarded as condemned. Meanwhile, contemptuous of God's Word, they coin dogmas after their own whim, which in accordance with this rule they afterward require to be subscribed to as articles of faith. For they do not count a man a Christian unless he firmly consents to all their dogmas, whether affirmative or negative—if not with explicit faith, at least with implicit.^{F267} For the church has the power to frame new articles of faith.

11. THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN HIS CHURCH DOES NOT ANNUL ITS BOND TO THE WORD

First, let us hear by what arguments they prove that this authority has been given to the church; then we shall see how much they are helped by what they claim about the church.

The church, they say, has excellent promises that never is she to be forsaken by Christ, her spouse, but guided by his Spirit into all truth [cf. ^{<431613>} John 16:13]. But of the promises they habitually allege, many were given just as much to individual believers as to the whole church. For even though the Lord was speaking to the twelve apostles when he said, “Behold, I am with you even unto the end of the age” [^{<402820>} Matthew 28:20]; also, “I will pray the Father, and he will give you another Advocate... even the Spirit of truth” [^{<431416>} John 14:16-17], ^{F268} he was promising it not only to the Twelve together but also to them individually, as well as to other disciples, either those whom he had already received or those who would afterward be added. But when they so interpret such promises, full of wonderful consolation, as if they were given to no individual Christian but to the whole church together, what do they do but take away from all Christians the confidence which ought to have come from this source to hearten them? I do not say here that the whole fellowship of believers, supplied with a manifold diversity of gifts, has not been endowed with a far fuller and richer treasure of heavenly wisdom than each one separately. Nor do I mean that this is so spoken in common to the believers as if all are equally endowed with the Spirit of understanding and instruction [cf. ^{<231102>} Isaiah 11:2]. But we must not allow Christ’s enemies to twist Scripture into an alien meaning to defend their evil case.

Passing over this, however, I simply admit what is true: that the Lord is ever present with his people and governs them by his Spirit. I confess that this Spirit is not the Spirit of error, ignorance, falsehood, or darkness; but of sure revelation, wisdom, truth, and light, from whom they may learn without deceit what has been given them [^{<460212>} 1 Corinthians 2:12]; that is, “what is the hope of their calling, and what the riches of the glory of the divine inheritance in the saints” [^{<490118>} Ephesians 1:18, Vg.]. But believers, even those who have been given more excellent gifts than the

rest, in this flesh receive only the first fruits and some taste of his Spirit [^{<450823>}Romans 8:23]. Consequently, being aware of their own weakness, nothing better is left for them but to keep themselves carefully within the limits of God's Word, lest, if they wander far according to their own predilection, they stray quite out of the right way, insomuch as they are void of that Spirit by whose teaching alone truth is distinguished from falsehood. For all confess with Paul that they have not yet reached the goal [^{<500312>}Philippians 3:12]. Therefore, they strive toward daily advancement more than they boast of perfection.

12. THE CHURCH NOT INFALLIBLE

But they will object that whatever is partly attributed to any one of the saints belongs utterly and completely to the church itself. Even though this has some semblance of truth, I deny that it is true. Indeed, God distributes the gifts of his Spirit to each of the members according to measure [^{<490407>}Ephesians 4:7], so that when the gifts are given in common, the whole body may not lack anything essential. But the riches of the church are always far from that supreme perfection of which our adversaries boast. Not that the church is in any respect so destitute that it does not have enough. For the Lord knows what its need requires. But to keep it within humility and godly modesty, he has bestowed no more upon it than he knows is expedient.

I know what they usually object here also: that the church was cleansed "with the washing of water in the word of life, that it might be... without wrinkle or spot" [^{<490526>}Ephesians 5:26-27, cf. Vg.], and therefore is elsewhere called "the pillar and ground of truth" [^{<540315>}1 Timothy 3:15].

But the previous passage teaches awhat Christ does each day in the church rather than what he has already accomplished. For if he daily sanctifies all his people, cleanses and polishes them, and wipes away their stains, it is obvious that they are still sprinkled with some defects and spots, and that something is lacking to their sanctification. But to consider the church already completely and in every respect holy and spotless when all its members are spotted and somewhat impure—how absurd and foolish this is! It is true, therefore, that the church has been sanctified by Christ, abut only the beginning of its sanctification is visible here; the end and perfect

completion will appear when Christ, the Holy of Holies [cf. Hebrews chapters 9;10], truly and perfectly fills the church with his holiness, it is also true that the church's spots and wrinkles have been wiped away, but this is a daily process until Christ by his coming completely removes whatever remains. For, unless we accept this, it will be necessary for us to affirm, with the Pelagians, that the righteousness of believers is made perfect in this life; likewise, with the Cathari and Donatists, to brook no weakness in the church.^{F269}

The other passage, as we have elsewhere seen,^{F270} has an entirely different meaning from what they pretend. For when Paul has instructed Timothy and trained him for the true office of bishop, he says that he has done so that he may know how to behave in the church. And, that he may with greater piety and zeal bend to this task, Paul adds that the church itself is "the pillar and foundation of truth" [^{<540315>} 1 Timothy 3:15]. But what else do these words mean than that God's truth is preserved in the church, that is, by the ministry of preaching? Or as he elsewhere teaches, that "Christ gave... apostles... pastors and teachers" [^{<490411>} Ephesians 4:11], "that... we may no longer... be tossed about by every wind of doctrine, or be deluded by men" [verse 14 p.]. Rather, illumined "by the true knowledge of the Son of God, we should meet together in oneness of faith" [verse 13 p.]. Truth, therefore, is not extinguished in the world, but remains safe, because it has the church as its faithful custodian, by whose work and ministry it is sustained. And if this custody rests in the prophetic and apostolic ministry, it follows that this safekeeping of the truth wholly depends on whether the Word of the Lord is faithfully kept and preserved in its purity.

13. WORD AND SPIRIT BELONG INSEPARABLY TOGETHER

That my readers may better understand the pivotal point of this question, I shall explain in a few words what our adversaries demand, and wherein we oppose them. Their statement that the church cannot err bears on this point, and this is how they interpret it—inasmuch as the church is governed by the Spirit of God, it can proceed safely without the Word; no matter where it may go, it can think or speak only what is true; caccordingly, if it should ordain anything beyond or apart from God's Word, this must be taken as nothing but a sure oracle of God.^{F271}

If we grant the first point, that the church cannot err in matters necessary to salvation, here is what we mean by it: The statement is true in so far as the church, having forsaken all its own wisdom, allows itself to be taught by the Holy Spirit through God's Word. This, then, is the difference. Our opponents locate the authority of the church outside God's Word; but we insist that it be attached to the Word, and do not allow it to be separated from it.

And what wonder if Christ's bride and pupil be subject to her Spouse and Teacher, so that she pays constant and careful attention to his words! For this is the arrangement of a well-governed house, that the wife obey the husband's authority. This is the plan of a well-ordered school, that there the teaching of the schoolmaster alone be heard. For this reason, the church should not be wise of itself, should not devise anything of itself but should set the limit of its own wisdom where Christ has made an end of speaking.

In this way the church will distrust all the devisings of its own reason. But in those things where it rests upon God's Word the church will not waver with any distrust or doubting, but will repose in great assurance and firm constancy. So also trusting in the fullness of the promises it possesses, the church will have in them excellent means of sustaining its faith. Thus it will never doubt that the Holy Spirit is always with it, its best guide in the right path. But it will at the same time be mindful what use God would have us receive from his Spirit. "The Spirit," he says, "whom I shall send from the Father" [^{<431607>} John 16:7 p.] "will lead you into all truth" [^{<431613>} John 16:13 p.]. But how? Because, he says, "the Spirit will recall all that I have said to you" [^{<431426>} John 14:26]. Therefore, he declares that we are to expect nothing more from his Spirit than that he will illumine our minds to perceive the truth of his teaching. Accordingly, Chrysostom most pointedly says: "Many boast of the Holy Spirit, but those who speak their own thoughts claim him falsely. As Christ testified that he spoke not from himself [^{<431249>} John 12:49; 14:10], because he spoke from the Law and the Prophets [^{<431250>} John 12:50], so let us not believe anything that is thrust in under the title of the Spirit apart from the gospel. For just as Christ is the fulfillment of the Law [^{<451004>} Romans 10:4] and the Prophets, so is the Spirit the fulfillment of the gospel."^{F272} These are his words.

Now it is easy to conclude how wrongly our opponents act when they boast of the Holy Spirit solely to commend with his name strange doctrines foreign to God's Word—while the Spirit wills to be conjoined with God's Word by an indissoluble bond, and Christ professes this concerning him when he promises the Spirit to his church. Assuredly, this is so. That soberness which the Lord once prescribed for his church [cf. <600113> 1 Peter 1:13; 4:7; 5:8; etc.] he wills to be preserved forever. But he forbade anything to be added to his Word or taken away from it [<050402> Deuteronomy 4:2; cf. <662218> Revelation 22:18-19]. It is this inviolable decree of God and of the Holy Spirit which our foes are trying to set aside when they pretend that the church is ruled by the Spirit apart from the Word.

14. TRADITION SUBORDINATE TO SCRIPTURE?

Here again they mutter that the church needed to add some things to the writings of the apostles, or that the apostles themselves afterward properly supplied through a living voice what they had not clearly enough taught. For, of course, Christ said to the apostles, "I have many things to say to you which you cannot bear now" [<431612> John 16:12]. These, they explain, are decrees which, apart from Scripture, have been accepted only by use and custom.^{F273} But what effrontery is this? I confess that the disciples were as yet untutored and well-nigh unteachable when they heard this from the Lord. But when they committed their doctrine to writing, were they even then beset with such dullness that they afterward needed to supply with a living voice what they had omitted from their writings through the fault of ignorance? Now, if they had already been led into all truth by the Spirit of truth [cf. <431613> John 16:13] when they put forth their writings, what hindered them from embracing and leaving in written form a perfect and distinct knowledge of gospel doctrine? But come now, let us grant them what they seek: only let them point out what ought to have been revealed apart from writing. If they dare attempt it, I shall counter with Augustine's words, that is, "When the Lord said nothing, who of us may say, 'These things are or those things are'? Or if one dare say so, what proof does he provide"?^{F274} But why do I quarrel over something superfluous? For every schoolboy knows that in the writings of

the apostles, which these fellows, as it were, maim and halve, there abides the fruit of that revelation which the Lord then promised to the apostles.

15. CONTRADICTION IN DOCTRINAL DECREES OF THE CHURCH

What, they say, has not Christ put beyond controversy all that the church teaches and decrees, when he commands us to regard as a Gentile and a publican anyone who dares contradict it [^{<401817>} Matthew 18:17]?^{F275} First, Christ makes no mention there of doctrine, but only asserts the authority of the church to correct vices by censures in order that those who have been admonished or rebuked may not oppose its judgment, about passing over this, it is indeed a wonder that these rascals are so shameless that they allow themselves to go wild on this point. For what will their final conclusion be, except that one is not to despise the consensus of the church, which rests solely in the truth of God's Word? Men must listen to the church, they say.^{F276} Who denies this? The reason is that the church makes no pronouncement except from the Lord's Word. If they require anything more, let them know that these words of Christ afford them no support.

And I should not seem too quarrelsome because I insist so strongly that the church is not permitted to coin any new doctrine, that is, to teach and put forward as an oracle something more than the Lord has revealed in his Word. For sensible men see how perilous it is if men once be given such authority. They also see how great a window is opened to the quips and cavils of the impious if we say that what men have decided is to be taken as an oracle among Christians.

Besides, Christ speaking in accordance with his own time gives this distinction to the Sanhedrin [^{<400522>} Matthew 5:22] so that his disciples should afterward learn to reverence the sacred assemblies of the church. In that case, each city and village would come to have equal freedom in coining dogmas.

16. FEEBLENESS OF OUR OPPONENTS' EXAMPLES

The examples that our opponents use help them not one bit. They say that infant baptism has arisen not so much from a clear mandate of

Scripture as from a decree of the church. Yet it would be a very poor refuge if, to defend infant baptism, we were compelled to flee to the mere authority of the church! But it will elsewhere be sufficiently shown that the fact is far otherwise.^{F277} In like manner, they object that one does not find in Scripture what was declared in the Council of Nicaea—that the Son is consubstantial with the Father.^{F278} In this they do grave injustice to the fathers, as if they had baselessly condemned Arius because he would not swear to their words, although he professed the whole teaching comprised in the prophetic and apostolic writings. The word “con-substantial,” I admit, does not exist in Scripture.^{F279} But when it is so often asserted in Scripture that there is one God, and further, when Christ is called so often the true and eternal God, one with the Father—what else are the Nicene fathers doing when they declare them of one essence but simply expounding the real meaning of Scripture?^{F280} Theodoret relates that Constantine made this preliminary statement in their assembly: “In disputations,” he says, over divine matters, there is the prescribed teaching of the Holy Spirit; the books of the evangelists and apostles, with the oracles of the prophets, fully show us the divine will.^{F281} Accordingly, laying discord aside, let us take the explanations of questions from the words of the Spirit.”^{F282} At that time there was no one who contradicted these holy admonitions. No one objected to the notion that the church could add something of its own; that the Spirit had not revealed all things to the apostles, or at least did not utter them to their successors; or any such thing. If what our adversaries would have is true, first, Constantine acted perversely in depriving the church of its power; secondly, because none of the bishops rose up to defend it, this silence of theirs was a breach of faith. For thus they were betrayers of the church’s right. But since Theodoret relates that they willingly embraced what the emperor stated,^{F283} it is certain that this new dogma was then entirely unknown.

CHAPTER 9

COUNCILS AND THEIR AUTHORITY

(True authority of church councils, 1-2)

1. TWO PREFATORY REMARKS

Now, suppose I grant them their every point on the church, even this would not much further their major premise. For all that is said about the church, they at once transfer to councils, since in their opinion these represent the church. Indeed, they so stubbornly contend over the power of the church to no other purpose but to bestow all they can extort upon the Roman pontiff and his entourage.

But before I begin to discuss this question, I must make two brief prefatory remarks:

The fact that I shall here be rather severe does not mean that I esteem the ancient councils less than I ought. For I venerate them from my heart, and desire that they be honored by all.^{F284} But here the norm is that nothing of course detract from Christ. Now it is Christ's right to preside over all councils and to have no man share his dignity. But I say that he presides only when the whole assembly is governed by his word and Spirit.

Secondly, the fact that I attribute less to councils than my opponents claim does not mean that I am afraid of councils, as if they supported their side and opposed ours. For as we have been amply equipped by the Word of the Lord for the full proof of our teaching and for the overthrow of all popery, and consequently there is no great need to require anything additional, so, if the matter should require it, the ancient councils would in large measure provide us enough evidence for both these.

2. TRUE AND FALSE COUNCILS

Let us now speak of the matter itself. If one seeks in Scripture what the authority of councils is, there exists no clearer promise than in this

statement of Christ's: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them" [^{<401820>}Matthew 18:20]. But that nonetheless refers as much to a little meeting as to a universal council. Yet the difficulty of the question does not lie in this, but in the added condition that Christ will be in the midst of a council only if it is gathered together in his name. As a consequence, it will benefit our adversaries but little to mention councils of bishops a thousand times over; nor will they persuade us to believe what they contend—that councils are governed by the Holy Spirit—before they convince us that these have been gathered in Christ's name. Ungodly and evil bishops can just as much conspire against Christ as good and honest ones can come together in his name. We have clear proof of this fact in a great many decrees that have come forth from such councils. But this will appear later.^{F285} I now reply with but one word: Christ promises nothing except to those who are gathered in his name. Let us therefore define what that means. I deny that they are gathered in his name who, casting aside God's commandment that forbids anything to be added or taken away from his Word [^{<050402>}Deuteronomy 4:2; cf. ^{<051232>}Deuteronomy 12:32; ^{<203006>}Proverbs 30:6; ^{<662218>}Revelation 22:18-19], ordain anything according to their own decision; who, not content with the oracles of Scripture, that is, the sole rule of perfect wisdom, concoct some novelty out of their own heads. Surely, since Christ promised that he would be present not in all councils whatsoever but laid down a special mark by which a true and lawful one might be distinguished from the rest, it behooves us never to neglect this distinction. This is the covenant which God of old made with the Levitical priests, that they should teach from his own lips [^{<390207>}Malachi 2:7]. He required this always of the prophets; we see that this rule was also imposed upon the apostles. Those who violate this covenants^{F286} God deems worthy neither of the honor of the priesthood nor of any authority. Let my opponents resolve this difficulty for me if they would bind my faith to the decrees of men apart from God's Word.

(Defects of pastors render their councils fallible, 3-7)

3. THE TRUTH CAN ALSO SUPPORT AND ASSERT ITSELF IN THE CHURCH WITHOUT AND AGAINST THE “PASTORS”

They suppose that the truth does not abide in the church unless there is agreement among the pastors; and that the church itself exists only if it becomes visible in general councils.^{F287} Yet this is far from having always been true, if the prophets have left us true testimonies of their times. In Isaiah’s day, there was a church at Jerusalem which God had not yet forsaken. But of the pastors he thus speaks: “His watchmen are all blind, and know nothing; they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark. Lying down, they sleep, and love sleep.... And the shepherds know and understand nothing; they all look to their own way” [^{<235610>} Isaiah 56:10-11 p.]. qn the same way Hosea says: “The watchman of Ephraim is... with God, a fowler’s snare... and hatred in God’s house” [^{<280908>} Hosea 9:8 p.]. There, by ironically joining them with God, he teaches that theirs is a vain pretense of the priesthood. The church also endured to the time of Jeremiah. Let us hear what he says of the pastors: “From prophet to priest, everyone deals falsely” [^{<240613>} Jeremiah 6:13]. Again: “The prophets are prophesying lies in my name, since I did not send them, nor did I command them” [^{<241414>} Jeremiah 14:14]. And lest we should be too prolix in quoting his words, let our readers consult what he has written in the whole twenty-third [^{<242301>} Jeremiah 23:1 ff.] and fortieth^{F288} chapters. At that time, from another quarter, Ezekiel no more gently inveighed against the same ones. He says: “A conspiracy of her prophets in the midst of her is like a roaring lion tearing the prey.... Her priests have done violence to my law, and have profaned my holy things; they have made no distinction between the holy and the common” [^{<262225>} Ezekiel 22:25-26]; and the rest that he adds in this sense. Similar complaints appear in the prophets again and again; in fact, nothing else recurs more frequently there [^{<230914>} Isaiah 9:14; 28:7; 29:10; ^{<240208>} Jeremiah 2:8, 26; 5:13, 31; 6:13; 8:10; 13:13; 14:14; 23:1; 27:9; etc.].

4. DEJECTION OF THE PASTORS FORETOLD

This, someone will say, may have prevailed among the Jews: our age, however, is free from such great evil! Would, indeed, that it were! But the

Holy Spirit has declared that it will be otherwise. For Peter's words are clear: "As there were," he says, "false prophets among the ancient folk, so also among you there will be false teachers, secretly bringing in destructive heresies" [^{<610201>} 2 Peter 2:1 p.]. Do you see how he predicts that danger threatens, not from the common people, but from those who boast the title of teachers and pastors? Moreover, how often did Christ and his apostles foretell that pastors would pose the greatest dangers to the church [^{<402411>} Matthew 24:11, 24; ^{<442029>} Acts 20:29-30; ^{<540401>} 1 Timothy 4:1; ^{<550301>} 2 Timothy 3:1 ff.; 4:3]? Indeed, Paul plainly shows that Antichrist will sit in no other place than the temple of God [^{<530204>} 2 Thessalonians 2:4]. By this he means that the terrible calamity of which he there speaks will come from no other source than from those who will sit as pastors in the church. And in another passage he shows that the beginnings of that very great evil were already almost at hand. For when he addresses the Ephesian bishops ^{F289} he says, "I know that after my departure fierce wolves will come in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves will arise men speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them" [^{<442019>} Acts 20:19-30]. Since the pastors could become so degraded in such a short time, how much corruption could a long succession of years bring among them? And, not to fill many pages in reciting them, we are warned by examples from almost every age that the truth is not always nurtured in the bosom of the pastors, and the wholeness of the church does not depend upon their condition. It was indeed fitting that they be executors and keepers of the peace and safety of the church, since they were appointed for its preservation; but it is one thing to render what you owe; another, to owe what you fail to render.

5. THE NEED TO JUDGE THEM WITH DISCRIMINATION

Still, let no one understand these words as if I meant to undermine the authority of pastors, in general, rashly, and without distinction. I am only warning that discrimination is to be made among these pastors themselves, lest we also immediately regard as pastors those who are so called. But the pope with the whole troupe of his bishops, for no other reason except that they are called pastors, having shaken off obedience to God's Word, tumble and toss everything at their pleasure. And meantime they strive to

persuade us that they cannot be bereft of the light of truth, that the Spirit of God dwells continually in them, that the church subsists in them, and dies with them. As if there were now no judgments of the Lord to punish the world today with the same kind of punishment that he once visited upon the ungratefulness of the ancient folk: that is, he struck the pastors with blindness and dullness [^{<381117>} Zechariah 11:17]. Nor do these utterly stupid men realize that they are singing the same song that those once sang who were fighting against God's Word. For thus did Jeremiah's enemies array themselves against truth: "Come, and we shall make plots against Jeremiah, for the law shall not perish from the priest, nor counsel from the wise, nor the word from the prophet" [^{<241818>} Jeremiah 18:18].

6. THE TRUTH CAN ALSO STAND AGAINST COUNCILS

Hence it is easy to answer that other objection concerning general councils. That the Jews had a true church under the prophets cannot be denied. But if a general council of priests had then been convened, what semblance of the church would have shown itself? We hear that God announced not to one or another of them, but to the whole order: "The priests shall become mute and the prophets astounded" [^{<240409>} Jeremiah 4:9 p.]. Also: "The law will perish from the priest and council from the elders" [^{<260726>} Ezekiel 7:26 p.]. Also: "The night shall be vision for you, and darkness your divination; the sun shall go down upon the prophets, and the day shall be black over them" [^{<330306>} Micah 3:6 p.]. Come now, if they had all been assembled together, what spirit would have presided over their assembly? We have a notable example of this thing in the council convened by Ahab [^{<112206>} 1 Kings 22:6,22]. Four hundred prophets were present. But because they convened with no other purpose than to flatter the wicked king, Satan is sent by the Lord to be a lying spirit in the mouths of all. The truth is there, by the vote of all, condemned: Micaiah is condemned as a heretic, beaten, and cast into prison [^{<112226>} 1 Kings 22:26-27]. The same happened to Jeremiah [^{<242002>} Jeremiah 20:2; 32:2; 37:15 ff.] and to the other prophets [cf. ^{<402135>} Matthew 21:35; 23:29 ff.].

7. EXAMPLE FROM ^{<431147>} JOHN 11:47

But one example, more memorable than the rest, will suffice for all. In that council which the high priests and Pharisees convened at Jerusalem against

Christ [^{<431147>} John 11:47], what was lacking as far as outward appearance is concerned? For unless a church then existed at Jerusalem, Christ would never have taken part in the sacrifices and other ceremonies. A solemn convocation takes place; the high priest presides; the whole priestly order is present. Yet Christ is there condemned, and his teaching cast away [^{<402657>} Matthew 26:57 ff.]. This deed proves that the church was by no means embraced within that council. Yet, our opponents assert, there is no danger of such a thing happening to us. Who has assured us of this? For to be unconcerned in so important a matter is culpable neglect. But when the Holy Spirit prophesies expressly through Paul's lips that an apostasy is coming [^{<530203>} 2 Thessalonians 2:3]—which cannot come unless the pastors are the first to forsake God—why are we here willfully blind to our own destruction? Accordingly, we must by no means admit that the church consists in the assembly of the pastors, whom the Lord nowhere assumes to be forever good but has declared will sometimes be evil. But where he warns of peril, he does so to render us more wary.

(Departing from Scripture, councils have deteriorated, but even those of Nicaea and Chalcedon were defective, 8-11)

8. THE VALIDITY OF CONCILIAR DECISIONS

What then? You ask, will the councils have no determining authority? Yes, indeed; for I am not arguing here either that all councils are to be condemned or the acts of all to be rescinded, and (as the saying goes) to be canceled at one stroke. But, you will say, you degrade everything, so that every man has the right to accept or reject what the councils decide. Not at all! But whenever a decree of any council is brought forward, I should like men first of all diligently to ponder at what time it was held, on what issue, and with what intention, what sort of men were present; then to examine by the standard of Scripture what it dealt with—and to do this in such a way that the definition of the council may have its weight and be like a provisional judgment, yet not hinder the examination which I have mentioned.

Would that all kept that moderation which Augustine enjoins in the third book against Maximinus! When he wishes to silence in a few words this heretic contending over the decrees of councils, he says: "I ought not to

throw up against you the Council of Nicaea, nor you against me the Council of Ariminum as prejudging the matter. For I am not subject to the authority of the second, nor you to that of the first. Let matter contend with matter, cause with cause, reason with reason, by Scriptural authorities, not those peculiar to either one, but those common to both.”^{F290}

Thus councils would come to have the majesty that is their due; yet in the meantime Scripture would stand out in the higher place, with everything subject to its standard. In this way, we willingly embrace and reverence as holy the early councils, such as those of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus I, Chalcedon,^{F291} and the like, which were concerned with refuting errors—in so far as they relate to the teachings of faith. For they contain nothing but the pure and genuine exposition of Scripture, which the holy fathers applied with spiritual prudence to crush the enemies of religion who had then arisen. In some of the later councils also we see shining forth the true zeal for piety, and clear tokens of insight, doctrine, and prudence. But as affairs usually tend to get worse, it is to be seen from the more recent councils how much the church has degenerated from the purity of that golden age.

I do not doubt that even in these more corrupt times the councils had their bishops of a better type. But the same thing happened to them that Roman senators of old themselves complained of—senatorial decrees were badly framed. For so long as opinions are counted, not weighed, the better part had often to be overcome by the greater. They have surely put forward many impious opinions. And it is not necessary here to collect instances, either because it would take too long or because others have done this so diligently that not much can be added.^{F292}

9. COUNCILS AGAINST COUNCILS

Need I then recount how councils disagreed with councils? And there is no ground for anyone to murmur against me that of the two that disagree one is not legitimate. For by what shall we judge such a case? By this, unless I am deceived, that we shall determine from Scripture which one's decree is not orthodox. For this is the only sure principle on which to distinguish.

It is now about nine hundred years since the Council of Constantinople, convened under the Emperor Leo, decided that images set up in churches should be pulled down and smashed. A little later, the Council of Nicaea, which the Empress Irene, in hatred toward the first council, assembled, decreed the restoration of images.^{F293} Which of these two shall we acknowledge as legitimate? The latter, which gave images a place in churches, has subsequently prevailed among the people. But Augustine says that this practice involves an ever-present danger of idolatry.^{F294} Epi-phanus, of a previous period, speaks much more harshly, for he states that it is unlawful and abominable for images to be seen in the churches of Christians.^{F295} Would they who speak thus approve this council if they were alive today? But if the historians tell the truth, and the acts themselves are believed, not only the images themselves but also their worship was approved there. It is obvious that such a decree emanated from Satan. What about the fact that, in perverting and mangling the whole of Scripture, they show that it was a laughingstock to them? This I have made abundantly clear above.^{F296} However it may be, we cannot otherwise distinguish between councils that are contradictory and discordant, which have been many, unless we weigh them all, as I have said, in the balance of all men and angels, that is, the Word of the Lord. Thus, we accept Chalcedon, but reject Ephesus II, because in it the Eutychean heresy was confirmed, which Chalcedon condemned.^{F297} Holy men have judged this matter solely by Scripture, and we so follow them in judgment that God's Word, which shone before them, may now shine before us also. Now, let the Romanists go and boast (as they are accustomed) that the Holy Spirit is fastened and bound to their councils.

10. HUMAN FAILINGS IN THE COUNCILS

Still, in those ancient and purer councils one may count something lacking. For either otherwise learned and wise men who were present, occupied with the business at hand, did not foresee many other things; or some things of lesser importance escaped them, occupied as they were with graver and more serious matters; or simply, as men, they could be deceived through lack of skill; or they were sometimes borne headlong with too much feeling. Of this last (which seems hardest of all), there is a notable example in the Council of Nicaea, whose eminence has been recognized by

the consent of all with highest reverence, as it deserved. For when the chief article of our faith was there imperiled, the enemy Arius was ready for battle, and they had to fight with him hand to hand, so it was of greatest importance that there should be agreement among those who had come prepared to fight Arius' error. Despite this, heedless of such great dangers, even forgetful of gravity, modesty, and all civility, they let slip the battle that was in their hands, as if they had purposely come there to do Arius a favor. They began to revile one another with internal dissensions, and to turn against one another the pen which ought to have been wielded against Arius. Foul recriminations were heard; accusatory pamphlets flew back and forth; and the contentions would not have ended until they had stabbed and wounded one another if the Emperor Constantine had not interfered. He, professing that an inquiry into their life was a matter beyond his competence, chastised such intemperance with praise rather than with blame.^{F298} In how many respects is it likely that other councils which followed this also failed? This matter needs no long proof. For if anyone reads through their acts, he will note many defects there—not to mention things more serious!

11. HUMAN FALLIBILITY IN THE COUNCILS

Leo, the Roman pontiff, does not hesitate to charge the Council of Chalcedon (which he admits to be orthodox in doctrines) with ambition and unadvised rashness. Indeed, he does not deny that it is legitimate, but he openly declares that it may have erred.^{F299} Perhaps someone will think me foolish because I labor to show such errors, since our opponents admit that councils can err in those matters which are not necessary to salvation.^{F300} But this is no superfluous labor! For even though, being compelled, they confess it by mouth, still, when they thrust upon us the decision of every council, on whatever matter, indiscriminately as an oracle of the Holy Spirit, they require more than they had originally assumed. In doing this, what do they affirm but that councils cannot err; or if they err, it is not lawful for us to discern the truth, or not to assent to their errors? And I intend merely to show what can be the inference from this, that the Holy Spirit so governed the otherwise godly and holy councils as to allow something human to happen to them, lest we should put too much confidence in men. This is a much better opinion than that of Gregory of

Nazianzus, that he never saw a good end to any council.^{F301} For when he asserts that all without exception have a bad end, he does not leave them much authority.

There is now no need to make separate mention of provincial councils, since it is easy to estimate from general councils how much authority they ought to have to frame articles of faith and to receive whatever doctrine pleases them.

(We must not obey blind guides; decisions of later councils faulty in the light of Scripture, 12-14)

12. NO BLIND OBEDIENCE

But our Romanists, where in defending their cause they see that all help of reason forsakes them, resort to this last and miserable evasion: even though these men themselves be stupid in mind and counsel, and utterly wicked in heart and will, still the Word of the Lord abides, which bids men obey their rulers [^{<581317>}Hebrews 13:17]^{F302} Is this so? What if I deny that they who are of this sort are really rulers? For they ought not to claim for themselves more than Joshua had, who was also a prophet of the Lord and an excellent shepherd. But let us hear with what words the Lord appointed him to his office: “This Book of the Law shall not depart out of your mouth, but you shall meditate on it day and night.... You shall not turn from it to the right hand or to the left; then you will direct your path, and understand it” [^{<060108>}Joshua 1:8,7 p.]. They, therefore, will be our spiritual rulers who turn aside from the law of the Lord neither this way nor that. But if we must accept the teaching of all pastors whatever without any doubting, what was the point of the Lord’s frequent admonitions to us not to heed the talk of false prophets? “Do not,” he says through Jeremiah, “listen to the words of the prophets who prophesy to you; for they teach you vanity, and not from the mouth of the Lord.” [^{<242316>}Jeremiah 23:16.] Likewise: “Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep’s clothing but inwardly are ravenous wolves” [^{<400715>}Matthew 7:15]. John also would vainly exhort us to “test the spirits to see whether they are of God” [^{<620401>}1 John 4:1]. Not even the angels are exempt from this judgment, much less Satan with his lies [^{<480108>}Galatians 1:8]! But what is this saying: “If a blind man lead a blind

man, both will fall into the ditch” [^{<401514>}Matthew 15:14]? Does this not sufficiently declare that it is very important what sort of pastors should be heard, and that not all are to be heard indiscriminately? There is consequently no reason why they should frighten us with their titles so as to drag us into sharing their blindness. For we see, on the contrary, that the Lord took particular care to alarm us, so that we should not allow ourselves to be led into others’ error, masked under any name whatsoever. For if Christ’s answer is true, all blind guides, whether they are called high priests, or prelates, or pontiffs, can do nothing but hurtle their partners with them over the same precipice. Accordingly, no names of councils, pastors, bishops (which can either be falsely pretended or truly used) can prevent our being taught by the evidence of words and things to test all spirits of all men by the standard of God’s Word in order to determine whether or not they are from God.

13. THE ACTUAL SIGNIFICANCE OF COUNCILS FOR THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE

Since we have proved that the church has not been given the power to set up a new doctrine, let us now speak concerning the power which they claim for it in interpreting Scripture.

We indeed willingly concede, if any discussion arises over doctrine, that the best and surest remedy is for a synod of true bishops to be convened, where the doctrine at issue may be examined. Such a definition, upon which the pastors of the church in common, invoking Christ’s Spirit, agree, will have much more weight than if each one, having conceived it separately at home, should teach it to the people, or if a few private individuals should compose it. Then, when the bishops are assembled, they can more conveniently deliberate in common what they ought to teach and in what form, lest diversity breed offense. Thirdly, Paul prescribes this method in distinguishing doctrines. For when he assigns the distinguishing of doctrines to the separate churches [cf. ^{<461429>}1 Corinthians 14:29], he shows what should be the order of procedure in more serious cases—namely, that the churches should take common cognizance among themselves. And the very feeling of piety so instructs us that, if anyone disturb the church with a strange doctrine, and the matter reach the point that there is danger of greater dissension, the

churches should first assemble, examine the question put, and finally, after due discussion, bring forth a definition derived from Scripture which would remove all doubt from the people and stop the mouths of wicked and greedy men from daring to go any farther.

Thus, when Arius rose up, the Council of Nicaea was summoned. By its authority it both crushed the wicked efforts of that ungodly man, restoring peace to those churches which he had troubled, and asserted the eternal deity of Christ against his sacrilegious teaching. Then, when Eunomius and Macedonius stirred up new tumults, the Council of Constantinople provided a like remedy for their madness.^{F303} At the Council of Ephesus, Nestorius' impiety was overthrown. From the beginning, then, this was the ordinary method of maintaining unity in the church whenever Satan began any machinations.

But let us remember that not every age or place has men like Athanasius, Basil, Cyril, and such vindicators of true doctrine, whom the Lord raised up at that time. Indeed, let us ponder what happened at the Second Synod of Ephesus, where Eutyches' heresy prevailed,^{F304} and that man of holy memory, Flavian, with some other godly men, was cast into exile, and many misdeeds of this sort committed. That happened because Dioscorus, a quarrelsome man of very evil character, and not the Spirit of the Lord, presided. But, you say, the church was not there. I admit it. For I am quite convinced that truth does not die in the church, even though it be oppressed by one council, but is wonderfully, preserved by the Lord so that it may rise up and triumph again in its own time. But I deny it to be always the case that an interpretation of Scripture adopted by vote of a council is true and certain.

14. FALSE EVALUATION OF CONCILIAR DECISIONS ON THE PART OF THE ROMAN CHURCH

But the Romanists aim at another goal when they teach that the power of interpreting Scripture belongs to councils, and without appeal. For, in calling everything ordained in councils "interpretation of Scripture," they misuse this as pretext. Not one syllable of purgatory, of intercession of saints, of auricular confession, and the like will be found in Scripture.^{F305} But, because all these things have been sanctioned by the

authority of the church, that is (to speak more accurately), received by opinion and use, every one will have to be taken as an interpretation of Scripture. And not that only: but if a council decides anything—even if Scripture cries out against it—it will have the name “interpretation.” Christ bids all drink of the cup which he proffers in the Supper [^{<402627>} Matthew 26:27-28]. The Council of Constance forbade it to be given to the laity but willed that the priest alone drink it.^{F306} What is so diametrically opposed to Ghrist’s institution they would have men consider “interpretation.” Paul calls the prohibition of marriage the hypocrisy of demons [^{<540401>} 1 Timothy 4:1-3]; and in another passage the Spirit declares marriage holy and honorable in all [^{<581304>} Hebrews 13:4]. Their subsequent prohibition of marriage to priests^{F307} they demand to be regarded as a true and genuine interpretation of Scripture, when nothing more alien can be devised. If anyone dare open his mouth in opposition, he will be adjudged a heretic, because the decision of the church is without appeal; and it is unlawful to question whether its interpretation is true. Why should I inveigh against such shamelessness? For to have shown it up is to have conquered it.

I wittingly pass over what they teach on the power to approve Scripture. For to subject the oracles of God in this way to men’s judgment, making their validity depend upon human whim, is a blasphemy unfit to be mentioned. I have already touched on the matter above.^{F308} Nevertheless, I shall ask this one question: If the authority of Scripture is grounded in the approval of the church, the decree of which Council will they they cite on this point? They have none, I believe. Why, then, did Arius allow himself to be overcome at the Council of Nicaea by testimonies drawn from the Gospel of John?^{F309} For he was—according to these men—free to reject them, since no approval of a general council had preceded. They bring forward as evidence an ancient list, called “canon,” which they say came from the judgment of the church. But I ask once more, in what council was that canon promulgated? Here they must remain mute. However, I should like to know furthermore what sort of canon they think it is. For I see that it was little agreed on among ancient writers. And if what Jerome says ought to have weight, the books of Maccabees, Tobit, Ecclesiasticus, and the like, are to be thrown back into the rank of Apocrypha. This the Romanists cannot bear to do.^{F310}

CHAPTER 10

THE POWER OF MAKING LAWS, IN WHICH THE POPE, WITH HIS SUPPORTERS, HAS EXERCISED UPON SOULS THE MOST SAVAGE TYRANNY AND BUTCHERY

(Church laws and traditions, and the Christian's conscience before God, 1-4)

1. THE BASIC QUESTION

The second part of church power follows.^{F311} The Romanists wish this to consist in the making of laws. From this source have arisen innumerable human traditions—so many nets to ensnare miserable souls. For they have no more scruples than the scribes and Pharisees about laying on other men's shoulders burdens which they would not touch with their finger [^{<421146>}Luke 11:46; cf. ^{<402304>}Matthew 23:4]. I have elsewhere taught what cruel butchery their teaching about auricular confession is.^{F312} In their other laws such great violence does not appear; but those which seem most bearable of all tyrannously oppress consciences. I say nothing of their corrupting the worship of God, and their depriving God himself, who is the sole lawgiver, of his right.

This is the power now to be discussed, whether the church may lawfully bind consciences by its laws. In this discussion we are not dealing with the political order, but are only concerned with how God is to be duly worshiped according to the rule laid down by him, and how the spiritual freedom which looks to God may remain unimpaired for us.

It has become common usage to call all decrees concerning the worship of God put forward by men apart from his Word “human traditions.” Our contention is against these, not against holy and useful church institutions, which provide for the preservation of discipline or honesty or peace. But the purpose of our effort is to restrain this unlimited and barbarous empire

usurped over souls by those who wish to be counted pastors of the church but are actually its most savage butchers. They say the laws they make are “spiritual,” pertaining to the soul, and declare them necessary for eternal life.^{F313} But thus the Kingdom of Christ (as I have just suggested^{F314}) is invaded; thus the freedom given by him to the consciences of believers is utterly oppressed and cast down. I am not now discussing the great impiety with which they sanction the observance of their laws, while they teach men to seek forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and salvation from this observance, and while they establish the whole of religion and the sum of piety in it. I assert the one point that necessity ought not to be imposed upon consciences in those matters from which they have been freed by Christ; and unless freed, as we have previously taught,^{F315} they cannot rest with God. They should acknowledge one King, their deliverer Christ, and should be governed by one law of freedom, the holy Word of the gospel, if they would retain the grace which they once obtained in Christ. They must be held in no bondage, and bound by no bonds.

2. THE ROMAN CONSTITUTIONS ENSLAVE CONSCIENCES

These Solons even fancy that their constitutions are laws of freedom, a gentle yoke, a light burden [^{<401130>} Matthew 11:30],^{F316} but who does not see that this is pure falsehood? They do not feel their laws oppressive when, casting aside the fear of God, they heedlessly and actively neglect both their own and divine laws. But those men who are moved by some concern for their own salvation are far from regarding themselves as free so long as they are entangled in these snares. We see how cautiously Paul dealt with this matter, not daring in even one thing to lay a restraint upon men [^{<460735>} 1 Corinthians 7:35]. And with good reason! He surely foresaw how great a wound would be inflicted upon consciences if in those matters which the Lord left free, necessity were imposed. On the contrary, one can scarcely count the constitutions which these men have very grievously decreed under pain of eternal death, and which they with the greatest severity require as necessary for salvation.^{F318} And among these are very many extremely difficult to observe, but all, if piled up together, are impossible, so great is the pile. How, then, can they who are so burdened with great difficulties escape being perplexed and tortured with extreme anguish and terror?

My purpose here is, therefore, to attack constitutions made to bind souls inwardly before God and to lay scruples on them, as if enjoining things necessary to salvation.

3. THE NATURE OF CONSCIENCE

This question embarrasses most men because they do not distinguish subtly enough between the outward forum (as they call it) and the forum of conscience.^{F319} The difficulty is increased, besides, by the fact that Paul teaches us to obey the magistrate, not only because of fear of punishment, but because of conscience [^{<451301>}Romans 13:1 ff.]. From this it follows that consciences are also bound by civil laws. But if this were so, all that we said in the previous chapter^{F320} and what I am now going to say about spiritual government would fall.

To solve this difficulty, it first behooves us to grasp what conscience is. We must take our definition from the etymology of the word. When men grasp the conception of things with the mind and the understanding they are said “to know,” from which the word “knowledge” is derived.^{F321} In like manner, when men have an awareness of divine judgment adjoined to them as a witness which does not let them hide their sins but arraigns them as guilty before the judgment seat—this awareness is called “conscience.” It is a certain mean between God and man, for it does not allow man to suppress within himself what he knows, but pursues him to the point of making him acknowledge his guilt.

This is what Paul means when he teaches that conscience testifies to men, while their thoughts accuse or excuse them in God’s judgment [^{<450215>}Romans 2:15-16]. A simple awareness could repose in man, bottled up, as it were. Therefore, this feeling, which draws men to God’s judgment, is like a keeper assigned to man, that watches and observes all his secrets so that nothing may remain buried in darkness. Hence that ancient proverb: conscience is a thousand witnesses.^{F322} By like reasoning, Peter also put “the response^{F323} of a good conscience to God” [^{<600321>}1 Peter 3:21] as equivalent to peace of mind, when, convinced of Christ’s grace, we fearlessly present ourselves before God. And when the author of the Letter to the Hebrews states that we “no longer have any

consciousness of sin” [^{<581002>} Hebrews 10:2], he means that we are freed or absolved so that sin can no longer accuse us.

4. BONDAGE AND FREEDOM OF CONSCIENCE

Therefore, just as works concern men, so the conscience relates to God in such a way that a good conscience is nothing but an inward uprightness of heart. In this sense, Paul writes that “the fulfillment of the law is love, out of a pure... conscience and faith unfeigned” [^{<540105>} 1 Timothy 1:5 p.]. Afterward, in the same chapter, he shows how much it differs from understanding, saying that certain ones “made shipwreck of faith” because they had “forsaken a good conscience” [^{<540119>} 1 Timothy 1:19]. For by these words he indicates that it is a lively longing to worship God and a sincere intent to live a godly and holy life.

Sometimes, it is extended also to men, as when the same Paul, according to Luke, testifies that he tried to walk with a good conscience toward God and men [^{<442416>} Acts 24:16]. But this was said because the blessings of a good conscience flow to and even reach men. But speaking properly, it refers to God alone, as I have already said.^{F324}

Hence it happens that the law is said to bind the conscience when it simply binds man, without regard to other men, or without having any consideration for them. For example: God not only teaches us to keep our mind chaste and pure from all lust, but forbids any obscenity of speech and outward wantonness. My conscience is subject to the observance of this law, even though no man were alive in the world. Thus, he who conducts himself intemperately sins not so much because he furnishes a bad example to his brethren as in that his conscience is bound with guilt before God.

In things intrinsically indifferent there is another consideration. For we ought to abstain from them if they cause any offense, but with a free conscience. So Paul speaks of meat consecrated to idols: “If anyone raises objection,” he says, “do not touch it, for conscience’ sake; I speak not of your conscience but another’s” [^{<461028>} 1 Corinthians 10:28-29 p.]. A faithful man would sin if, previously warned, he nonetheless ate such meat. But however necessary abstention may be to him with regard to his brother, as is prescribed by God, still he does not cease to retain freedom

of conscience. We see that this law, binding only outward works, leaves the conscience free.

*(Conscience in relation to human and papal laws:
God the only lawgiver, 5-8)*

5. THE MEANING OF HUMAN LAWS FOR THE CONSCIENCE

Now let us return to human laws. If they were passed to lay scruples upon us, as if the observance of these laws were necessary of itself, we say that something unlawful is laid upon conscience. For our consciences do not have to do with men but with God alone. This is the purport of that common distinction between the earthly forum and the forum of conscience. While the whole world was shrouded in the densest darkness of ignorance, this tiny little spark of light remained, that men recognized man's conscience to be higher than all human judgments. Although they afterward indeed cast away what they confessed in one word, God still willed that some testimony of Christian freedom appear even then, to rescue consciences from the tyranny of men.

But the difficulty arising out of Paul's words has not yet been disposed of.^{F325} For if we must obey rulers not only because of punishment but for conscience' sake [^{<451305>}Romans 13:5], it seems to follow from this that the rulers' laws also have dominion over the conscience. Now, if this is true, the same also will have to be said of church laws.

I reply: we must first distinguish here between genus and species. For even though individual laws may not apply to the conscience, we are still held by God's general command, which commends to us the authority of magistrates. And Paul's discussion turns on this point: the magistrates, since they have been ordained by God, ought to be held in honor [^{<451301>}Romans 13:1]. Meanwhile, he does not teach that the laws framed by them apply to the inward governing of the soul, since he everywhere extols, above any decrees of men, both the worship of God and the spiritual rule of right living.^{F326}

Another thing is also worth noting (which depends, however, upon the previous ones): human laws, whether made by magistrate or by church, even though they have to be observed (I speak of good and just laws), still

do not of themselves bind the conscience. For all obligation to observe laws looks to the general purpose, but does not consist in the things enjoined.

Far different from this order are those laws which prescribe a new form for worshiping God, and impose necessity even in matters that are free.

6. THE CHURCH HAS NO RIGHT TO SET UP INDEPENDENT CONSTITUTIONS TO BIND CONSCIENCES

Such, moreover, are what are called today in the papacy “ecclesiastical constitutions,” which are thrust upon men as true and necessary worship of God. And as these are innumerable, so innumerable are the traps to catch and ensnare souls. We touched upon this slightly in the explanation of the law.^{F327} However, because this was a more suitable place for a proper treatment of it. I shall now try to sum up the whole matter in the best order I can. And because we have recently discussed at sufficient length (as it seemed) the tyranny which the false bishops claim for themselves in the license to teach whatever they please, I shall omit that whole field. Here I shall stop only to explain the power to make laws which they say they have.

Our false bishops, therefore, burden our consciences with new laws on the pretext that they have been appointed by the Lord spiritual lawgivers, as a consequence of which the government of the church has been entrusted to them. Accordingly, they contend that whatever they command and prescribe must of necessity be observed by Christian people. Anyone who violates it they hold guilty of double disobedience, because he is a rebel against God and the church.^{F328}

Certainly, if they were true bishops, I would grant them authority in this respect, not as much as they claim, but as much as is required duly to maintain the government of the church; now, since they are everything but what they would have themselves esteemed, they cannot take upon themselves even the least authority without stepping out of bounds.

But because this also has been looked at elsewhere,^{F329} let us concede to them for the present that whatever power true bishops have belongs to these men by right. Yet I deny that they have so been appointed lawgivers

over believers as to be able by themselves to prescribe a rule of life, or to force their ordinances upon the people committed to them. When I say this, I mean that they have no right to command the church to observe as obligatory what they have themselves conceived apart from God's Word. Since that right was both unknown to the apostles, and many times denied the ministers of the church by the Lord's own mouth, al marvel that anyone, contrary to the example of the apostles and against the clear prohibition of God, dared seize this right and dare defend it today!

7. ALL ARBITRARY LORDSHIP IS AN ENCROACHMENT UPON GOD'S KINGDOM

In his law the Lord has included everything applicable to the perfect rule of the good life, so that nothing is left to men to add to that summary.^{F330} He did this for two reasons. The first is that he wants us to regard himself as the master and guide of our life. This we shall do if all our actions conform to the standard of his will, for in it all righteous living consists. The second is that he wants us to realize there is nothing he requires of us more than obedience. "For this reason, James says: "He who judges his brother... judges the law; he who judges the law is not a keeper of the law but a judge. There is one lawgiver... who is able to save and destroy" [^{<590411>} James 4:11-12 p.]. We hear that God claims this one prerogative as his very own—to rule us by the authority and laws of his Word. And he had said this previously through Isaiah, albeit a little less clearly: "The Lord is our king, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our judge; he will save us" [^{<233322>} Isaiah 33:22 p.]. Both passages show that the power of life and death is his who has jurisdiction over the soul. Indeed, James clearly declares this. Further, no man can take this to himself. "We ought, therefore, to acknowledge God as sole ruler of souls, with whom alone is the power to save and to destroy, as those words of Isaiah declare that he is at once ruler and judge and lawgiver and savior [^{<233322>} Isaiah 33:22]. Therefore, 'Peter, when admonishing the shepherds as to their office, exhorts them to feed their flock, without domineering over the "clergy" [^{<600502>} 1 Peter 5:2-3]; by this term he means the inheritance of God, that is, the believing folk. If we duly weigh this, that it is unlawful to transfer to man what God reserves for himself, we shall understand that the whole

power of those who wish to advance themselves to command anything in the church apart from God's Word is thus cut off.

8. DIRECTIONS TO DETERMINE WHICH HUMAN CONSTITUTIONS ARE INADMISSIBLE

The whole case rests upon this: if God is the sole lawgiver, men are not permitted to usurp this honor. Consequently, we ought at the same time to keep in mind these two reasons already mentioned why the Lord claims this for himself alone. The first is that we should have in his will the perfect rule of all righteousness and holiness, and thus in knowing him possess the perfect knowledge of the good life. The second is that he alone (when we seek the way to worship him aright and fitly) has authority over our souls, him we ought to obey, and upon his will we ought to wait.

Having noted these two reasons, we should be able with ease to distinguish what human constitutions^{F331} are contrary to the Lord's Word. All of these are of the sort that pretend to relate to the true worship of God, and that consciences are bound to keep, as if their observance were compulsory. Let us, therefore, remember that all human laws are to be weighed in this balance if we wish to have a sure test which will not allow us in anything to go astray.

Paul employs the former reason when he contends in the letter to the Colossians against false apostles who were trying to oppress the churches with new burdens [^{<510208>}Colossians 2:8]. He makes more use of the second reason in the letter to the Galatians, in a similar case [^{<480501>}Galatians 5:1-12]. Accordingly, he argues in the letter to the Colossians that we are not to seek from men the doctrine of the true worship of God, for the Lord has faithfully and fully instructed us how he is to be worshiped. To prove this, he says in the first chapter that the gospel contains all the wisdom by which the man of God is made perfect in Christ [^{<510128>}Colossians 1:28]. At the beginning of the second chapter he states that all treasures of wisdom and understanding are hidden in Christ [^{<510203>}Colossians 2:3]. From this he subsequently concludes that believers ought to beware lest they be seduced from Christ's flock through empty philosophy, according to the constitutions of men [^{<510208>}Colossians 2:8]. But at the end of the chapter he condemns with

greater confidence all self-made religion,^{F332} that is, all feigned worship, which men have devised for themselves or received from others, and all precepts they of themselves dare promulgate concerning the worship of God [^{<510216>}Colossians 2:16-23]. We therefore consider impious all constitutions in whose observance the worship of God is reigned to consist.

Sufficiently clear are the passages in the letter to the Galatians where Paul urges that consciences (which ought to be ruled by God alone) are not to be entangled in snares—especially chapter 5 [^{<480501>}Galatians 5:1-12]. Let it therefore be enough to have noted them.

(Ecclesiastical constitutions authorizing ceremonies in worship are tyrannous, frivolous, and contrary to Scripture, 9-18)

9. THE ROMAN CONSTITUTIONS ARE, ACCORDING TO THE FOREGOING PRINCIPLES, TO BE REJECTED

But because the whole matter will be made clearer by examples, it is worthwhile before we go any farther to apply this doctrine to our own times. We say that the constitutions (termed by them “ecclesiastical”), with which the pope and his minions burden the church, are pernicious and impious; our adversaries defend them as being holy and salutary. But they are of two kinds: some apply to ceremonies and rites; others, more to discipline. Is there, therefore, just cause for us to attack both kinds? Truly more just than we would wish!

First, do not the authors themselves define, in clear terms, that the veriest worship of God is, so to speak, contained in these very constitutions? To what end do they direct their ceremonies, except that God may be worshiped through them? And this is not done solely by the error of the unlettered multitude, but with the approval of those who have the task of teaching. I am not yet touching on the gross abominations with which they have endeavored to overthrow all piety. But among them it would not be imagined to be such an atrocious crime to fail to observe in even the least little tradition if they did not subject the worship of God to their fictions, how do we sin, if today we cannot bear what Paul has taught to be unbearable—that the lawful order of divine worship is reduced to men’s decision? Especially, when they command men to worship according to

the elements of this world, which Paul testifies to be against Christ [^{<510220>}Colossians 2:20]. Again, it is well known with what extreme rigor they bind consciences to observe whatever they command. When we contradict them, we make common cause with Paul, who on no account allows faithful consciences to be reduced to human bondage [^{<480501>}Galatians 5:1].

10. THE PAPAL CONSTITUTIONS DENY GOD'S LAW

Moreover, this evil thing is added, that when religion once begins to be defined in such vain fictions, such perversity is always followed by another hateful depravity, for which Christ rebuked the Pharisees. It is that they nullify God's commandment for the sake of the traditions of men [^{<401503>}Matthew 15:3]. I do not wish to fight with words of my own against our present lawmakers;^{F333} let them win, I say, if they can in any way cleanse themselves of Christ's accusation. But how could they excuse themselves, since among them it is far more wicked to have skipped auricular confession at the turn of the year than to have led an utterly wicked life the whole year through? to have infected their tongue with a slight taste of meat on Friday than to have fouled the whole body with fornication every day? to have moved the hand to honest work on a day consecrated to some saintlet or other than religiously to have exercised all the bodily members in the worst crimes? for a priest to be bound in one lawful marriage than to be entangled in a thousand adulteries? to have left unperformed an avowed pilgrimage than to have broken faith in all promises? not to have squandered something on monstrous, but no less superfluous and unprofitable, pomp of churches than to have failed the poor in their extremity? to have passed by an idol without honoring it than to have treated the whole race of mankind abusively? not to have murmured long senseless words at certain hours than never to have framed a lawful prayer in the mind? What is it to set at nought God's precept for the sake of their own traditions [^{<401503>}Matthew 15:3] if it be not this? While commending the observance of God's commandments only coldly and perfunctorily, they nonetheless zealously and busily urge an exact obedience to their own, as if these contained in themselves the whole force of piety? While requiring that only light amends be made for the

transgression of the divine law, they punish even the slightest infraction of their decree with no lighter penalty than prison, exile, fire, or sword.^{F334}

While not so harsh and inexorable against those who despise God, they persecute to the extremity their own despisers with an implacable hatred; and they instruct all those whose simplicity they hold captive to see with greater equanimity God's whole law overthrown than a tittle of the precepts of the church (as they call them) violated. First, it is a grave transgression for one man to despise, judge, and cast out another because of what are trivial and (in God's sight) indifferent matters. But now, as though this were but a slight evil, those trifling elements of this world (as Paul writing to the Galatians calls them [^{<480409>} Galatians 4:9]) are more highly esteemed than the heavenly oracles of God. And he who is well-nigh absolved in adultery is judged in food; he to whom a harlot is permitted is denied a wife. Here, then, is the fruit of this sham obedience which turns away from God as much as it inclines to men.

11. ROMAN CONSTITUTIONS MEANINGLESS AND USELESS

In these same constitutions there are also two other considerable faults of which we disapprove. First, they prescribe observances for the most part useless and sometimes even foolish; secondly, pious consciences are oppressed with an immense multitude of them, and reverting to a kind of Judaism,^{F335} so cling to shadows that they cannot reach Christ.

I know that my description of them as foolish and useless will not be credible to the wisdom of the flesh, which takes such pleasure in them that it thinks the church utterly deformed when they are removed. But this is what Paul writes: "These have... an appearance of wisdom in counterfeit worship, in self-abasement," and for that reason they seem by their severity to be able to tame the flesh [^{<510223>} Colossians 2:23 p.]. Surely a most salutary admonition, this, which ought never to escape us! Human traditions, he says, deceive under the appearance of wisdom. Whence this deceptive hue? From the fact that they have been reigned by men. Human wit recognizes there what is its own, and embraces it, once recognized, more willingly than something truly excellent but less in accord with its vanity.

Again, that these constitutions seem to afford appropriate instruction in self-abasement, keeping men's minds pressed to the ground by their yoke gives them another commendation. Lastly, because they apparently try to restrain the delights of the flesh, and to subject it to the rigor of abstinence, they therefore seem to have been wisely contrived. But what does Paul say to these? Does he tear off these masks, that the simple-minded may not be deluded by false pretense? Since to disprove them he had deemed it enough merely to have said that they were the devisings of men, he passes over all these things without refutation [^{<510222>} Colossians 2:22], as if he counted them of no value. Indeed, Paul knew that all counterfeit worship in the church was condemned, and that the more it delights human nature the more it is suspected by believers; he knew that that false image of outward humility is so far from true humility as to be easily distinguished from it; lastly, he knew that that elementary discipline is no more to be esteemed than bodily exercise. He wished the very facts to serve as a refutation of human traditions for believers, for whose sake these were commended among the unlearned.

12. THEIR MYSTERIES ARE MOCKERIES

So today not only the untutored crowd but any man who is greatly puffed up with worldly wisdom is marvelously captivated by ceremonial pomp. Indeed, hypocrites and lightheaded women think that nothing more beautiful or better can be imagined. But those who more deeply investigate and, according to the rule of piety, more truly weigh the value of so many and such ceremonies, understand first that they are trifles because they have no usefulness; secondly, that they are tricks because they delude the eyes of the spectators with empty pomp. I am speaking of those ceremonies under which the Romanist masters would have it that great mysteries exist; we experience them to be nothing but pure mockeries.^{F336} And no wonder that their authors have slipped to the point of deluding themselves and others with trifling follies! For they have partly taken their pattern from the ravings of the Gentiles, partly, like apes, have rashly imitated the ancient rites of the Mosaic law, which apply to us no more than do animal sacrifices and other like things. Obviously, even if there is no other proof, no one in his right mind will hope for anything good from such an ill-patched hodgepodge. And the thing itself plainly shows that

most ceremonies have no other use than to benumb the people rather than to teach them. So also in these newfangled canons, which overturn rather than preserve discipline, the hypocrites put great importance. But if someone investigates them more thoroughly, he will find them nothing but a shadowy and fleeting illusion of discipline.

13. THE ROMAN CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS, THROUGH THEIR SENSELESS ACCUMULATION, BRING JEWISH VEXATIONS UPON THE CONSCIENCE

To come to the other point, who does not see that these traditions by being heaped one upon another have increased to such a number as to be unbearable to the Christian church? Hence, some sort of Judaism comes to light in ceremonies, and other observances bring cruel torment upon pious minds. Augustine complained that, in his time, when God's precepts were neglected, everything was so full of many prejudices that a man who touched his bare foot to the ground during his octaves was more severely rebuked than one who drowned his mind in drink. He complained that the church, which God in his mercy willed to be free, was so oppressed that the condition of the Jews was more bearable.^{F337} If that holy man had lived to our age, how he would have complained against the bondage that now exists! For the number is even ten times greater, and every tittle is exacted a hundred times more strictly than then. Thus it usually happens that where these perverse lawgivers have once taken authority, they never cease to command and forbid, until they come to the limit of over-scrupulousness. This Paul has also eloquently declared in these words: "If you died to the world.... why do you submit to regulations, as if you were alive, 'Do not eat, Do not taste, Do not touch'?" [^{<510220>}Colossians 2:20-21 p.]. For although the word [ἄπτεσθαι] means both to eat and to touch, here, to avoid idle repetition, it is doubtless taken in the former sense. Here, then, Paul admirably describes the procedure of the false apostles. They begin with superstition, forbidding one not only to eat but even to chew slightly; when they have gained this point, they forbid one even to taste. After this, too, has been conceded, they consider it unlawful even to touch with a finger.

14. CEREMONIES TO SHOW FORTH CHRIST, NOT TO HIDE HIM

Today we rightly blame this tyranny in human constitutions, by which miserable consciences come to be wonderfully tormented with innumerable decrees and their immoderate enforcement. I have elsewhere spoken of the canons pertaining to discipline.^{F338} What shall I say of ceremonies which, with Christ half buried, cause us to return to Jewish symbols? “Our Lord Christ,” says Augustine, “has bound the fellowship of the new people together with sacraments, very few in number, very excellent in meaning, very easy to observe.”^{F339} How far from this simplicity is that multitude and variety of rites, with which we see the church entangled today, cannot be fully told.

I know with what artifice some crafty men excuse this perversity. They say that among us are very many as untutored as there were among the people of Israel; that for the sake of these this sort of elementary discipline was provided and that the stronger, even though they can go without it, ought not to neglect it, since they see it to be useful for weak brethren. I reply, that we are not unmindful of what is owed to the infirmity of the brethren; but we object, on the contrary, that this is not the way to take care of the weak—to overwhelm them with great heaps of ceremonies. It was not in vain that God set this difference between us and the ancient folk, that he willed to teach them as children by signs and figures, but to teach us more simply, without such outward trappings. As a child (says Paul) is guided by his tutor according to the capacity of his age, and is restrained under his tutelage, so the Jews were under the custody of the law [^{<480401>} Galatians 4:1-3]. But we are like adults, who, freed of tutelage and custody, have no need of childish rudiments. The Lord surely foresaw what sort of people would be in his church, and how they would have to be governed. Yet in this way, as we said, he distinguished between us and the Jews. Therefore, if we wish to benefit the untutored, raising up a Judaism that has been abrogated by Christ is a stupid way to do it. Christ also marked this dissimilarity between the old and new people in his own words when he said to the Samaritan woman that the time had come “when the true worshipers should worship God in spirit and in truth” [^{<430423>} John 4:23]. Indeed, this had always been done. But the new worshipers differ from the old in that under Moses the

spiritual worship of God was figured and, so to speak, enwrapped in many ceremonies; but now that these are abolished, he is worshiped more simply. Accordingly, he who confuses this difference is overturning an order instituted and sanctioned by Christ.

Shall no ceremonies then (you will ask) be given to the ignorant to help them in their inexperience? I do not say that. For I feel that this kind of help is very useful to them. I only contend that the means used ought to show Christ, not to hide him.^{F340} Therefore, God has given us a few ceremonies, not at all irksome, to show Christ present. To the Jews more were given as images of Christ absent. He was absent, I say, not in power, but in the means by which he might be made known. Accordingly, to keep that means, it is necessary to keep fewness in number, ease in observance, dignity in representation, which also includes clarity. What point is there in saying that this has not been done? The fact confronts all eyes.

15. CORRUPTION OF CEREMONIES REGARDED AS EXPIATORY SACRIFICES

Here I pass over the pernicious opinions with which men's minds are imbued: that the ceremonies are sacrifices by which God is duly appeased, sins are cleansed, and righteousness and salvation obtained. They will deny that foreign errors of this sort corrupt good things, since in this respect one can sin just as much in those works enjoined by God. But it is more unworthy to attribute so much honor to works rashly devised at the will of men than to believe them meritorious for eternal life. Works enjoined by God have their reward because the Lawgiver himself accepts them as evidence of obedience. Therefore, such works do not derive value from their own worth or merit but because God so highly values our obedience to him. Here I am speaking of the perfection in works which is enjoined by God, but is not performed by men. For the works of the law which we do, have grace only from God's free kindness, because in them our obedience is weak and defective. But inasmuch as the value of works without Christ is not under discussion here, let us pass over this question. I again repeat what belongs in the present argument: whatever works have in themselves to commend them, they have in respect to obedience, which alone God regards, as he has attested through the prophet: "I did not command you concerning sacrifices and burnt offerings... but only that

hearing, you should hear my voice” [^{<240722>} Jeremiah 7:22-23 p.]. Of feigned works he speaks elsewhere: “You spend your money, and not for bread” [^{<235502>} Isaiah 55:2 p.]. Likewise: “They vainly worship me with the precepts of men” [cf. ^{<232913>} Isaiah 29:13; ^{<401509>} Matthew 15:9]. Our adversaries can therefore in no way excuse the fact that they let the poor folk seek in those outward trifles a righteousness which they may offer to God, and which will uphold them before the tribunal of heaven.

Moreover, is this not a fault deserving censure, that they display ceremonies not understood, like a scene on the stage, or a magical incantation? It is certain that all ceremonies are corrupt and harmful unless through them men are led to Christ. But those ceremonies in use under the papacy are separated from teaching so as to hold men to utterly meaningless signs.

Finally (as the belly is a cunning craftsman), it appears that many ceremonies have been invented by greedy priestlings as snares to catch money. But whatever beginning they have, all are so prostituted to filthy gain that we must cut off a good part of them if we would have the church freed of this profane and sacrilegious traffic.

16. GENERAL APPLICATION OF COMMON INSIGHTS

Though I may not seem to be teaching a permanent doctrine concerning human constitutions, inasmuch as this discourse is applied entirely to our own age, still nothing has been said that would not be profitable for all ages. For whenever this superstition creeps in, that men wish to worship God with their fictions, all laws enacted for this purpose immediately degenerate to these gross abuses. For God threatens not one age or another but all ages with this curse, that he will strike with blindness and amazement those who worship him with the doctrines of men [^{<232913>} Isaiah 29:13-14]. This blinding continually causes those who despise so many warnings of God and willfully entangle themselves in these deadly snares, to embrace every kind of absurdity. But suppose, apart from present circumstances, you simply want to understand what are those human traditions of all times that should be repudiated by the church and by all godly men^{F341} What we have set forth above^{F342} will be a sure and clear definition: that they are all laws apart from God’s Word,

laws made by men, either to prescribe the manner of worshiping God or to bind consciences by scruples, as if they were making rules about things necessary for salvation. If other faults be added to one or both of these—that they obscure by their multitude the clarity of the gospel, that they are in no sense constructive but are useless and trifling occupations rather than true exercises of piety, that they are calculated for sordid and base gain, that they are too difficult to observe, that they are befouled with shameful superstitions—these will help us to comprehend how much evil these constitutions contain.

17. THE ROMAN CONSTITUTIONS CANNOT, AS THEY ASSUME, COUNT AS CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS

I hear the answer they make for themselves—that their traditions are not from themselves but from God. For they say that the church is being governed by the Holy Spirit, to keep it from erring; that its authority resides in them. This point gained, it follows immediately that their traditions are the revelations of the Holy Spirit and cannot be despised except in impious contempt of God. And that they may not seem to have attempted anything without great authorities, they want us to believe that a good part of their observances has come down from the apostles. And they contend that one example sufficiently shows what the apostles did in other situations, when, assembled together in a council, they ordered all Gentiles, by decree of council, to abstain from things offered to idols, from blood, and from what is strangled [^{<441520>} Acts 15:20, 29].^{F343} In another place we have already explained how falsely they counterfeit the title of church for their self-glorification.^{F344} As for the present case, suppose that, tearing away all masks and disguises, we truly look upon that which ought to be our first concern and is of greatest importance for us, that is, the kind of church Christ would have that we may fashion and fit ourselves to its standard. We shall then easily see that it is not a church which, passing the bounds of God's Word, wantons and disports itself in the framing of new laws. For does not that law once spoken to the church hold good forever? "Everything that I command you you shall be careful to do; you shall not add to it or take from it." [^{<051232>} Deuteronomy 12:32.] And another passage: "Do not add to" the Word of the Lord, or take away from it, "lest he rebuke you, and you be found a liar"

[<203006> Proverbs 30:6 p.]. They cannot deny that this was spoken to the church. What else, then, do they declare but its recalcitrance, for they boast that, after such prohibitions, it nonetheless dared add and mix something of its own with God's teaching? Far be it from us to assent to their falsehood, by which they bring so much insult upon the church! But let us understand that whenever one considers this inordinate human rashness—which cannot contain itself within God's commands but must, wildly exulting, run after its own inventions—the name “church” is falsely pretended. There is nothing involved, nothing obscure, nothing ambiguous in these words which forbid the church universal to add to or take away anything from God's Word, when the worship of the Lord and precepts of salvation are concerned.

But this (they assert) was spoken of the law alone, which was followed by prophecies and the whole ministration of the gospel. True, I admit; and I also add, these are rather supplements to the law than either additions or abridgments. Now, the Lord allows nothing to be added or taken away from the ministry of Moses—obscure, so to speak, because of its very many wrappings—until he shall administer a clearer doctrine through his servants, the prophets, and at last through his beloved Son. Why, then, should we not consider ourselves much more strictly forbidden to add anything to the law, prophets, psalms, and gospel? The Lord, who long ago declared that nothing so much offended him as being worshiped by humanly devised rites, has not become untrue to himself. Here is the source of those wonderful words of the prophets which ought continually to resound in our ears: “I did not speak to your fathers, in the day that I brought them out of Egypt, words concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices. But this command I gave them, saying, ‘Hearing, hear my voice, and I will be your God, and you shall be my people; and you shall walk in all the way that I command you’” [<240722> Jeremiah 7:22-23]. Again:

“Warning, I warned your fathers ‘Hear my voice’” [<241107> Jeremiah 11:7 p.]. There are other passages of the same kind, but this is pre-eminent above the rest: “Does the Lord delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices and not rather that his voice be obeyed? For obedience is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. Since to rebel is as the sin of divination, and not to obey as the iniquity of idolatry” [<091522> 1 Samuel 15:22-23 p.]. Therefore, since one cannot excuse of the charge of impiety

all human inventions in this area which are sustained by the authority of the church, they are easily proved to be falsely imputed to the church.

18. THE ROMAN CONSTITUTIONS DO NOT REACH BACK TO THE APOSTLES, OR EVEN TO THE “APOSTOLIC TRADITION”

For this reason we freely inveigh against this tyranny of human tradition which is haughtily thrust upon us under the title of the church. For we do not scorn the church (as our adversaries, to heap spite upon us, unjustly and falsely assert); but we give the church the praise of obedience, than which it knows no greater.^{F345} But grave injury is done to the church by those who make it obstinate against its Lord, when they pretend that it has gone beyond what is permitted by God’s Word. I leave unsaid what infamous shamelessness—as well as malice—it is to harp continually about the power of the church, while at the same time to conceal what the Lord has commanded it and what obedience it owes the Lord’s command. But, if, as is fitting, we are minded to agree with the church, it is more to the point to see and remember what the Lord has enjoined upon us and the church, that we may obey it with one consent. For there is no doubt that we shall agree very well with the church if we show ourselves in all things obedient to the Lord.

But to trace the origin of these traditions (with which the church has hitherto been oppressed) back to the apostles is pure deceit. For the whole doctrine of the apostles has this intent: not to burden consciences with new observances, or contaminate the worship of God with our own inventions. Again, if there is anything credible in the histories and ancient records, the apostles not only were ignorant of what the Romanists attribute to them but never even heard of it.

And let them not prate that most of the apostles’ decrees which were not committed to writing had been received in use and customary practice. The reference is to those things which, while Christ was still alive, they could not understand but after his ascension learned by the revelation of his Holy Spirit [^{<431619>} John 16:19-13.].^{F346} We have already seen the interpretation of this passage in another place.^{F347} This is enough for the present argument—they actually make themselves ridiculous when they picture as huge mysteries, unknown for so long to the apostles, what were

partly Jewish and Gentile observances (some published long before among the Jews, others among the Gentiles); partly foolish gesticulations and empty little ceremonies which stupid priestlings (who ken neither swimming nor letters^{F348}) perform exceedingly well. In fact, children and jesters so aptly mimic these that they might seem to be the most suitable officiants of such holy rites! If there were no histories, still men of sound mind could conclude from the facts of the case that such a great heap of rites and observances did not suddenly burst upon the church, but crept in gradually. For after those holier bishops, close to the apostolic age, had ordained some things pertaining to order and discipline, they were followed by men, one after another, insufficiently discreet and too curious and covetous. The later each one was, the more he contended in stupid rivalry with his predecessors not to be surpassed in the invention of novelties. And because there was danger that their inventions (by which they sought praise from their successors) might presently fall out of use, they were much more rigorous in requiring their observance. This perverse zeal^{F349} has given birth to a good part of these ceremonies, which they hawk to us as apostolic. And the histories also attest this.

*(Accumulation of useless rites falsely called
“apostolic”: obligation to weak consciences, 19-21)*

19. POST-APOSTOLIC ACCUMULATION OF USELESS RITES

Not to be too prolix in making a complete list of these “traditions,” we shall be content with one example. Under the apostles the Lord’s Supper was administered with great simplicity. Their immediate successors added something to enhance the dignity of the mystery which was not to be condemned. But afterward they were replaced by those foolish imitators, who, by patching pieces from time to time, contrived for us these priestly vestments that we see in the Mass, these altar ornaments, these gesticulations, and the whole apparatus of useless things.

But they object that in olden times men were convinced that what was done by common consent in the church universal had come down from the apostles. They cite Augustine as authority in this matter. But I shall bring forth an answer from no other source than Augustine’s own words.

“Those things [he says] that the whole world observes we may

understand to have been established either by the apostles themselves or by general councils, whose authority is most healthful in the church. Examples of these include the celebration with annual rites of the Lord's Passion and resurrection, his ascent into heaven, and the coming of the Holy Spirit, and any similar event that has occurred which is celebrated by the whole church, wherever it may be spread.^{F350} Since Augustine listed so few examples, who does not see that he intended to refer to authors worthy of credit and reverence the observances then in use, that is, only those simple, infrequent and sober rites useful to preserve the church order? How different this is from what the Roman masters would extort from men—that every little ceremony among them is to be considered apostolic!

20. AUGUSTINE INTERPRETED

Not to weary you, I shall bring forth only one example. If anyone should ask them where their holy water comes from, they will answer at once, "From the apostles." As if the histories do not attribute this invention to some bishop or other of Rome,^{F351} who, if he had consulted the apostles, would never have contaminated baptism with a strange and inappropriate symbol! Even at that, it does not seem likely to me that the origin of this consecration of water is as old as is there written. For Augustine's statement that certain churches in his time shrank from solemnly imitating Christ in foot washing, lest that rite seem to pertain to baptism,^{F352} would indicate that there was no kind of washing that had any similarity to baptism. Whatever may be the case, I by no means admit that baptism is in a manner repeated by recalling it with a daily sign. Such practice has not come down from the spirit of the apostles. And I do not linger over the fact that the same Augustine elsewhere ascribes other things to the apostles. For since he is giving only conjectures, judgment in so great a matter should not be based upon them. Finally, suppose we admit that the things which he mentions have come down from the apostles. There is still a great difference between establishing some exercise of piety which believers may use with a free conscience, or (if it will serve them no useful purpose) abstain from it, and making a law to entrap consciences in bondage. But now, whoever their author may have been, after we see the great abuse into which they have slipped, nothing will prevent us from

abolishing them without any disrespect for him. For they never were so recommended that they should remain unalterable.

21. THE DECREE OF ^{<441520>} ACTS 15:20

Nor does it help them much to claim the example of the apostles to excuse their tyranny, aThe apostles, they say, and the elders of the primitive church framed a decree outside the command of Christ, by which they enjoined all the Gentiles to abstain from meat offered to idols, from meat of strangled animals, and from blood [^{<441520>} Acts 15:20]. If this was allowed to them, why should it not be allowed to their successors to follow the same practice as often as the situation requires?^{F353} Would that they always followed them both in other practices and in this! For I affirm—and can easily prove by a strong reason—that the apostles instituted or decreed nothing new there. For when Peter in that council declares that God is being tried if a yoke is laid on the necks of the disciples [^{<441510>} Acts 15:10], he subverts his own opinion if he afterward consents to have any yoke laid upon them. But it is imposed, if the apostles on their own authority decree that the Gentiles are prohibited to touch meat offered to idols, blood, and things strangled. A scruple, indeed, still remains in that they nonetheless seem to forbid these. But this scruple will be easily removed if one pays attention to the actual meaning of the decree itself, of which the first and most important point is that the Gentiles are to be left their freedom, and are not to be troubled or exposed to the bother of observing the law [^{<441519>} Acts 15:19, 24, 28]. So far it notably favors us. But an exception immediately follows [^{<4415200>} Acts 15:20, 29]. This is no new law laid down by the apostles, but the divine and eternal command of God not to violate love. It takes away not one tittle from that freedom but only warns the Gentiles how to temper themselves toward their brethren so as not to offend them by abusing their freedom. Let this be the second point, that the Gentiles may enjoy a harmless freedom, without offending their brethren. Yet the apostles still prescribe a particular thing: they teach and designate, as far as was expedient for the time, what things might cause the brethren offense, in order to avoid them. But they bring nothing new of their own to God's eternal law, which forbids the offending of brethren.

22. OBLIGATION TO WEAK BRETHREN

It is as if faithful pastors in charge of churches not yet well established should command all their people that—until the weak with whom they live grow stronger—they should not openly eat meat on Friday, or publicly labor on holy days, or any such thing. For even though these things, superstition aside, are of themselves indifferent, still, when offense to the brethren is added, they cannot be committed without sin. But the times are such that believers cannot so appear in the sight of weak brethren without very gravely wounding the consciences of their brethren. Who but a slanderer will say that they thus make a new law, when it is clear that they are only forestailing scandals which have been explicitly enough forbidden by the Lord? And it can no more be said of the apostles, who had no other intention than by removing the occasion for offenses to urge the divine law concerning the avoiding of offense. It is as if they had said: “The Lord’s command is that you should not wound a weak brother; you cannot eat meat offered to idols, things strangled, and blood, without offending weak brethren. We therefore command you in the Word of the Lord not to eat with offense.” Paul is the best witness that the apostles had the same thing in mind. He surely writes this in accordance with the decision of the council: “Concerning food offered to idols... we know that ‘an image has no real existence.’ ... But some, through being hitherto accustomed to idols, eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled... Take care lest this liberty of yours... cause even a slight offense to the weak” [^{<460801>} 1 Corinthians 8:1,4,7,9]. He who shall weigh these matters well will not afterward be deceived by the camouflage of those who make the apostle a pretext for their tyranny, as if the apostles by their decree had begun to encroach upon the freedom of the church. But, that they may not be able to escape without approving this answer to their objection by their very own confession, let them answer me by what right they dared set aside that apostolic decree. Because (they say) there was no more danger from those offenses and dissensions which the apostles meant to forestall. They knew that the law was to be judged by its purpose. Since, therefore, this law was framed with a view to love, in it nothing is prescribed except as it pertains to love. When they confess that transgression of this law is nothing but the violation of love, do they not acknowledge that this is no contrived

addition to God's law but a genuine and simple accommodation to the times and customs for which it was intended?

(Traditions and human inventions in worship condemned in Scripture and by Christ himself, 23-26)

23. THE APPEAL TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH CONTRADICTS THE EVIDENCE OF SCRIPTURE

But, though such laws be a hundred times unjust and injurious to us, still they contend that these should be obeyed without exception. For here there is no question of our consenting to errors, but only that as subjects we should bear the harsh commands of our leaders, which we have no right to reject.

But here also the Lord best confronts them with the truth of his word, and delivers us out of such bondage into the freedom that he has purchased for us by his sacred blood [^{<460723>} 1 Corinthians 7:23], the benefit of which he has more than once sealed by his Word. For here it is not only intended (as they maliciously pretend) that we endure some grave oppression in our body but that our consciences, deprived of their freedom (that is, of the benefit of the blood of Christ), should be tormented like slaves.

Let us, however, pass over this also, as if it were little to the point. But how important do we think it that the Lord is deprived of his Kingdom, which he so sternly claims for himself? But it is taken away whenever he is worshiped by laws of human devising, inasmuch as he wills to be accounted the sole lawgiver of his own worship. So that no one may think this something negligible, let us hear how highly the Lord regards it.

“Because,” he says, “this people... feared me by a commandment and doctrines of men.... behold, I will astound this people with a great and amazing miracle; for wisdom shall perish from their wise men, and understanding shall depart from their elders.” [^{<232913>} Isaiah 29:13-14 p.]

Another passage: “In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrine the precepts of men” [^{<401509>} Matthew 15:9]. And truly, when the children of Israel corrupted themselves with many idolatries, the cause of all that evil is ascribed to this impure mixture: they have transgressed God's commandments and have fabricated new rites. On this account, the Sacred History relates that the new settlers who had been brought by the king of

Babylonia to dwell in Samaria were torn and consumed by wild beasts because they were ignorant of the judgments and statutes of the god of that land. Although they did not sin in ceremonies, their empty pomp was not approved by God; but meanwhile, because men had introduced devices foreign to his word, he did not desist from avenging the violation of his worship. Thereupon, it is afterward said that they, frightened by that punishment, took up the rites prescribed in the law; but because they were not yet purely worshiping the true God, it is twice repeated that they feared him and feared him not [^{<121724>} 2 Kings 17:24-25, 32-33,41]. From this we gather that a part of the reverence that is paid to him consists simply in worshiping him as he commands, mingling no inventions of our own. And pious kings are often praised because they acted in accordance with all precepts, and did not turn aside either to the right or to the left [^{<122201>} 2 Kings 22:1-2; cf. ^{<111511>} 1 Kings 15:11; 22:43; ^{<121202>} 2 Kings 12:2; 14:3; 15:3; 15:34; 18:3]. I say further: although in some contrived worship impiety does not openly appear, it is still severely condemned by the Spirit, since it is a departure from God's precept. The altar of Ahaz, the pattern of which was brought out of Samaria [^{<121610>} 2 Kings 16:10], could seem to enhance the adornment of the Temple, since it was Ahaz' intention to offer sacrifices there to the only God, which he was going to do more splendidly than on the old original altar. Yet we see how the Spirit loathes this insolence solely because the inventions of men in the worship of God are impure corruptions [^{<121610>} 2 Kings 16:10-18].^{F354} And the more clearly God's will is revealed to us, the less excusable is our wantonness in attempting anything. Accordingly, the crime of Manasseh is rightly aggravated by the circumstance that he built a new altar in Jerusalem, of which city God had declared, "There will I put my name" [^{<122103>} 2 Kings 21:3-4], for God's authority is now, so to speak, avowedly rejected.

24. PERVERSE WORSHIP AN ABOMINATION TO GOD

Many marvel why the Lord so sharply threatens to astound the people who worshiped him with the commands of men [^{<232913>} Isaiah 29:13-14] and declares that he is vainly worshiped by the precepts of men [^{<401509>} Matthew 15:9]. But if they were to weigh what it is to depend upon God's bidding alone in matters of religion (that is, on account of

heavenly wisdom), they would at the same time see that the Lord has strong reasons to abominate such perverse rites, which are performed for him according to the willfulness of human nature. For even though those who obey such laws in the worship of God have some semblance of humility in this obedience of theirs, they are nevertheless not at all humble in God's sight, since they prescribe for him these same laws which they observe. Now, this is the reason why Paul so urgently warns us not to be deceived by the traditions of men [^{<510204>} Colossians 2:4 ff.], or by what he calls [ἑθελοθησκεία] that is, "will worship," devised by men apart from God's teaching [^{<510223>} Colossians 2:23, 22]. It is certainly true that our own and all men's wisdom must become foolish, that we may allow him alone to be wise. Those who expect his approval for their paltry observances contrived by men's will, and offer to him, as if involuntarily, a sham obedience which is paid actually to men, do not hold to that path. So it has been done for some centuries past, and within our memory, and is done today also in those places in which the authority of the creature is more than that of the Creator [cf. ^{<450125>} Romans 1:25]. Their religion (if it still deserves to be called religion) is defiled with more, and more senseless, superstitions than ever any paganism was. For what could men's mind produce but all carnal and fatuous things which truly resemble their authors?

25. REFUTATION OF ROMANIST COUNTEREVIDENCE

The supporters of superstitions also allege that Samuel sacrificed in Ramah, and that, although he did so apart from the law, yet the sacrifice pleased God [^{<090717>} 1 Samuel 7:17]. The refutation of this argument is easy: it was not a second altar that he set against the sole altar, but, because the place of the Ark of the Covenant had not yet been determined, the town where he was living was designated as most convenient. Surely the purpose of the holy prophet was not to make any innovation in sacred rites, when God had so strictly forbidden anything to be added or taken away [^{<050402>} Deuteronomy 4:2]. As for the example of Manoah, I say that it was extraordinary and singular [^{<071319>} Judges 13:19]. He offered sacrifice to God as a private individual, not without God's approval, that is, because he undertook it not out of a rash impulse of his own mind but by heavenly inspiration. But Gideon, a man not inferior to Manoah,

provides a notable proof of how much God hates what mortals think up out of themselves to worship him. For Gideon's ephod brought ruin not only upon himself and his family, but upon all the people [^{<070827>}Judges 8:27]. In short, every chance invention, by which men seek to worship God, is nothing but a pollution of true holiness.

26. CHRIST'S WARNING AGAINST THE LEAVEN OF THE PHARISEES

Why, then, they ask, did Christ will that those unbearable burdens be endured, which the scribes and Pharisees laid upon men?^{F355} Nay, rather, why did the same Christ elsewhere will that men beware the leaven of the Pharisees [^{<402303>}Matthew 23:3; 16:6]? As explained by the Evangelist Matthew, "leaven" means whatever of their own doctrine men mix with the purity of God's Word [^{<401612>}Matthew 16:12]. What could be clearer than that we are commanded to flee and avoid their whole doctrine? By this it is made very clear to us that in the other passage, too, the Lord would not have the consciences of his people troubled by traditions peculiar to the Pharisees. And the words themselves, if only they are not twisted, imply no such thing. For there the Lord meant to inveigh bitterly against the conduct of the Pharisees and was simply instructing his hearers at the outset, so that, although they saw nothing in the life of the Pharisees which they should follow, still they should not stop doing those things which the Pharisees taught by word of mouth, since they sat in Moses' seat, as interpreters of the law. He therefore meant only to forewarn the people not to be led by the bad examples of their teachers to despise doctrine. But because some are not at all convinced by reasons but always require authority, I shall quote Augustine's words, which say the very same thing: "The Lord's sheepfold has overseers—some sons, some hirelings. The overseers who are sons are true shepherds. But hear how the hirelings are also necessary. Many in the church, seeking after earthly advantage, preach Christ; and through them the voice of Christ is heard; and the sheep follow not the hireling but the shepherd through the hireling [cf. ^{<431011>}John 10:11-13]. Hear that hirelings are pointed out by the Lord himself. The scribes, he says, and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat. Do what they say; not what they do [^{<402302>}Matthew 23:2-3]. What else has he said but this: 'Hear the voice of the Shepherd through the hirelings'?"

For by sitting in the seat, they teach God's law; therefore, God teaches through them. But if they would teach their own laws, hear it not, do it not."^{F356} These are Augustine's words.

(Right ordering of church government and worship: decency, love, and a free conscience, 27-32)

27. NECESSITY OF CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS

But many unlettered persons, when they are told that men's consciences are impiously bound by human traditions, and God is worshiped in vain, apply the same erasure to all the laws by which the order of the church is shaped. It is convenient here to deal also with their error. At this point it is exceedingly easy to be deceived, for it is not apparent at first sight how much difference there is between the former and the latter sort of regulations. I shall briefly explain the whole matter so clearly that no one will be deceived by the similarity,

First, let us grasp this consideration. We see that some form of organization is necessary in all human society to foster the common peace and maintain concord.^{F357} We further see that in human transactions some procedure is always in effect, which is to be respected in the interests of public decency, and even of humanity itself. This ought especially to be observed in churches, which are best sustained when all things are under a well-ordered constitution, and which without concord become no churches at all. Therefore, if we wish to provide for the safety of the church, we must attend with all diligence to Paul's command that "all things be done decently and in order" [^{<461440>} 1 Corinthians 14:40].

Yet since such diversity exists in the customs of men, such variety in their minds, such conflicts in their judgments and dispositions, no organization is sufficiently strong unless constituted with definite laws; nor can any procedure be maintained without some set form. Therefore, we are so far from condemning the laws that conduce to this as to contend that, when churches are deprived of them, their very sinews disintegrate and they are wholly deformed and scattered. Nor can Paul's requirement—that "all things be done decently and in order"—be met unless order itself and decorum be established through the addition of observances that form, as it were, a bond of union.

But in these observances one thing must be guarded against. They are not to be considered necessary for salvation and thus bind consciences by scruples; nor are they to be associated with the worship of God, and piety thus be lodged in them.

28. THE PROBLEM OF RIGHT CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS

We therefore have a most excellent and dependable mark to distinguish between those impious constitutions (which, as we have said, obscure true religion and subvert consciences)^{F358} and legitimate church observances. We have this if we remember that the end in view must always be one of two things, or both together—that in the sacred assembly of believers all things be done decently and with becoming dignity; and that the human community itself be kept in order with certain bonds of humanity and moderation. For when it is once understood that a law has been made for the sake of public decency, there is taken away the superstition into which those fall who measure the worship of God by human inventions. Again, when it is recognized that the law has to do with common usage, then that false opinion of obligation and necessity, which struck consciences with great terror when traditions were thought necessary to salvation, is overthrown. For here nothing is required except that love be fostered among us by common effort.

But it is worthwhile to define still more clearly what is included under that decorum which Paul commends, and also under order [^{<461440>} 1 Corinthians 14:40].

The purpose of decorum is in part that, when rites are used which promote reverence toward sacred things, we be aroused to piety by such aids; in part, also, that modesty and gravity, which ought to be seen in all honorable acts, may greatly shine there. The first point in order is that those in charge know the rule and law of good governing, but that the people who are governed become accustomed to obedience to God and to right discipline. The second point is, when we have the church set up in good order, we provide for its peace and quietness.

29. TRUE DECORUM IN WORSHIP, NOT THEATRICAL SHOW

As a consequence, we shall not say that decorum exists where there is nothing but vain pleasure.^{F359} We see such an example in the theatrical props that the papists use in their sacred rites, where nothing appears but the mask of useless elegance and fruitless extravagance. But decorum for us will be something so fitted to the reverence of the sacred mysteries that it may be a suitable exercise for devotion, or at least will serve as an appropriate adornment of the act. And this should not be fruitless but should indicate to believers with how great modesty, piety, and reverence they ought to treat sacred things. Now, ceremonies, to be exercises of piety, ought to lead us straight to Christ.

Similarly, we shall not establish an order in those trifling pomps which have nothing but fleeting splendor, but in that arrangement which takes away all confusion, barbarity, obstinacy, turbulence, and dissension.

There are examples of the first sort in Paul: that profane drinking bouts should not be mingled with the Sacred Supper of the Lord [^{<461121>} 1 Corinthians 11:21-22], and that women should not go out in public with uncovered heads [^{<461105>} 1 Corinthians 11:5]. And we have many others in daily use, such as: that we pray with knees bent and head bare; that we administer the Lord's sacraments not negligently, but with some dignity; that in burying the dead we use some decency; and other practices that belong to the same class.^{F360}

Of the other kind are the hours set for public prayers, sermons, and sacraments. At sermons there are quiet and silence, appointed places, the singing together of hymns, fixed days for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, the fact that Paul forbids women to teach in the church [^{<461434>} 1 Corinthians 14:34], and the like. Especially are there those things which maintain discipline, such as catechizing, church censures, excommunication, fasting, and whatever can be referred to the same list.

Thus all ecclesiastical constitutions^{F361} which we accept as holy and salutary should be reckoned under two heads: the first type pertains to rites and ceremonies; the second, to discipline and peace.

30. BONDAGE AND FREEDOM OF CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS

But there is danger here lest, on the one hand, false bishops seize from this the pretext to excuse their impious and tyrannous laws, and on the other, lest some be overscrupulous and, warned of the above evils, leave no place whatever for holy laws. Consequently, it behooves me to declare that I approve only those human constitutions which are founded upon God's authority, drawn from Scripture, and, therefore, wholly divine.

Let us take, for example, kneeling when solemn prayers are being said. The question is whether it is a human tradition, which any man may lawfully repudiate or neglect. I say that it is human, as it is also divine. It is of God in so far as it is a part of that decorum whose care and observance the apostle has commended to us [^{<461440>} 1 Corinthians 14:40]. But it is of men in so far as it specifically designates what had in general been suggested rather than explicitly stated.

By this one example we may judge what opinion we should have of this whole class. I mean that the Lord has in his sacred oracles faithfully embraced and clearly expressed both the whole sum of true righteousness, and all aspects of the worship of his majesty, and whatever was necessary to salvation; therefore, in these the Master alone is to be heard. But because he did not will in outward discipline and ceremonies to prescribe in detail what we ought to do (because he foresaw that this depended upon the state of the times, and he did not deem one form suitable for all ages), here we must take refuge in those general rules which he has given, that whatever the necessity of the church will require for order and decorum should be tested against these. Lastly, because he has taught nothing specifically, and because these things are not necessary to salvation, and for the upbuilding of the church ought to be variously accommodated to the customs of each nation and age, it will be fitting (as the advantage of the church will require) to change and abrogate traditional practices and to establish new ones. Indeed, I admit that we ought not to charge into innovation rashly, suddenly, for insufficient cause. But love will best judge what may hurt or edify; and if we let love be our guide, all will be safe.^{F362}

31. BONDAGE AND FREEDOM OVER AGAINST CHURCH CONSTITUTIONS

Now it is the duty of Christian people to keep the ordinances that have been established according to this rule with a free conscience, indeed, without superstition, yet with a pious and ready inclination to obey; not to despise them, not to pass over them in careless negligence. So far ought we to be from openly violating them through pride and obstinacy!

What sort of freedom of conscience could there be in such excessive attentiveness and caution? Indeed, it will be very clear when we consider that these are no fixed and permanent sanctions by which we are bound, but outward rudiments for human weakness. Although not all of us need them, we all use them, for we are mutually bound, one to another, to nourish mutual love. This may be recognized in the examples set forth above.^{F363} What? Does religion consist in a woman's shawl, so that it is unlawful for her to go out with a bare head? Is that decree of Paul's concerning silence so holy that it cannot be broken without great offense? Is there in bending the knee or in burying a corpse any holy rite that cannot be neglected without offense? Not at all. For if a woman needs such haste to help a neighbor that she cannot stop to cover her head, she does not offend if she runs to her with head uncovered. And there is a place where it is no less proper for her to speak than elsewhere to remain silent. Also, nothing prohibits a man who cannot bend his knees because of disease from standing to pray. Finally, it is better to bury a dead man in due time than, where a shroud is lacking, or where there are no pallbearers to carry him, to wait until the unburied corpse decays. Nevertheless, the established custom of the region, or humanity itself and the rule of modesty, dictate what is to be done or avoided in these matters. In them a man commits no crime if out of imprudence or forgetfulness he departs from them; but if out of contempt, this willfulness is to be disapproved. Similarly, the days themselves, the hours, the structure of the places of worship, what psalms are to be sung on what day, are matters of no importance. But it is convenient to have definite days and stated hours, and a place suitable to receive all, if there is any concern for the preservation of peace. For confusion in such details would become the seed of great contentions if every man were allowed, as he pleased, to change matters affecting public order! For it will never happen that the

same thing will please all if matters are regarded as indifferent and left to individual choice. But if anyone loudly complains and wishes here to be wiser than he ought, let him see with what reason he can defend his over-scrupulousness before the Lord. This saying of Paul's ought to satisfy us: that it is not our custom to contend, or that of the churches of God [^{<461116>} 1 Corinthians 11:16].

32. OBSERVANCES SHOULD BE FEW AND EDIFYING

Further, we must strive with the greatest diligence to prevent error from creeping in, either to corrupt or to obscure this pure use. This end will be attained if all observances, whatever they shall be, display manifest usefulness, and if very few are allowed; but especially if a faithful pastor's teaching is added to bar the way to perverse opinions. But this knowledge assures first that each one of us will keep his freedom in all these things; yet each one will voluntarily impose some necessity upon his freedom, in so far as this decorum of which we spoke^{F364} or considerations of love shall require.^{F365} Secondly, that we occupy ourselves without superstition in the observance of these things and not require it too fastidiously of others, that we may not feel the worship of God to be the better for a multitude of ceremonies; and that one church may not despise another because of diversity of outward discipline. Finally, that, establishing here no perpetual law for ourselves, we should refer the entire use and purpose of observances to the upbuilding of the church. If the church requires it, we may not only without any offense allow something to be changed but permit any observances previously in use among us to be abandoned. This present age offers proof of the fact that it may be a fitting thing to set aside, as may be opportune in the circumstances, certain rites that in other circumstances are not impious or indecorous. For (such was the blindness and ignorance of former times) churches have heretofore stuck fast in ceremonies with corrupt opinion and stubborn intent. Consequently, they can scarcely be sufficiently cleansed of frightful superstitions without removing many ceremonies probably established of old with good reason and not notably impious of themselves.

CHAPTER 11

THE JURISDICTION OF THE CHURCH AND ITS ABUSE AS SEEN IN THE PAPACY

*(Jurisdiction and discipline: the power of the keys
and the civil magistracy, 1-5)*

1. THE BASIS OF CHURCH JURISDICTION IN THE POWER OF THE KEYS

There remains the third part of ecclesiastical power, the most important in a well-ordered state. This, as we have said, consists in jurisdiction.^{F366} But the whole jurisdiction of the church pertains to the discipline of morals, which we shall soon discuss. For as no city or township can function without magistrate and polity, so the church of God (as I have already taught, but am now compelled to repeat) needs a spiritual polity. This is, however, quite distinct from the civil polity, yet does not hinder or threaten it but rather greatly helps and furthers it. Therefore, this power of jurisdiction will be nothing, in short, but an order framed for the preservation of the spiritual polity.

For this purpose courts of judgment were established in the church from the beginning to deal with the censure of morals, to investigate vices, and to be charged with the exercise of the office of the keys.^{F367} Paul designates this order in his letter to the Corinthians when he mentions offices of ruling [^{<461228>} 1 Corinthians 12:28]. Likewise, in Romans, when he says, “Let him who rules, rule with diligence” [^{<451208>} Romans 12:8 p.]. For he is not addressing the magistrates (not any of whom were then Christians), but those who were joined with the pastors in the spiritual rule of the church. In the letter to Timothy, also, he distinguishes two kinds of presbyters: those who labor in the Word, and those who do not carry on the preaching of the Word yet rule well [^{<540517>} 1 Timothy 5:17]. By this latter sort he doubtless means those who were appointed to supervise morals and to use the whole power of the keys.

For this power of which we speak depends entirely upon the keys which, in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, Christ gave to the church. There he commands that those who are contemptuous of private warnings be severely warned in the name of the people; but if they persist in their stubbornness, he teaches that they should be cut off from the believers' fellowship [^{<401815>} Matthew 18:15-18]. Now these admonitions and corrections cannot be made without investigation of the cause; accordingly, some court of judgment and order of procedure are needed. Therefore, if we do not wish to make void the promise of the keys and banish excommunication, solemn warnings, and such things, we must give the church some jurisdiction. Let my readers observe that that passage does not deal with the general doctrinal authority, as do ^{<401619>} Matthew 16:19 and ^{<432023>} John 20:23, but that the jurisdiction of the Sanhedrin is for the future transferred to Christ's flock. Until that day the Jews had their order of governing which Christ establishes in his church as an institution merely, and that with grave sanction. This is reasonable, for the judgment of a contemptible and despised church could otherwise be spurned by rash and foolish men.

And so that my readers may not be troubled that Christ in these same words expresses two things somewhat diverse from each other, it will be helpful if we solve this difficulty. There are, then, two passages which speak of binding and loosing. One is Matthew chapter 16, where Christ, after promising to give the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to Peter, immediately adds that whatever he binds or looses on earth shall be confirmed in heaven [^{<401619>} Matthew 16:19]. By these words he means the same thing as by the other words which occur in John, when, about to send the disciples out to preach, after he breathes on them [^{<432029>} John 20:29], he says, "If you forgive the sins of any, they will be forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they will be retained in heaven" [^{<432023>} John 20:23]. I shall bring to this an interpretation not subtle, not forced, not distorted; but natural, fluent, and plain.^{F368} This command concerning forgiving and retaining sins and that promise made to Peter concerning binding and loosing ought to be referred solely to the ministry of the Word, because when the Lord committed his ministry to the apostles, he also equipped them for the office of binding and loosing. For what is the sum total of the gospel except that we all, being slaves of sin and death, are

released and freed through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus [cf. ^{<450324>}Romans 3:24]? and that they who do not receive or acknowledge Christ as their liberator and redeemer are condemned and sentenced to eternal chains [cf. ^{<650106>}Jude 6]? When the Lord entrusted this mission to his apostles to be carried into all nations [cf. ^{<402819>}Matthew 28:19], in order to approve it as his own and as coming from himself, he honored it with this noble testimony—and he did this to the extraordinary strengthening both of the apostles themselves and of all those to whom it was going to come. It was important for the apostles to have constant and perfect assurance in their preaching, which they were not only to carry out in infinite labors, cares, troubles, and dangers, but at last to seal with their own blood. In order that they might know, I say, that this assurance was not vain or empty, but full of power and strength, it was important for them to be convinced that in such anxiety, difficulty, and danger they were doing God's work; also, for them to recognize that God stood beside them while the whole world opposed and attacked them; for them, not having Christ, the Author of their doctrine before their eyes on earth, to know that he, in heaven, confirms the truth of the doctrine which he had delivered to them. On the other hand, it was necessary to give an unmistakable witness to their hearers that the doctrine of the gospel was not the word of the apostles but of God himself;^{F369} not a voice born on earth but one descended from heaven. For these things—forgiveness of sins, the promise of eternal life, the good news of salvation—cannot be in man's power. Therefore, Christ has testified that in the preaching of the gospel the apostles have no part save that of ministry; that it was he himself who would speak and promise all things through their lips as his instruments. Accordingly, he has testified that the forgiveness of sins which they preached was the true promise of God; the damnation which they pronounced, the sure judgment of God. This testimony, moreover, was given to all ages, and remains firm, to make all men certain and sure that the word of the gospel, whatever man may preach it, is the very sentence of God, published at the supreme judgment seat, written in the Book of Life, ratified, firm and fixed, in heaven. We conclude that in those passages the power of the keys is simply the preaching of the gospel, and that with regard to men it is not so much power as ministry. For Christ has not given this power actually to men, but to his Word, of which he has made men ministers.

2. THE POWER OF BINDING AND LOOSING*

The other passage, in Matthew chapter 18, deals, as we have said, with the power of binding and loosing. There Christ says: “If any brother... refuses to listen to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a publican. Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven” [⁴⁰¹⁸¹⁷Matthew 18:17-18 p.]. This passage is not entirely like the first [⁴⁰¹⁶¹⁹Matthew 16:19] but is to be understood a little differently, but I do not make them out to be so different as not to possess considerable connection between them. Both are alike in this first respect; each is a general statement; in both is always the same power of binding and loosing (that is, through God’s Word), the same command, the same promise. But they differ in this respect: the first passage is particularly concerned with the preaching which the ministers of the Word execute; the latter applies to the discipline of excommunication which is entrusted to the church. But the church binds him whom it excommunicates—not that it casts him into everlasting ruin and despair, but because it condemns his life and morals, and already warns him of his condemnation unless he should repent. It looses him whom it receives into communion, for it makes him a sharer of the unity which it has in Christ Jesus. Therefore, that no one may stubbornly despise the judgment of the church, or think it immaterial that he has been condemned by the vote of the believers, the Lord testifies that such judgment by believers is nothing but the proclamation of his own sentence, and that whatever they have done on earth is ratified in heaven. For they have the Word of God with which to condemn the perverse; they have the Word with which to receive the repentant into grace. They cannot err or disagree with God’s judgment, for they judge solely according to God’s law, which is no uncertain or earthly opinion but God’s holy will and heavenly oracle.

Upon these two passages—which I believe I have interpreted briefly, familiarly, and truly—these madmen (as they are carried away by their own giddiness) indiscriminately try to establish now confession, now excommunication, now jurisdiction, now the right to frame laws, and now indulgences, and indeed, they cite the first passage to establish the primacy of the Roman see.^{F370} Thus, they know so well how to fit their keys to any

locks and doors they please that one would say they had practiced the locksmith's art all their lives!

3. CIVIL AND ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION

Some imagine that all those things were temporary, lasting while the magistrates were still strangers to the profession of our religion.^{F371} In this they are mistaken, because they do not notice how great a difference and unlikeness there is between ecclesiastical and civil power. For the church does not have the right of the sword to punish or compel, not the authority to force; not imprisonment, nor the other punishments which the magistrate commonly, inflicts. Then, it is not a question of punishing the stoner against his will, but of the sinner professing his repentance in a voluntary chastisement. The two conceptions are very different. The church does not assume what is proper to the magistrate; nor can the magistrate execute what is carried out by the church. An example will make this clearer. Suppose a man is drunk. In a well-ordered city, imprisonment will be the penalty. Suppose he is a fornicator. His punishment will be similar or, rather, greater. So will the laws, the magistrate, and outward justice be satisfied. Yet he may happen to show no sign of repentance, but, rather, murmur or grumble. Shall the church stop there? Such men cannot be received to the Lord's Supper without doing injury to Christ and his sacred institution. And reason requires that he who offends the church by a bad example remove, by a solemn declaration of repentance, the offense he has caused.

The argument brought forward by those who feel otherwise is too barren. Christ, they say, entrusted these functions to the church, since there was no magistrate to carry them out. But it very often happens that a magistrate is rather negligent, indeed, sometimes perhaps deserves chastisement himself, as happened to the Emperor Theodosius.^{F372} One can say as much about nearly the whole ministry of the Word. Today, then, according to our opponents, let pastors stop rebuking manifest misdeeds; let them cease to chide, to accuse, to rebuke. For there are Christian magistrates who ought to correct these things by laws and sword. And as the magistrate ought by punishment and physical restraint to cleanse the church of offenses, so the minister of the Word in turn ought to help the

magistrate in order that not so many may sin. Their functions ought to be so joined that each serves to help, not hinder, the other.

4. THE CHURCH AND THE CHRISTIAN MAGISTRATE

Truly, if a man more closely weigh Christ's words [Matthew chapter 18], he will easily see that a set and permanent order of the church, not a temporary one, is there described. For it is not fitting for us to accuse to the magistrate those who do not obey our admonitions. Yet this would be necessary if the magistrate should take over the office of the church. What of that promise? Are we to say that it is for one year or for a few years: "Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth..." [Matthew 18: 18]? Furthermore, Christ here instituted nothing new but followed the custom always observed in the ancient church of his people. By this he signified that the church cannot go without the spiritual jurisdiction which it had from the beginning. And this was confirmed by the agreement of all times. For, when emperors and magistrates began to accept Christ, this spiritual jurisdiction was not at once annulled but was only so ordered that it should not detract from the civil jurisdiction or become confused with it. And rightly! For the magistrate, if he is godly, will not want to exempt himself from the common subjection of God's children. It is by no means the least significant part of this for him to subject himself to the church, which judges according to God's Word—so far ought he to be from setting that judgment aside! "For what is more honorable," says Ambrose, "than for the emperor to be called a son of the church?"^{F373} For a good emperor is within the church, not over the church." Therefore, they who, to honor the magistrate, deprive the church of this power not only corrupt Christ's utterance with a false interpretation but condemn in no light fashion all the holy bishops who have been from the time of the apostles for having taken upon themselves the honor and office of magistrate on a false pretext.

5. THE SPIRITUAL CHARACTER OF ECCLESIASTICAL JURISDICTION

But it also behooves us, on the other hand, to see what was formerly the true use of ecclesiastical jurisdiction and what great abuse crept in, in order that we may know what is to be abrogated and what of antiquity is to be

restored, if we wish to overturn the kingdom of Antichrist and set up again the true Kingdom of Christ.

First, this is the aim of ecclesiastical jurisdiction: that offenses be resisted, and any scandal that has arisen be wiped out. In its use two things ought to be taken into account: that this spiritual power be completely separated from the right of the sword; secondly, that it be administered not by the decision of one man but by a lawful assembly.^{F374} Both of these were observed when the church was purer [^{<460504>} 1 Corinthians 5:4-5].

Now the holy bishops did not exercise their power through fines or prisons or other civil penalties but used the Lord's Word alone, as was fitting. For the severest punishment of the church, the final thunderbolt, so to speak, is excommunication, which is used only in necessity. Now, this requires no physical force but is content with the power of God's Word. In short, the jurisdiction of the ancient church was nothing but a declaration in practice (so to speak) of what Paul teaches concerning the spiritual power of pastors. "A power has been given us," he says, "to destroy strongholds, to level every pinnacle that vaunts itself against the knowledge of God, to subjugate and take captive every thought to the obedience of Christ, being ready to punish every disobedience." [^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4-6 p.] As this is done by the preaching of the doctrine of Christ, so, in order that this doctrine may not be a laughingstock, those who profess themselves of the household of faith ought to be judged in accordance with what is taught. That cannot be done unless there be joined with the ministry the right to call those who are to be admonished privately or be more sharply corrected; also the right to bar from the communion of the Lord's Supper those who cannot be received without profaning this great mystery, Therefore, while Paul says in another place that it is not ours to judge strangers [^{<460512>} 1 Corinthians 5:12], he subjects the children of the church to censures to chastise their vices, and he then implies that there were then judgments in force from which no one of the believers was immune.

*(Abuses caused by the unwarranted assumption of power
by the bishops, 6-10)*

6. ADMINISTRATION OF JUSTICE IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH WAS NOT THE FUNCTION OF AN INDIVIDUAL

This power (as we have declared^{F375}) was not in one man's possession to do whatever he pleased but in the hands of the assembly of the elders, which was to the church what the Senate is to the city. Cyprian, when he mentions those through whom the power was exercised in his day, usually associates the entire clergy with the bishop. But in another passage he also shows the clergy as so governing that the people were not excluded from deliberation. For he writes as follows: "From the beginning of my episcopate I determined not to do anything without the advice of the clergy and the consent of the people."^{F376} But the common and customary order was for the jurisdiction of the church to be exercised through the senate of the presbyters, of whom (as I have said^{F377}) there were two kinds. For some had been ordained to teach; others, only to be censors of morals. Gradually this institution degenerated from its original condition, so that already in the time of Ambrose the clergy alone sat in ecclesiastical judgments. He complained about this in the following words: "The old synagogue, and afterward the church, had elders, without whose counsel nothing was done. It has fallen out of use, by what negligence I do not know, unless perhaps through the sloth, or rather, pride, of the learned, wishing to appear to be important by themselves alone."^{F378} We see how indignant the holy man is that the better state has somewhat decayed while they still had an order that was at least tolerable! If he were to see these formless ruins, which show almost no trace of the former building—how he would lament! First, against law and right, the bishop has claimed for himself alone what had been given to the church. For it is just as if the Senate were cast out and the consul alone held authority. But as the bishop is above the rest in honor, so there is more authority in the assembly than in one man. For it was a very wicked misdeed that one man, transferring the common power to himself, both opened the way to tyrannous license and seized from the church what had belonged to it, and suppressed and dissolved the assembly ordained by Christ's Spirit.

7. DETERIORATION OF JURISDICTION AND DISCIPLINE

But (as one evil often gives rise to another) bishops, disdaining the business as something unworthy of their care, have delegated it to others. As a consequence, “officials”^{F379} were created to exercise that function. I do not yet say what sort of men; I only say that they do not differ from secular judges. Nevertheless, although the litigation concerns only earthly matters, they still call it “spiritual jurisdiction.” If there were no other evil, with what impudence do these people dare call a brawling court a “tribunal of the church”?

Yet there are admonitions; there is excommunication. Obviously, they are mocking God. Does some poor man owe money? He is cited. If he appears, he is condemned. If, being condemned, he does not pay up, he is warned; after the second warning, a step is taken toward excommunication; if he does not appear, he is warned to submit himself to judgment; if he delays, he is warned, and soon thereafter excommunicated. I ask you, what is there here that is anything like Christ’s institution, or like ancient custom, or like ecclesiastical procedure?

But they also carry on the censure of vices there. That is, fornication, wantonness, drunkenness, and misdeeds of this sort, they not only tolerate but, so to speak, foster and confirm with tacit approval—not only among the people but also among the clergy themselves. They call but a few of many before them, either that they may not seem too negligent in conniving or that they may milk them of some money. I am not speaking of the pillagings, robberies, embezzlements, and sacrileges associated with this. I leave unmentioned the sort of men who for the most part are chosen for this office. It is more than enough to say that, when the Romanists boast of their spiritual jurisdiction, we can readily show that nothing is more contrary to the procedure instituted by Christ, and that it has no more likeness to the ancient custom than darkness has to light.

8. THE WORLDLY POWER OF THE BISHOPS CONTRADICTS THE MEANING OF THIS OFFICE

Even though we have not mentioned everything that could be presented here, and also what we have said has been confined to a few words, I trust we have won such a victory as to leave no reason for anyone to doubt that

the spiritual power on which the pope with his whole royal entourage preens himself is an impious tyranny opposed to God's Word and unjust toward his people. Indeed, under the term "spiritual power" I include boldness in formulating new doctrines by which they have turned the wretched people away from the original purity of God's Word, the wicked traditions with which they have ensnared them, and the pretended ecclesiastical jurisdiction which they exercise through suffragans and officials. For if we allow Christ a kingdom among us, it can only result in this whole kind of dominion being at once cast down and falling into ruin.

Moreover, we are not presently concerned to discuss the power of the sword, which they also claim,^{F380} because it is not exercised over consciences.^{F381} Yet in this respect it is worth noting that they are always like themselves, that is, far removed from what they wish to be regarded, pastors of the church.

I do not blame the individual faults of men, but the common crime of the whole order, the veritable plague of the order, since it is thought to be mutilated unless it be decked out with opulence and proud titles. If we seek the authority of Christ in this matter, there is no doubt that he wished to bar the ministers of his Word from civil rule and earthly authority when he said, "The rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them but you do not do so" [^{<402009>} Matthew 20:95-26; ^{<421225>} Luke 12:25-26 p.]. He means not only that the office of pastor is distinct from that of prince but also that the things are so different that they cannot come together in one man. For that Moses carried both offices at once was, in the first place, through a rare miracle; secondly, it was a temporary arrangement, until things might be better ordered. But when a definite form is prescribed by the Lord, the civil government is left to Moses; he is ordered to resign the priesthood to his brother [^{<021813>} Exodus 18:13-26]. And rightly; for it is beyond nature that one man should be sufficient for both burdens. This has been in all ages carefully observed in the church. And no one of the bishops, so long as any true form of the church endured, thought of usurping the right of the sword. Thus, in the age of Ambrose it was a common proverb that "emperors coveted the priesthood more than priests the empire." In the minds of all has been engraved what Ambrose subsequently says: "To the emperor belong the palaces; to the priest the churches."^{F382}

9. ASSUMPTION OF PRINCELY POWERS BY THE BISHOPS

A means was, indeed, devised by which bishops might hold the title, honor, and riches of their office without burden or care. But afterward, not to leave them entirely idle, the right of the sword was given them, or rather, they usurped it for themselves. With what excuse, then, will they defend this shamelessness? Was it the bishops' duty to involve themselves in judicial proceedings and in the administration of cities and provinces, and to undertake activities far, far removed from their own? For in their own office they have so much work and business that if they devoted themselves wholly and continuously to it, and were not distracted by any interruptions, they would scarcely be adequate to the task. But, such is their obstinacy, they do not hesitate to boast that the glory of Christ's Kingdom thus becomingly flourishes as it deserves, and that they meanwhile are not too much drawn away from the functions of their calling. As far as the first point is concerned, if it is a fitting ornament of the sacred office that they have been raised to such a height as to inspire fear in lofty monarchs, they have reason to expostulate with Christ, who has in this way gravely injured their honor. For what more outrageous thing could be said, in their opinion, than these words: "The rulers and princes of the Gentiles lord it over them but you do not do so"

[<402025> Matthew 20:25-26; <411042> Mark 10:42-44; <422225> Luke 22:25-26 p.]. Yet he does not impose a harder law upon his servants than he has first borne and received himself. "Who has made me," he says, "a judge or divider over you?" [<421214> Luke 12:14.] We see that he has simply rejected the office of judging, a thing he would not have done if the task had agreed with his office. Will the servants not let themselves be pressed into the rank to which the Lord has subjected himself? I would that they could prove this by experience as easily as they can say it! It did not seem good to the apostles to give up the preaching of the Word of God to serve tables [<440602> Acts 6:2]. Since they do not wish to be taught by this, they are compelled to accept the fact that to be both a good bishop and a good prince is not the same man's task. For if the apostles (who, according to the largeness of the gifts with which they were endowed, were able to cope with far more and greater cares than any men born after them) still confessed that they could not shoulder the ministry of the Word and tables together, without sinking under the burden—how could these little

men, nothing compared to the apostles, outstrip their industry a hundred times? Even to attempt it was the most shameless and brazen self-confidence! Yet we see it done—with what success is clear! For there could be no other outcome than that they should forsake their duties and move into the other camp.

10. HOW HAS THIS WORLDLY POWER OF THE BISHOPS COME ABOUT?

There is no doubt that from slight beginnings the Romanists have little by little made great increases.^{F383} For they could not climb so high with the first step. But at one time they secretly advanced themselves by craft and by devious arts, so that no one could have foreseen what would happen until it happened. At other times, as opportunity offered, through terror and threats they wrested from princes some increase of their power. At still other times, when they saw princes disposed to be generous, they abused their foolish and ill-advised generosity.

In the past, if any conflict arose, the pious, to avoid the necessity of a law suit, committed the judgment to the bishop, because they had no doubt about his integrity. The ancient bishops were often involved in such decisions, to their great annoyance (as Augustine somewhere attests^{F384}), but they reluctantly took this trouble, that the parties might not rush before a contentious court. The Romanists have made out of voluntary arbitration—something wholly unlike the noise of the law courts—an ordinary jurisdiction.

Some time later, when cities and regions were occasionally oppressed by various difficulties, they betook themselves to the bishops for protection, to be shielded by their faithfulness. These men with marvelous subtlety turned themselves from protectors into lords.

But it cannot be denied that they have got possession of a good part through violent factions. The princes who willingly conferred jurisdiction upon bishops were moved to do so by various impulses. But, granted that their generosity had some semblance of piety, they did not provide well for the welfare of the church by this absurd liberality of theirs, for they thus corrupted its true and ancient discipline. Indeed, to speak the truth, they completely abolished it! Those bishops who misused this great

bounty of the princes to their own benefit, by showing this one example, have given proof enough and more that they are no bishops. For if they had had any spark of the apostolic spirit, they would doubtless have answered from the words of Paul: “The weapons of our warfare are not physical, but spiritual” [^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4]. But, seized with blind greed, they have destroyed themselves, their successors, and the church.

*(Inordinate and fraudulent claims of the papacy
and its usurpation of worldly powers, 11-16)*

11. THE ORIGIN OF PAPAL WORLD SUPREMACY

At last, the Roman pontiff, not content with modest baronies, first laid his hand on kingdoms, then upon the Empire itself. And that he may retain by some pretext or other the possession obtained by mere robbery, he sometimes boasts that he has it by divine right, sometimes pretends the Donation of Constantine, sometimes another title. I answer first with Bernard: “Though we admit that he claims this for some other reason, yet it is not by apostolic right. For Peter could not give what he did not have; but he gave to his successors what he had, the care of the churches.” “But since the Lord and Master says that he was not appointed a judge between two people [^{<421214>} Luke 12:14], the servant and disciple ought not to count it unworthy if he does not judge all men.” But Bernard is speaking of civil laws, for he adds: “Your power is therefore in misdeeds, not in possessions, since you have received the keys to the Kingdom of Heaven because of misdeeds, not possessions. What seems the greater honor to you: to forgive sins or to divide estates? There is no comparison. These base and earthly things have their own judges, the kings and princes of the earth. Why do you invade another’s border?” etc. Likewise: “You have been made a superior” (he is addressing Pope Eugenius). “For what? Not to domineer, I suppose. Therefore, highly as we think of ourselves, let us remember that a ministry has been laid upon us, not a lordship given. Learn that you need a hoe, not a scepter, to do the prophet’s work.” Again: “It is plain, lordship is forbidden to the apostles. Go, therefore, and dare take upon yourself either, being a lord, apostleship; or being an apostle, lordship.” And immediately thereafter: This is the form of apostleship: lordship is forbidden; ministry is bidden.”^{F385} Although these things have been so said by that man as to make it evident to all that he is

speaking truth itself, indeed, even though the very thing is clear without any words, the Roman pontiff was nevertheless not ashamed to decree in the Council of Arles that the supreme right to both swords belonged to him by divine right.^{F386}

12. THE DONATION OF CONSTANTINE FRAUDULENT AND ABSURD

As for the Donation of Constantine, those only moderately versed in the history of those times need not be taught not only how fabulous, but also how absurd, it is. But to pass over histories, Gregory himself is a fitting and complete witness of this matter. For whenever he speaks of the emperor, he calls him “most serene Lord” and himself his “unworthy servant.” Likewise, in another passage: “Now let not our lord, by virtue of his earthly power, be too ready to take offense at the priests; but, with excellent consideration, for the sake of Him whose servants they are, let him so rule them that he also may give them due reverence.” We see how, in common subjection, he wishes to be regarded as one of the people. For there he is pleading no other man’s cause but his own. In another passage: “I trust in Almighty God that he will give long life to our pious lords and will dispose us under your hand according to his mercy.”^{F387} I have not quoted these statements because I intend to discuss thoroughly the question of the Donation of Constantine, but only that my readers may see in passing how childishly the Romanists lie when they try to claim earthly power for their pontiff.

The more foul, then, is the shamelessness of Augustinus Steuchus, who has dared, in this lost cause, to sell his labor and tongue to his pontiff. Valla had roundly refuted that fable—a task not difficult for a learned man with sharp wit. Yet (as a man little versed in ecclesiastical matters), he had not said everything applicable to the argument. Steuchus bursts in and scatters nauseating ditties to overwhelm the clear light. And surely he pleads his master’s case no less feebly than if some facetious fellow, pretending to do the same, argued on Valla’s side. A cause worthy, indeed, to have the pope hire such supporters of it for money!

And just as worthy are those hired wranglers to be deceived in their hope of gain—as happened to Eugubinus!^{F388}

13. THE RELATIONSHIP OF HENRY IV AND HILDEBRAND

But if anyone should ask at what time this contrived empire began to rise up, not yet five hundred years have passed since the pontiffs were still in subjection to the princes and no pontiff was created apart from the emperor's authority. The Emperor Henry, ^{F389} fourth of that name, an unstable and rash man, of no prudence, of great boldness and disorderly life, provided Gregory VII with the occasion to alter this arrangement. For when Henry had the bishoprics of all Germany in his court, partly up for sale, partly laid out for plunder, Hildebrand, who had been provoked by him, seized upon a plausible excuse to vindicate himself. Because he seemed to be pleading a good and pious cause, he was helped by the favor of many. And Henry, on the other hand, was hated by most of the princes because of his rather insolent manner of rule. Finally, Hildebrand, who called himself Gregory VII, as he was an unclean and wicked man, betrayed his malicious intention. For this reason, many who had conspired with him deserted him. Nevertheless, he achieved this: his successors were able with impunity not only to shake off the yoke but also to subject emperors to themselves. ^{F390} Besides this, there were subsequently many emperors (more like Henry than like Julius Caesar) whom it was not difficult to subjugate, since they sat at home, careless and cowardly about everything, when they especially needed with vigorous yet lawful means to repress the pontiff's greed. We see the fair hues with which that famous Donation of Constantine has been tricked out, by which the pope pretends the western empire had been turned over to him.

14. APPROPRIATIONS ANATHEMATIZED UNDER GREGORY THE GREAT

Since that time the popes have not ceased, now by fraud, now by treachery, now by weapons of war, to invade other men's domains. And about 130 years ago they reduced the city itself (at that time free) to their control, until they came into that authority which they hold today; and for some two hundred years they have so troubled Christendom in their efforts to hold or increase that authority (they began to do this before they seized control of the city) that they have nearly destroyed it.

Long ago, under Gregory, the keepers of church possessions laid hands on the estates which they reckoned as church property and, according to the custom of the rise, imposed titles upon them as evidence of claim. Gregory then called a council of bishops together, inveighed stoutly against that profane custom, and asked whether they would anathematize the cleric who tried to occupy some possession by inscribing a title on his own initiative; similarly, a bishop who either ordered it done or let it go unpunished. All declared, “Anathema.”^{F391} If claiming a piece of ground by writing a title is a crime deserving anathema in a cleric—when for two hundred years pontiffs have practiced nothing but battles, bloodshed, slaughter of armies, sacking of some cities, destruction of others, massacres of nations, and devastations of kingdoms—solely to seize other men’s dominions—what anathemas are strong enough to punish such examples? It is indeed perfectly plain that there is nothing they seek less than Christ’s glory. For if they are generally willing to resign all the secular power they have, no danger will befall the glory of God, sound doctrine, or the safety of the church, abut they are carried away, blind and headlong, by one lust for dominion. For they think that nothing is safe unless (as the prophet says) they rule with harshness and with might [^{<263404>} Ezekiel 34:4].

15. IMMUNITIES OF THE ROMAN CLERGY

To jurisdiction is appended the immunity which the Roman clergy assume for themselves. For they count it beneath their dignity to answer in personal cases before a civil judge. And they deem both the liberty and dignity of the church to consist in their exemption from common courts and laws.

But the ancient bishops, who were otherwise very strict in declaring the right of the church, did not judge themselves and their order harmed if they were under subjection. Also pious emperors, without protest, regularly summoned the clergy to their judgment seats as often as necessary. For thus spoke Constantine in his letter to the Nicomedians: “If any of the bishops indiscreetly causes a disturbance, his audacity shall be restrained by official authority of the minister of God, that is, by my authority.” And Valentinian says: “Good bishops do not speak against the power of the emperor but sincerely keep the commandments of God, the great King,

and obey our laws.”^{F392} At that time all, without any controversy, were persuaded of this.

Ecclesiastical cases, indeed, were referred to the bishop’s judgment. If any cleric, for example, had not broken the law, but was only charged with having transgressed the canons, he was not cited to the civil tribunal; but he had the bishop as judge in his case. Similarly, if a question of faith or some other matter that properly pertained to the church were under controversy, judgment of it was committed to the church. So is to be understood what Ambrose writes to Valentinian: “Your father of noble memory not only answered by word but also decreed by laws that in a case involving faith the judge ought to be one who is neither unqualified by office nor alien in jurisdiction.” Likewise: “If we regard the Scripture or ancient examples, who can deny that, in a case involving faith—in a case involving faith, I repeat—it is customary for bishops to judge concerning Christian emperors, not emperors concerning bishops?” Likewise: “I would have come, O Emperor, to your consistory, if either the bishops or the people had allowed me to go, saying, as they did, that a case involving faith ought to be heard in the church before the people.”^{F393} He contends, indeed, that a spiritual case, that is, one of religion, ought not to be taken to a civil court, where profane quarrels are aired. All men rightly praise his constancy in this matter. Yet in a case where he is in the right he goes so far as to say that, if it comes to physical violence, he will yield. “I will not,” he says, “willingly forsake the place committed to me; but forced, I know not how to resist, for our weapons are prayers and tears.” Let us observe this holy man’s singular moderation and prudence, combined with greatness of mind. Justina, the emperor’s mother, because she could not draw him over to the Arians’ side, attempted to expel him from the government of the church. And that would have happened if, summoned to the aforesaid case, he had come to the palace. Therefore, he denies that the emperor is a proper judge of such a great controversy. The necessity of the time and the perpetual character of the matter itself required this. For he judged that he ought rather to die than that such an example be, with his consent, transmitted to posterity. And yet if violence be offered, he does not think of resisting. For he says that it is not the part of a bishop to defend the faith and the right of the church by arms. But in other cases he shows himself ready to do whatever the emperor has ordered. “If

the emperor seeks tribute,” he says, “we do not deny it; the lands of the church pay tribute. If he seeks fields, he has the power to claim them; none of us resists.”^{F394} Gregory also speaks in this way: “I am not,” he says, “unaware of the mind of our most serene lord, that it is not his custom to intervene in cases involving priests, lest in anything he be burdened with our sins.”^{F395} He does not generally exclude the emperor from judging priests; but he says that there are certain cases which he ought to leave to ecclesiastical judgment.

16. BISHOPS SUBJECT TO SECULAR COURTS

By this very exception, therefore, holy men sought only to prevent the less religious princes from obstructing the church in the conduct of its office by their tyrannical violence and license. They did not, however, disapprove of princes interposing their authority in ecclesiastical matters, provided it was done to preserve the order of the church, not to disrupt it; and to establish discipline, not to dissolve it. For since the church does not have the power to coerce, and ought not to seek it (I am speaking of civil coercion), it is the duty of godly kings and princes to sustain religion by laws, edicts, and judgments. In this manner, after the Emperor Maurice had commanded certain bishops to receive their neighboring fellow bishops who had been driven out by barbarians, Gregory confirms his order and urges them to obey. When Gregory himself is admonished by the same emperor to become reconciled to John, bishop of Constantinople, he gives, indeed, a reason why he ought not to be blamed. Yet he does not boast of immunity from a secular court but rather promises that he will obey as far as his conscience will allow. And at the same time he says that Maurice did what was becoming to a pious prince in giving such commands to the bishops.^{F396}

CHAPTER 12

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH: ITS CHIEF USE IN CENSURES AND EXCOMMUNICATION

(Discussion of power of the keys in true discipline: the ends and processes of discipline, 1-7)

1. NECESSITY AND NATURE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The discipline of the church, the discussion of which we have deferred to this place, must be treated briefly, that we may thereafter pass to the remaining topics. Discipline depends for the most part upon the power of the keys^{F397} and upon spiritual jurisdiction. To understand it better, let us divide the church into two chief orders: clergy and people. I call by the usual name “clergy”^{F398} those who perform the public ministry in the church. We shall first speak of common discipline, to which all ought to submit; then we shall come to the clergy, who, besides the common discipline, have their own.^{F399}

But because some persons, in their hatred of discipline, recoil from its very name, let them understand this: if no society, indeed, no house which has even a small family, can be kept in proper condition without discipline, it is much more necessary in the church, whose condition should be as ordered as possible. Accordingly, as the saving doctrine of Christ is the soul of the church, so does discipline serve as its sinews, through which the members of the body hold together, each in its own place. Therefore, all who desire to remove discipline or to hinder its restoration—whether they do this deliberately or out of ignorance—are surely contributing to the ultimate dissolution of the church. For what will happen if each is allowed to do what he pleases? Yet that would happen, if to the preaching of doctrine there were not added private admonitions, corrections, and other aids of the sort that sustain doctrine and do not let it remain idle. Therefore, discipline is like a bridle to restrain and tame those who rage against the doctrine of Christ; or like a spur to arouse those of

little inclination; and also sometimes like a father's rod^{F400} to chastise mildly and with the gentleness of Christ's Spirit those who have more seriously lapsed. When, therefore, we discern frightful devastation beginning to threaten the church because there is no concern and no means of restraining the people, necessity itself cries out that a remedy is needed. Now, this is the sole remedy that Christ has enjoined and the one that has always been used among the godly.

2. STAGES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

The first foundation of discipline is to provide a place for private admonition; that is, if anyone does not perform his duty willingly, or behaves insolently, or does not live honorably, or has committed any act deserving blame—he should allow himself to be admonished; and when the situation demands it, every man should endeavor to admonish his brother. But let pastors and presbyters be especially watchful to do this, for their duty is not only to preach to the people, but to warn and exhort in every house, wherever they are not effective enough in general instruction. Paul teaches this when he relates that he taught privately and from house to house [^{<442020>} Acts 20:20], and declares himself “innocent of the blood of all” [verse 26], because he “ceased not to admonish everyone night and day with tears” [^{<442031>} Acts 20:31]. For doctrine obtains force and authority where the minister not only explains to all together what they owe to Christ, but also has the right and means to require that it be kept by those whom he has observed are either disrespectful or languid toward his teaching.

If anyone either stubbornly rejects such admonitions or shows that he scorns them by persisting in his own vices, after having been admonished a second time in the presence of witnesses, Christ commands that he be called to the tribunal of the church, that is, the assembly of the elders,^{F401} and there be more gravely admonished as by public authority, in order that, if he reverences the church, he may submit and obey. If he is not even subdued by this but perseveres in his wickedness, then Christ commands that, as a despiser of the church, he be removed from the believers' fellowship [^{<401815>} Matthew 18:15,17].

3. CONCEALED AND OPEN SINS

But because Christ is here speaking only of secret faults, we must postulate this division: some sins are private; others, public or openly manifest.^{F402} Of the former, Christ says to every individual: “Reprove him, between you and him alone” [^{<401815>} Matthew 18:15]. Paul says to Timothy of open sins: “Rebuke them in the presence of all, so that the rest may stand in fear” [^{<540520>} 1 Timothy 5:20]. For Christ had previously said, “If your brother has sinned against you” [^{<401815>} Matthew 18:15]. This phrase [“against you”] (unless you wish to be contentious) you cannot otherwise understand than as “with your knowledge alone, no others being aware.” But what the apostle enjoins upon Timothy concerning reproving openly those who sin openly, he himself follows in the case of Peter. For when Peter sinned to the point of public scandal, Paul did not admonish him privately but brought him into the presence of the church [^{<480214>} Galatians 2:14].

This, then, will be the right sequence in which to act: to proceed in correcting secret sins according to the steps laid down by Christ; but in open sins, if the offense is indeed public, to proceed at once to solemn rebuke by the church.

4. LIGHT AND GRAVE SINS

Here is another distinction: of sins, some are faults; others, crimes or shameful acts.^{F403} To correct these latter ones, we must not only use admonition or rebuke, but a severer remedy: as Paul shows when he not only chastises the incestuous Corinthian with words but punishes him with excommunication, as soon as he has been apprised of the crime [^{<460503>} 1 Corinthians 5:3 ff.]. Now, therefore, we begin to see better how the spiritual jurisdiction of the church, which punishes sins according to the Lord’s Word, is the best support of health, foundation of order, and bond of unity. Therefore, in excluding from its fellowship manifest adulterers, fornicators, thieves, robbers, seditious persons, perjurers, false witnesses, and the rest of this sort, as well as the insolent (who when duly admonished of their lighter vices mock God and his judgment), the church claims for itself nothing unreasonable but practices the jurisdiction conferred upon it by the Lord. Now, that no one may despise such a

judgment of the church or regard condemnation by vote of the believers as a trivial thing, the Lord has testified that this is nothing but the publication of his own sentence, and what they have done on earth is ratified in heaven. For they have the Word of the Lord to condemn the perverse; they have the Word to receive the repentant into grace [^{<401619>} Matthew 16:19; 18:18; ^{<432023>} John 20:23]. Those who trust that without this bond of discipline the church can long stand are, I say, mistaken; unless, perhaps, we can with impunity go without that aid which the Lord foresaw would be necessary for us. Truly, the variety of uses of this discipline will better show how great the need of it is!

5. THE PURPOSE OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE

In such corrections and excommunication, the church has three ends in view. The first is that they who lead a filthy and infamous life may not be called Christians, to the dishonor of God, as if his holy church [cf. ^{<490525>} Ephesians 5:25-26] were a conspiracy of wicked and abandoned men. For since the church itself is the body of Christ [^{<510124>} Colossians 1:24], it cannot be corrupted by such foul and decaying members without some disgrace falling upon its Head. Therefore, that there may be no such thing in the church to brand its most sacred name with disgrace, they from whose wickedness infamy redounds to the Christian name must be banished from its family. And here also we must preserve the order of the Lord's Supper, that it may not be profaned by being administered indiscriminately.^{F404} For it is very true that he to whom its distribution has been committed, if he knowingly and willingly admits an unworthy person whom he could rightfully turn away, is as guilty of sacrilege as if he had cast the Lord's body to dogs. On this account, Chrysostom gravely inveighs against priests who, fearing the power of great men, dare exclude no one. "Blood," he says, "will be required at your hands. [^{<260318>} Ezekiel 3:18; 33:8.] If you fear a man, he will laugh at you; but if you fear God, you will be revered also among men. Let us not dread the fasces, the purple, the crowns; here we have a greater power. I truly would rather give my body to death, and let my blood be poured out, than participate in that pollution."^{F405} Therefore, lest this most hallowed mystery be disgraced, discretion is very much needed in its distribution. Yet this can be had only through the jurisdiction of the church.

The second purpose is that the good be not corrupted by the constant company of the wicked, as commonly happens. For (such is our tendency to wander from the way) there is nothing easier than for us to be led away by bad examples from right living. The apostle noted this tendency when he bade the Corinthians expel the incestuous man from their company. “A little leaven,” he says, “ferments the whole lump.” [^{<460506>} 1 Corinthians 5:6.] And he foresaw such great danger here that he prohibited all association with him. “If any brother,” he says, “bears among you the name of fornicator, miser, worshiper of idols, drunkard, or reviler, I do not allow you even to take food with such a man.” [^{<460511>} 1 Corinthians 5:11 p.]

The third purpose is that those overcome by shame for their baseness begin to repent. They who under gentler treatment would have become more stubborn so profit by the chastisement of their own evil as to be awakened when they feel the rod. The apostle means this when he speaks as follows: “If anyone does not obey our teaching, note that man; and do not mingle with him, that he may be ashamed” [^{<530314>} 2 Thessalonians 3:14 p.]. Likewise, in another passage, when he writes that he has delivered the Corinthian man to Satan: “that his spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord” [^{<460505>} 1 Corinthians 5:5]; that is (as I interpret it), Paul gave him over to temporary condemnation that he might have eternal salvation. But he speaks of “delivering over to Satan” because the devil is outside the church, as Christ is in the church.^{F406} Some authorities refer this phrase to a certain vexing of the flesh,^{F407} but this seems very doubtful to me.

6. THE HANDLING OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE IN THE VARIOUS CASES

With these purposes enumerated, it remains for us to see how the church carries out this part of discipline which falls within its jurisdiction.

To begin with, let us keep the division set forth above: that some sins are public; others, private or somewhat secret.^{F408} Public sins are those witnessed not by one or two persons, but committed openly and to the offense of the entire church. I call secret sins, not those completely hidden from men, as are those of hypocrites (for these do not fall under the

judgment of the church), but those of an intermediate sort, which are not unwitnessed, yet not public.

The first kind does not require the steps which Christ lists [^{<401815>} Matthew 18:15-17]; but when any such sin appears, the church ought to do its duty in summoning the sinner and correcting him according to his fault.

In the second kind, according to that rule of Christ, the case does not come before the church until the sinner becomes obstinate. When it has come before the church, then the other division between crimes and faults is to be observed. For such great severity is not to be used in lighter sins, but verbal chastisement is enough—and that mild and fatherly—which should not harden or confuse the sinner, but bring him back to himself, that he may rejoice rather than be sad that he has been corrected. But shameful acts need to be chastised with a harsher remedy. Nor is it enough if he, who by setting a bad example through his misdeed has gravely injured the church, be chastised only with words; but he ought for a time to be deprived of the communion of the Supper until he gives assurance of his repentance. For Paul not only rebuked the Corinthian in words but banished him from the church, and chided the Corinthians for bearing with him so long [^{<460501>} 1 Corinthians 5:1-7].

The ancient and better church kept this procedure while lawful government flourished. For if anyone had committed a crime that caused offense, he was ordered first to abstain from partaking of the Sacred Supper, then to humble himself before God and witness his repentance before the church. There were, moreover, solemn rites customarily enjoined as marks of repentance upon those who had lapsed. When these had been performed to the satisfaction of the church, the penitent was received into grace with laying on of hands, a reception that Cyprian often calls “peace.” He also briefly describes such a rite. “They do penance,” he says, “for a set period; then they come to public confession and through the laying on of hands of bishop and clergy receive the right to communion.” Although the bishop with his clergy possessed a power of reconciliation, it required at the same time the consent of the people, as Cyprian elsewhere shows.^{F409}

7. IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH, DISCIPLINE APPLIED TO ALL OFFENDERS ALIKE

As no one was exempt from this discipline, both princes and common people submitted to it. And rightly! For it was established by Christ, to whom it is fitting that all royal scepters and crowns submit. Thus Theodosius, when he was deprived of the right of communion by Ambrose because of the slaughter committed at Thessalonica,^{F410} threw down all his royal trappings; in church he publicly wept over his sin, which had overtaken him through others' deceit, and begged pardon with groaning and tears. For great kings ought not to count it any dishonor to prostrate themselves as suppliants before Christ, the King of Kings; nor ought they to be displeased that they are judged by the church. For inasmuch as they hear almost nothing but mere flatteries in their courts, it is all the more necessary for them to be rebuked by the Lord through the mouth of priests. Rather, they ought to desire not to be spared by the priests, that God may spare them.

In this place I say nothing about those persons through whom this jurisdiction is to be exercised; for I have discussed this elsewhere.^{F411} I add only this: Paul's course of action for excommunicating a man is the lawful one, provided the elders do not do it by themselves alone, but with the knowledge and approval of the church; in this way the multitude of the people does not decide the action but observes as witness and guardian so that nothing may be done according to the whim of a few. Indeed, the whole sequence of the action, besides the calling on God's name, ought to have that gravity which bespeaks the presence of Christ in order that there may be no doubt that he himself presides at his own tribunal.

(Moderation in discipline enjoined, and rigorists confuted, 8-13)

8. SEVERITY AND MILDNESS IN CHURCH DISCIPLINE

But we ought not to pass over the fact that such severity as is joined with a "spirit of gentleness" [^{<480601>} Galatians 6:1] befits the church. For we must always, as Paul bids us, take particular care that he who is punished be not overwhelmed with sorrow [^{<470207>} 2 Corinthians 2:7]. Thus a remedy would become destruction. But, from the purpose intended it would be better to take a rule of moderation. For, in excommunication the

intent is to lead the sinner to repentance and to remove bad examples from the midst, lest either Christ's name be maligned or others be provoked to imitate them. If, then, we look to these things, it will be easy for us to judge how far severity ought to go and where it ought to stop. Therefore, when a sinner gives testimony of his repentance to the church, and by this testimony wipes out the offense as far as he can, he is not to be urged any further. If he is so urged, the rigor will now exceed due measure.

In this respect we cannot at all excuse the excessive severity of the ancients, which both completely departed from the Lord's injunction and was also terribly dangerous. For when they imposed solemn penance and deprivation from Holy Communion sometimes for seven, sometimes for four, sometimes for three, years, and sometimes for life,^{F412} what could be the result but either great hypocrisy or utter despair? Likewise, it was not profitable or consonant with reason that one who had fallen again should not be admitted to a second repentance, but should be cast out of the church to the end of his life.^{F413} Whoever will weigh the matter with sound judgment will recognize their lack of prudence in this.

However, I rather disapprove the public custom here than accuse all those who have used it, of whom it is certain that some disliked the practice but put up with it because they could not correct it. In truth, Cyprian declares how it was not by his own will that he was so rigorous. "Our patience," he says, "and gentleness and humaneness are ready for all comers. I desire that all return to the church; I long that all our fellow soldiers be gathered within Christ's camp and God the Father's abode. I

forgive all things; I overlook much; in ardent zeal to bring the brotherhood together, I do not judicially examine in detail the faults committed against God. In pardoning faults more than I ought I am myself almost at fault. I embrace with prompt and full affection those returning in repentance, confessing their sin in making humble and simple satisfaction."^{F414} Chrysostom is somewhat harder, yet he speaks as follows: "If God is so kind, why does his priest wish to seem so rigorous?"^{F415} We know, moreover, what gentleness Augustine used toward the Donatists. He did not hesitate to take back to their bishoprics those who had returned from schism, and that immediately after repentance!^{F416} But because a contrary

practice had come to prevail, they were compelled to yield their own judgment, and to follow it.

9. THE LIMITS OF OUR JUDGMENT ACCORDING TO CHURCH DISCIPLINE

This gentleness is required in the whole body of the church, that it should deal mildly with the lapsed and should not punish with extreme rigor, but rather, according to Paul's injunction, confirm its love toward them [^{<470208>}2 Corinthians 2:8]. Similarly, each layman ought to temper himself to this mildness and gentleness. It is, therefore, not our task to erase from the number of the elect those who have been expelled from the church, or to despair as if they were already lost. It is lawful to regard them as estranged from the church, and thus, from Christ—but only for such time as they remain separated. However, if they also display more stubbornness than gentleness, we should still commend them to the Lord's judgment, hoping for better things of them in the future than we see in the present. Nor should we on this account cease to call upon God in their behalf. And (to put it in one word) let us not condemn to death the very person who is in the hand and judgment of God alone; rather, let us only judge of the character of each man's works by the law of the Lord. While we follow this rule, we rather take our stand upon the divine judgment than put forward our own. Let us not claim for ourselves more license in judgment, unless we wish to limit God's power and confine his mercy by law. For God, whenever it pleases him, changes the worst men into the best, engrafts the alien, and adopts the stranger into the church. And the Lord does this to frustrate men's opinion and restrain their rashness—which, unless it is checked, ventures to assume for itself a greater right of judgment than it deserves.

10. EXCOMMUNICATION IS CORRECTIVE

For when Christ promises that what his people "bind on earth shall be bound in heaven" [^{<401818>}Matthew 18:18], he limits the force of binding to ecclesiastical censure. By this those who are excommunicated are not cast into everlasting ruin and damnation, but in hearing that their life and morals are condemned, they are assured of their everlasting condemnation unless they repent. Excommunication differs from anathema in that the latter,

taking away all pardon, condemns and consigns a man to eternal destruction; the former, rather, avenges and chastens his moral conduct. And although excommunication also punishes the man, it does so in such a way that, by forewarning him of his future condemnation, it may call him back to salvation. But if that be obtained, reconciliation and restoration to communion await him. Moreover, anathema is very rarely or never used. Accordingly, though ecclesiastical discipline does not permit us to live familiarly or have intimate contact with excommunicated persons, we ought nevertheless to strive by whatever means we can in order that they may turn to a more virtuous life and may return to the society and unity of the church. So the apostle also teaches: “Do not look upon them as enemies, but warn them as brothers” [^{<530315>} 2 Thessalonians 3:15]. Unless this gentleness is maintained in both private and public censures, there is danger lest we soon slide down from discipline to butchery.

11. AGAINST WILLFUL EXCESS IN DEMANDING CHURCH DISCIPLINE

This is also a prime requisite for the moderation of discipline, as Augustine argues against the Donatists: that individual lay-men, if they see vices not diligently enough corrected by the council of elders, should not therefore at once depart from the church; and that the pastors themselves, if they cannot cleanse all that needs correction according to their hearts’ desire, should not for that reason resign their ministry or disturb the entire church with unaccustomed rigor. For what Augustine writes is very true: “Whoever either corrects what he can by reproof, or excludes, without breaking the bond of peace, what he cannot correct—disapproving with fairness, bearing with firmness—this man is free and loosed from the curse.” In another passage he gives the reason: “All pious method and measure of ecclesiastical discipline ought ever to look to ‘the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ [^{<490403>} Ephesians 4:3], which the apostle orders us to keep by ‘forbearing one another’ [^{<490402>} Ephesians 4:2], and when it is not kept, the medicine of punishment begins to be not only superfluous but also harmful, and so ceases to be medicine.” “He who diligently ponders these things,” Augustine says, “neither neglects severe discipline in the maintenance of unity, nor by intemperate correction breaks the bond of fellowship.” He indeed admits that not only ought

pastors to exert themselves to the end that no fault may remain in the church, but that every man ought to strive to the same end according to his strength. And Augustine does not hide the fact that he who neglects to warn, reprove, and correct evil men, even though he does not favor them or sin with them, is guilty before the Lord. But if he plays such a part that he is able to cut the evil men off from partaking of the sacraments, and does not do so, he sins not in another's misdeed, but in his own. Only, Augustine would have that prudence used which the Lord also requires "lest, when the tares are being uprooted, the grain be harmed"

[^{<401329>}Matthew 13:29]. From this point he concludes with Cyprian: "Let a man mercifully correct what he can; let him patiently bear what he cannot correct, and groan and sorrow over it with love."^{F417}

12. DISRUPTIVE SEVERITY: DONATISTS AND ANABAPTISTS

But Augustine says this because of the overscrupulousness of the Donatists, who, when they observed faults in the church which the bishops reprov'd in words but did not punish with excommunication (because they thought they could gain nothing in this way), inveighed fiercely against the bishops as betrayers of discipline and in an impious schism separated themselves from Christ's flock. The Anabaptists act in the same way today. While they recognize no assembly of Christ to exist except one conspicuous in every respect for its angelic perfection,^{F418} under the pretense of their zeal they subvert whatever edification there is. "Such persons," says Augustine, "not out of hatred of other men's wickedness but out of fondness for their own contentions, ensnaring the weak folk by boasting of their own name, strive either to draw them all to their side or at least to divide them. Puffed up in their pride, mad in their stubbornness, deceitful in their slanders, and turbulent in their seditions, they draw the shade of a rigid severity to hide their lack of the light of truth. Those things which Scripture enjoins to be done to correct the vices of the brethren with a modest remedy while sincere love is kept and unity of peace preserved, they seize upon and turn to the sacrilege of schism and the occasion of cutting off." Thus, "Satan transforms himself into an angel of light" [^{<471114>}2 Corinthians 11:14, cf. Vg.] when, on occasion of just severity, he prompts men to merciless cruelty, seeking only to corrupt and break the bond of peace and unity. While this bond remains firm among

Christians, all his powers are powerless to do harm, the mousetraps of his treachery are weakened, and his schemes of subversions vanish away.^{F419}

13. AUGUSTINE REQUIRES DISCRIMINATION IN DISCIPLINE

Augustine especially commends this one thing: if the contagion of sin invades the multitude, the severe mercy of a vigorous discipline is necessary. “For advice to separate,” he says, “is vain, harmful, and sacrilegious, because it becomes impious and proud; and it disturbs weak good men more than it corrects bold bad ones.”^{F420} And what he there enjoins on others, he himself has faithfully followed. For, writing to Aurelius, bishop of Carthage, he complains that drunkenness (so severely condemned in Scripture) is raging unpunished in Africa, and he advises calling a council of bishops to provide a remedy. He then adds: “These things, in my judgment, are removed not roughly or harshly, or in any imperious manner; and more by teaching than by commanding, more by monishing than by menacing. For so we must deal with a great number of sinners. But we are to use severity toward the sins of a few.”^{F421} Yet he does not mean that bishops should on this account condone public crimes, or remain silent because they cannot punish them more severely, as he explains afterward. But he wishes the method of correction to be so tempered that, as far as possible, it may bring health rather than death to the body. Therefore, he concludes as follows: “That precept of the apostle on the separation of evil persons must accordingly by no means be neglected when it can be applied without danger of violating peace. For he did not wish it to be done otherwise. And this principle must also be kept: bearing with one another, we should try to keep ‘the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace’ [^{<460503>} 1 Corinthians 5:3-7; ^{<490402>} Ephesians 4:2-3]?”^{F422}

*(The use and purpose of lasting, private and public:
principles to be guarded in it, 14-18)*

14. PUBLIC AND MUTUAL PRACTICE OF PENANCE

The remaining part of discipline, which is not properly contained within the power of the keys, is where the pastors, according to the need of the times, should exhort the people either to fasting or to solemn

supplications, or to other acts of humility, repentance, and faith—of which the time, the manner, and the form are not prescribed by God’s Word, but left to the judgment of the church. Also, the observance of this part, as it is useful, was always customary in the early church, even from the days of the apostles themselves. However, even the apostles were not the first authors, but took their example from the Law and the Prophets. For we see there that whenever anything grave occurred, the people were called together, and supplications and a fast appointed [^{<290215>} Joel 2:15; ^{<441302>} Acts 13:2-3]. The apostles, therefore, followed what was not new to the people of God, and what they foresaw would be useful to them. The explanation of other exercises is similar; by them the people can either be aroused to duty or kept within duty and obedience. There are examples scattered through the sacred histories, which there is no need to collect. To sum them up: whenever a controversy over religion arises which ought to be settled by either a synod or an ecclesiastical court, whenever there is a question about choosing a minister, whenever, finally, any difficult matter of great importance is to be discussed, or again when there appear the judgments of the Lord’s anger (as pestilence, war, and famine)—this is a holy ordinance and one salutary for all ages, that pastors urge the people to public fasting and extraordinary prayers. If anyone declines to accept the testimonies which can be cited from the Old Testament, as if inappropriate to the Christian church, the fact remains that the apostles also followed the same practice. Concerning prayers, however, I think scarcely anyone will be found who would raise a question. Let us, therefore, say something about fasting, since very many, while they do not understand how useful it is, regard it as not very necessary; others also, considering it superfluous, completely reject it.^{F423} And, since its use is not well understood, it can easily lapse into superstition.

15. THE PURPOSE OF FASTING

Holy and lawful fasting has three objectives. We use it either to weaken and subdue the flesh that it may not act wantonly, or that we may be better prepared for prayers and holy meditations, or that it may be a testimony of our self-abasement before God when we wish to confess our guilt before him.

The first objective does not generally have a place in public fasting, because all bodies do not have the same constitution, or the same state of health; therefore, it is more appropriate to private fasting.

The second is common to both. For both the whole church and every individual believer have need of such preparation for prayers.

The third is common likewise. For it sometimes will happen that God will strike a nation with war, or pestilence, or some calamity. Under this common scourge, the whole people ought to accuse themselves and confess their guilt. But if the hand of the Lord should strike any individual, he ought to do this alone or with his family. The matter lies primarily in the motive of the heart. But when the heart is affected as it ought to be, it can hardly help breaking into outward testimony. And this especially happens if it tends to common edification, so that all together, by confessing their sin openly, render praise to the God of righteousness, and urge one another, each by his example.

16. FASTING AND PRAYER

Accordingly, fasting, as it is a sign of self-abasement, has more frequent use in public than among private individuals even though, as has been said,^{F424} it is common to both. In so far, therefore, as it concerns the discipline which we are now discussing, whenever men are to pray to God concerning any great matter, it would be expedient to appoint fasting along with prayer. Thus, when the Antiochenes placed their hands upon Paul and Barnabas, the better to commend their ministry to God, a ministry of great importance, they joined fasting to prayer [^{<441303>} Acts 13:3]. Thus, both of these afterward, when they appointed ministers to churches, were accustomed to pray with fasting [^{<441423>} Acts 14:23]. Their sole purpose in this kind of fasting is to render themselves more eager and unencumbered for prayer. Surely we experience this: with a full stomach our mind is not so lifted up to God that it can be drawn to prayer with a serious and ardent affection and persevere in it. So are we to understand what Luke relates concerning Anna, that she has served the Lord in fasting and prayers [^{<420237>} Luke 2:37]. For Luke does not set the worship of God in fasting; but he means that the holy woman has in this way trained herself to sustained prayer. Such was Nehemiah's fast when, with earnest

zeal, he prayed God for the liberation of his people [^{<160104>} Nehemiah 1:4]. For this reason, Paul says that believers act rightly if they abstain for a time from the marriage bed, that they may be left freer for prayer and fasting. There he joins fasting with prayer as an aid to it, and warns that it is of no importance of itself except as it is applied to this end [^{<460705>} 1 Corinthians 7:5]. Then, when in the same passage he instructs married couples to give one another mutual consideration [^{<460703>} 1 Corinthians 7:3], it is clear that he is not speaking of daily prayers, but of something demanding more serious attention.

17. FASTING AND THE PRACTICE OF PENANCE

Again, if either pestilence, or famine, or war begins to rage, or if any disaster seems to threaten any district and people—then also it is the duty of the pastors to urge the church to fasting, in order that by supplication the Lord's wrath may be averted. For where he causes danger to appear he warns that he is ready and, so to speak, armed for vengeance. Therefore, as in ancient times the accused were accustomed to abase themselves as suppliants with long beard, unkempt hair, and dark clothing, in order to appeal to the mercy of the judge—so, when we stand before God's judgment seat, it redounds to his glory and to edification of the people, and is also profitable and salutary for us in humble garb to pray that his severity be averted. And it can be readily inferred from the words of Joel that this was the custom among the Israelites. For when he orders a trumpet to be sounded, an assembly to be called, fasting to be appointed, and the things that follow [^{<290215>} Joel 2:15-16], he is speaking of matters received as common custom. A little before, he had said that the trial of the people's shameful acts was set, and announced that a day of judgment was now at hand, and had summoned the accused to plead their cause [cf. ^{<290201>} Joel 2:1]; then he cries out for them to hasten to sackcloth and ashes, to weeping and fasting [^{<290212>} Joel 2:12], that is, to prostrate themselves before the Lord also with outward testimonies. Indeed, sackcloth and ashes were perhaps more appropriate to those times; but there is no doubt that meeting and weeping and fasting, and like activities, apply equally to our age^{F425} whenever the condition of our affairs so demands. For since this is a holy exercise both for the humbling of men and for their confession of humility, why should we use it less than the

ancients did in similar need? We read that not only the Israelite church, formed and established on the Word of God [^{<090706>} 1 Samuel 7:6; 31:13; ^{<100112>} 2 Samuel 1:12], but also the Ninevites, who had no teaching but the preaching of Jonah [^{<320305>} Jonah 3:5], fasted in token of sorrow. What reason is there why we should not do the same?

But, you object, this is an external ceremony which, together with others, ended in Christ. No, it is an excellent aid for believers today (as it always was) and a profitable admonition to arouse them in order that they may not provoke God more and more by their excessive confidence and negligence, when they are chastised by his lashes. Accordingly, Christ, when he excuses his apostles for not fasting, does not say that fasting is abolished, but appoints it for times of calamity and joins it with mourning. “The days will come when the bridegroom is taken away from them.” [^{<400915>} Matthew 9:15; ^{<420534>} Luke 5:34-35.]^{F426}

18. THE NATURE OF FASTING

But to avoid any error in the term, let us define what fasting is. For here we do not understand it simply as restraint and abstemiousness in food, but as something else. Throughout its course, the life of the godly indeed ought to be tempered with frugality and sobriety, so that as far as possible it bears some resemblance to a fast. But, in addition, there is another sort of fasting, temporary in character, when we withdraw something from the normal regimen of living, either for one day or for a definite time, and pledge ourselves to a tighter and more severe restraint in diet than ordinarily. This consists in three things: in time, in quality of foods, and in smallness of quantity. By time, I mean that we should carry out those acts of fasting for the sake of which that fast is appointed. As, for example, if a man fasts for the sake of solemn prayer, he should come to it without breaking his fast. Quality consists in that all elegance should be absent, and that, content with common and baser foods, we should not whet our palate with delicacies. The rule of quantity in this is that we should eat more sparingly and lightly than is our custom; only for need, not also for pleasure.

*(Danger of superstition, notions of merit, and hypocrisy in fasting
and the observance of Lent, 19-21)*

19. MISCONCEPTIONS OF FASTING

But we must always take especial precaution lest any superstition creep in, as has previously happened to the great harm of the church. For it would be much more satisfactory if fasting were not practiced at all, than diligently observed and at the same time corrupted with false and pernicious opinions, into which the world repeatedly falls, unless the pastors meet it with the highest faithfulness and prudence.

The first point is that they should always urge what Joel teaches, that they are to “rend their hearts, not their garments” [^{<290213>} Joel 2:13]; that is, they should admonish the people that God does not greatly esteem fasting of itself, unless an inner emotion of the heart is present, and true displeasure at one’s sin, true humility, and true sorrowing arising from the fear of God. Indeed, fasting is not otherwise useful than when it is joined as a lesser help to these. For God abominates nothing more than when men try to disguise themselves by displaying signs and outward appearances in place of innocence of heart. Therefore, Isaiah very severely inveighs against the Jews’ hypocrisy in thinking they were satisfying God when they had only fasted, whatever impiety and impure thoughts they harbored in their hearts. “Is this the fast that the Lord has chosen?” [^{<235805>} Isaiah 58:5-6, conflated], and what follows. Hypocritical fasting, then, is not only a useless and superfluous weariness but the greatest abomination.

Another evil akin to this, and to be utterly avoided, is to regard fasting as a work of merit or a form of divine worship. For since fasting is in itself a thing indifferent, and should have no importance except for the sake of those ends to which it ought to be directed, a most dangerous superstition is involved in confusing it with works commanded by God and necessary of themselves without any other consideration. Such was the delusion of the Manichees of old. Augustine, in refuting them, teaches clearly enough that fasting is to be judged solely by those ends which I have mentioned, and that it is approved by God only if it has reference to this.^{F427} There is a third error, not indeed so impious, but still dangerous: to require it to be

kept too strictly and rigidly as if it were one of the chief duties, and to extol it with such immoderate praises that men think they have done something noble when they have fasted. In this respect, I dare not wholly absolve the ancient writers from having sown certain seeds of superstition and having furnished the occasion of the tyranny which afterward arose. In them one sometimes comes across sane and wise statements about fasting, but later one repeatedly meets immoderate praises of fasting, which set it up among the chief virtues.

20. DEGENERATION OF FASTING IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHURCH

At that time the superstitious observance of Lent had prevailed everywhere, because the common people thought that in it they were doing some exceptional service to God, and the pastors commended it as a holy imitation of Christ.^{F428} On the contrary, it is plain that Christ did not fast to set an example for others, but to prove, in so beginning to proclaim the gospel, that it was no human doctrine but actually one sent from heaven [^{<400402>}Matthew 4:2]. And the marvel is that such sheer hallucination (which is refuted so often and with such clear arguments) could creep upon men of keen judgment. For Christ does not fast often—as he would have to do if he had willed to lay down a law of yearly fasting—but only once, when he girded himself for the proclamation of the gospel. Nor does he fast in human fashion, as would have been fitting if he willed to arouse men to imitate him; but he shows an example rather to transport all men to admiration of him than to arouse them with zeal to imitate him. Finally, his reason for fasting was not different from that which Moses performed when he received the law at the Lord's hand [^{<022418>}Exodus 24:18; 34:28]. For since that miracle was manifested in Moses to establish the authority of the law, it ought not to have been omitted in Christ, lest the gospel seem to yield to the law. But since that time it never entered any man's mind, on the excuse of following Moses, to establish such a form of fasting among the people of Israel. And none of the holy prophets and patriarchs followed it, even when they had enthusiasm and zeal enough for all pious exercises. For the statement that Elijah went forty days without food and drink [^{<111908>}1 Kings 19:8] only served to apprise the people that he had been raised up to restore the law,

from which almost all Israel had departed. It was, therefore, mere wrongheaded zeal,^{F429} full of superstition, that they justified and painted fasting as the following of Christ.

However, there was amazing diversity in the manner of fasting, as Cassiodorus relates from the ninth book of Socrates' history. For the Romans (he says) had only three weeks, but for them the fast was continuous, except on Sunday and Saturday. The Illyrians and Greeks had six; others, seven; but fasting was at intervals. They differed as much in choice of foods: some ate only bread and water; others added vegetables; still others did not abstain from fish and fowl; others made no distinction in foods.^{F430} Augustine also mentions this difference in his second letter to Januarius.^{F431}

21. DEPRAVED INDULGENCE IN SEASONS OF LASTING

Worse times then followed, and to the misdirected zeal of the people was added the incompetence and lack of training of the bishops, as well as their lust for mastery and their tyrannical rigor. Wicked laws were passed which bind consciences with deadly chains. The eating of meat was forbidden, as if it would defile a man. Sacrilegious opinions were piled upon one another, until the depth of all errors was reached. And not to overlook any depravity, they began, with a completely absurd pretense of abstinence, to mock God. For the praise of fasting is sought in the most exquisite delicacies; then no dainties are enough; at no other time is there greater abundance or variety or sweetness of foods. They think that they are duly serving God in such and so elegant trappings. I forbear to mention that they who wish to be esteemed the most holy of men never glut themselves more foully. To sum up: for them the highest worship of God is to abstain from meats, and in their place to abound in all sorts of delicacies. On the other hand, the ultimate impiety, scarcely to be expiated by death, is for anyone to taste the slightest bit of bacon fat or rancid meat with dark bread. Jerome tells us that in his day there were certain men who mocked God with such follies. To avoid eating oil, they arranged for the most delicate foods to be brought to them from everywhere; indeed, to do violence to nature, they abstained from drinking water, but had sweet and costly draughts prepared for them, which they drank not from a cup but from a shell.^{F432} What was then a vice among the few is today common

among all the wealthy, so that they fast for no other purpose than to feast more sumptuously and daintily. But I do not want to waste many words in a matter so obvious. I say only this, that both in fasts and in all other parts of discipline the papists have nothing right, nothing sincere, nothing well-ordered and arranged, to give them occasion to boast, as if anything remained among them deserving of praise.

(Requirement of clerical celibacy a harmful innovation, 22-28)

22. THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CLERGY AND ITS DEGENERATION

There follows the second part of discipline, which applies particularly to the clergy. It is contained in the canons that the ancient bishops imposed upon themselves and their order. Such are these: no cleric should devote himself to hunting, gambling, or reveling. No cleric should practice usury or commerce; no cleric should be present at wanton dances—and there are others of this sort. Penalties were also added to sanction the authority of the canons so that none might violate them with impunity. For this purpose the government of his own clergy was committed to each bishop, that he should rule them according to the canons and keep them to their duty. For this purpose annual visitations and synods were established to admonish anyone negligent in office and, if anyone sinned, to punish him according to his offense. The bishops themselves also had yearly provincial synods—in the early period twice yearly—by which they were judged as to whether they had acted at variance from their duty.^{F433} For if any bishop was too harsh or violent toward his clergy, the latter could appeal to a synod, even though only one cleric complained. The severest punishment was that the one who had sinned should be deposed from office and deprived of communion for a time. Because this was a permanent system, they used never to dismiss one synod without setting the place and time of the next.^{F434} For the convening of a universal council belonged to the emperor alone, as all the ancient summonses attest.^{F435}

So long as this severity was in force, the clergy expected from the people no more by word than they themselves showed by example and act. Nay, they were much stricter with themselves than with the people. And it is truly fitting that the common people be ruled, so to speak, by a gentler

and laxer discipline; that the clergy practice harsher censures among themselves and be far less indulgent toward themselves than toward others.

There is no need to relate how all this has fallen into disuse, since today nothing more unbridled and dissolute than this order can be imagined, and they have broken into such license that the whole world cries out. I admit that, lest all antiquity should with them seem utterly buried, they deceive the eyes of the simple with certain shadows, but these come no nearer to the ancient customs than the ape's mimicry to that which men do by reason and planning. There is a memorable passage in Xenophon where he tells how foully the Persians had degenerated from the ordinances of their forebears and had lapsed from a strict manner of living to effeminacy and luxury, but to cover that disgrace, attentively kept the former rites. For while in the time of Cyrus sobriety and temperance still flourished, so that there was no need to wipe one's nose, and it was even thought a disgrace, among their descendants it remained a religious custom that no one should blow mucus out of his nostrils, but was permitted to suck it up and feed within (to the point of putrefaction) the noisome humors which had been contracted through gluttony. Thus, according to the ancient precept, it was unlawful to bring drinking bowls to the table; but later merely to swill so that men needed to be carried away drunk was tolerable. There was an ordinance to eat but once a day. These good successors did not set this aside, but were accustomed to continue their drunken revels from noon to midnight. It was a long-established custom among the Persians, enjoined by law, that men should complete a day's journey without eating; but to avoid weariness, it became the permitted and usual practice to shorten the journey to two hours.^{F436} Whenever the papists trot out their degenerate rules to show their relationship to the holy fathers, this example will sufficiently reprove their ridiculous imitation, so that no painter could express it more vividly.

23. PRIESTLY CELIBACY AND ITS CONTRADICTION OF SCRIPTURE

In one thing they are extremely rigid and inexorable—in not permitting marriage to priests.^{F437} But it is needless to speak of the extent to which fornication prevails among them unpunished; and how, relying upon their

foul celibacy, they have become callous to all crimes. Yet this prohibition clearly shows what a plague all their traditions are. For it has not only deprived the church of good and fit pastors, but has also brought in a sink of iniquities and has cast many souls into the abyss of despair. Surely the forbidding of marriage to priests came about by an impious tyranny not only against God's Word but also against all equity. First, to forbid what the Lord left free was by no means lawful to men. Again, that the Lord expressly took care by his Word that this freedom should not be infringed upon is too clear to require a long proof. I pass over the fact that Paul in many passages wishes a bishop to be a man of one wife [^{<540302>} 1 Timothy 3:2; ^{<560106>} Titus 1:6]. But what could be more forcefully said than when he declares by the Holy Spirit that in the Last Days there will be impious men who forbid marriage, and calls them not only impostors but demons [^{<540401>} 1 Timothy 4:1,3]? that the prohibition of marriage is a doctrine of demons is then a prophecy, a sacred oracle of the Holy Spirit, and by it the Spirit willed from the beginning to arm the church against dangers?

But they think they have neatly escaped when they twist this sentence to Montanus, the Tatianists, the Encratites, and other ancient heretics. They (the papists say) alone condemned matrimony; we do not damn it at all, but debar from it only the ecclesiastical order, for which we deem it unfitting.^{F438} As if this prophecy, even though at first fulfilled in those heretics, did not apply also to the papists; or as if this childish quibble were worth listening to, to deny that they prohibit marriage because they do not prohibit it to all! For it is as if a tyrant should contend that a law is not unjust when only a part of a city is oppressed with its injustice!

24. MARRIAGE ENJOINED AND SPIRITUALLY INTERPRETED

They object that the priest should be distinguished from the people by some mark. As if the Lord had not also foreseen in what ornaments priests ought to excel! Thus they blame the apostle for the disturbed order and disfigured comeliness of the church, who, when he sketched the perfect pattern of the good bishop, dared put marriage among the other endowments which he required in him. I know how they interpret this [^{<540302>} 1 Timothy 3:2; ^{<560106>} Titus 1:6], namely, that a man who had a second wife must not be chosen.^{F439} And I admit that this is no new

interpretation, but from its context it is plainly false.^{F440} For Paul immediately prescribes what sort the wives of bishops and deacons need to be [^{<540311>} 1 Timothy 3:11].

Paul lists marriage among the virtues of the bishop; the papists teach that it is an intolerable fault in the church order. And, please God, not content with this general blame, they call it in their canons uncleanness and pollution of the flesh.^{F441} Let every man ponder from what workshop these things have come! Christ deems marriage worthy of such honor that he wills it to be an image of his sacred union with the church [^{<490523>} Ephesians 5:23-24, 32]. What more splendid commendation could be spoken of the dignity of marriage? With what shamelessness will that be called unclean or defiled in which a likeness of Christ's spiritual grace shines forth!

25. REFUTATION OF AN OPPOSING SCRIPTURAL ARGUMENT

Now, although their prohibition so clearly conflicts with God's Word, they still find something to defend it in Scripture. The Levitical priests, whenever their turn to minister came, had to sleep apart from their wives in order to be pure and unspotted to handle sacred things [cf. ^{<092105>} 1 Samuel 21:5 ff.]. Therefore, it would be very unseemly for our sacred rites—which are much nobler and occur daily—to be administered by married men. As if the role of the gospel ministry and the Levitical priesthood were one and the same! For the Levitical priests as antitypes^{F442} represented Christ, who, mediator of God and men [^{<540205>} 1 Timothy 2:5], by his perfect purity was to reconcile the Father to us. But though sinners cannot in every respect express the pattern of his holiness, in order to make at least a sketch of it, they were ordered to purify themselves beyond the custom of men when they approached the sanctuary. For then they properly represented Christ, because they appeared at the Tabernacle (the image of the heavenly judgment seat) as peacemakers to reconcile the people to God. Because the pastors of the church do not play this part today, it is pointless to compare them with the priests. Therefore, the apostle boldly proclaims, without exception, that marriage is honorable among all men, but fornicators and adulterers are left to God's judgment [^{<581304>} Hebrews 13:4]. And the apostles themselves prove by their example that marriage is not unworthy of the

holiness of ally office, however excellent.^{F443} For Paul is witness that they not only kept their wives but took them about with them [^{<460905>} 1 Corinthians 9:5].

26. THE ANCIENT CHURCH AND CELIBACY

Then, it was an astonishing shamelessness: on their part to peddle this ornament of chastity as something necessary. This they did to the deep disgrace of the ancient church, which, while abounding in an excellent knowledge of God, still more excelled in holiness. For if they do not heed the apostles (they are accustomed sometimes to treat them with outright contempt), please, then, what will they do with all the ancient fathers, who certainly not only tolerated marriage in the order of bishops but also approved it?^{F444} Did they then promote a foul profanation of sacred things, inasmuch as the Lord's sacraments were not duly celebrated among them? Indeed, there was agitation in the Council of Nicaea to require celibacy. For there are always superstitious little fellows who dream up something new to win admiration for themselves. But what was decreed? Paphnutius' opinion was accepted, who declared that it was chastity for a man to cohabit with his own wife.^{F445} Therefore, marriage remained sacred among them; and it caused them no shame, nor was it thought to cast any spot upon the ministry.

27. LATE DEVELOPMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT OF CELIBACY

Then those times followed when the too superstitious admiration of celibacy became prevalent. After this came those frequent and unrestrained rhapsodic praises of virginity, so that scarcely any other virtue was commonly believed to compare with it. And although marriage was not condemned as unclean, still its dignity was so weakened and its holiness so obscured that a man who did not refrain from it seemed not to aspire to perfection with enough strength of purpose. Hence those canons by which first, men who had come to the rank of priests were forbidden to contract marriage; next, it was forbidden for any but celibates or those who, along with their wives, had renounced the marriage bed to be taken into that order. I admit that these regulations, because they seemed to bring reverence to the priesthood, were also received with great approbation in

antiquity. But if my adversaries claim antiquity against me, my first answer is that this freedom of bishops to be married existed both under the apostles and for some centuries afterward [^{<540302>} 1 Timothy 3:2]. The apostles themselves, and those pastors of prime authority who followed in their place, used this freedom without any difficulty. We ought to hold the example of the earlier church of greater importance than to judge as unlawful or unseemly what then was accepted with praise and was customary. Secondly, that age which with immoderate affection for virginity began to discriminate against marriage did not impose the law of celibacy upon priests as a thing necessary of itself, but because a celibate was preferred to a married man. And lastly, I answer that they did not require it in such a way that by necessity and force they compelled celibacy of those who were not fitted to keep continence. For while they punished fornications with very severe laws, in the case of those who contracted marriage they decreed only that they give up their office.^{F446}

28. ABUSES UNDER THE RULE OF CELIBACY

Therefore, whenever the defenders of this new tyranny seek the pretext of antiquity in defense of their celibacy, we shall have to require of them that they restore that ancient chastity in their priests; that they remove adulterers and fornicators; that they do not allow those to whom they forbid an honorable and modest use of the marriage bed to run unpunished into every sort of lusts; that they restore that now abandoned discipline by which all wantonness may be restrained; and that they free the church from this most shameful wickedness with which it has so long been defaced. When they concede this, then we shall have to admonish them once more not to claim as obligatory that which, being free, depends on its usefulness to the church.

Yet I do not say this because I believe that under any condition room ought to be given for these canons which cast the fetters of celibacy over the ecclesiastical order; but I do so in order that the wiser ones may understand with what effrontery our foes, in the name of antiquity, defame holy wedlock in priests.

As far as the fathers whose writings remain are concerned, when they speak from their own opinion, none, bexcept Jerome,^{F447} has so spitefully

impugned the honorableness of marriage. We shall be content with Chrysostom's tribute alone, because, since he was a particular admirer of virginity, he cannot be regarded as more profuse than the others in commendation of marriage. But here are his words: "The first degree of chastity is sincere virginity; the second, faithful marriage. Therefore, the second sort of virginity is the chaste love of matrimony."^{F448}

CHAPTER 13

VOWS; AND HOW EVERYONE RASHLY TAKING THEM HAS MISERABLY ENTANGLED HIMSELF

(The nature of vows, and prevalent errors concerning them, 1-7)

1. DEGENERATION AND DANGERS

It is a matter indeed to be deplored that the church, whose freedom was bought at the inestimable price of Christ's blood, has been thus oppressed by cruel tyranny and almost overwhelmed with a huge mass of traditions. But meanwhile each man's private madness shows that it was not without very just cause that God permitted so much to Satan and his ministers. And it was not enough for men, neglecting Christ's authority, to bear all the burdens imposed by false teachers; each had further to seek his own burdens for himself and, by digging pits for himself, had to plunge deeper still. This happened when they eagerly devised vows by which a greater and stricter obligation might be added to the common chains. We have already shown how so-called "pastors" in their presumptuous rule of the church have corrupted the worship of God in ensnaring miserable souls with their iniquitous laws. It will not, therefore, be inopportune here to join with this another related evil, to show how the world, according to the depravity of its own disposition, has always repelled with such obstacles as it could the helps by which it ought to have been led to God. Now the better to see how very serious is the mischief occasioned by vows, let my readers now recall the principles already set forth.

For we have taught first that whatever may be required to train men to live pious and holy lives is comprised in the law.^{F449} We have further taught that the Lord, in order better to call us away from inventing new works, has included the entire praise of righteousness in simple obedience to his will.^{F450} If these things are true, one can readily judge that all reigned acts of worship, which we ourselves invent to deserve God's favor, are not at all acceptable to him, no matter how well they may please us. And surely

the Lord himself in many passages not only openly rejects but deeply abhors them.

Hence, there arises a doubt concerning those vows which are made apart from God's express Word. What place should they have? Can they be duly undertaken by Christian men? To what extent are they binding?

For what is called "promise" among men is called "vow" with respect to God. Moreover, we promise to men either those things which we think will be pleasing to them or those which we owe out of duty. It is, then, fitting that there should be a far closer observance of those vows which are directed to God himself, toward whom we must act in the greatest earnestness.

At this point superstition has been strangely prevalent in all ages, so that men have, without judgment and without distinction, immediately vowed to God whatever came into their mind, or even their mouth. Hence arose those follies, indeed, monstrous absurdities among the Gentiles, by which they too insolently mocked their gods. And would that even the Christians had not imitated this presumption of theirs! Indeed, they ought not to have done this. But we see that for some centuries nothing has been more usual than this wickedness: whole people everywhere, despising God's law, burned with a mad zeal to vow anything that had tickled them in dreams. I will not hatefully exaggerate, nor recount in detail, how gravely and in how many ways men have sinned in this respect. But it seems to me right to say this in passing, in order that it may better appear that, in discussing vows, we are not by any means raising a question over a superfluous matter.

2. GOD AS THE ONE TO WHOM WE MAKE OUR VOWS

Now, if we wish to avoid error in determining what vows are lawful, what ones objectionable, it is well to consider three things:

- (1) who it is to whom the vow is made;
- (2) who we are who make the vow;
- (3) lastly, with what intention we make our vow.

The purpose of the first thing is to make us realize that it is God with whom we have to deal, who is so pleased by our obedience that he declares all self-made religion,^{F451} however splendid and beautiful it may be in men's eyes, accursed [^{<510223>}Colossians 2:23]. If all voluntary worship which we ourselves devise apart from God's commandment is hateful to him, it follows that no worship can be acceptable to him except that which is approved by his Word. Therefore, let us not take to ourselves such license as to dare vow to God that which bears no evidence as to how he may esteem it. For Paul's teaching that whatever is done apart from faith is sin [^{<451423>}Romans 14:23]—since it may be extended to all actions—surely is particularly applicable when one turns one's thought directly to God. But if we fail or err in the least things (Paul is there discussing the difference of foods) where faith gives no clear mandate, how much more modest must we be when we undertake a matter of the greatest importancel tindeed, nothing ought to be more serious for us than the duties of religion. Let our first precaution in vows, therefore, be never to proceed to any avowal without our conscience first making sure that it attempts nothing rash. But it shall be free of the danger of rashness when it has God going before it and dictating as from his own Word what is good or unprofitable to do.

3. THE MAN WHO MAKES THE VOW

The second thing which we have said must be looked at here contains the following: we should measure our strength, we should keep our calling in mind, so as not to neglect the blessing of freedom which God has given us. For he is a rash man who vows what is either not in his power or conflicts with his calling. And he is ungrateful who despises God's beneficence, which constitutes him lord of all things. When I speak thus, I do not mean that anything has been so placed in our hand that, borne up by confidence in our own strength, we may promise it to God. For it was very truly decreed in the Council of Orange that we vow nothing duly to God except what we have received at his hand. For all things offered to him are purely his gifts.^{F452} But since some things are given us by God's kindness, others denied us by his equity, let every man look to the measure of grace given him, as Paul enjoins [^{<451203>}Romans 12:3; ^{<461211>}1 Corinthians 12:11].

I mean nothing else here than that you are to temper your vows to that measure which God by his gift sets for you, lest if you try to go beyond what he allows, in claiming too much for yourself, you cast yourself headlong. For example, when those assassins (of whom mention is made by Luke) vowed that they would not eat food until they had killed Paul [^{<442312>} Acts 23:12], even if the plan had not been a wicked one, their very rashness in subjecting a man's life and death to their power was not to be borne. Thus Jephthah was punished for his own folly when in hasty fervor he conceived a rash vow [^{<071130>} Judges 11:30-31]. In this class, celibacy holds the first place for insane boldness. For priests,^{F453} monks, and nuns, forgetful of their own infirmity, think themselves surely capable of celibacy. But by what oracle were they taught to maintain chastity throughout life, and take vows to this end? They hear the Word of God on the universal condition of men: "It is not good for man to be alone" [^{<010218>} Genesis 2:18]. They understand—and would that they did not feel—how the sin remaining in us is not without very sharp pricks! How confidently do they dare shake off for life that general calling, inasmuch as the gift of continence is more often given for a limited time, as occasion requires?

In such stubbornness let them not count on God as their helper, but let them, rather, remember what he has said: "You shall not tempt the Lord your God" [^{<050616>} Deuteronomy 6:16; ^{<400407>} Matthew 4:7]. But this is to tempt God: to strive against the nature imparted by him, and to despise his present gifts as if they did not belong to us at all. They not only dare do this, but dare also call marriage "pollution," only to extol some sort of celibacy with wondrous praise. This, despite the fact that God deemed it not alien to his majesty to institute marriage [cf. ^{<010222>} Genesis 2:22]; that he declared it honorable among all men [Hebrews 15:4]; and that Christ, our Lord, sanctified it by his presence, deigning to honor it with his first miracle [^{<430202>} John 2:2, 6-11]! As though they do not furnish splendid proof in their own lives (which they most impudently call "angelic") that celibacy is one thing, virginity another! in this they do great injury, surely, to God's angels by comparing them with fornicators, adulterers, and something much more wicked and shameful.^{F454} And obviously, there is no need whatsoever for arguments where they are openly refuted by the thing itself. For we clearly see with what frightful punishments the Lord

commonly avenges such arrogance, and such contempt of his gifts arising from overconfidence. And for modesty's sake, I omit the more hidden sins, of which even what is understood is too much.

That we must vow nothing that may hinder us from serving our calling—this is beyond controversy. As if a householder should vow that, forsaking his wife and children, he would undertake other burdens; or a man fitted to hold public office, when elected, should vow that he would be a private citizen.

But there will be some difficulty in understanding what we have said about not despising our freedom, unless it be explained. Here it is, then, in a nutshell. God has made us lords of all things and has so subjected them to us that we may use them all for our own benefit. Consequently, if we yield ourselves in bondage to external things (which ought to be a help to us), there is no reason why we should expect it to be a service acceptable to God. I say this because some try to win praise for humility through ensnaring themselves in many observances, from which God has with good reason willed us to be free and exempt. Accordingly, if we wish to escape this danger, let us always remember that we are by no means to depart from that dispensation^{F455} which the Lord has established in the Christian church.

4. VOWS CLASSIFIED ACCORDING TO INTENTION

Now I come to my third point: your intention in making a vow is important if you would have God approve it. For, because the Lord looks upon the heart, not the outward appearance, the same thing (as the purpose in mind changes) may sometimes please and be acceptable to him, sometimes strongly displease him. If you vow abstinence from wine as though something holy inhered in this act, you are superstitious; if you look to some other not perverted end, no one can disapprove.

But, as far as I can judge, there are four ends to which our vows ought duly to be directed. Two of these, for the sake of instruction, I refer to past time; two, to future.

To past time belong those vows by which we either attest our gratitude to God for benefits received or, to avert his wrath, punish ourselves for

offenses committed. Let us, if you please, call the former, exercises of thanksgiving; the latter, of repentance.

Of the first sort we have an example in the tithes which Jacob vowed if the Lord should lead him back unharmed from exile to his homeland [^{<012820>}Genesis 28:20-22]. Another, in the ancient peace offerings which pious kings and leaders, about to undertake a righteous war, vowed to make if they should win the victory; or, indeed, when they were pressed by some greater difficulty, if the Lord should deliver them. That is what we are to understand in all the passages of the psalms that speak of vows [^{<012825>}Psalms 22:25; 61:8; 56:12; 116:14, 18]. Such vows can also be useful for us today whenever the Lord has snatched us either from some calamity, or from some trying illness, or from any other critical situation. For it is not inconsistent with the duty of a pious man to consecrate to God a votive offering as a solemn token of recognition, lest he seem ungrateful toward his kindness.

One familiar example will suffice to show the nature of the second sort. If anyone should, through the vice of gluttony, fall into any misdeed, nothing will stand in the way of his renouncing all dainty foods for a time in order to chastise his intemperance—doing this with the use of a vow to bind himself with a stricter bond. Yet I do not lay down a universal law for those who have offended in this way, but I am showing what is permitted to those who deem such a vow useful to themselves. Therefore, I hold that a vow of this sort is allowable, provided it be left optional.

5. VOWS OF FUTURE REFERENCE

Those vows which have regard for the future tend partly to make us more cautious, as we have said, partly to arouse us, as by some stimulus, to our duty.

A man sees himself so prone to a specific vice that in a thing otherwise not bad he cannot prevent himself from falling directly into evil. He will be doing nothing foolish if by vow he cuts off the use of this thing for a time. For example, if a man recognizes that some bodily adornment is dangerous for him, and still enticed by desire violently covets it, what better thing can he do than to put a bridle on himself—that is, to impose upon himself the necessity of abstinence—and thus free himself from all uncertainty?

Similarly, if a man be either forgetful or lazy toward the necessary duties of piety, why should he not, by making a vow, wake up his memory and shake off his laziness?

In both kinds of vows, I admit, there is a sort of elementary training, but as helps to weakness they are utilized with advantage by the untutored and imperfect.

Accordingly, we shall say that those vows which look to one of these ends, especially in outward things, are lawful, provided they are supported by God's approval, agree with our calling, and are limited to the endowment of grace given us by God.

6. LAWFUL VOWS IN GENERAL

It is not difficult now to infer what we ought to think of vows in general. All believers have one common vow which, made in baptism, we confirm and, so to speak, sanction by catechism and receiving the Lord's Supper. For the sacraments are like contracts^{F456} by which the Lord gives us his mercy and from it eternal life; and we in turn promise him obedience. But this is the form, or at least a summary, of the vow: that, renouncing Satan, we yield ourselves to God's service to obey his holy commandments but not to follow the wicked desires of our flesh [cf. <451314> Romans 13:14]. It is not to be doubted that this vow, since it is attested by Scripture and indeed is required of all children of God, is holy and salutary. And there is no obstacle in the fact that no one can maintain in this life the perfect obedience to the law which God requires of us. For inasmuch as this stipulation is included in the covenant of grace^{F457} under which are contained both forgiveness of sins and the spirit of sanctification, the promise which we make there is joined with a plea for pardon and a petition for help.

We must keep in mind the three rules given above when judging particular vows; by them we may safely determine the nature of each vow. Yet do not think that I so commend those very vows which I declare to be holy as to wish them to be daily practice. For though I dare not prescribe anything about number or time, anyone who obeys my advice will undertake only sober and temporary vows. If from time to time you go to excess in making vows, the whole religious character of it will be cheapened by the

very repetition, and will tend to lapse into superstition. If you bind yourself with a perpetual vow, either you will fulfill it with great trouble and tedium, or else, wearied by its long duration, you will one day venture to break it.

7. PERVERSE VOWS

Now, it is clear what great superstition over vows plagued the world for some centuries. One person vowed that he would be abstemious, as if abstinence from wine were of itself worship pleasing to God.^{F458} Another bound himself to fasting; a third, to abstinence from meat on certain days, in which he had vainly imagined there was a singular holiness above other days. And some things far more childish were vowed, but not by children. For men esteemed it great wisdom to undertake votive pilgrimages to holier places, and sometimes to make their journey either on foot or half naked, in order to obtain more merit through their weariness. If these and like things, over which the world has flamed with unbelievable zeal for some time, be examined according to those rules which we have previously laid down, they will be deemed not only empty and fleeting but full of manifest impiety. For, however the flesh may judge it, God hates nothing more than counterfeit worship. Besides, there are these pernicious and damned opinions: hypocrites, when they have performed such follies, believe that they have procured for themselves exceptional righteoustress; they place the whole of piety in external observances; and they despise all others who appear less careful of such things.

(Monastic vows and the decline of monastic life, 8-10)

8. THE MONASTICISM OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH

There is no point in listing individual forms. But since monastic vows are held in greater veneration because they seem to be approved by public judgment of the church, we must speak of them briefly.^{F459}

First, lest anyone should defend present-day monasticism on the grounds of its antiquity, we must note that a far different mode of living once prevailed in monasteries. Those who wished to exercise themselves in the greatest severity and patience retired there. For the sort of discipline that, as historians relate, existed among the Spartans under the laws of Lycurgus

was found among the monks, and even one much more rigid. They slept on the ground; their drink was water; their food bread, vegetables, and roots; their chief delicacies oil and chick-peas. They abstained from all sumptuous fare and pampering of the body. These things might seem exaggerated if they were not handed down by experienced eyewitnesses, Gregory of Nazianzus, Basil, and Chrysostom.^{F460} With such preliminaries the monks prepared themselves for greater tasks. For that the monastic colleges were, so to speak, seminaries of the ecclesiastical order, those whom we have just mentioned offer clear enough proof (for all of them were reared in monasteries and then called to the office of bishop), as do many other great and outstanding men of their time. And Augustine shows that in his day the monasteries usually supplied the clergy for the church. For he thus addresses the monks of the island of Capraria: “We exhort you, brethren in the Lord, to keep your resolve and persevere to the end; and if Mother Church at any time requires your labor, do not take it up with eager elation, or reject it through alluring indolence, but obey God with a meek heart. And do not prefer your leisure to the needs of the church. If no good men had been willing to minister to her in childbirth, you would not have found out how you were born.” He is speaking of the ministry by which believers are spiritually reborn. Likewise, writing to Aurelius: “If deserters from monasteries are chosen for the army of the clergy, this occasions their own fall and inflicts a most shameful injury upon the order of clergy. For of those who remain in the monastery it is our custom to take into the clergy only the more acceptable and better men. Unless perhaps, as the common folk say, a bad piper makes a good musician,^{F461} so they will jokingly say of us, a bad monk makes a good clergyman. ‘Tis a great pity for us to lift monks to such ruinous pride and consider the clergy worthy of such grave reproach—seeing that sometimes even a good monk scarcely makes a good clergyman, if he has the requisite continence and yet lacks necessary training.”^{F462} It is clear from these passages that pious men customarily prepared themselves by monastic discipline to govern the church, that thus they might be fitter and better trained to undertake so great an office. Not that all the monks attained this end or even aimed at it, since the greater part were unlettered; but those who were suitable were chosen.

9. AUGUSTINE'S DESCRIPTION OF MONASTICISM

But there are two main places in which Augustine depicts for us the form of early monasticism. In the book *On the Morals of the Catholic Church*, he defends the holiness of that profession against the slanders of the Manichees; and in another book, which he entitled *On the Work of Monks*, he inveighs against certain degenerate monks who were beginning to corrupt that institution. I shall sum up what he teaches there as far as possible in his own words. "In contempt of the allurements of this world, gathered into a most chaste and holy common life, they spend their time together, living in prayers, readings, and discussions, not swollen by pride, not disorderly through stubbornness, nor livid with envy. No one possesses anything of his own; no one is burdensome to any man. With their hands they earn that which may feed the body yet not keep the mind from God. They give their work to men whom they call 'deacons.' These deacons, managing everything with great care, render an account to one whom they call 'father.' These fathers are not only most holy in morals but also most pre-eminent in divine doctrine, and distinguished in all things. They counsel without pride those whom they call 'sons'; they command their sons with great authority while the latter obey with great willingness. They come together from their several cells at the end of each day, while they are yet fasting, to hear that father. At least three thousand men meet under each father" (he is speaking chiefly of Egypt and the East). "Then they take bodily nourishment, enough for health and well-being; each one restrains his desire in order not to take too much even of the frugal and very common fare available. Thus they not only abstain from meat and wine sufficiently to tame their lusts, but from such things as arouse too greedy appetite in the stomach and gullet. Yet some authorities in an absurd and shameful manner habitually defend these latter foods as 'cleaner,' and condone a base desire for them on the ground that they are quite distinct from meats. Whatever remains over and above necessary food (and very much remains from the works of their hands and the restriction of their diet) is distributed to the needy with greater care than that with which it was procured by those who distribute it. For in no way do they make it a business to have a surplus, but in every way make it their business not to keep any surplus." Then, remembering the austerity (an example of which he had seen at Milan and elsewhere), he

says: ‘Amid these conditions no one is urged to hard things which he cannot bear; no one is burdened with what he refuses; nor condemned by others because he confesses himself too weak to follow them. For they remember how greatly love is commended; they remember ‘that all things are clean to the clean’ [^{<560115>}Titus 1:15]. Therefore, they watch with all diligence not to reject certain kinds of foods, as if corrupted, but to tame lust and maintain love of the brethren. They remember, ‘Food is meant for the stomach and the stomach for food’ [^{<460613>}1 Corinthians 6:13]. Yet many who are strong abstain for the sake of the weak. Many have no reason to do this except that they like to sustain themselves on the commoner and less sumptuous fare. Therefore, they who, while well, restrain themselves, if reason of health compels them, in sickness have no qualms about taking food. Many do not drink wine, yet they do not think themselves defiled by it; for they most humanely provide it for the weaker brethren, and those who without it cannot attain bodily health; and they fraternally admonish some who foolishly refuse it lest out of vain superstition they become weaker rather than more holy. So they diligently exercise piety; yet they know that exercise of the body applies for but a short time. Brotherly love especially is kept: diet, speech, clothing, countenance—all are conformed to it. They meet in and aspire together toward one love. To offend against it is considered as wicked as to offend against God himself. If anyone resists it, he is cast out and avoided. If anyone flouts it, he is not allowed to stay one day.’^{”F462A}

In these words that holy man seemed to have painted us a picture of what monastic life was of old. Even though they were rather long, I wanted to insert them here, because I realized that I would go to somewhat greater length if I were to collect the same things from various sources, however brief I might try to be.

10. COMPARISON OF EARLIER WITH LATER MONASTICISM

But here it is not my intention to pursue this entire argument. I merely wish to indicate in passing not only what sort of monks the ancient church had but what sort of monastic profession then existed. Thus intelligent readers may judge by comparison the shamelessness of those who claim antiquity to support present monasticism. Augustine, in sketching for us a

holy and lawful monasticism, would dispense with all rigid requirement of those things left free to us by the Lord's Word.

Yet today nothing is more sternly required! For they count it an unforgivable crime for anyone to depart even in the slightest degree from what is prescribed in color or appearance of clothing, in kind of food, or in other trifling and cold ceremonies. Augustine stoutly contends that it is not lawful for monks to live upon others in idleness. In any well-ordered monastery of his day he denies that such an example existed.^{F463} Our present-day monks find in idleness the chief part of their sanctity. For if you take idleness away from them, where will that contemplative life be, in which they boast they excel all others and draw nigh to the angels? Finally, Augustine requires a kind of monasticism which is but an exercise and aid to those duties of piety enjoined upon all Christians. What? When he makes brotherly love its chief and almost its only rule, are we to think that he praises a conspiracy by which a few men, bound together among themselves, are separated from the whole body of the church?^{F464} Rather, it is his intention that by their example they may shed a light to preserve the unity of the church. In both respects the character of present-day monasticism is so different that you could scarcely find things more unlike, not to say contrary. Our monks are not content with that piety to which Christ enjoins his followers to attend with unremitting zeal. Instead, they dream up some new sort of piety to meditate upon in order to become more perfect than all other people.

(The erroneous claim of monastic perfection, 11-14)

11. MONASTICISM—A STATE OF PERFECTION?

If they deny this, I should like to ask them why they dignify their order alone with the title of perfection, and take the same title away from all God's callings. And I am not ignorant of their sophistical solution: that monasticism is not to be called perfect because it contains perfection within itself, but because it is the best way of all to attain perfection.^{F465} When they would hawk themselves among the common people, when they would lay a snare for untutored and ignorant youths, when they would assert their own privileges, and when they would enhance their own dignity to the reproach of others—they boast that they are in the state of

perfection. When they are so closely pressed that they cannot maintain such empty arrogance, they fall back on this dodge—that they have not yet attained perfection, but that they are in such a state that they aspire to it more than all other men. Meanwhile, such admiration of monasticism remains among the people that they think the monastic life alone angelic, perfect, and purged of all fault. On this pretext they engage in the most profitable commerce. But they leave that restraint of theirs buried in a few books. Who does not see that this is an intolerable mockery? But let us deal with them on the assumption that they attribute nothing more to their profession than to call it a state of acquiring perfection. Indeed, in giving it this name they distinguish it from other ways of life as by a special mark. And who can bear such a great honor being given to an institution nowhere approved by even one syllable; and that all other callings of God are regarded as unworthy by comparison, though they have not only been commanded by his own sacred lips, but adorned with noble titles? And how great an injury, I beg of you, is done to God when some such forgery is preferred to all the kinds of life ordained by him and praised by his own testimony?

12. CHRIST'S RULE OF LIFE IS FOR ALL CHRISTIANS

Come now, let them call slanderous my previous statement that they are not content with the rule laid down by God. Even though I refrain from speaking, they accuse themselves more than enough. For they openly teach that they shoulder a greater burden than Christ laid upon his people, seeing that they promise to keep the evangelical counsels to love one's enemies, not to seek vengeance, not to swear, etc. [^{<400533>}Matthew 5:33 ff.].—by which Christians are not commonly bound. What antiquity will they claim against us here? This never entered the minds of the ancients. All declare with one voice that men must of necessity obey every little word uttered by Christ. And without any hesitation they consistently teach that these things are particularly commanded which our good interpreters imagine Christ only “advised.”^{F466} But because we have taught above^{F467} that this is a most pestilential error, it is sufficient here briefly to have noted that present-day monasticism is founded upon the very opinion which all pious folk ought by right to abhor. This opinion is that a more perfect rule of life can be devised than the common one committed

by God to the whole church.^{F468} Whatever is built upon such a foundation cannot but be abominable.

13. THE MEANING OF ^{<401921>}MATTHEW 19:21

But they bring in another argument for their perfection, and this they regard as their strongest one. For the Lord said to the young man who inquired about perfect righteousness, “If you wish to be perfect, sell all that you have and give to the poor” [^{<401921>}Matthew 19:21].

I am not yet discussing whether they do this or not; let us grant them this for the moment. They therefore boast that they are made perfect by forsaking all their possessions. If the sum of perfection lies in this, what does Paul mean when he teaches that he who gives all his goods to the poor is nothing unless he has love [^{<461303>}1 Corinthians 13:3]? What sort of perfection is this which, if love is lacking, is reduced to nothing along with the man who has it? Here they have to reply: it is indeed the highest, but not the sole, work of perfection. But here also Paul loudly contradicts them, not hesitating to make love—without such renunciation—the bond of perfection [^{<510314>}Colossians 3:14]. If it is certain that there is no disagreement between the Master and the disciple, and one of them denies that man’s perfection consists in renouncing all his goods, and again declares that it stands without the renunciation, we must take note how Christ’s statement is to be understood: “If you would be perfect, sell all you have” [^{<401921>}Matthew 19:21].

Now, the meaning will be quite clear if we take into account to whom these words are addressed, something we should always heed in all Christ’s discourses.^{F469} A young man asks by what works he shall enter into eternal life [^{<401916>}Matthew 19:16; cf. ^{<421025>}Luke 10:25]. Christ, because the question concerned works, refers him to the law [^{<401917>}Matthew 19:17-19]. And rightly! For, considered in itself, it is the way of eternal life; and, except for our depravity, is capable of bringing salvation to us. By this reply Christ declared that he taught no other plan of life than what had been taught of old in the law of the Lord. So also he attested God’s law to be the doctrine of perfect righteousness, and at the same time confuted false reports so he might not seem by some new rule of life to incite the people to desert the law.

The young man, not from evil intent, but puffed up with vain confidence, replies that he has kept all the precepts of the law from childhood [^{<401920>} Matthew 19:20]. It is quite certain that he was an immeasurable distance away from what he boasted of having reached. And if his boasting had been true, he would have lacked nothing toward attaining the highest perfection. For we have shown above that the law in itself contains perfect righteousness; and this appears from the fact that its observance is called the way of eternal salvation. To teach him how little he had advanced toward that righteousness which he too boldly replied he had fulfilled, it was worth-while to search out his intimate shortcoming. Since he abounded in riches, he had his heart fixed upon them. Therefore, because he did not feel this secret wound, Christ probes it. “Go,” he says, “sell all you have.” [^{<401921>} Matthew 19:21.] If he had been as good a keeper of the law as he thought, he would not have gone away in sorrow on hearing this word [^{<401922>} Matthew 19:22]. For the man who loves God with all his heart not only counts as refuse whatever opposes love of Him, but flees it like the plague.

Therefore, when Christ commands the covetous rich man to give up all that he has, it is like commanding an ambitious man to give up all his honors, a voluptuary all his pleasures, or a shameless man all means of lust. Thus, consciences untouched by any awareness of the general admonition must be called back to a specific awareness of their own evil. Our opponents vainly give a general interpretation to this particular instance, as if Christ established the perfection of man in renunciation of goods. Actually, he meant nothing else by this statement than to compel the young man, pleased with himself beyond measure, to feel his sore, that he might realize he was still far removed from the perfect obedience to the law which he was falsely claiming for himself.

I admit that this passage was misunderstood by some of the fathers, and hence arose the affectation of voluntary poverty, by which only those who abandoned all earthly things and devoted themselves naked to Christ were accounted blessed.^{F470} But I trust that all good and peaceable men will be satisfied with my explanation, so that they may not be in doubt about Christ’s meaning.

14. MONASTIC SECTARIANISM

Yet nothing was more remote from the thought of the fathers than to establish the kind of perfection afterward fabricated by these hooded Sophists so as to set up a double Christianity. For that sacrilegious doctrine had not yet arisen which compares the profession of monasticism to baptism, and even openly declares it a form of second baptism. Who can doubt that the fathers would have abhorred this blasphemy with all their heart?

Now about that last thing which Augustine says was in force among the ancient monks—that they applied themselves wholly to love^{F471}—what need is there to show in words how completely foreign it is to this new profession? The facts themselves tell us that all those who enter into the monastic community break with the church. Why? Do they not separate themselves from the lawful society of believers, in adopting a peculiar ministry and a private administration of the sacraments? If this is not to break the communion of the church, what is? And, to pursue the comparison which I have begun, and to finish it once for all, what resemblance in this respect do they have to the ancient monks? Even though they dwelt apart from others, yet they had not a separate church; they partook of the sacraments with others; they attended solemn assemblies; there they were part of the people. By erecting a private altar for themselves, what else have present-day monks done but broken the bond of unity? For they have both excommunicated themselves from the whole body of the church and despised the ordinary ministry by which the Lord willed to preserve peace and love among his people. For every monastery existing today, I say, is a conventicle of schismatics, disturbing the order of the church and cut off from the lawful society of believers. And that this separation should not be obscure, they have taken upon themselves various names of sects. And they have not been ashamed to boast of what Paul cannot sufficiently execrate [^{<460112>} 1 Corinthians 1:12-13; 3:4]. Unless we are to suppose that Christ was divided by the Corinthians, when one boasted of one teacher, another of another! And that it is not an injustice to Christ when some call themselves Benedictines instead of Christians, some Franciscans, some Dominicans; and when they haughtily take to themselves these titles as their profession of religion, while affecting to be different from ordinary Christians!^{F472}

*(Differences of ancient and monastic profession: New Testament
widows and deaconesses were not nuns, 15-19)*

15. THE DEGENERATION OF THE CONDUCT OF MONKS

These differences which I have so far recounted between the ancient monks and the monks of our time are not in morals but in the profession itself. Let my readers accordingly remember that I have spoken rather of monasticism than of monks, and noted not those faults which inhere in the life of a few, but those which cannot be separated from the order of living itself.

But what use would it be to explain in detail what a great discrepancy there is in their morals? This is clear: that no order of men is more polluted by all sorts of foul vices; nowhere do factions, hatreds, party zeal, and intrigue burn more fiercely. Indeed, in a few monasteries men live chastely, if one must call it chastity where lust is suppressed to the point of not being openly infamous. Yet you will scarcely find one in ten which is not a brothel rather than a sanctuary of chastity. But what sort of frugality is there in their diet? They are fattened just like pigs in a sty. But that they may not complain of my treating them too unkindly, I go no farther. Yet in the few things I have touched upon, anyone who knows the matter itself will admit that I have said nothing as an accuser.

Augustine, while according to his testimony the monks excelled in very great chastity, still complains that there were many vagabonds who by evil arts and impostures fleeced the simpler folk of their money; who plied a disgraceful traffic in carrying martyrs' relics about—indeed, hawked the bones of some dead man or other for martyr's relics; and who with many like misdeeds brought shame upon the order. As he declares that he saw no better men than those who improved in monasteries, so he laments that he saw no worse men than those who deteriorated in monasteries.^{F473} What would he say if he saw today how almost all monasteries abound in and well-nigh burst with so many and such lamentable vices? I am saying only what is perfectly obvious to all.

Still, this charge does not apply to all with no exception whatever. For just as the rule and discipline of holy living was never so well established in monasteries as not to leave some drones far different from the rest,

similarly, I say that monks today have not so degenerated from that holy antiquity as not to have still some good ones in their flock. But these few lie hidden, scattered in that huge multitude of evil and depraved men. And they are not only despised but also wantonly molested, and even at times cruelly treated by the others, who—as the Milesian proverb has it—think there ought to be no place for a good man among them.^{F474}

16. CONSIDERATIONS AGAINST ANCIENT MONASTICISM

By this comparison of ancient and present-day monasticism I trust I have accomplished my purpose: to show that our hooded friends falsely claim the example of the first church in defense of their profession—since they differ from them as much as apes from men.

Meanwhile, I frankly admit that even in that ancient form which Augustine commends there is something that I do not like very much. I grant that they were not superstitious in the outward exercise of a quite rigid discipline, yet I say that they were not without immoderate affectation and perverse zeal.^{F475} It was a beautiful thing to forsake all their possessions and be without earthly care. But God prefers devoted care in ruling a household, where the devout householder, clear and free of all greed, ambition, and other lusts of the flesh, keeps before him the purpose of serving God in a definite calling. It is a beautiful thing to philosophize in retirement, far from intercourse with men. But it is not the part of Christian meekness, as if in hatred of the human race, to flee to the desert and the wilderness and at the same time to forsake those duties which the Lord has especially commanded. Though we grant there was nothing else evil in that profession, it was surely no slight evil that it brought a useless and dangerous example into the church.

17. MONASTIC VOWS, ESPECIALLY THE VOW OF CHASTITY

Now then, let us look at the nature of those vows by which monks are today initiated into this illustrious order.

First, because it is their intention to establish a new and forged worship to merit God's favor, I conclude from the above evidence that whatever they vow is abominable in God's sight.^{F476}

Secondly, because they invent any mode of life they please without regard for God's call, and without his approval, I say that this is a rash and therefore unlawful enterprise. For their conscience has nothing to sustain it before God, and "whatever is not of faith is sin" [^{<451423>}Romans 14:23].^{F477}

Moreover, when they bind themselves to many acts of worship at once perverted and impious, which present-day monasticism includes within itself, I contend that they are consecrated not to God but to an evil spirit. For why was the prophet allowed to say that the Israelites had sacrificed their children to demons and not to God [^{<053217>}Deuteronomy 32:17; ^{<19A637>}Psalms 106:37], merely because they had corrupted the true worship of God with profane ceremonies? Why are we not allowed to say the same of monks who wrap themselves in a cowl and a thousand impious superstitions?

Now, what are the kinds of vows? They promise perpetual virginity to God, as if they had previously covenanted with God to free them from the need to marry. There is no reason for them to claim that they make this vow only with reliance upon God's grace. For since he declares that it is not given to all men [^{<401911>}Matthew 19:11-12], it is not for us to take assurance that the special gift is ours. Let those who have it use it. If at any time they feel themselves troubled by their flesh, let them take refuge in the help of him through whose power alone they can resist. If they do not benefit, let them not despise the remedy which is offered them. For those who are denied the power of continence are called to marriage by God's clear word [^{<460709>}1 Corinthians 7:9]. I call "continence" not that continence by which the body alone is kept pure from fornication but also that by which the mind keeps its chastity unsullied. For Paul enjoins us to guard not only against outward wantonness but also against the burning lust of the mind. This practice, they say, was observed from time immemorial: that those who wished to dedicate themselves completely to the Lord should bind themselves by a vow of continence.^{F478} I admit, of course, that this custom was allowed in ancient times, but I do not grant that that age was so free of all defect that whatever was done then must be taken as the rule. Then there gradually crept in that inexorable severity by which, after the vow was made, no place was left for repentance. This is clear from Cyprian. "If virgins have out of faith dedicated themselves to

Christ, let them continue therein, modestly and chastely, without any deception. Thus, strong and steadfast, let them await the reward of virginity. But if they do not wish to continue, or cannot, they had better marry than fall into fire by their trespasses.”^{F479} With what reproaches would they now not torture a man who wished to temper the vow of continence with such equity! Therefore, they depart far more from that ancient custom. For they not only admit no moderation or pardon when anyone is found unable to keep his vow, but shamelessly declare that he sins more heinously if he cures the intemperance of his flesh by taking a wife than if he corrupts body and soul by fornication.

18. THE CASE OF THE WIDOWS IN ^{<540512>} 1 TIMOTHY 5:12

But they are still persistent, and try to show that such a vow was customary under the apostles. For Paul says that the widows who married after having been once received into public ministry violated their first pledge [^{<540511>} 1 Timothy 5:11-12]. I by no means deny to them that the widows who pledged themselves and their services to the church took upon themselves the state of perpetual celibacy. But they did so not because they regarded it as something religious of itself (as afterward began to be the case) but because they could not carry on their function without being their own masters and free of the marriage yoke.^{F480} But if, having made their pledge, they contemplated remarriage, what was this but to cast off God’s call? No wonder, then, if Paul says that with such desires they grow wanton against Christ [^{<540511>} 1 Timothy 5:11]! Afterward, by way of amplification, he adds that in so far as they do not fulfill what they promised the church, they also violate and nullify that first pledge given in baptism [^{<540512>} 1 Timothy 5:12], which includes the provision that every person should fulfill his calling. Unless, perhaps, you prefer to understand it thus: that, having lost shame, so to speak, they then cast away all concern for decency, stoop to all kinds of wantonness and unchastity, and in their licentious and dissolute life exhibit something utterly unbecoming to Christian women. This interpretation pleases me very much.

Let us then reply: those widows who were at that time received into public ministry took upon themselves the condition of perpetual celibacy. If they afterward married, we can easily understand how they fell into what Paul says: casting away shame, they became more immoderate than

befitted Christian women [^{<540518>} 1 Timothy 5:18]. Thus they not only sinned in breaking the pledge given to the church but cut themselves off from the condition of pious women. But first, I deny that they professed celibacy for any reason except that marriage did not agree with the work which they undertook; and I deny that they bound themselves at all to celibacy except in so far as the necessity of their calling demanded. Secondly, I do not grant that they were so bound that it was not better for them then to marry than either to be troubled by the stings of the flesh or to fall into any uncleanness. Thirdly, I say that Paul set an age which is commonly beyond danger, especially when he ordered that only those be chosen who, content with one marriage, had already given an example of continence. Moreover, we disapprove of the vow of celibacy for no other reason than that it is wrongly considered as service of God and is rashly made by those to whom the power of continence has not been given.

19. NUNS ARE VERY DIGERENT

But how is it lawful to apply this passage of Paul to nuns? For deaconesses were created not to appease God with songs or unintelligible mumbling, not to live the rest of the time in idleness, but to discharge the public ministry of the church toward the poor and to strive with all zeal, constancy, and diligence in the task of love. They did not vow celibacy to present to God some sort of service in abstaining from marriage, but only because they were thus freer to perform their task. Finally, they made this vow not at the beginning of youth, or even in the flower of life—to learn too late by experience over what a cliff they had plunged; but when they seemed to have passed all danger, they made a vow no less safe than holy. But not to press our opponents' two points, I say that it was unlawful to receive women into the vow of continence before the age of sixty, inasmuch as the apostle admits only women of sixty years [^{<540509>} 1 Timothy 5:9] but bids the younger women marry and bear children [^{<540514>} 1 Timothy 5:14]. Therefore, that permission given first at the age of twelve years, then at twenty, and afterward at thirty years can in no way be excused. And it is something much less tolerable that poor girls, before they can either know through age or grasp through any experience of their own, are not only induced by fraud but compelled by force and threats to take upon themselves this cursed halter.^{F481}

I shall not stop to assail the two remaining vows.^{F482} I only say this: besides being, as conditions are today, entangled with many superstitions, these vows seem to have been composed in order that those who take them may mock God and men. But lest we seem to criticize every little point too spitefully, we shall be content with that general refutation which has been given above.^{F483}

(Unlawful and superstitious vows are not binding, 20-21)

20. ARE INADMISSIBLE VOWS BINDING?

I believe that I have sufficiently explained what sort of vows are lawful and acceptable to God. Yet ignorant and timid consciences, even when they dislike or disapprove of a vow, nonetheless sometimes doubt concerning the obligation, and are gravely troubled, when they shrink from violating a pledge given to God, and are afraid, on the other hand, lest they sin more by keeping it. Consequently, we must help them here, so as to enable them to escape from this difficulty.

But to remove every misgiving at once, I say that all unlawful or improperly conceived vows, as they are of no value before God, should be invalid for us. For if in human contracts only those promises bind us in which he with whom we contract wishes us to be considered bound, it is absurd to hold us to fulfill what God does not require of us; especially since our works are right only when they please God and have the testimony of conscience that they please him. For this principle remains: “Whatever is not of faith is sin” [^{<451423>}Romans 14:23]. Paul means by this that when a work is undertaken with doubt it is faulty because the root of all good works is faith, by which we are sure they are acceptable to God. Therefore, assuming that a Christian man is allowed to undertake nothing without this certainty, if men have undertaken anything rashly through the fault of ignorance, why should they not desist from it when once freed of error? Since rashly made vows are of this sort, they not only bind nothing but must of necessity be rescinded. But what of the fact that they are accounted not only worthless in God’s sight but also an abomination to him—as was previously proved?^{F484} It is superfluous to discuss an unnecessary matter any further. To me this one proof seems quite enough to set pious consciences at rest and free them from every

misgiving: all works that do not flow from a pure fountain and are not directed to a lawful end are repudiated by God, and so repudiated that he forbids us not less to continue in them than to begin them. From this it follows that those vows which arise from error and superstition are of no value before God and must also be abandoned by us.

21. ON THE BREAKING OF MONASTIC VOWS

Moreover, he who will grasp this explanation will have the means to defend against the slanders of the wicked those who depart from monasticism to some honorable way of living. They are gravely accused of broken faith and perjury because they have broken the so-called “indissoluble” bond by which they were bound to God and church.^{F485} But I say that there has been no bond where God abrogates what man confirms. Secondly, granted that they were bound while they were held entangled in ignorance of God and in error—but now, after they have been illumined by the knowledge of truth, I say they are free by the grace of Christ. For if the cross of Christ has such great power that it frees us from the curse of God’s law, by which we were held bound [Galatians 3:13], how much more will it deliver us from those outward fetters which are nothing more than the deceptive nets of Satan! There is no doubt that those whom Christ illumines with the light of his gospel he also releases from all halters which they had taken upon themselves through superstition.

Yet the released have another defense if they were not fit for celibacy. For if an impossible vow is sure destruction of the soul which God wills to be saved and not lost, it follows that one must not continue in it. How impossible the vow of continence is for those not endowed with that special gift [^{<401911>} Matthew 19:11-12], we have already explained above.^{F486} And though I should remain silent, experience speaks. For it is not unknown with what great impurity almost all monasteries swarm. And if any seem more decent and more modest than the rest, they are not for this reason chaste, for the evil of unchastity, though repressed and confined, remains within. Thus, indeed, God takes vengeance with frightful examples upon the arrogance of men when they, unmindful of their own weakness, against nature covet what has been denied them, and, contemptuous of the remedies which the Lord had put within their grasp,

assume that they can conquer the disease of incontinence with stubbornness and obstinacy. For what else but stubbornness will we call it when a man, warned that he needs marriage, and that it is given to him as a remedy by the Lord, not only despises it but also binds himself by an oath to despise it?

CHAPTER 14

THE SACRAMENTS^{F487}

(The word “sacrament” explained: sacraments are signs of God’s covenants, 1-6)

1. DEFINITION

We have in the sacraments another aid to our faith related to the preaching of the gospel. It is very important that some definite doctrine concerning them be taught, that we may learn from it both the purpose for which they were instituted and their present use.

First, we must consider what a sacrament is. It seems to me that a simple and proper definition would be to say that it is an outward sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences the promises of his good will toward us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith; and we in turn attest our piety toward him in the presence of the Lord and of his angels and before men. Here is another briefer definition: one may call it a testimony of divine grace toward us, confirmed by an outward sign, with mutual attestation of our piety toward him. Whichever of these definitions you may choose, it does not differ in meaning from that of Augustine, who teaches that a sacrament is “a visible sign of a sacred thing,” or “a visible form of an invisible grace,”^{F488} but it better and more clearly explains the thing itself. For since there is something obscure in his brevity, in which many of the less educated are deceived, I have decided to give a fuller statement, using more words to dispel all doubt.

2. THE WORD “SACRAMENT”

The reason why the ancients used this word in this sense is clear enough. For wherever the old translator wished to render into Latin the Greek word **μυστήριον**, especially where it refers to divine things, he translated it “sacrament.” For example, in Ephesians: “That he may make known the ‘sacrament’ of his will” [^{<490109>}Ephesians 1:9]. Again: “If you have heard

of the stewardship of God's grace, that was given to me in you, how according to revelation the 'sacrament' was made known to me" [^{<490302>}Ephesians 3:2-3 P.]. In Colossians: "The mystery which was hidden for ages and generations, but is now made manifest to his saints, to whom the Lord has willed to make known...the riches...of this 'sacrament'" [^{<510126>}Colossians 1:26-27 p.]. Also in the first letter to Timothy: "Great is the 'sacrament' of godliness: God was manifested in the flesh" [^{<540316>}1 Timothy 3:16 p.]. He did not wish to use the word "secret," lest he seem to say something beneath the greatness of the matter. Therefore he wrote "sacrament" for "secret" but in reference to a sacred thing. In this sense it repeatedly occurs among church writers. And it is sufficiently known that what the Latins call "sacraments" the Greeks call "mysteries." The identity of meaning banishes all controversy, And from this it came to be applied to those signs which reverently represented sublime and spiritual things. Augustine, too, notes this somewhere: "It would be tedious," he says, "to argue over the variety of signs which, when they apply to divine things, are called 'sacraments.'"^{F489}

3. WORD AND SIGN

Now, from the definition that I have set forth we understand that a sacrament is never without a preceding promise but is joined to it as a sort of appendix, with the purpose of confirming and sealing the promise itself, and of making it more evident to us and in a sense ratifying it. By this means God provides first for our ignorance and dullness, then for our weakness. Yet, properly speaking, it is not so much needed to confirm his Sacred Word as to establish us in faith in it. For God's truth is of itself firm and sure enough, and it cannot receive better confirmation from any other source than from itself. But as our faith is slight and feeble unless it be propped on all sides and sustained by every means, it trembles, wavers, totters, and at last gives way. Here our merciful Lord, according to his infinite kindness, so tempers himself to our capacity that, since we are creatures who always creep on the ground, cleave to the flesh, and, do not think about or even conceive of anything spiritual, he condescends to lead us to himself even by these earthly elements, and to set before us in the flesh a mirror of spiritual blessings. For if we were incorporeal (as Chrysostom says), he would give us these very things naked and

incorporeal. Now, because we have souls engrafted in bodies, he imparts spiritual things under visible ones.^{F490} Not that the gifts set before us in the sacraments are bestowed with the natures of the things, but that they have been marked with this signification by God.

4. THE WORD MUST EXPLAIN THE SIGN

What our opponents commonly say is this: a sacrament consists of the word and the outward sign. For we ought to understand the word not as one whispered without meaning and without faith, a mere noise, like a magic incantation, which has the force to consecrate the element. Rather, it should, when preached, make us understand what the visible sign means.

What, therefore, was practiced under papal tyranny involved a monstrous profanation of the mysteries. For they thought it enough if the priest mumbled the formula of consecration while the people looked on bewildered and without comprehension. Indeed, they deliberately saw to it that, from this, nothing of doctrine, should, penetrate to the people; for they spoke everything in Latin among unlearned men. Afterward, superstition came to the point that they believed consecration duly performed only in a hoarse whisper which few could hear.

Far different is the teaching of Augustine concerning the sacramental word: “Let the word be added to the element and it will become a sacrament. For whence comes this great power of water, that in touching the body it should cleanse the heart, unless the word makes it? Not because it is said, but because it is believed. In the word itself the fleeting sound is one thing; the power remaining, another. ‘This is the word of faith which we proclaim,’ says the apostle [^{<451008>}Romans 10:8]. Accordingly, in The Acts of the Apostles: ‘Cleansing their hearts by faith’ [^{<441509>}Acts 15:9]. And the apostle Peter: ‘Thus baptism...saves us, not as a removal of filth from the flesh, but as an appeal...for a good conscience...’ [^{<600321>}1 Peter 3:21 p.]. ‘This is the word of faith which we proclaim’ [^{<451008>}Romans 10:8], by which doubtless baptism, that it may be able to cleanse, is also consecrated.”^{F491}

You see how the sacrament requires preaching to beget faith. And we need not labor to prove this when it is perfectly clear what Christ did, what he commanded us to do, what the apostles followed, and what the purer

church observed. Indeed, it was known even from the beginning of the world that whenever God gave a sign to the holy patriarchs it was inseparably linked to doctrine, without which our senses would have been stunned in looking at the bare sign. Accordingly, when we hear the sacramental word mentioned, let us understand the promise, proclaimed in a clear voice by the minister, to lead the people by the hand wherever the sign tends and directs us.

5. THE SACRAMENTS AS SEALS

awe must not listen to those who try to fight against us with a dilemma more subtle than solid. We either know, they say, or do not know that the word of God which precedes the sacrament is the true will of God. If we know it, we learn nothing new from the sacrament, which comes after. If we do not know it, the sacrament (whose whole force rests in the word) also will not teach it. To this our answer would be in brief: the seals which are attached to government documents and other public acts are nothing taken by themselves, for they would be attached in vain if the parchment had nothing written on it. Yet, when added to the writing, they do not on that account fail to confirm and seal what is written. And our adversaries cannot boast that this comparison has been recently devised by us, since Paul himself used it, calling circumcision a “seal”^{F492} [^{<450411>} Romans 4:11]. There Paul expressly argues that Abraham’s circumcision was not for his justification but for the seal of that covenant by faith in which he had already been justified. And what is there, I beg, to offend any man greatly if we teach that the promise is sealed by the sacraments, when it is clear from the promises themselves that each confirms the other? For the clearer anything is, the fitter it is to support faith. But the sacraments bring the clearest promises; and they have this characteristic over and above the word because they represent them for us as painted in a picture from life. And the distinction commonly made by way of objection between sacraments and seals of documents ought not to bother us,^{F493} namely, that, since both consist of physical elements of this world, the former cannot suffice or be adequate to seal God’s promises, which are spiritual and eternal, while the latter are commonly attached to seal princes’ edicts that are concerned with frail and fleeting things. Indeed, the believer, when he sees the sacraments with his own eyes, does not halt at

the physical sight of them, but by those steps (which I have indicated by analogy) rises up in devout contemplation to those lofty mysteries which lie hidden in the sacraments.

6. THE SACRAMENTS AS SIGNS OF A COVENANT

Since the Lord calls his promises “covenants” [^{<010618>}Genesis 6:18; 9:9; 17:2] and his sacraments “tokens” of the covenants, a simile can be taken from the covenants of men. What can the slaughter of a sow accomplish unless words accompany the act, indeed, unless they precede it? For sows are often slain apart from any inner or loftier mystery. What can giving the right hand accomplish when hands are often joined in battle? Yet when words precede, the laws of covenants are by such signs ratified, although they were first conceived, established, and decreed in words. The sacraments, therefore, are exercises which make us more certain of the trust-worthiness of God’s Word. And because we are of flesh, they are shown us under things of flesh, to instruct us according to our dull capacity, and to lead us by the hand as tutors lead children. Augustine calls a sacrament “a visible word”^{F494} for the reason that it represents God’s promises as painted in a picture and sets them before our sight, portrayed graphically and in the manner of images.^{F495}

Other comparisons can be adduced to designate the sacraments more plainly; thus we might call them “the pillars of our faith.” For as a building stands and rests upon its own foundation but is more surely established by columns placed underneath, so faith rests upon the Word of God as a foundation; but when the sacraments are added, it rests more firmly upon them as upon columns. Or we might call them mirrors in which we may contemplate the riches of God’s grace, which he lavishes upon us. For by them he manifests himself to us (as has already been said^{F496}) as far as our dullness is given to perceive, and attests his good will and love toward us more expressly than by word.

(They confirm faith, not of themselves, but as agencies of the Holy Spirit and in association with the Word; and they are distinguishing marks of our profession of faith before men, 7-13.)

7. THE RECEPTION OF THE SACRAMENTS BY THE WICKED IS NO EVIDENCE AGAINST THEIR IMPORTANCE

They are not reasoning closely enough when they argue that the sacraments are not testimonies of God's grace because they are also offered to the wicked, who, however, do not find God more favorable but rather incur a heavier condemnation. For by the same argument, because the gospel is heard but rejected by many, and because Christ was seen and recognized by many but very few of them accepted him, neither gospel nor Christ would be a testimony of God's grace.

A similar thing can be seen in official documents. For most of the people ridicule and scorn that authentic^{F497} seal, although they know that it was put forth by a prince to attest his will. Some treat it with indifference as not applying to them; others even curse it. Thus as it can apply equally to both, the comparison used by me above ought to be received with increasing favor.

It is therefore certain that the Lord offers us mercy and the pledge of his grace both in his Sacred Word and in his sacraments. But it is understood only by those who take Word and sacraments with sure faith, just as Christ is offered and held forth by the Father to all unto salvation, yet not all acknowledge and receive him. In one place Augustine, meaning to convey this, said that the efficacy of the Word is brought to light in the sacrament, not because it is spoken, but because it is believed.^{F498}

Accordingly, Paul, in speaking to believers, so deals with the sacraments as to include in them the communicating of Christ. For example, he says, "All of you who have been baptized...have put on Christ" [^{<480327>} Galatians 3:27, cf. Vg.]. Again: "All of us who have been baptized in Christ are one body and one spirit" [^{<461212>} 1 Corinthians 12:12-13]. But when he speaks of the perverse use of the sacraments, he treats *them* as nothing more than cold and empty figures. By this he means: however much impious and hypocritical men may, by their own perversity, oppress or obscure or hinder the working of divine grace in the sacraments

ō still that does not prevent these (wherever and whenever it pleases God) from bearing true witness to the communication of Christ, and the Spirit of God himself also from revealing and fulfilling what they promise, *boa*) We have determined, therefore, that sacraments are truly named the testimonies of God's grace and are like seals of the good will that he feels toward us, which by attesting that good will to us, sustain, nourish, confirm, and increase our faith.

The reasons which some are accustomed to object against this opinion are too weak and trifling. They say that our faith cannot be made better if it is already good, for it is not faith unless it leans unshaken, firm, and steadfast upon God's mercy.^{F499} It would have been better for them to pray with the apostles that the Lord increase their faith [^{<421705>} Luke 17:5] than confidently to pretend such perfection of faith as no one of the children of men ever attained or ever will attain in this life.

Let them answer what sort of faith they think he had who said, "I believe, O Lord; help thou my unbelief" [^{<410924>} Mark 9:24]. For that faith, although only begun, was good and could be made better after unbelief was taken away. But they are refuted by no surer argument than their own conscience. For if they confess themselves sinners (which, willy-nilly, they cannot deny), they must charge it to the imperfection of their own faith.

8. TO WHAT EXTENT CAN WE SPEAK OF A CONFIRMATION OF FAITH THROUGH THE SACRAMENTS?

Yet, they say, Philip answers the eunuch that he was permitted to be baptized if he believed with all his heart [^{<440837>} Acts 8:37]. What place does confirmation of baptism have here, where faith fills the whole heart? On the other hand, I ask them whether they do not feel a good portion of their heart devoid of faith, and whether they do not daily acknowledge new increases. An eminent man boasted that he grew old, learning.^{F500} We are therefore thrice miserable Christians if we grow old without advancement, for our faith ought to progress through all stages of our life until it grows to full manhood [^{<490413>} Ephesians 4:13]. Accordingly, in this passage, to "believe with all our heart" is not to believe Christ perfectly, but only to embrace him from the heart and with a sincere mind;

not to be sated with him, but to hunger, thirst, and aspire to him with fervent affection. It is customary in Scripture to speak of something as done “with the whole heart,” when it means sincerely and deeply. Of this sort are the following: “With my whole heart I have sought thee” [^{19B910} Psalm 119:10]; “I shall confess unto thee with my whole heart”; and the like [^{19B101} Psalm 111:1; 138:1 p.]. On the other hand, when he rebukes false and deceitful men, he commonly reproaches them “with...a double heart”^{F501} [¹⁹¹²⁰² Psalm 12:2].

If faith be increased through sacraments, they now add, the Holy Spirit was given in vain, whose power and work is to begin, sustain, and consummate faith. I certainly admit to them that faith is the proper and entire work of the Holy Spirit, illumined by whom we recognize God and the treasures of his kindness, and without whose light our mind is so blinded that it can see nothing; so dull that it can sense nothing of spiritual things. But for one blessing of God which they proclaim, we recognize three. For first, the Lord teaches and instructs us by his Word. Secondly, he confirms it by the sacraments. Finally, he illumines our minds by the light of his Holy Spirit and opens our hearts for the Word and sacraments to enter in, which would otherwise only strike our ears and appear before our eyes, but not at all affect us within.^{F502}

9. THE HOLY SPIRIT IN THE SACRAMENTS

As to the confirmation and increase of faith (which I think I have already explained in clear terms^{F503}), I should therefore like my readers to be reminded that I assign this particular ministry to the sacraments. Not that I suppose there is some secret force or other perpetually seated in them by which they are able to promote or confirm faith by themselves. Rather, I consider that they have been instituted by the Lord to the end that they may serve to establish and increase faith.

But the sacraments properly fulfill their office only when the Spirit, that inward teacher,^{F504} comes to them, by whose power alone hearts are penetrated and affections moved and our souls opened for the sacraments to enter in. If the Spirit be lacking, the sacraments can accomplish nothing more in our minds than the splendor of the sun shining upon blind eyes, or a voice sounding in deaf ears. Therefore, I make such a division between

Spirit and sacraments that the power to act rests with the former, and the ministry alone is left to the latter ó a ministry empty and trifling, apart from the action of the Spirit, but charged with great effect when the Spirit works within and manifests his power.

Now it is clear in what way, according to this opinion, the godly mind is strengthened in faith through the sacraments. That is, just as the eyes see by the brightness of the sun, or the ears hear by the sound of a voice, so the eyes would not be affected by any light unless they were endowed with a sharpness of vision capable of being illumined of themselves; and the ears would never be struck by any noise, unless they were created and fitted for hearing. But suppose it is true (something that ought at once to be clear among us) that what sight does in our eyes for seeing light, and what hearing does in our ears for perceiving a voice, are analogous to the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts, which is to conceive, sustain, nourish, and establish faith. Then both of these things follow: the sacraments profit not a whit without the power of the Holy Spirit, and nothing prevents them from strengthening and enlarging faith in hearts already taught by that Schoolmaster. There is only this difference: that our ears and eyes have naturally received the faculty of hearing and seeing; but Christ does the same thing in our hearts by special grace beyond the measure of nature.

10. ILLUSTRATION FROM HUMAN PERSUASION

By this also those objections which trouble some men are at once dispelled. If we ascribe to creatures either the increase or the confirmation of faith, injustice is done to the Spirit of God, who should be recognized as its sole author. For we do not snatch from him the credit for confirming and increasing it; rather, we assert that what increases and confirms faith is precisely the preparation of our minds by his inward illumination to receive the confirmation extended by the sacraments.

But if it has as yet been expressed too obscurely, it will become crystal-clear from the comparison that I shall add. If you set out to convince anyone by words to do something, you will think of all the arguments by which he may be drawn to your opinion and more or less constrained to obey your advice. But you have accomplished nothing unless he in turn

has a keen and sharp judgment by which to weigh the validity of your arguments; unless also he is of a teachable disposition and ready to listen to teaching; unless, finally, he conceives such an opinion of your faith and prudence as may predispose him to adopt your opinion. For there are very many stubborn heads which you can never bend by reasoning. And where faith is suspect, where authority is despised, there is little progress even among the teachable. When, on the contrary, all those traits are present, they will immediately cause the hearer, whom you are advising, to obey your advice, which he would otherwise have laughed at. The Spirit does this same sort of work in us. For, that the Word may not beat your ears in vain, and that the sacraments may not strike your eyes in vain, the Spirit shows us that in them it is God speaking to us, softening the stubbornness of our heart, and composing it to that obedience which it owes the Word of the Lord. Finally, the Spirit transmits those outward words and sacraments from our ears to our soul.

Therefore, Word and sacraments confirm our faith when they set before our eyes the good will of our Heavenly Father toward us, by the knowledge of whom the whole firmness of our faith stands fast and increases in strength. The Spirit confirms it when, by engraving this confirmation in our minds, he makes it effective. Meanwhile, the Father of Lights [cf. <590117> James 1:17] cannot be hindered from illuminating our minds with a sort of intermediate brilliance through the sacraments, just as he illumines our bodily eyes by the rays of the sun.

11. WORD AND SACRAMENT WORK EQUALLY IN THE CONFIRMING OF OUR FAITH

Our Lord taught that this property subsisted in his outward Word when in a parable he called it “seed” [<401303> Matthew 13:3-23; <420805> Luke 8:5-15]. For a seed, if it falls in a deserted and neglected part of a field, will only die; but if it is cast in soil fitly cultivated and tended, it will bear its fruit with abundant increase. So also the Word of God, if it falls upon any stiff-necked person, will become as barren as if it were cast upon sand; if it lights upon a soul cultivated by the hand of the Heavenly Spirit, it will be most fruitful. But if the same form of thought applies to seed and Word, just as we say that from seed grain is born, increases, and rises to

maturity, why may we not say that from the Word faith takes its beginning, increase, and perfection?

Paul excellently explains both in various passages. For when he wishes to remind the Corinthians how effectively God uses His work [^{<460204>} 1 Corinthians 2:4], he glories that he has the ministry of the Spirit [^{<470306>} 2 Corinthians 3:6], as if the power of the Holy Spirit were joined by an indissoluble bond to his preaching for the inward illumination and moving of the mind. But when he wishes elsewhere to teach of what avail God's Word itself is as preached by man, he compares the ministers themselves to farmers who, when they have put their toil and effort into tilling the earth, have nothing more to do [^{<460306>} 1 Corinthians 3:6-9]. But what good would plowing and sowing and watering do unless what has been sown were made to grow by heavenly blessing? He therefore concludes: "Neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but all things are to be ascribed to God who gives the growth" [^{<460307>} 1 Corinthians 3:7 P.]. Thus the apostles express the power of the Spirit in their preaching, as far as God uses the instruments ordained by himself for the unfolding of his spiritual grace. Nevertheless, this distinction is to be kept: we should remember what man can do of himself, and what is reserved to God.

12. SACRAMENTAL ELEMENTS HAVE VALUE ONLY AS GOD'S INSTRUMENTS

Sacraments, moreover, are so much confirmations of our faith that the Lord sometimes, when he would remove confidence in the very things that had been promised by him in the sacraments, takes away the sacraments themselves. When he deprives Adam of the gift of immortality and withdraws it from him, he says, "Let him not take of the fruit of life, lest he live forever" [Genesis 3: 22 p.]. What can this mean? Could that fruit restore to Adam his incorruption, from which he had now fallen? Not at all! But this is just as if the Lord had said, "Lest he enjoy vain confidence by clinging to the symbol of my promise, let that which could bring him any hope of immortality be removed from him." For this reason, when the apostle urged the Ephesians to remember that they were "strangers to the covenants, foreigners to the commonwealth of Israel, without God and without Christ" [^{<490212>} Ephesians 2:12 p.], he said that they had not been participants in the circumcision [^{<490211>} Ephesians 2:11]. In this he

signifies by metonymy that those who had not received the token^{F505} of the promise were excluded from the promise itself.

To their other objection — that the glory of God passes down to the creatures, and so much power is attributed to them, and is thus to this extent diminished — our answer is ready: we place no power in creatures. I say only this: God uses means and instruments which he himself sees to be expedient, that all things may serve his glory, since he is Lord and Judge of all. He feeds our bodies through bread and other foods, he illumines the world through the sun, and he warms it through heat; yet neither bread, nor sun, nor fire, is anything save in so far as he distributes his blessings to us by these instruments. In like manner, he nourishes faith spiritually through the sacraments, whose one function is to set his promises before our eyes to be looked upon, indeed, to be guarantees of them to us. It is our duty to put no confidence in other creatures which have been destined for our use by God's generosity and beneficence, and through whose ministry he lavishes the gifts of his bounty upon us; nor to admire and proclaim them as the causes of our good. In the same way, neither ought our confidence to inhere in the sacraments, nor the glory of God be transferred to them. Rather, laying aside all things, both our faith and our confession ought to rise up to him who is the author of the sacraments and of all things.

13. THE WORD SACRAMENTUM

Some derive an argument from the very term “sacrament,” but one that is far from convincing. Sacrament, they say, although it has many senses among reputable authors, has only one that accords with “signs.” That is, it signifies the solemn oath that the soldier took to the commander when he entered military service. For as recruits bind their fealty to their commander by this military oath^{F506} and make profession of military service, so by our signs do we profess Christ our commander, and testify that we serve under his ensign.^{F507} They add comparisons by which they make the matter clearer. As the toga distinguished the Romans from the pallium-clad Greeks, as at Rome the orders were distinguished from each other by their insignia (the senatorial from the knightly class by purple and by crescent-shaped shoes, and the knights in turn from the common

people by a ring) — so we wear our symbols to distinguish us from profane men.

Yet it is abundantly clear from the preceding that the ancients who applied the name “sacraments” to signs had given no attention to the use of this word by Latin writers, but that they invented this new meaning for their own convenience, simply to designate sacred signs by it.^{F508}

But if we wish to investigate more deeply, they can be seen to have transferred the term to the meaning now in use by the same analogy as that which appears in the use of the word “faith.” For although faith is truthfulness in carrying out promises, yet they have called it certainty or sure persuasion which one has of truth itself. In this way, while the “sacrament” was the soldier’s act of vowing himself to his commander, they made it the commander’s act of receiving soldiers into the ranks. For by the sacraments the Lord promises that “he will be our God and we shall be his people” [^{<470616>}2 Corinthians 6:16; ^{<263727>}Ezekiel 37:27].

But we pass over such subtleties, since it seems to me that I have proved with arguments plain enough that, in using the word “sacraments,” the ancients had no other intention than to signify that they are signs of holy and spiritual things.^{F509} We indeed accept the comparisons which our adversaries bring forward from outward signs, but we do not tolerate that what is secondary in the sacraments be regarded by them as the first and even the only point. Now, the first point is that the sacraments should serve our faith before God; after this, that they should attest our confession before men. As applied to this latter consideration, these comparisons have validity. Meanwhile, let that first point be retained; otherwise, the mysteries (as we have seen) would become lifeless, if they were not aids to our faith and supplements to our doctrine, destined for the same use and purpose.

*(They do not of themselves impart grace, but, like the Word,
hold forth Christ, 14-17)*

14. THE ERROR OF A MAGICAL CONCEPTION OF THE SACRAMENTS

On the contrary, we must be reminded that, as these men weaken the force of the sacraments and completely overthrow their use, so, on the opposite side, there are those who attach to the sacraments some sort of secret powers with which one nowhere reads that God has endowed them. By this error the simple and unskilled are dangerously deceived, while they are both taught to seek God's gifts where they cannot be found, and are gradually drawn away from God to embrace mere vanity rather than his truth. The schools of the Sophists have taught with remarkable agreement that the sacraments of the new law (those now used in the Christian church) justify and confer grace, provided we do not set up a barrier of mortal sin.^{F510} How deadly and pestilential this notion is cannot be expressed — and the more so because for many centuries it has been a current claim in a good part of the world, to the great loss of the church. Of a certainty it is diabolical. For in promising a righteousness apart from faith, it hurls souls headlong to destruction. Secondly, because it draws the cause of righteousness from the sacraments,^{F511} it binds men's pitiable minds (of themselves more than enough inclined to earth) in this superstition, so that they repose in the appearance of a physical thing rather than in God himself. Would that we had not had so much experience of these two things — so far are they from needing an extended proof! But what is a sacrament received apart from faith but the most certain ruin of the church? For nothing ought to be expected from it apart from the promise, but the promise no less threatens wrath to unbelievers than offers grace to believers. Hence, any man is deceived who thinks anything more is conferred upon him through the sacraments than what is offered by God's Word and received by him in true faith.

From this something else follows: assurance of salvation does not depend upon participation in the sacrament, as if justification consisted in it. For we know that justification is lodged in Christ alone, and that it is communicated to us no less by the preaching of the gospel than by the seal of the sacrament, and without the latter can stand unimpaired. Augustine's

statement is just as true: there can be invisible sanctification without a visible sign, and on the other hand a visible sign without true sanctification.^{F512} For men (as he also writes elsewhere) sometimes put on Christ to the point of receiving the sacrament, sometimes to the sanctification of life. And the first condition can be common to both good and evil men; but the latter is confined to the good and pious alone.^{F513}

15. MATTER AND SIGN TO BE DISTINGUISHED

thence that distinction (if it be duly understood), often noted by the same Augustine, between a sacrament and the matter of the sacrament. For the distinction signifies not only that the figure and the truth are contained in the sacrament, but that they are not so linked that they cannot be separated; and that even in the union itself the matter must always be distinguished from the sign, that we may not transfer to the one what belongs to the other.

He speaks of their separation when he writes, “In the elect alone the sacraments effect what they represent.”^{F514} Again, when he writes thus of the Jews: “Although the sacraments were common to all, grace was not common — which is the power of the sacraments. So also the laver of regeneration [^{<560305>}Titus 3:5] is now common to all; but grace itself, by which the members of Christ are regenerated with their Head, is not common to all.”^{F515} Again, he says in another place of the Lord’s Supper: “We also receive visible food this day, but the sacrament is one thing, the power of the sacrament another. Why is it that many receive from the altar and die, and die in receiving? For the Lord’s morsel was poison to Judas, not because he received evil, but because an evil man evilly received a good thing.”^{F516} A little later: “The sacrament of this matter, that is, of the unity of the body and blood of Christ, is in some places prepared daily on the Lord’s Table, in other places at set intervals of days; and some receive from it unto life, others unto death. But the matter itself, of which it is the sacrament, is received by all who partake of it unto life, and by none unto death.” And a little while before he had said, “He who has eaten will not die, meaning, he who attains to the power of the sacrament, not to the visible sacrament; he who eats inwardly, not outwardly; he who eats with the heart, not he who presses with the teeth.”^{F517} On this you are everywhere told that a sacrament is thus separated from its truth by the

unworthiness of the recipient, so that nothing remains but a vain and useless figure. But that you may have not a sign empty of truth but the matter with the sign, you must apprehend in faith the word which is included there. As much, then, as you will profit through the sacraments in the partaking of Christ, so much profit will you receive from them.

16. THE SACRAMENTS HAVE SIGNIFICANCE FOR US IN FAITH IN CHRIST

If this is rather obscure because of its brevity, I shall explain it at greater length. I say that Christ is the matter or (if you prefer) the substance of all the sacraments; for in him they have all their firmness, and they do not promise anything apart from him. The less tolerable, then, is the error of Peter Lombard, who learnedly makes them the causes of righteousness and salvation, of which they are but parts.^{F518} Accordingly, bidding farewell to all causes which man's ingenuity fashions for itself, we ought to hold to this single cause. Therefore, the sacraments have effectiveness among us in proportion as we are helped by their ministry sometimes to foster, confirm, and increase the true knowledge of Christ in ourselves; at other times, to possess him more fully and enjoy his riches. But that happens when we receive in true faith what is offered there.

You will ask: Do the wicked, then, by their ungratefulness cause the ordinance of God to be voided and nullified? I reply: What I have said is not to be understood as if the force and truth of the sacrament depended upon the condition or choice of him who receives it. For what God has ordained remains firm and keeps its own nature, however men may vary. For since it is one thing to offer, another to receive, nothing prevents the symbol consecrated by the Lord's Word from being actually what it is called, and from keeping its own force. Yet this does not benefit a wicked or impious man. But Augustine has well solved this question in a few words: "If you receive carnally, it does not cease to be spiritual, but it is not so for you."^{F519}

But, as Augustine has shown in the above passages that the sacrament is a worthless thing if it be separated from its truth, so in another place he reminds us that in the very joining of these we also must have a distinction, lest we cling too tightly to the outward sign. He says, "As to

follow the letter and receive the signs for the things themselves are marks of servile weakness, so unprofitably to interpret the signs is a mark of badly straying error.”^{F520} He points out two vices which are here to be avoided. The first vice is for us to receive the signs as though they had been given in vain, and by destroying or weakening their secret meanings through our antagonism, to cause them to be wholly fruitless to us. The second vice is by not lifting our minds beyond the visible sign, to transfer to it the credit for those benefits which are conferred upon us by Christ alone. And they are conferred through the Holy Spirit, who makes us partakers in Christ; conferred, indeed, with the help of outward signs, if they allure us to Christ; but when they are twisted in another direction, their whole worth is shamefully destroyed.

17. TRUE OFFICE OF THE SACRAMENTS

Therefore, let it be regarded as a settled principle that the sacraments have the same office as the Word of God: to offer and set forth Christ to us, and in him the treasures of heavenly grace. But they avail and profit nothing unless received in faith. As with wine or oil or some other liquid, no matter how much you pour out, it will flow away and disappear unless the mouth of the vessel to receive it is open; moreover, the vessel will be splashed over on the outside, but will still remain void and empty.

Moreover, we must beware lest we be led into a similar error through what was written a little too extravagantly by the ancients to enhance the dignity of the sacraments. That is, to think that a hidden power is joined and fastened to the sacraments by which they of themselves confer the graces of the Holy Spirit upon us, as wine is given in a cup; while the only function divinely imparted to them is to attest and ratify for us God’s good will toward us. And they are of no further benefit unless the Holy Spirit accompanies them. For he it is who opens our minds and hearts and makes us receptive to this testimony. In this also, varied and distinct graces of God brightly appear. For the sacraments (as we have suggested above^{F521}) are for us the same thing from God, as messengers of glad tidings or guarantees of the ratification of covenants are from men. They do not bestow any grace of themselves, but announce and tell us, and (as they are guarantees and tokens) ratify among us, those things given us by divine bounty. The Holy Spirit (whom the sacraments do not bring

indiscriminately to all men but whom the Lord exclusively bestows on his own people) is he who brings the graces of God with him, gives a place for the sacraments among *us*, and makes them bear fruit.

We do not deny that God himself is present in his institution by the very-present power of his Spirit. Nevertheless, that the administration of the sacraments which he has ordained may not be unfruitful and void, we declare that the inner grace of the Spirit, as distinct from the outward ministry, ought to be considered and pondered separately, God therefore truly executes whatever he promises and represents in signs; nor do the signs lack their own effect in proving their Author truthful and faithful. The only question here is whether God acts by his own intrinsic power (as they say) or resigns his office to outward symbols. But we contend that, whatever instruments he uses, these detract nothing from his original activity.

When this doctrine is taught concerning the sacraments, their worth is duly commended, their use clearly indicated, their value abundantly proclaimed, and the best mean in all these things retained, so that nothing is given to them which should not be given, and conversely nothing taken away which belongs to them. In the meantime, that false doctrine is removed by which the cause of justification and the power of the Holy Spirit are enclosed in elements, just as in vessels or vehicles,^{F522} and that chief force which has been overlooked by some^{F523} is clearly set forth.

We must also note this: that God accomplishes within what the minister represents and attests by outward action, lest what God claims for himself alone should be turned over to a mortal man. Augustine also wisely admonishes this. “How,” he says, “do both Moses and God sanctify? Not Moses on God’s behalf; but Moses by the visible sacraments through his ministry, God by invisible grace through the Holy Spirit. There, also, is the whole fruit of the visible sacraments. For without this sanctification of invisible grace, what is gained from these visible sacraments?”^{F524}

(Wide application of the term to Scriptural incidents and its restriction to the ordinary sacraments of the church, 18-20)

18. SACRAMENTS IN THE WIDER SENSE

The term “sacrament,” as we have previously discussed its nature so far, embraces generally all those signs which God has ever enjoined upon men to render them more certain and confident of the truth of his promises. He sometimes willed to present these in natural things, at other times set them forth in miracles.

Here are some examples of the first kind. One is when he gave Adam and Eve the tree of life as a guarantee of immortality, that they might assure themselves of it as long as they should eat of its fruit [^{<010209>}Genesis 2:9; 3:22]. Another, when he set the rainbow for Noah and his descendants, as a token that he would not destroy the earth with a flood [Genesis 9: 13-16]- These, Adam and Noah regarded as sacraments. Not that the tree provided them with an immortality which it could not give to itself; nor that the rainbow (which is but a reflection of the sun’s rays upon the clouds opposite) could be effective in holding back the waters; but because they had a mark engraved upon them by God’s Word, so that they were proofs and seals of his covenants. And indeed the tree was previously a tree, the rainbow a rainbow. When they were inscribed by God’s Word a new form was put upon them, so that they began to be what previously they were not. That no one may think these things said in vain, the rainbow even today is a witness to us of that covenant which the Lord made with Noah. As often as we look upon it, we read this promise of God in it, that the earth will never be destroyed by a flood. Therefore, if any philosophizer, to mock the simplicity of our faith, contends that such a variety of colors naturally arises from rays reflected upon a cloud opposite, let us admit it, but laugh at his stupidity in failing to recognize God as the lord and governor of nature, who according to his will uses all the elements to serve his glory.^{F525} If he had imprinted such reminders upon the sun, stars, earth, stones, they would all be sacraments for us. Why are crude and coined silver not of the same value, though they are absolutely the same metal? The one is merely in the natural state; stamped with an official mark, it becomes a coin and receives a new valuation. And

cannot God mark with his Word the things he has created, that what were previously bare elements may become sacraments?

Here are examples of the second kind: when he showed Abraham a light in a smoking fire pot [^{<011517>}Genesis 15:17]; when, to promise Gideon the victory, he watered a fleece with dew while the earth was dry, and conversely bedewed the earth, leaving the fleece untouched [^{<070637>}Judges 6:37-38]; when the shadow of the sundial went back ten degrees to promise safety to Hezekiah [^{<122009>}2 Kings 20:9-11; ^{<233807>}Isaiah 38:7]. Since these things were done to support and confirm their feeble faith, they were also sacraments.

19. ORDINARY SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

about our present intention is specifically to discuss those sacraments which the Lord willed to be ordinary in the church in order to nourish his worshipers and servants in one faith and the confession of one faith. “For,” to use Augustine’s words, “men cannot be welded together in any name of religion, whether true or false, unless they are bound in some partnership of signs or visible sacraments.”^{F526} Since our most merciful Father foresaw this need, at the outset he instituted definite exercises of piety for his servants. Afterward, Satan, by turning them into wicked and superstitious acts of worship, degraded and corrupted them in many ways.^{F527} Hence arose those initiations of the Gentiles into their own mysteries, and other degenerate rites, which, even though full of error and superstition, were still a proof that men could not go without such outward signs in a profession of religion. But because they were neither grounded upon God’s Word nor had reference to that truth which all signs ought to set forth, they are not worth recalling where mention is made of the sacred symbols that have been ordained by God and have not been turned aside from their fundamental purpose as aids to true piety.

They consist, moreover, not in simple signs, such as were the rainbow and tree, but in ceremonies. Or (if you prefer) the signs here given are ceremonies. But as we have stated above^{F528} that they are testimonies of grace and salvation from the Lord, so from us in turn they bare marks of profession, by which we openly swear allegiance to God, binding ourselves in fealty to him. In one place Chrysostom therefore has

appropriately called them “covenants,” by which God leagues himself with us, and we pledge ourselves to purity and holiness of life^{F529} since there is interposed here a mutual agreement between God and ourselves. For as in them the Lord promises to cancel and blot out any guilt and penalty contracted by us through our transgression, and reconciles us to himself in his only-begotten Son, so do we, in turn, bind ourselves to him by this profession, to pursue piety and innocence, Hence you can rightfully say that such sacraments are ceremonies by which God wills to exercise his people, first, to foster, arouse, and confirm faith within; then, to attest religion before men.

20. CHRIST PROMISED IN THE OLD TESTAMENT SACRAMENTS

The sacraments themselves were also diverse, in keeping with the times, according to the dispensation by which the Lord was pleased to reveal himself in various ways to men. For circumcision was enjoined upon Abraham and his descendants [^{<011710>}Genesis 17:10]. To it were afterward added purifications [Leviticus chs. 11 to 15], sacrifices, and other rites [Leviticus chs. 1 to 10] from the law of Moses. These were the sacraments of the Jews until the coming of Christ. When at his coming these were abrogated, two sacraments were instituted which the Christian church now uses, Baptism and the Lord’s Supper [^{<402819>}Matthew 28:19; 26:26-28]. I am speaking of those which were established for the use of the whole church. I would not go against calling the laying on of hands, by which ministers of the church are initiated into their office,^{F530} a sacrament, but I do not include it among the ordinary sacraments. In what place the rest of what are commonly considered sacraments should be held, we shall soon see.^{F531}

Yet those ancient sacraments looked to the same purpose to which ours now tend: to direct and almost lead men by the hand to Christ, or rather, as images, to represent him and show him forth to be known. We have already taught^{F532} that they are seals by which God’s promises are sealed, and, moreover, it is very clear that no promise has ever been offered to men except in Christ [^{<470120>}2 Corinthians 1:20]. Consequently, to teach us about any promise of God, they must show forth Christ.^{F533} To this pertains that heavenly pattern of the Tabernacle and of worship under the

law, which was put before Moses on the mountain [^{<022509>}Exodus 25:9, 40; 26:80]. There is only one difference: the former foreshadowed Christ promised while he was as yet awaited; the latter attest him as already given and revealed.

(Sacraments of the Old Testament closely related to those of the New as foreshadowing the full manifestation of Christ, 21-26)

21. CIRCUMCISION, PURIFICATIONS, SACRIFICES, POINT TO CHRIST

When these things are individually explained, they will become much clearer.

For the Jews, circumcision was the symbol by which they were admonished that whatever comes forth from man's seed, that is, the whole nature of mankind, is corrupt and needs pruning. Moreover, circumcision was a token and reminder to confirm them in the promise given to Abraham of the blessed seed in which all nations of the earth were to be blessed [^{<012218>}Genesis 22:18], from whom they were also to await their own blessing. Now that saving seed (as we are taught by Paul) was Christ [Galatians 3: 16], in whom alone they trusted that they were to recover what they had lost in Adam. Accordingly, circumcision was the same thing to them as in Paul's teaching it was to Abraham, namely, a sign of the righteousness of faith [^{<450411>}Romans 4:11]; that is, a seal by which they are more certainly assured that their faith, with which they awaited that seed, is accounted to them as righteousness by God. But elsewhere at a more appropriate occasion we shall pursue a fuller comparison of circumcision and baptism.^{F534}

Baptisms and purifications disclose to them their own uncleanness, foulness, and pollution, with which they were defiled in their own nature; but these rites promised another cleansing by which all their filth would be removed and washed away [^{<580901>}Hebrews 9:10, 14]. And this cleansing was Christ. Washed by his blood [I ^{<430107>}John 1:7; ^{<660105>}Revelation 1:5], we bring his purity before God's sight to cover all our defilement's.

Sacrifices made them aware of their unrighteousness and, at the same time, taught them that some satisfaction must be paid to God's justice^{F534A}

They also taught that there should be some high priest, a mediator between God and men, to make satisfaction to God by the shedding of blood and by the offering of a sacrifice that would suffice for the forgiveness of sins. This high priest was Christ [^{<580414>} Hebrews 4:14; 5:5; 9:11]; he poured out his own blood; he himself was the sacrificial victim; he offered himself, obedient unto death, to the Father [^{<502308>} Philippians 2:8]. By his obedience he canceled the disobedience of man from. 5:19] which had aroused God's wrath.

22. CHRIST MORE FULLY EXPRESSED IN THE CHRISTIAN SACRAMENTS

As for our sacraments, the more fully Christ has been revealed to men, the more clearly do the sacraments present him to us from the time when he was truly revealed by the Father as he had been promised. For baptism attests to us that we have been cleansed and washed; the Eucharistic Supper, that we have been redeemed. In water, washing is represented; in blood, satisfaction. These two are found in Christ "...who," as John says, "came in water and blood" [^{<620506>} 1 John 5:6]; that is, to wash and to redeem. The Spirit of God is also witness of this. Indeed, "there are three witnesses in one: the water, the blood, and the Spirit" [^{<620508>} 1 John 5:8 p.]. In the water and the blood we have testimony of cleansing and redemption. But the Spirit, the primary witness, makes us certain of such testimony. This lofty mystery has been admirably shown us in the cross of Christ, when water and blood flowed from his sacred side [^{<431934>} John 19:34]. For this reason, Augustine has called it the wellspring of our sacraments. ^{F535}

Yet we shall have to discuss this a little more amply. There is no doubt that the grace of the Spirit also reveals itself more here if you compare one time with another. For that pertains to the glory of Christ's Kingdom, as we infer from a good many passages, and especially from the seventh chapter of John [^{<430708>} John 7:8-9, 38-39]. In this sense we ought to understand Paul's statement: under the law were shadows; in Christ, the body [^{<510217>} Colossians 2:17]. It is not his intention to deprive of their effect the testimonies of grace, in which God long ago willed to prove himself truthful to the patriarchs, as he does to us today in baptism and the Sacred Supper. But his intention is, by comparison, to magnify what

has been given us, that no one may think it strange that the ceremonies of the law have been abolished by the coming of Christ.

23. SIMILARITY AND DISSIMILARITY OF THE OLD AND NEW SACRAMENTS

But we must utterly reject that Scholastic dogma (to touch on it also in passing) which notes such a great difference between the sacraments of the old and new law, as if the former only fore-shadowed God's grace, but the latter give it as a present reality.^{F536} Indeed, the apostle speaks just as clearly concerning the former as the latter when he teaches that the fathers ate the same spiritual food as we, and explains that food as Christ [^{<461003>} 1 Corinthians 10:3]. Who dared treat as an empty sign that which revealed the true communion of Christ to the Jews? And the nature of the case with which Paul was there dealing clearly argues on our side. In order that no man, relying upon a barren knowledge of Christ, upon the empty title and outward tokens of Christianity, should dare despise God's judgment, Paul exhibits examples of divine severity that are to be seen in the Jews, to make us aware that the same punishments which they suffered threaten us if we give ourselves up to the same vices. Now, that the comparison should be appropriate, it was needful for him to show that there is no inequality between us and them in those boons in which he forbade us to boast falsely. He therefore first makes them equal to us in sacraments, and he leaves us no shred of privilege which could make souls hope to go unpunished. Nor is it lawful for us to attribute more to our baptism than he elsewhere attributes to circumcision when he calls it the seal of the righteousness of faith [^{<450411>} Romans 4:11]. Therefore, whatever is shown us today in the sacraments, the Jews of old received in their own — that is, Christ with his spiritual riches. They felt the same power in their sacraments as do we in ours; these were seals of divine good will toward them, looking to eternal salvation. If our opponents had been skilled interpreters of The Letter to the Hebrews, they would not have been thus deceived. But when they read there that sins were not expiated by the ceremonies of the law, indeed that the ancient shadows had no importance for righteousness [Hebrews 10:1], overlooking the comparison discussed there while grasping this one point, that the law of itself does not profit its keepers, they simply supposed the ceremonies to have been

figures devoid of truth.^{F537} But the apostle's intention is to reduce the ceremonial law to nothing until the coming of Christ, upon whom its entire effectiveness depends.

24. PAUL'S TEACHING ON THE VALUE OF CIRCUMCISION

But by way of objection they will quote what they read concerning "circumcision of the letter" in Paul [^{<450229>}Romans 2:29], that it has no place with God, confers nothing, and is empty. For such statements seem to press it down far beneath our baptism [cf. ^{<450225>}Romans 2:25-29; ^{<480506>}Galatians 5:6; 6:15; ^{<4460719>}1 Corinthians 7:19]. Not at all! The very same thing could justly be said of baptism. But this is even said, and first by Paul himself, when he is showing that God cares nothing about the outward washing with which we are initiated into religion [cf. ^{<461005>}1 Corinthians 10:5], unless the heart also be inwardly cleansed and persevere in purity to the end. Then it is said by Peter when he bears witness that the truth of baptism rests not in outward washing but in the testimony of a clear conscience [^{<600321>}1 Peter 3:21].

But in another place (they will say) Paul also seems completely to despise the circumcision made with hands when he compares it with Christ's circumcision [^{<510211>}Colossians 2:11-12]. I reply: in this passage its dignity is not in any way reduced. There Paul is disputing against those who require it as necessary although it has already been abolished. He therefore admonishes believers to forsake the old shadows and stand fast in the truth. These teachers (he says) urge you to have your bodies circumcised. Yet you have been spiritually circumcised both in soul and body. You therefore have a revelation of the reality, which is far better than the shadow. But someone could have objected, on the other hand, that men ought not to despise the figure because they had the thing itself, inasmuch as among the patriarchs too there was that putting off of the old man, of which Paul is there speaking; yet outward circumcision was not superfluous for them. Paul forestalls this objection when he immediately adds that the Colossians had been buried with Christ through baptism [^{<510212>}Colossians 2:12]. By this he means that baptism is today for Christians what circumcision was for the ancients, and that therefore circumcision cannot be enjoined upon Christians without injustice to baptism.

25. NEW TESTAMENT DISPARAGEMENT OF JEWISH CEREMONIES EXPLAINED

Yet what follows — lately referred to by us^{F538} — is (they say) more difficult to solve: that all Jewish ceremonies were figures of future things, and that the body is in Christ [^{<510217>} Colossians 2:17]. Indeed, most difficult of all is what is discussed in many chapters of The Letter to the Hebrews, that the blood of animals did not pertain to consciences [^{<580912>} Hebrews 9:12 ff.]; that the law had a shadow of future blessings, not an image of the things themselves [^{<580804>} Hebrews 8:4-5; 10:1]; that worshipers received nothing of perfection from the Mosaic ceremonies [^{<580719>} Hebrews 7:19; 9:9; 10:1]; and the like. I repeat what I have already touched upon^{F539} — that Paul does not make the ceremonies shadowed because they have no reality, but because their fulfillment had been, so to speak, held in suspense until the appearance of Christ. Then I say that this must be understood not of efficacy but rather of mode of signification. For until Christ was manifested in the flesh, all signs foreshadowed him as if absent, however much he might make the presence of his power and himself inwardly felt among believers. But we ought especially to note that in all these passages Paul is not speaking simply but by way of controversy. Since he was in conflict with false apostles who wished piety to consist in ceremonies alone without regard to Christ, to refute them it was enough only to treat what value the ceremonies had of themselves. The author of The Letter to the Hebrews also sought this end.

But let us remember that here the discussion is not about ceremonies taken in their true and natural sense, but distorted to a false and perverted interpretation; not about their lawful use, but their superstitious abuse. What wonder, then, if ceremonies, cut off from Christ, are divested of all force! For, when the thing signified is removed, all that belongs to the signs is reduced to nothing. Thus Christ, when he had to deal with those who thought manna nothing but food for the stomach, accommodates his discourse to their crass notion, and says that he, who feeds souls to the hope of immortality, dispenses better food [^{<430627>} John 6:27].

But if you require a clearer answer to objections, the whole matter comes to this: first, all the pomp of ceremonies which was in the law of Moses, unless it be directed to Christ, is a fleeting and worthless thing; secondly,

they looked to Christ in such a way that, when he was at length revealed in the flesh, they had their fulfillment; lastly, it was fitting that they should be abrogated by his coming, just as shadows vanish in the clear light of the sun. But because I defer further discussion of this matter to the place where I have planned to compare baptism with circumcision,^{F540} I am now touching upon it only briefly.

26. SIMILARITY AND DIFFERENCE: AUGUSTINE'S DISTINCTIONS

Perhaps those immoderate praises of the sacraments which are read in ancient writers concerning our signs have deceived these miserable Sophists. Such is Augustine's statement: "The sacraments of the old law only promised the Savior; but ours give salvation." Failing to note that these and similar figures of speech were exaggerated, they also published their own exaggerated dogmas, but in a sense wholly at variance from the writings of the ancients. For Augustine only meant there the same thing that he writes elsewhere: "The sacraments of the Mosaic law foretold Christ, but ours tell forth Christ."^{F541} And against Faustus: "Theirs were promises of things to be accomplished; ours are tokens of things already accomplished."^{F542} *qt* is as if he had said: "Those represented him when he was still awaited; but ours show him as if present who has already come." Further, he is speaking of the manner of signifying, just as he indicates elsewhere in these words: "The Law and Prophets had sacraments foretelling a thing to come; but the sacraments of our time attest that what the former proclaimed as a future event has come."^{F543} But his understanding of the thing itself and its efficacy he explains in many places, as when he says that the sacraments of the Jews were different in their signs, but equal in the thing signified; different in visible appearance, but equal in spiritual power. Likewise: "In different signs there is the same faith; it is the same with different signs as it is with different words; for words change their sounds from time to time; and words are nothing but signs. The fathers drank the same spiritual drink, but not the same physical one, as ours. See, therefore, how faith remains while signs change. With them Christ was the Rock [^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4]; for us Christ is that which is put upon the altar. They drank, as a great sacrament, water flowing from the rock; believers know what we drink. If you look at the

visible appearance, they drank something different; if you look at the inner signification, they drank the same spiritual drink.”^{F544} Another passage: “In the mystery they had the same food and drink as we; but in signification, not in appearance. For the same Christ represented to them in the rock has been manifested to us in the flesh.”^{F545}

Yet in this respect also we admit some difference. For both attest that God’s fatherly kindness and the graces of the Holy Spirit are offered us in Christ, but ours is clearer and brighter. In both Christ is shown forth,^{F546} but in ours more richly and fully, that is, in accordance with that difference between the Old and the New Testament, which we have discussed above. And this is what the same Augustine meant (whom we quote often as the best and most reliable witness of all antiquity) in teaching that when Christ was revealed, sacraments were instituted, fewer in number, more majestic in signification, more excellent in power.^{F547}

It is good that our readers be briefly apprized of this thing also: whatever the Sophists have dreamed up concerning the *opus operatum*^{F548} is not only false but contradicts the nature of the sacraments, which God so instituted that believers, poor and deprived of all goods, should bring nothing to it but begging. From this it follows that in receiving the sacraments believers do nothing to deserve praise, and that even in this act (which on their part is merely passive) no work can be ascribed to them.

CHAPTER 15

BAPTISM

(Baptism a sign of our forgiveness, of our participation in Christ's death and resurrection and also in his blessings, 1-6)

1. THE MEANING OF BAPTISM

Baptism is the sign of the initiation^{F549} by which we are received into the society of the church, in order that, engrafted in Christ, we may be reckoned among God's children. Now baptism was given to us by God for these ends (which I have taught to be common to all sacraments^{F550}): first, to serve our faith before him; secondly, to serve our confession before men. We shall treat in order the reasons for each aspect of its institution. Baptism brings three things to our faith which we must deal with individually. The first thing that the Lord sets out for us is that baptism should be a token and proof of our cleansing; or (the better to explain what I mean) it is like a sealed document to confirm to us that all our sins are so abolished, remitted, and effaced that they can never come to his sight, be recalled, or charged against us. For he wills that all who believe be baptized for the remission of sins [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19; ^{<440238>} Acts 2:38].

Accordingly, they who regarded baptism as nothing but a token and mark by which we confess our religion before men, as soldiers bear the insignia of their commander as a mark of their profession,^{F551} have not weighed what was the chief point of baptism. It is to receive baptism with this promise: "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" [^{<411616>} Mark 16:16].

2. ITS VIRTUE NOT IN WATER WITHOUT THE WORD

In this sense we are to understand what Paul has written: that the church "has been sanctified" by Christ, the bridegroom, and "cleansed with the washing of water in the Word of life" [^{<490526>} Ephesians 5:26 p.]. And another passage: "He saved us...in virtue of his own mercy, through the

washing of regeneration and of renewal in the Holy Spirit” [^{<560305>}Titus 3:5]. And by Peter: “Baptism...saves us” [^{<600321>}1 Peter 3:21 p.].

For Paul did not mean to signify that our cleansing and salvation are accomplished by water, or that water contains in itself the power to cleanse, regenerate, and renew; nor that here is the cause of salvation, but only that in this sacrament are received the knowledge and certainty of such gifts. This the words themselves explain clearly enough. For Paul joins together the Word of life and the baptism of water, as if he had said: “Through the gospel a message of our cleansing and sanctification is brought to us; through such baptism the message is sealed.” And Peter immediately adds that this baptism is not a removal of filth from the flesh but a good conscience before God [^{<600321>}1 Peter 3:21], which is from faith, indeed, baptism promises us no other purification than through the sprinkling of Christ’s blood, which is represented by means of water from the resemblance to cleansing and washing. Who, therefore, may say that we are cleansed by this water which attests with certainty that Christ’s blood is our true and only laver? Thus, the surest argument to refute the self-deception of those who attribute everything to the power of the water^{F552} can be sought in the meaning of baptism itself, which draws us away, not only from the visible element which meets our eyes, but from all other means, that it may fasten our minds upon Christ alone.

3. TOKEN OF CLEANSING FOR THE WHOLE OF LIFE!

But we are not to think that baptism was conferred upon us only for past time, so that for newly committed sins into which we fall after baptism we must seek new remedies of expiation in some other sacraments, as if the force of the former one were spent. In early times this error caused some to refuse the initiation by baptism unless in uttermost peril of life and at their last gasp, so that thus they might obtain pardon for their whole life. The ancient bishops frequently inveighed in their writings against this preposterous caution.^{F553} But we must realize that at whatever time we are baptized, we are once for all washed and purged for our whole life. Therefore, as often as we fall away, we ought to recall the memory of our baptism and fortify our mind with it, that we may always be sure and confident of the forgiveness of sins. For, though baptism, administered only once, seemed to have passed, it was still not destroyed by

subsequent sins. For Christ's purity has been offered us in it; his purity ever flourishes; it is defiled by no spots, but buries and cleanses away all our defilement's.

Nevertheless, from this fact we ought not to take leave to sin in the future, as this has certainly not taught us to be so bold. Rather, this doctrine is only given to sinners who groan, wearied and oppressed by their own sins, in order that they may have something to lift them up and comfort them, so as not to plunge into confusion and despair. Paul speaks thus: "Christ was made our expiator for the forgiveness of past sins" [^{<450325>} Romans 3:25]. By this Paul does not deny that we obtain in Christ continual and unceasing forgiveness of sins even unto death; but he indicates that he was given by the Father only to poor sinners who, wounded by the branding of conscience, sigh for the physician. To them the mercy of God is offered. Those who, counting on impunity, chase after the occasion and license to sin, provoke nothing but God's wrath and judgment.

4. TRUE RELATION OF BAPTISM AND REPENTANCE

Another view, I well know, is widely received, that by the benefit of repentance and of the keys we obtain after baptism the forgiveness which in our first regeneration was given us through baptism alone.^{F554} But those who devise this notion err in not realizing that the power of the keys of which they speak so depends upon baptism that it should by no means be severed from it. The sinner receives forgiveness by the ministry of the church, that is, not without the preaching of the gospel. But what is the nature of this preaching? That we have been cleansed of our sins by Christ's blood. Yet what is the sign and testimony of that washing but baptism? We therefore see that the absolution has reference to baptism.

And this error has provided us with the fictitious sacrament of penance, I have touched on this before,^{F555} and I shall complete the discussion in its proper place.^{F556} But no wonder if men, who from the grossness of their natures were immoderately attached to outward things, also betrayed this fault, in the fact that, not content with the pure instruction of God, they introduced new helps devised by themselves! As if baptism itself were not the sacrament of penance! But if penance is commended to us throughout life, the power of baptism too ought to be extended to the very same

limits, Therefore, there is no doubt that all pious folk throughout life, whenever they are troubled by a consciousness of their faults, may venture to remind themselves of their baptism, that from it they may be confirmed in assurance of that sole and perpetual cleansing which we have in Christ's blood.

5. BAPTISM AS TOKEN OF MORTIFICATION AND RENEWAL IN CHRIST

Baptism also brings another benefit, for it shows us our mortification in Christ, and new life in him. Indeed (as the apostle says), "we have been baptized into his death," "buried with him into death...that we may walk in newness of life" [^{<450603>}Romans 6:3-4 p.]. By these words he not only exhorts us to follow Christ as if he had said that we are admonished through baptism to die to our desires by an example of Christ's death, and to be aroused to righteousness by the example of his resurrection. But he also takes hold of something far higher, namely, that through baptism Christ makes us sharers in his death, that we may be engrafted in it [^{<450605>}Romans 6:5, cf. Vg.]. ^{F557} And, just as the twig draws substance and nourishment from the root to which it is grafted, so those who receive baptism with right faith truly feel the effective working of Christ's death in the mortification of their flesh, together with the working of his resurrection in the vivification of the Spirit [^{<450608>}Romans 6:8]. From this, Paul takes occasion for exhortation: if we are Christians, we ought to be dead to sin and alive to righteousness [^{<450611>}Romans 6:11]. He uses this same argument in another place: we were circumcised and put off the old man after we were buried in Christ through baptism [^{<510211>}Colossians 2:11-12]. And in this sense, in the passage which I have previously quoted, he called it the washing of regeneration and of renewal [^{<560305>}Titus 3:5]. ^{F558} Thus, the free pardon of sins and the imputation of righteousness are first promised us, and then the grace of the Holy Spirit to reform us to newness of life.

6. BAPTISM AS TOKEN OF OUR UNION WITH CHRIST

Lastly, our faith receives from baptism the advantage of its sure testimony to us that we are not only engrafted into the death and life of Christ, but so united to Christ himself that we become sharers in all his blessings. For

he dedicated and sanctified baptism in his own body [^{<400313>} Matthew 3:13] in order that he might have it in common with us as the firmest bond of the union and fellowship which he has deigned to form with us. Hence, Paul proves that we are children of God from the fact that we put on Christ in baptism [^{<480326>} Galatians 3:26-27]. Thus we see that the fulfillment of baptism is in Christ, whom also for this reason we call the proper object of baptism. Consequently, it is not strange that the apostles are reported to have baptized in his name [^{<440816>} Acts 8:16; 19:5], although they had also been bidden to baptize in the name of the Father and of the Spirit [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19]. For all the gifts of God proffered in baptism are found in Christ alone. Yet this cannot take place unless he who baptizes in Christ invokes also the names of the Father and the Spirit. For we are cleansed by his blood because our merciful Father, wishing to receive us into grace in accordance with his incomparable kindness, has set this Mediator among us to gain favor for us in his sight. But we obtain regeneration by Christ's death and resurrection only if we are sanctified by the Spirit and imbued with a new and spiritual nature. For this reason we obtain and, so to speak, clearly discern in the Father the cause, in the Son the matter, and in the Spirit the effect, of our purification and our regeneration. So John first baptized, so later did the apostles, "with a baptism of repentance unto forgiveness of sins" [^{<400306>} Matthew 3:6; 11; ^{<420316>} Luke 3:16; ^{<430323>} John 3:23; 4:1; ^{<440238>} Acts 2:38, 41] — meaning by the word "repentance" such regeneration; and by "forgiveness of sins," cleansing.

(The baptism of John not different from that of the apostles: its meaning symbolized to the Israelites in the exodus, 7-9)

7. JOHN'S BAPTISM AND CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

By this also we are assured that John's ministry was exactly the same as that afterward committed to the apostles. For the different hands that administer baptism do not make it different; but the same doctrine shows it to be the same baptism. John and the apostles agreed on one doctrine: both baptized to repentance, both to forgiveness of sins, both into the name of Christ, from whom repentance and forgiveness of sins came. John said that Christ was the Lamb of God, through whom the sins of the world would be taken away [^{<430129>} John 1:29]. In this, he made Him a sacrifice

acceptable to the Father, and the propitiator of righteousness and author of salvation. What could the apostles add to this confession?

Therefore, let no one be troubled by the attempt of ancient writers to differentiate the one thing from the other. We ought not so to value their authority as to let it shake the certainty of Scripture. For who would rather listen to Chrysostom denying that forgiveness of sins was included in John's baptism than to Luke asserting to the contrary that John the Baptist preached repentance unto forgiveness of sins [^{<420303>} Luke 3:3]? And we must not accept that subtle reasoning of Augustine, that in the baptism^{F559} of John sins were remitted in hope, but in the baptism of Christ are remitted in reality.^{F560} For since the Evangelist clearly testifies that John promised forgiveness of sins in his baptism, why must we weaken this language, when no necessity compels us to do so?

But if anyone should seek a difference between them from God's Word, he will find no other difference than that John baptized in him who was to come; but the apostles, in him who had already revealed himself [^{<420316>} Luke 3:16; ^{<441904>} Acts 19:4].

8. DISPARITY IN PERSONALITY, NOT IN BAPTISM

The fact that richer graces of the Spirit have been poured out since Christ's resurrection does not serve toward establishing a diversity of baptism. For the baptism that the apostles administered during Christ's earthly ministry was called his. And yet it did not have a greater abundance of the Spirit than the baptism of John. Even after his ascension, the Samaritans, although they had been baptized in the name of Jesus, were not given a larger measure of the Spirit than were previous believers, until Peter and John were sent to lay their hands upon them [^{<440814>} Acts 8:14, 17].

I believe the early writers, when they said that the baptism of John was only a preparation for the baptism of Christ, were deceived only because they read that those who had once received the baptism of John were rebaptized by Paul [^{<441903>} Acts 19:3, 6]. But how deluded they were in this will be explained very clearly in the proper place.^{F561}

What, then, is the meaning of John's statement that he baptizes with water but that Christ would come to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire [^{<400311>}Matthew 3:11; ^{<420316>}Luke 3:16]? This can be explained in few words. John did not mean to distinguish one sort of baptism from another, but he compared his person with that of Christ — that he was a minister of water, but Christ the giver of the Holy Spirit; and that this power would be declared by a visible miracle on the day when he would send the Holy Spirit to the apostles under tongues of fire [^{<440203>}Acts 2:3]. What could the apostles boast beyond this? And what those who baptize today? For they are only ministers of the outward sign, but Christ is the author of inward grace, as those same ancient writers everywhere teach, and especially Augustine, who in controversy with the Donatists relied chiefly on this argument: whosoever may baptize, Christ alone presides.^{F562}

9. PROTOTYPE OF BAPTISM IN THE OLD COVENANT

These things which we have said both of mortification and of washing were foreshadowed in the people of Israel,^{F563} who were on this account said by the apostle to have been “baptized in the cloud and in the sea” [^{<461002>}1 Corinthians 10:2]. Mortification was symbolized when the Lord, rescuing his people from the domination and cruel bondage of Pharaoh, made a way for them through the Red Sea [^{<021421>}Exodus 14:21] and drowned both Pharaoh himself and the Egyptian army, who were in hot pursuit and almost at their backs [^{<021426>}Exodus 14:26-28]. For in the same way he also promises us in baptism and shows us by a sign given that by his power we have been led out and delivered from bondage in Egypt, that is, from the bondage of sin; that our Pharaoh, that is, the devil, has been drowned, although he does not cease to harry us and weary us. As the Egyptian, however, was not cast into the depth of the sea, but, left lying on the shore, still terrified the Israelites by his frightful appearance, yet could not harm them [^{<021430>}Exodus 14:30-31], so too this enemy of ours still threatens, brandishes his weapons, is felt, but cannot conquer.

In the cloud [^{<040915>}Numbers 9:15; ^{<021321>}Exodus 13:21] there was a symbol of cleansing. For as the Lord covered them with a cloud and gave them coolness, that they might not weaken and pine away in the merciless heat of the sun, so do we recognize that in baptism we are covered and

protected by Christ's blood, that God's severity, which is truly an unbearable flame, should not assail us.

Even though the mystery was then obscure and known to few, still, because there is no other way to obtain salvation than in these two graces, God did not will to take away the tokens of both from the ancient fathers whom he had adopted as his heirs.

(We are not by the rite of baptism set free from original sin, but by it we make confession of faith before men, 10-13)

10. BAPTISM, ORIGINAL SIN, AND NEW RIGHTEOUSNESS

Now, it is clear how false is the teaching, long propagated by some and still persisted in by others, that through baptism we are released and made exempt from original sin, and from the corruption that descended from Adam into all his posterity; and are restored into that same righteousness and purity of nature which Adam would have obtained if he had remained upright as he was first created. For teachers of this type never understood what original sin, what original righteousness, or what the grace of baptism was. But we have already contended^{F564} that original sin is the depravity and corruption of our nature, which first renders us liable to God's wrath, then also gives rise to what Scripture calls "works of the flesh" [^{<480519>}Galatians 5:19]. We must therefore carefully note these two points.

As we are vitiated and corrupted in all parts of our nature, we are held rightly condemned on account of such corruption alone and convicted before God, to whom nothing is acceptable but righteousness, innocence, and purity. Even infants bear their condemnation with them from their mother's womb; for, though they have not yet brought forth the fruits of their own iniquity, they have the seed enclosed within themselves. Indeed, their whole nature is a seed of sin; thus it cannot but be hateful and abominable to God. Through baptism, believers are assured that this condemnation has been removed and withdrawn from them, since (as was said^{F565}) the Lord promises us by this sign that full and complete remission has been made, both of the guilt that should have been imputed to us, and of the punishment that we ought to have undergone because of the guilt. They also lay hold on righteousness, but such righteousness as

the people of God can obtain in this life, that is, by imputation only, since the Lord of his own mercy considers them righteous and innocent.

11. WE MUST STRIVE TO OVERCOME PERSISTENT SIN

The other point is that this perversity never ceases in us, but continually bears new fruits-what we have previously described as “works of the flesh,” [^{<480519>}Galatians 5:19]^{F566}—just as a glowing furnace continually emits flame and sparks, or a spring ceaselessly gives forth water. For lust never actually dies and is extinguished in men until, freed by death from the body of death, they are completely divested of themselves. Baptism indeed promises to us the drowning of our Pharaoh [^{<020428>}Exodus 4:28] and the mortification of our sin, but not so that it no longer exists or gives us trouble, but only that it may not overcome us. For so long as we live cooped up in this prison of our body,^{F567} traces of sin will dwell in us; but if we faithfully hold fast to the promise given us by God in baptism, they shall not dominate or rule.

But let no one deceive himself, let no one cajole himself in his sinfulness, when he hears that sin always dwells in us. When we speak thus it is not that those who otherwise are all too prone to sin should slumber untroubled in their sins, but only that those who are disturbed and pricked by their own flesh should not faint and be discouraged. Let them rather think that they are still on the way, and believe that they have made good progress when they feel that a bit is being taken away from their lust each day, until they reach their destination, that is, the final death of their flesh, which shall be accomplished in the close of this mortal life. Meanwhile, let them not cease to struggle manfully, to have courage for the onward way, and to spur on to full victory. For the fact that, after long striving, they see no little difficulty still remaining ought to sharpen their efforts all the more. This we must believe: we are baptized into the mortification of our flesh, which begins with our baptism and which we pursue day by day and which will, moreover, be accomplished when we pass from this life to the Lord.

12. PAUL'S INNER STRUGGLE [ROMANS CH. 7]

there we are saying the same thing that the apostle Paul very clearly explains in the seventh chapter of Romans.^{F568} After he had discussed freely given righteousness, then, since some impious persons were inferring from it that we should live as we pleased because we were not accepted by God through the merit of works [^{<450601>}Romans 6:1, 15], he adds that all those who don Christ's righteousness are at the same time regenerated by the Spirit, and that we have a pledge of this regeneration in baptism [^{<450603>}Romans 6:3 ff.]. Hence he exhorts believers not to let sin have lordship over their members [^{<450612>}Romans 6:12]. He knew that there is always some weakness in believers. Consequently, to prevent their being discouraged by it, he adds the consolation that they are not under the law from. 6:14]. On the other hand, because it might seem that Christians could conceivably grow insolent because they were not under the yoke of the law, he discusses the nature of this abrogation [^{<450701>}Romans 7:1-6], and at the same time what the use of the law is [^{<450707>}Romans 7:7-13], a question now twice postponed [^{<450212>}Romans 2:12-24].^{F569} The essential point is that we have been freed from the rigor of the law that we may cleave to Christ. But the function of the law is that, convicted of our depravity, we may confess our weakness and misery. Now, because that depravity of nature does not so readily appear in secular man (who indulges his own desires without fear of God), Paul takes his example from a regenerated man, that is, himself. He therefore says that he has a perpetual conflict^{F570} with the vestiges of his flesh, and that he is held bound in miserable bondage, so that he cannot consecrate himself wholly to obedience to the divine law from. 7:18-23]. Hence, he is compelled to exclaim with groaning: "Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body subject to death?" from. 7:24 p.]. But if God's children are held captive in prison as long as they live, they must be very anxious over the thought of their own peril, unless this fear is overcome. Paul has accordingly attached a consolation for this purpose: "There is...no more condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" [^{<450801>}Romans 8:1]. There he teaches that those whom the Lord has once received into grace, engrafts into the communion of his Christ, and adopts into the society of the church through baptism — so long as they persevere in faith in Christ (even though they are besieged by sin and still

carry sin about in themselves) — are absolved of guilt and condemnation. If this is the simple and genuine interpretation of Paul, there is no reason why we should seem to be teaching something strange.

13. BAPTISM AS TOKEN OF CONFESSION

But baptism serves as our confession before men. Indeed, it is the mark by which we publicly profess that we wish to be reckoned God's people;^{F571} by which we testify that we agree in worshipping the same God, in one religion with all Christians; by which finally we openly affirm our faith. Thus not only do our hearts breathe the praise of God, but our tongues also and all members of our body resound his praise in every way they can. For thus, as is fitting, all our faculties are employed to serve God's glory, which ought to lack nothing, and by our example others are aroused to the same efforts. Paul had this in mind when he asked the Corinthians whether they had not been baptized in Christ's name [^{<460113>}1 Corinthians 1:13]. He thus implied that, in being baptized in his name, they had devoted themselves to him, sworn allegiance to his name, and pledged their faith to him before men. As a result, they could no longer confess any other but Christ alone, unless they chose to renounce the confession they had made in baptism.

(Baptism to be received with trust in the promise of which it is a sign, and not repeated, 14-18)

14. SIGN AND THING

Now that we have explained our Lord's purpose in ordaining baptism, it will be easy for us to judge how we should use and receive it. For inasmuch as it is given for the arousing, nourishing, and confirming of our faith, it is to be received as from the hand of the Author himself. We ought to deem it certain and proved that it is he who speaks to us through the sign; that it is he who purifies and washes away sins, and wipes out the remembrance of them; that it is he who makes us sharers in his death, who deprives Satan of his rule, who weakens the power of our lust; indeed, that it is he who comes into a unity with us so that, having put on Christ, we may be acknowledged God's children. These things, I say, he performs for our soul within as truly and surely as we see our body outwardly

cleansed, submerged, and surrounded with water. For this analogy or similitude is the surest rule of the sacraments: that we should see spiritual things in physical, as if set before our very eyes. For the Lord was pleased to represent them by such figures — not because such graces are bound and enclosed in the sacrament so as to be conferred upon us by its power, but only because the Lord by this token attests his will toward us, namely, that he is pleased to lavish all these things upon us. And he does not feed our eyes with a mere appearance only, but leads us to the present reality and effectively performs what it symbolizes.^{F572}

15. BAPTISM AS CONFIRMING FAITH

Let us take as proof of this, Cornelius the centurion, who, having already received forgiveness of sins and the visible graces of the Holy Spirit, was nevertheless baptized [^{<441048>} Acts 10:48]. He did not seek an ampler forgiveness of sins through baptism, but a surer exercise of faith — indeed, increase of assurance from a pledge. Perhaps someone will object: why, then, did Ananias tell Paul to wash away his sins through baptism [^{<442216>} Acts 22:16; cf. ch. 9:17-18] if sins are not washed away by the power of baptism itself? I reply: we are said to receive, obtain, and acquire what, according as our faith is aware, is shown forth to us by the Lord, whether when he first testifies to it, or when he confirms more fully and more surely what has been attested, Ananias meant only this: “To be assured, Paul, that your sins are forgiven, be baptized. For the Lord promises forgiveness of sins in baptism; receive it, and be secure.”

Yet it is not my intention to weaken the force of baptism by not joining reality and truth to the sign, in so far as God works through outward means, abut from this sacrament, as from all others, we obtain only as much as we receive in faith. If we lack faith, this will be evidence of our ungratefulness, which renders us chargeable before God, because we have not believed the promise given there.

But as far as it is a symbol of our confession, we ought by it to testify that our confidence is in God’s mercy, and our purity in forgiveness of sins, which has been procured for us through Jesus Christ; and that we enter God’s church in order to live harmoniously with all believers in complete agreement of faith and love. This last point was what Paul meant

when he said, “We have all been baptized in one Spirit that we may be one body” [^{<461213>} 1 Corinthians 12:13p.].

16. BAPTISM DOES NOT DEPEND UPON THE MERIT OF HIM WHO ADMINISTERS IT

Now, suppose what we have determined is true — that a sacrament must not be judged by the hand of the one by whom it is ministered, but as if it were from the very hand of God, from whom it doubtless has come.^{F573} From this we may then infer that nothing is added to it or taken from it by the worth of him by whose hand it is administered. Among men, if a letter is sent, provided the handwriting and seal are sufficiently recognized, it makes no difference who or of what sort the carrier is. In like manner, it ought to be enough for us to recognize the hand and seal of our Lord in his sacraments, whatever carrier may bring them.

This argument neatly refutes the error of the Donatists, who measured the force and value of the sacrament by the worth of the minister. Such today are our Catabaptists, who deny that we have been duly baptized because we were baptized by impious and idolatrous men under the papal government.^{F574} They therefore passionately urge rebaptism.

We shall be armed against their follies with a strong enough argument if we think of ourselves as initiated by baptism not into the name of any man, but into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19]; and that baptism is accordingly not of man but of God, no matter who administers it. Ignorant or even contemptuous as those who baptized us were of God and all piety, they did not baptize us into the fellowship of either their ignorance or sacrilege, but into faith in Jesus Christ, because it was not their own name but God’s that they invoked, and they baptized us into no other name. But if it was the baptism of God, it surely had, enclosed in itself, the promise of forgiveness of sins, mortification of the flesh, spiritual vivification, and participation in Christ. Thus it was no hindrance to the Jews to be circumcised by impure and apostate priests; nor was the sign therefore void so that it had to be repeated, but it was a sufficient means by which to return to the real source.

Their objection that baptism ought to be celebrated in the assemblies of the godly does not have the effect of extinguishing the whole force of what is only partially faulty. For when we teach what ought to be done in order that baptism may be pure and free of all defilement, we do not abolish God's ordinance, however idolaters may corrupt it. For when in ancient times circumcision was corrupted by many superstitions, it did not cease nevertheless to be regarded as a symbol of grace. And when Josiah and Hezekiah called out of all Israel those who had forsaken God [2 Kings, chs. 22; 23; 18], they did not summon them to a second circumcision.

17. BAPTISM NOT INVALIDATED BY THE DELAY OF REPENTANCE

Now our opponents ask us what faith came to us during some years after our baptism. This they do to prove our baptism void, since it is not sanctified to us except when the word of promise is accepted in faith. To this question we reply that we indeed, being blind and unbelieving, for a long time did not grasp the promise that had been given us in baptism; yet that promise, since it was of God, ever remained fixed and firm and trustworthy. Even if all men are liars and faithless, still God does not cease to be trustworthy [^{<450303>}Romans 3:3]. Even if all men are lost, still Christ remains salvation. We therefore confess that for that time baptism benefited us not at all, inasmuch as the promise offered us in it — without which baptism is nothing — lay neglected. Now when, by God's grace, we begin to repent, we accuse our blindness and hardness of heart — we who were for so long ungrateful toward his great goodness. But we believe that the promise itself did not vanish. Rather, we consider that God through baptism promises us forgiveness of sins, and he will doubtless fulfill his promise for all believers. This promise was offered to us in baptism; therefore, let us embrace it by faith. Indeed, on account of our unfaithfulness it lay long buried from us; now, therefore, let us receive it through faith.

For this reason, when the Lord invites the Jewish people to repentance, he enjoins no second circumcision upon those who (as we have said^{F575}) were circumcised by an impious and sacrilegious hand and lived for a time entangled in the same impiety; but he urges only conversion of heart. However the covenant might be violated by them, the symbol of the

covenant remained ever firm and inviolable by virtue of the Lord's institution. Therefore, on the sole condition of repentance they were restored into the covenant which God had once made with them in circumcision; and which, moreover, they had received at the hand of a covenant-breaking priest, and then done their utmost to defile and render ineffectual.

18. PAUL DID NOT REBAPTIZE

But they fancy they are hurling a fiery dart at us when they assert that Paul rebaptized those who had once been baptized with John's baptism [^{<441902>} Acts 19:2-7]. For suppose, by our confession, John's baptism and that which is now ours are one and the same. Then, as those persons who had previously been wrongly instructed, after they were taught the right faith, were rebaptized into it, that baptism which was without true doctrine must be counted as nothing, and we ought to be baptized all over again into the true religion which we have now tasted for the first time.

Some think it was some misguided disciple^{F576} of John's, who by previous baptism had initiated them into vain superstition. They base their conjecture about this matter on the fact that the persons baptized confessed their complete ignorance of the Holy Spirit, while John would never have sent out disciples so untaught. But it is also unlikely that Jews, even though they had not been baptized at all, would be destitute of all knowledge of the Spirit, who is celebrated in so many passages of Scripture. Their answer, that they do not know whether there is a Holy Spirit, is to be understood as if they said that they had not yet heard whether the graces of the Spirit, of which they were being asked by Paul, were given to Christ's disciples, I admit, for my part, that it was the true baptism of John, and one and the same as the baptism of Christ, but I deny that they were rebaptized.^{F577} What, then, do the words, "They were baptized in the name of Jesus," mean? Some interpret it to mean that they were only instructed with genuine doctrine by Paul,^{F578} but I prefer to understand it more simply, that it is the baptism of the Holy Spirit, that is, the visible graces of the Spirit given through the laying on of hands. It is nothing new to signify these graces by the word "baptism." As on the Day of Pentecost, the apostles are said to have recalled the words of the Lord about the baptism of fire and of the Spirit [^{<440105>} Acts 1:5]. And

Peter mentions that the same thing came to his memory when he had seen those graces poured out upon Cornelius, his household, and kindred [^{<441116>} Acts 11:16].

And this is not out of accord with what is afterward added: “When he had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit descended upon them” [^{<441906>} Acts 19:6 p.]. For Luke is not telling two different things, but he is following the form of narration familiar to the Hebrews, who first put forward a summary of the matter and then explain it more fully.^{F579} Anyone can observe this from the context itself. For he says that when they had heard these things, they were baptized in Jesus’ name. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them then, the Holy Spirit descended upon them. This latter expression describes the nature of the baptism.

But if ignorance vitiates a previous baptism so that it must be corrected by a second baptism, the apostles first of all would have had to be rebaptized, who for three whole years after their baptism had scarcely tasted a tiny fragment of purer doctrine. Now among us, what rivers would suffice to repeat as many immersions as the instances of ignorance that are daily corrected in us through the Lord’s mercy?

(Objections to ceremonial accretions and to baptism by women, 19-21)

19. ERRONEOUS AND CORRECT BAPTISMAL USAGE

The force, worth, usefulness, and purpose of the mystery, unless I am mistaken, ought now to be sufficiently clear. As far as the outward symbol is concerned, would that Christ’s genuine institution had prevailed, to the degree of its fitness to restrain the boldness of men! For, as though to be baptized with water according to Christ’s precept were a contemptible thing, a benediction, or rather incantation, was devised to defile the true consecration of water. Afterward, a candle was added, with the chrism. But exsufflation seemed to open the gate to baptism.^{F580} Though I am aware how ancient the origin of this alien hodgepodge is, I still have the right, together with all pious men, to reject whatever men have dared to add to Christ’s institution. But when Satan saw how by the stupid credulity of the world his impostures were received without difficulty almost at the very beginning of the gospel, he broke into grosser mockeries. Hence, spittle and such trumpery were openly brought in with

unbridled license to the dishonor of baptism.^{F581} By these experiences let us learn that there is nothing holier or better or safer than to be content with the authority of Christ alone.

How much better it would be to omit from baptism all theatrical pomp, which dazzles the eyes of the simple and deadens their minds; whenever anyone is to be baptized, to present him to the assembly of believers and, with the whole church looking on as witness and praying over him, offer him to God; to recite the confession of faith with which the catechumen should be instructed; to recount the promises to be had in baptism; to baptize the catechumen in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit [^{<402819>}Matthew 28:19]; lastly, to dismiss him with prayers and thanksgiving. If this were done, nothing essential would be omitted; and that one ceremony, which came from God, its author, not buried in outlandish pollution's, would shine in its full brightness.^{F582}

But whether the person being baptized should be wholly immersed, and whether thrice or once, whether he should only be sprinkled with poured water — these details are of no importance, but ought to be optional to churches according to the diversity of countries. Yet the word “baptize” means to immerse, and it is clear that the rite of immersion was observed in the ancient church.^{F583}

20. AGAINST “EMERGENCY” BAPTISM

It is also pertinent here to know that it is wrong for private individuals to assume the administration of baptism; for this as well as the serving of the Supper is a function of the ecclesiastical ministry. For Christ did not command women, or men of every sort, to baptize, but gave this command to those whom he had appointed apostles. And when he ordered his disciples to do in the ministering of the Supper [^{<402819>}Matthew 28:19] what they had seen him do — while he was performing the function of a lawful steward [^{<422219>}Luke 22:19] — he doubtless willed that they should follow his example in it.

For many ages past and almost from the beginning of the church, it was a custom for laymen to baptize those in danger of death if a minister was not present at the time.^{F584} I do not see, however, how this can be defended with sound reasoning. Not even the ancient writers themselves,

who either followed this practice or condoned it, were certain whether it was right to do it. Now Augustine displays this doubt when he says: “Even if a layman compelled by necessity should give baptism, I do not know whether anyone might piously say that it should be repeated. For if no necessity compels it to be done, it is a usurping of another’s office; but if necessity urges it, it is either no sin at all or a venial one.”^{F585}

^{F586}Concerning women, it was decreed without exception in the Council of Carthage that they should not presume to baptize at all.^{F587}

Yet (you say) there is danger lest he who is ill, if he die without baptism, be deprived of the grace of regeneration. Not at all. God declares that he adopts our babies as his own before they are born, when he promises that he will be our God and the God of our descendants after us [^{<011707>}Genesis 17:7]. Their salvation is embraced in this word. No one will dare be so insolent toward God as to deny that his promise of itself suffices for its effect.

Few realize how much injury the dogma that baptism is necessary for salvation,^{F588} badly expounded, has entailed. As a consequence, they are less cautious. For, where the opinion has prevailed that all are lost who have not happened to be baptized with water, our condition is worse than that of God’s ancient people—as if the grace of God were now more restricted than under the law! For men will think that Christ has come not to fulfill the promises but to abolish them [cf. ^{<400517>}Matthew 5:17], seeing that the promise (which was then effective enough of itself to confer salvation before the eighth day) [^{<011707>}Genesis 17:7; cf. 5:12] now would not be valid without the aid of a sign.

21. WOMEN NOT PERMITTED TO BAPTIZE

“The practice before Augustine was born is first of all inferred from Tertullian, who held that a woman was not allowed to speak in the church, and also not to teach, to baptize, or to offer. This was that she might not claim for herself the function of any man, much less that of a priest.”^{F589} Epiphanius also is a trustworthy witness of this matter when he upbraids Marcion for having given women permission to baptize.

And I am well aware of the answer of those who think otherwise: that there is a great difference between common usage and an extraordinary

remedy required by dire necessity. But since Epiphanius declares that it is a mockery to give women the right to baptize and makes no exception, it is clear enough that he condemns this corrupt practice as inexcusable under any pretext. Also in the third book, where he teaches that permission was not even given to the holy mother of Christ, he adds no reservation.^{F590}

22. ZIPPORAH'S CIRCUMCISION OF HER SON NO PRECEDENT FOR BAPTISM BY WOMEN

The example of Zipporah is inappropriately cited by our opponents [^{<020425>} Exodus 4:25].^{F591} For, from the fact that the angel of God was appeased after she took up a stone and circumcised her son, they wrongly infer that her act was approved by God. Otherwise, one would have to say that God was pleased with the worship which had been raised up by the nations transported from Assyria [^{<121732>} 2 Kings 17:32-33].

But other valid reasons prove that it was stupid to be led to imitate what the foolish woman did. If I were to say that this was something unusual which ought not to be taken as an example, and (particularly since we nowhere read that an express command to circumcise was given to priests) that the case of circumcision is different from that of baptism — this should be sufficient refutation. For Christ's words are plain: "Go, teach all nations, and baptize" [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19]. Seeing that he ordained the same men as heralds of the gospel and ministers of baptism, and no one in the church (as the apostle testifies) takes that honor upon himself except one who has been called as Aaron [^{<580504>} Hebrews 5:4] — whoever baptizes without a lawful call usurps another's office [cf. ^{<600415>} 1 Peter 4:15].

Even in the smallest things, as in food and drink, whatever we undertake with a doubtful conscience, Paul openly pronounces to be sin [^{<451423>} Romans 14:23]. Therefore, in baptism by women there is much graver sin where it is plain that a rule given by Christ is violated, inasmuch as we know that it is unlawful to put asunder what God has joined together [^{<401906>} Matthew 19:6; ^{<411009>} Mark 10:9].^{F592}

But I pass over all of this. I should like my readers to note that nothing was farther from Zipporah's purpose than to perform some service to God. Seeing her son in danger, she complained and murmured, and anally

cast his foreskin on the ground, and so reviled her husband that he also at the same time became angry against God. In short, it is plain that this whole matter arose from her impetuosity, because she clamored against God and her husband that she was compelled to shed her son's blood. Besides, even if she had behaved herself well in everything else, it is inexcusable temerity that she circumcised her son in the presence of her husband — not any private individual, but Moses, the chief prophet of God, than whom no greater ever arose in Israel. This was no more permitted to her than for women today to baptize in the presence of a bishop.

But this principle will easily and immediately settle the controversy: infants are not barred from the Kingdom of Heaven just because they happen to depart the present life before they have been immersed in water. Yet *we* have already seen^{F593} that serious injustice is done to God's covenant if we do not assent to it, as if it were weak of itself, since its effect depends neither upon baptism nor upon any additions. Afterward, a sort of seal is added to the sacrament, not to confer efficacy upon God's promise as if it were invalid of itself, but only to confirm it to us. From this it follows that the children of believers are baptized not in order that they who were previously strangers to the church may then for the first time become children of God, but rather that, because by the blessing of the promise they already belonged to the body of Christ, they are received into the church with this solemn sign.^{F594}

Accordingly, if, when the sign is omitted, this is neither from sloth nor contempt nor negligence, we are safe from all danger. It is, therefore, much more holy to revere God's ordinance, namely, that we should seek the sacraments from those only to whom the Lord has committed them. When we cannot receive them from the church, the grace of God is not so bound to them but that we may obtain it by faith from the Word of the Lord.

CHAPTER 16

INFANT BAPTISM BEST ACCORDS WITH CHRIST'S INSTITUTION AND THE NATURE OF THE SIGN

*(Infant baptism, considered in relation to what it typifies,
corresponds to circumcision and is authorized in the covenant
with Abraham, 1-6)*

I. THE ATTACK ON INFANT BAPTISMS

But since in this age certain frantic spirits have grievously disturbed the church over infant baptism, and do not cease their agitation, I cannot refrain from adding an appendix^{F595} here to restrain their mad ravings. If this may perhaps seem too long to any man, let him, I pray, ponder with himself that, in such an important matter, we ought so to esteem purity of doctrine as well as the peace of the church that we must not fastidiously take exception to anything conducive to the achievement of both. Besides, I shall try to organize this discourse so that it will serve to explain the mystery of baptism more clearly. They attack infant baptism with an argument seemingly quite plausible, by boasting that it is not founded upon any institution of God, but has been introduced only through men's presumption and depraved curiosity, and at last received into use rashly and with stupid complacency.^{F596} For a sacrament, unless it rests upon the sure foundation of God's Word, hangs by a thread. But when the matter is rightly weighed, what if it shall be evident that such an injurious charge is falsely and unjustly brought against the Lord's holy ordinance? Let us therefore investigate its origin. If it appears to have been contrived by the mere rashness of men, let us bid it farewell and measure the true observance of baptism by God's will alone. But if it be proved by no means lacking his sure authority, we must beware lest, in abolishing God's holy ordinances, we also become insolent toward their Author himself.

2. THE MEANING OF BAPTISM DETERMINED

First, it is a doctrine well enough known and confessed among all godly men that a right consideration of signs does not rest solely in external ceremonies, but depends chiefly upon the promise and the spiritual mysteries, which the Lord ordains the ceremonies themselves to represent. Therefore, let him who would fully learn the value of baptism, its object, and indeed its entire nature, not fix his thought upon the element and the physical appearance, but rather raise it to God's promises which are there offered to us, and to the inner mysteries which are represented in it. He who grasps these things has attained the solid truth of baptism, and, so to speak, its entire substance. And from this he will also be taught the reason and use of outward sprinkling. On the other hand, he who contemptuously disregards these things and has his attention fixed and bound wholly to the visible ceremony will understand neither the force nor the character of baptism and not even the meaning of the water or its use. This statement is proved by so many and such clear testimonies of Scripture that it is not necessary to pursue it further for the present. It therefore now remains for us, from the promises given in baptism, to inquire what its force and nature are. Scripture declares that baptism first points to the cleansing of our sins, which we obtain from Christ's blood; then to the mortification of our flesh, which rests upon participation in his death and through which believers are reborn into newness of life and into the fellowship of Christ. All that is taught in the Scriptures concerning baptism can be referred to this summary, except that baptism is also a symbol^{F597} for bearing witness to our religion before men.

3. BAPTISM AND CIRCUMCISION

But since before baptism was instituted God's people had circumcision^{F598} instead, let us examine how these two signs differ from each other, and in what respects they are alike. From this will appear the anagogic relationship^{F599} of the one to the other. When the Lord commands Abraham to observe *circumcision*, he previously states that he will be God to him and his descendants [^{<011707>}Genesis 17:7, 10], adding that he possesses the abundance and sufficiency of all things [^{<011701>}Genesis 17:1, 6, 8]. This lie does in order that Abraham may regard His hand as the source of every good. The promise of eternal life is contained in these words as

Christ interprets them, drawing an argument from them for the immortality and resurrection of believers. For Christ says, “He is not the God of the dead but of the living [^{<422038>} Luke 20:38; ^{<402232>} Matthew 22:32]. Paul also, therefore, when he shows to the Ephesians out of what destruction the Lord has delivered them, from the fact that they had not been admitted into the covenant of circumcision infers that they were without Christ, without God, without hope, strangers to the testaments of promise [^{<490212>} Ephesians 2:12] — all of which the covenant itself contained. But the first access to God, the first entry into immortal life, is the forgiveness of sins. Accordingly, this corresponds to the promise of baptism that we shall be cleansed. Afterward, the Lord covenants with Abraham that he should walk before him in uprightness and innocence of heart [^{<011701>} Genesis 17:1]. This applies to mortification, or regeneration. And lest anyone be in doubt, Moses more clearly explains elsewhere, when exhorting the Israelite people to circumcise the foreskin of their heart for the Lord [^{<051016>} Deuteronomy 10:16], that circumcision is the sign of mortification; on this account Israel has been chosen as the people of God out of all the nations of the earth [^{<051015>} Deuteronomy 10:15]. As God, when he adopts the posterity of Abraham as his people, commands them to be *circumcised*, so Moses declares that they ought to be circumcised in heart, explaining the true meaning of this carnal circumcision [^{<053006>} Deuteronomy 30:6]. Again, that no man should strive after it by his own strength, Moses teaches that it is a work of God’s grace. All these things are so often reiterated by the prophets that there is no need to heap up here the many texts, as they occur repeatedly [^{<240404>} Jeremiah 4:4; ^{<261630>} Ezekiel 16:30]. We have, therefore, a spiritual promise given to the patriarchs in circumcision such as is given us in baptism, since it represented for them forgiveness of sins and mortification of flesh. Moreover, as we have taught that Christ is the foundation of baptism, in whom both of these reside, so it is also evident that he is the foundation of circumcision. For he is promised to Abraham, and in him the blessing of all nations [^{<011202>} Genesis 12:2-3]. To seal this grace, the sign of circumcision is added.

4. THE DIFFERENCE IS IN EXTERNALS ONLY

Now we can see without difficulty the similarity and difference of these two signs. The promise (in which we have shown the power of the signs to consist) is the same in both, namely, that of God's fatherly favor, of forgiveness of sins, and of eternal life. Then the thing represented is the same, namely, regeneration. In both there is one foundation upon which the fulfillment of these things rests. Therefore, there is no difference in the inner mystery, by which the whole force and character of the sacraments are to be weighed. What dissimilarity remains lies in the outward ceremony, which is a very slight factor, since the most weighty part depends upon the promise and the thing signified. We therefore conclude that, apart from the difference in the visible ceremony, whatever belongs to circumcision pertains likewise to baptism. To this anagogic relationship and comparison we are guided by the rule of the apostle, which bids us examine all Scriptural interpretation according to the proportion of faith [^{<451203>}Romans 12:3, 6].^{F600} And the thing is so true we can almost touch it. For circumcision was for the Jews their first entry into the church, because it was a token^{F601} to them by which they were assured of adoption as the people and household of God, and they in turn professed to enlist in God's service. In like manner, we also are consecrated to God through baptism, to be reckoned as his people, and in turn we swear fealty to him. By this it appears incontrovertible that baptism has taken the place of circumcision to fulfill the same office among us.

5. INFANTS ARE PARTICIPANTS IN THE COVENANT

Now, if we choose to investigate whether it is right to administer baptism to infants, shall we not say that a man is talking nonsense or indeed raving who would halt with the mere element of water and outward observance, but cannot bear to turn his mind to the spiritual mystery? If any account of this is made, it will be evident that baptism is properly administered to infants as something owed to them. For in early times the Lord did not deign to have them circumcised without making them participants in all those things which were then signified by circumcision [cf. ^{<011712>}Genesis 17:12]. Otherwise, he would have mocked his people with mere trickery if he had nursed them on meaningless symbols, which is a dreadful thing even to hear of. For he expressly declares that the circumcision of a tiny

infant will be in lieu of a seal to certify the promise of the covenant. But if the covenant still remains firm and steadfast, it applies no less today to the children of Christians than under the Old Testament it pertained to the infants of the Jews. Yet if they are participants in the thing signified, why shall they be debarred from the sign? If they grasp the truth, why shall they be driven away from the figure? Notwithstanding, the outward sign so cleaves to the word in the sacrament that it cannot be separated from it; yet if the sign is considered separately from the word, which, I ask you, shall we esteem more? Obviously, since we see that the sign serves the word, we shall say that it is under the word, and shall relegate it to a lower place. Therefore, since the word “baptism” is applied to infants, why shall the sign, which is an appendix of the word, be denied to them? This one reason, if no others were at hand, would be quite enough to refute all those who would speak in opposition. The objection that there was a stated day for circumcision^{F602} is sheer evasion. We admit that we are not now bound to certain days like the Jews; but since the Lord, without fixing the day, yet declares that he is pleased to receive infants into his covenant with a solemn rite, what more do we require?

6. DIFFERENCE IN THE MODE OF CONFIRMATION ONLY

Yet Scripture opens to us a still surer knowledge of the truth. Indeed, it is most evident that the covenant which the Lord once made with Abraham [cf. ^{<011714>}Genesis 17:14] is no less in force today for Christians than it was of old for the Jewish people, and that this word relates no less to Christians than it then related to the Jews. Unless perhaps we think that Christ by his coming lessened or curtailed the grace of the Father-but this is nothing but execrable blasphemy! Accordingly, the children of the Jews also, because they had been made heirs of his covenant and distinguished from the children of the impious, were called a holy seed [^{<150902>}Ezra 9:2; ^{<230601>}Isaiah 6:18]. For this same reason, the children of Christians are considered holy; and even though born with only one believing parent, by the apostle’s testimony they differ from the unclean seed of idolators [^{<010714>}1 Corinthians 7:14]. Now seeing that the Lord, immediately after making the covenant with Abraham, commanded it to be sealed in infants by an outward sacrament [^{<011712>}Genesis 17:12], what excuse will Christians give for not testifying and sealing it in their children today?

And let no one object against me that the Lord did not command that his covenant be confirmed by any other symbol than circumcision, which has long since been abolished. There is a ready answer that for the time of the Old Testament he instituted circumcision to confirm his covenant, but that after circumcision was abolished, the same reason for confirming his covenant (which we have in common with the Jews) still holds good. Consequently, we must always diligently consider what is common to both, and what they have apart from us. The covenant is common, and the reason for confirming it is common. Only the manner of confirmation is different — what was circumcision for them was replaced for us by baptism. Otherwise, if the testimony by which the Jews were assured of the salvation of their posterity is taken away from us, Christ's coming would have the effect of making God's grace more obscure and less attested for us than it had previously been for the Jews. Now, this cannot be said without grievously slandering Christ, through whom the Father's infinite goodness was more clearly and liberally poured out upon the earth and declared to men than ever before. And if so, we must admit that at least it should not be concealed with more malign intent, nor revealed with weaker testimony than under the dim shadows of the law.

(Christ invited and blessed little children: we should not exclude them from the sign, and the benefit, of baptism, 7-9)

7. JESUS AND THE CHILDREN

For this reason, the Lord Jesus, wishing to give an example by which the world would understand that he came to enlarge rather than to limit the Father's mercy, tenderly embraces the infants offered to him, chiding his disciples for trying to deny them access to him, because they were leading away from him those to whom the Kingdom of Heaven belonged [^{<401913>}Matthew 19:13-15]. But (someone will say) what does baptism have in common with Christ's embracing the children? For it is not related that he baptized them, but that he took them, embraced them, and blessed them. Accordingly, they assert, if we would follow his example, let us help infants with prayers, but not baptize them.^{F603} Let us, however, weigh Christ's acts a little more carefully than such men do. For we must not lightly pass over the fact that Christ commands that the infants be presented to him, adding the reason, "for of such is the Kingdom of

Heaven” [^{<401914>} Matthew 19:14]. And thereupon he attests his will by his act when, embracing them, he commends them with his prayer and blessing to his Father. If it is right for infants to be brought to Christ, why not also to be received into baptism, the symbol of our communion and fellowship with Christ? If the Kingdom of Heaven belongs to them, why is the sign denied which, so to speak, opens to them a door into the church, that, adopted into it, they may be enrolled among the heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven? How unjust of us to drive away those whom Christ calls to himself! To deprive those whom he adorns with gifts! To shut out those whom he willingly receives! But if we wish to make an issue of the great difference between baptism and this act of Christ, how much more precious shall we regard baptism, by which we attest that infants are contained within God’s covenant, than the receiving, embracing, laying on of hands, and prayer, by which Christ himself present declares both that they are his and are sanctified by him? In the other niggling arguments by which they try to discredit this passage, they only betray their own ignorance. For they argue from this saying of Christ, “Let the little ones come unto me,” that these were already somewhat grown and now fit to come. But the Evangelists call them “babes and children”^{F604} [^{<421815>} Luke 18:15; cf. ^{<401914>} Matthew 19:14; ^{<411013>} Mark 10:13]; by these words the Greeks mean infants at the breast. Therefore, the word “to come” is used simply in the sense of “to have access.”^{F605} See what webs of deceit those who have hardened themselves against the truth are compelled to weave! And there is not anything sounder in their boasting that the Kingdom of Heaven has not been given to infants but to those resembling them, since Christ says “of such,” not “of themselves.”^{F606} For if that notion is accepted, what reason will Christ have for meaning to show that infants are not strangers to him because of age? When he commands that infants be allowed to come to him, nothing is clearer than that true infancy is meant. Lest this seem absurd, he adds, “For of such is the Kingdom of Heaven” [^{<401914>} Matthew 19:14]. If infants must be included in it, it will be perfectly clear that by the expression “of such” the infants themselves and those like them are designated.

8. THE SILENCE OF SCRIPTURE ON THE PRACTICE OF INFANT BAPTISM

Now, everyone may see that infant baptism was by no means fashioned by man, resting as it does on such firm approbation of Scripture. Nor is their silly objection plausible that there is no evidence of a single infant's ever being baptized by the hands of the apostles! For even if this is not expressly related by the Evangelists, still, because infants are not excluded when mention is made of a family's being baptized, who in his senses can reason from this that they were not baptized? If such arguments were valid, women should similarly be barred from the Lord's Supper, since we do not read that they were admitted to it in the apostolic age [^{<441615>} Acts 16:15, 32]; but here we are content with the rule of faith. For when we weigh what the institution of the Supper implies, it is also easy to judge from this to whom the use of it ought to be granted. We observe this also in baptism. Indeed, when we pay attention to the purpose for which it was instituted, we clearly see that it is just as appropriate to infants as to older persons. For this reason, infants cannot be deprived of it without open violation of the will of God, its author. The opponents of infant baptism spread among the simple folk the notion that many years passed after Christ's resurrection during which infant baptism was unknown.^{F607} In this they are most shamefully untruthful. For indeed, there is no writer, however ancient, who does not regard its origin in the apostolic age as a certainty.^{F608}

9. THE BLESSING OF INFANT BAPTISM

It remains for us to indicate briefly what sort of benefit comes from this observance, both to the believers who present their children to be baptized, and to the infants themselves^{F609} who are baptized with the sacred water — lest anyone despise it as useless and unprofitable. Yet, if it enters anyone's mind to jest at infant baptism on this pretext, he is mocking the command of circumcision given by the Lord. For what will they bring forward to impugn infant baptism that may not be turned back against circumcision? Thus the Lord punishes the arrogance of those who at once condemn what they cannot comprehend with their carnal sense. But God provides us with other weapons to beat down their stupidity. For this holy institution of his, by which we feel our faith singularly

comforted,^{F610} does not deserve to be called superfluous. For God's sign, communicated to a child as by an impressed seal, confirms the promise given to the pious parent, and declares it to be ratified that the Lord will be God not only to him but to his seed; and that he wills to manifest his goodness and grace not only to him but to his descendants even to the thousandth generation [^{<022006>}Exodus 20:6].^{F611} God's boundless generosity, ill showing itself there, first gives men ample occasion to proclaim his glory, then floods godly hearts with uncommon happiness, which quickens men to a deeper love of their kind Father, as they see his concern on their behalf for their posterity.

If anyone should object that the promise ought to be enough to confirm the salvation of our children, I disregard this argument. For God views this otherwise; as he perceives our weakness, so he has willed to deal tenderly with us in this matter. Accordingly, let those who embrace the promise that God's mercy is to be extended to their children deem it their duty to offer them to the church to be sealed by the symbol of mercy, and thereby to arouse themselves to a surer confidence, because they see with their very eyes the covenant of the Lord engraved upon the bodies of their children. On the other hand, the children receive some benefit from their baptism: being engrafted into the body of the church, they are somewhat more commended to the other members. Then, when they have grown up, they are greatly spurred to an earnest zeal for worshiping God, by whom they were received as children through a solemn symbol of adoption before they were old enough to recognize him as Father. Finally, we ought to be greatly afraid of that threat, that God will wreak vengeance upon any man who disdains to mark his child with the symbol of the covenant; for by such contempt the proffered grace is refused, and, as it were, foresworn [^{<011714>}Genesis 17:14].

(Answer to the Anabaptist argument that baptism is not to be associated with circumcision, 10-16)

10. DIFFERENCES FALSELY ALLEGED

Now let us examine the arguments by which certain mad beasts ceaselessly assail this holy institution of God. First of all, since they feel that they are immoderately cramped and constrained by the likeness between baptism

and circumcision, they strive to set these two signs apart by a wide difference so that there may seem to be nothing in common between them. For they say that these two signify different things, that the covenant in each is quite different, and the calling of children under each not the same. But when they set out to prove this first point, they pretend that circumcision was a figure of mortification, not of baptism. This we most willingly concede to them, for it supports us very well. The only proof of our opinion we are using is that baptism and circumcision are signs of mortification. From this we gather that baptism is put in place of circumcision in order to represent to us what circumcision signified to the Jews of old.^{F612} In asserting a difference between the covenants, with what barbarous boldness do they dissipate and corrupt Scripture! And not in one passage only — but so as to leave nothing safe or untouched! For they depict the Jews to us as so carnal that they are more like beasts than men. A covenant with them would not go beyond the temporal life, and the promises given them would rest in present and physical benefits.^{F613} If this doctrine should obtain, what would remain save that the Jewish nation was satiated for a time with God's benefits (as men fatten a herd of swine in a sty), only to perish in eternal destruction? For when we mention circumcision and the promises attached to it, they at once reply that circumcision was a literal sign and its promises were carnal.

11. THE PROMISES WERE SPIRITUAL

Clearly, if circumcision was a literal sign, we must estimate baptism to be the same. For the apostle, in the second chapter of Colossians, makes neither more spiritual than the other. For he says that we were circumcised in Christ not by a circumcision made with hands, when we laid aside the body of sin which dwelt in our flesh. This he calls the “circumcision of Christ” [^{<510211>} Colossians 2:11]. Afterward, to explain this statement, he adds that in baptism we were “buried with Christ” [^{<510212>} Colossians 2:12]. What do these words mean, except that the fulfillment and truth of baptism are also the truth and fulfillment of circumcision, since they signify one and the same thing? For he is striving to demonstrate that baptism is for the Christians what circumcision previously was for the Jews. Since we have already clearly explained that the promises of both signs and the mysteries they represent agree, we shall not for the present

tarry longer over this. I shall only admonish believers that, though I do not speak, they should ponder among themselves whether they ought to think a sign merely earthly and literal when it represents nothing but what is spiritual and heavenly. But that they may not sell their smoke^{F614} to the simple-minded, we shall refute one objection with which they cover this utterly shameless lie. It is quite certain that the primary promises, which contained that covenant ratified with the Israelites by God under the Old Testament, were spiritual and referred to eternal life; then, conversely, that they were received by the fathers spiritually (as was fitting) in order that they might gain therefrom assurance of the life to come, to which they aspired with their whole heart. But meanwhile we do not deny that he attested his good will to them by earthly and physical benefits, by which we say that the hope of the promises of spiritual things was also confirmed. For example, when God promised eternal blessedness to his servant Abraham, in order to lay a clear indication of his favor before his eyes, he added another promise concerning the possession of the Land of Canaan [^{<011501>}Genesis 15:1, 18]. In this way we ought to understand all the earthly promises given to the Jewish nation: that the spiritual promise, as the head to which they refer, should always hold the first place. And since I have treated these matters at some length in the difference between the New and Old Testaments,^{F615} I now touch them more lightly.

12. PHYSICAL AND SPIRITUAL INFANCY

In the use of the term “children” they find this difference: those who had their origin from his seed were called the children of Abraham under the Old Testament; now, those who imitate his faith are called by this name. They therefore say that that physical infancy which was engrafted into the fellowship of the covenant through *circumcision* foreshadowed the spiritual infants of the New Testament, who were regenerated to immortal life by God’s Word.^{F616} In these words, indeed, we see a feeble spark of truth. But those fickle spirits gravely sin in seizing upon whatever first comes to hand where they ought to proceed further, and in stubbornly clinging to one word where they ought to compare many things together. From this it can only happen that they are repeatedly deceived, for they do not apply themselves to a sound knowledge of anything. Indeed, we admit that the carnal seed of Abraham for a time held the place of the

spiritual seed which is engrafted in him through faith. For we are called his children, although we have no blood relationship with him by nature [^{<480428>}Galatians 4:28; cf. ^{<450412>}Romans 4:12]. But if, as they plainly indicate, they mean that God's spiritual blessing was never promised to Abraham's physical offspring, they are gravely mistaken in this. We should, accordingly, aim at a better target, to which we are directed by the very sure guidance of Scripture. Therefore, the Lord promises Abraham that he will have offspring in whom all the nations of the earth will be blessed [^{<011203>}Genesis 12:3], and at the same time assures him that He will be his God and the God of his descendants [^{<011707>}Genesis 17:7]. All those who by faith receive Christ as author of the blessing are heirs of this promise, and are therefore called children of Abraham.

13. ABRAHAM WAS FATHER OF ALL WHO BELIEVE

After Christ's resurrection, the boundaries of God's Kingdom began to extend far and wide among all nations generally, in order that according to Christ's saying, believers might be gathered together from everywhere to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in heavenly glory [^{<400811>}Matthew 8:11]. Yet many centuries previously he had embraced the Jews with the same great mercy. And because, passing by all others, he chose this one nation in which to confine his grace for a time, he called it his own [^{<021905>}Exodus 19:5] and his purchased [^{<021516>}Exodus 15:16] people.

Circumcision was given to attest this beneficence in order to teach the Jews by its symbol that God is the Author of their salvation. By a knowledge of this their minds were raised to the hope of eternal life. For what would be lacking to one whom God had, once for all, received into safekeeping? Therefore, to prove that the Gentiles as well as the Jews were children of Abraham, the apostle speaks in this way: Abraham, he says, was in uncircumcision justified by faith. Afterward, he received the sign of circumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith, that he might be the father of all believers, both of uncircumcision and of circumcision, not of those who boast of circumcision alone, but of those who follow the faith which, in uncircumcision, our father Abraham had [^{<450410>}Romans 4:10-12]. Do we not see that both kinds are made equal in honor? For, during the time set by God's decree, Abraham was father of the

circumcision. After the wall was broken down (as the apostle elsewhere writes [^{<490214>} Ephesians 2:14]) which separated Gentiles from Jews, the Gentiles too were given access to God's Kingdom, and Abraham became their father — and that apart from the sign of circumcision, for they have baptism in place of it. But in order to crush the haughtiness of some who, neglecting all concern for piety, preened themselves on ceremonies alone, Paul expressly denies that Abraham is the father only of those who are of the circumcision [^{<450412>} Romans 4:12]. In like manner today, one can refute the vanity of those who in baptism look for nothing but water.

14. COVENANT WITH THE JEWS NOT MADE VOID

But they will bring forward in opposition another passage of the apostle [^{<450907>} Romans 9:7], where he teaches that those who are of the flesh are not children of Abraham, but that only those who are children of the promise are counted among his offspring. This seems to hint that physical descent from Abraham, to which we give some place, is nothing.

But we must mark more carefully the case which the apostle is discussing there. For, intending to show the Jews how God's goodness was not bound to the offspring of Abraham, indeed that of itself such descent conferred nothing, Paul cites, by way of proof, Ishmael and Esau [^{<450906>} Romans 9:6-13], who were rejected just as if they were strangers; even though they were real offspring of Abraham according to the flesh, the blessing rests upon Isaac and Jacob. From this follows what he afterward affirms, that salvation depends upon God's mercy, which he extends to whom he pleases [^{<450915>} Romans 9:15-16]; but that there is no reason for the Jews to preen themselves and boast in the name of the covenant unless they keep the law of the covenant, that is, obey the Word.

Nevertheless, when Paul cast them down from vain confidence in their kindred, he still saw, on the other hand, that the covenant which God had made once for all with the descendants of Abraham could in no way be made void. Consequently, in the eleventh chapter he argues that Abraham's physical progeny must not be deprived of their dignity. By the virtue of this, he teaches, the Jews are the first and natural heirs of the gospel, except to the extent that by their ungratefulness they were forsaken as unworthy — yet forsaken in such a way that the heavenly

blessing had not departed utterly from their nation. For this reason, despite their stubbornness and covenant-breaking, Paul still calls them holy [^{<451116>} Romans 11:16] (such great honor does he give to the holy generation whom God had held worthy of his sacred covenant); but he calls us (if we are compared with them), as it were, posthumous or even abortive children of Abraham — and that by adoption, not by nature — as if a sapling broken from its tree were grafted upon the trunk of another [^{<451117>} Romans 11:17]. Therefore, that they might not be defrauded of their privilege, the gospel had to be announced to them first. For they are, so to speak, like the first-born in God's household. Accordingly, this honor was to be given them until they refused what was offered, and by their ungratefulness caused it to be transferred to the Gentiles. Yet, despite the great obstinacy with which they continue to wage war against the gospel, we must not despise them, while we consider that, for the sake of the promise, God's blessing still rests among them. For the apostle indeed testifies that it will never be completely taken away: "For the gifts and the calling of God are without repentance" from. 11:29, Vg.].

15. THE PROMISE TO BE FULFILLED NOT ALLEGORICALLY BUT LITERALLY

See what is the value of the promise given to Abraham's descendants, and in what scale it is to be weighed. In distinguishing the heirs of the Kingdom from the illegitimate and foreigners, we have no doubt that God's election alone rules as of free right. Nevertheless, we see that it pleased him especially to embrace Abraham's offspring by his mercy, and, in order to attest that mercy more clearly, to seal it by circumcision. Now the condition of the Christian church is exactly the same. For, as Paul argues in that passage that the Jews are sanctified by their parents, so he teaches elsewhere that the children of Christians receive the same sanctification from their parents [^{<460714>} 1 Corinthians 7:14]. From this he concludes that those who, on the contrary, are found guilty of uncleanness [^{<460715>} 1 Corinthians 7:15] are deservedly separated from the rest.

Now, who can doubt that our opponents' conclusion is utterly false: that those infants who of old were circumcised merely prefigured that spiritual infancy which arises from the regeneration of God's Word? The apostle writes that "Christ" is "a minister of the circumcision, to fulfill the

promises which had been given to the fathers” from. 15:8 p.]. Speaking thus, he does not philosophize as subtly as if he had spoken in this fashion: “Inasmuch as the covenant made with Abraham applies to his descendants, Christ, to perform and discharge the pledge made once for all by his Father, came for the salvation of the Jewish nation.” Do you see how, after Christ’s resurrection also, he thinks that the promise of the covenant is to be fulfilled, not only allegorically but literally, for Abraham’s physical offspring? To the same point applies Peter’s announcement to the Jews [^{<440239>} Acts 2:39] that the benefit of the gospel belongs to them and their offspring by right of the covenant; and in the following chapter he calls them “sons of the covenant” [^{<440325>} Acts 3:25], that is, heirs. Not very different from this is the other passage of the apostle cited above, where he understands and interprets *circumcision* imprinted upon infants as a testimony of that communion which they have with Christ [^{<490211>} Ephesians 2:11-13].^{F617}

But if we listen to their trifles, what will become of that promise by which the Lord in the Second Commandment of his law pledges to his servants that he will be merciful to their offspring even to the thousandth generation [^{<022006>} Exodus 20:6]?^{F618} Shall we here take refuge in allegories? That would be too frivolous an evasion! Shall we say that it is abolished? But thus the law would be destroyed, which Christ came rather to establish [Matthew 5: 17], in so far as it benefits our life. Let us accept as incontrovertible that God is so good and generous to his own as to be pleased, for their sake, also to count among his people the children whom they have begotten.

16. FURTHER APPARENT DIFFERENCES BETWEEN BAPTISM AND CIRCUMCISION

Moreover, the differences that they try to thrust between baptism and circumcision are not only ridiculous and devoid of all semblance of reason but mutually contradictory. For, when they have declared that baptism applies to the first day of the spiritual combat, but circumcision to the eighth, after mortification is finished,^{F619} immediately forgetting this, they change their tune and call circumcision a figure of mortification of the flesh; but baptism they call burial, to which none are to be delivered unless already dead. Would the ravings of the insane ever leap about so nimbly?

For according to the first statement, baptism ought to precede circumcision; by the second, it is put after circumcision. Yet this is no new example of the way men's wits flit up and down when they worship as God's most certain Word whatever they have dreamed up.

We therefore say that the foregoing difference is a mere dream. If they wanted to allegorize^{F620} upon the eighth day, it was still not fitting to do so in this way. According to the old writers, it would be more fitting to refer the number eight to the resurrection (which took place on the eighth day), upon which we know that newness of life depends; or to the whole course of the present life, during which mortification ought always to proceed until, when life is finished, it also is accomplished.^{F621} Yet, in deferring circumcision until the eighth day, God may have intended to provide for tender infancy, since the wound would have been too dangerous for children newborn and still red from their mother.^{F622}

How much more vigorous is the statement that we, previously dead, are buried through baptism, although Scripture eloquently protests that we are buried into death on this condition — that we die, and thereupon practice this mortification [^{<450604>} Romans 6:4]?

A similar sleight-of-hand is their cavil that, if baptism must be conformed to circumcision, women ought not to be baptized.^{F623} For if it is quite certain that the sanctification of the Israelite offspring was attested by the sign of circumcision, there is no doubt that it was intended that from it men and women equally be sanctified. Only the bodies of the males were imprinted with it, which could be imprinted by nature, yet in such a way that the women might be through them, so to speak, companions and partners of circumcision. Therefore, setting aside these absurdities of theirs, let us cling to the resemblance between baptism and circumcision, which we see most completely in accord with respect to the inner mystery, the promises, the use, and the efficacy.

(Answer to the argument that infants are incapable of faith, 17-20)

17. CHILDREN SHOULD ALSO HAVE LIFE IN CHRIST

They think that they are putting forward a very strong reason why children are to be barred from baptism when they claim that children

because of their age are not yet able to understand the mystery signified in it, namely, spiritual regeneration, which cannot take place in earliest infancy. Our opponents therefore conclude that children are to be considered solely as children of Adam until they reach an appropriate age for the second birth.^{F624} But God's truth everywhere opposes all these arguments. For if it is admitted that they are among the children of Adam, they are left in death, since in Adam we can but die [^{<450512>}Romans 5:12 ff.]. On the contrary, Christ commands that they be brought to him [^{<401914>}Matthew 19:14]. Why is this? Because he is life. Therefore, to quicken them he makes them partakers in himself, while these fellows sentence them to banishment and death.

For if they hesitate in this, saying that infants do not perish though they are counted as children of Adam, their error is quite sufficiently refuted by the testimony of Scripture. For, since Scripture declares that in Adam all die, it follows that no hope of life remains except in Christ [^{<461522>}1 Corinthians 15:22]. Therefore, to become heirs of life, we must have communion with him. Again, since it is written in another passage that we are all by nature subject to God's wrath [^{<490203>}Ephesians 2:3], and conceived in sin [^{<195105>}Psalms 51:5], which always involves condemnation, we must depart from our nature before God's Kingdom can be opened to us. And what can be said more clearly than that flesh and blood cannot possess the Kingdom of God [^{<461550>}1 Corinthians 15:50, cf. Vg.]? Therefore, let all that is ours be destroyed (which will not be accomplished apart from regeneration); then we shall inherit the Kingdom. In short, if Christ speaks truly when he declares that he is life [^{<431125>}John 11:25; 14:6], we must be engrafted into him in order to be freed from bondage to death.

But how (they ask) are infants, unendowed with knowledge of good or evil, regenerated?^{F625} We reply that God's work, though beyond our understanding, is still not annulled. Now it is perfectly clear that those infants who are to be saved (as some are surely saved from that early age) are previously regenerated by the Lord. For if they bear with them an inborn corruption from their mother's womb, they must be cleansed of it before they can be admitted into God's Kingdom, for nothing polluted or defiled may enter there [^{<662127>}Revelation 21:27]. If they are born sinners, as both David and Paul affirm [^{<490203>}Ephesians 2:3; ^{<195105>}Psalms 51:5],

either they remain unpleasing and hateful to God, or they must be justified. And what further do we seek, when the Judge himself plainly declares that entry into heavenly life opens only to men who are born anew [^{<430303>} John 3:3]?

And to silence such gainsayers, God provided a proof in John the Baptist, whom he sanctified in his mother's womb [^{<420115>} Luke 1:15] — something he could do in others. And they do not gain anything here by this mocking evasion — that it was only once, and that from this one instance it does not immediately follow that the Lord usually deals thus with infants. But we are not arguing in this way either. Our purpose is solely to show that they unjustly and wickedly shut God's power within these narrow limits to which it does not permit itself to be confined. Their other quibble has no more weight. They claim that, in accordance with the usual mode of expression of Scripture, the phrase "from the womb" is merely the equivalent of saying "from childhood." But we can clearly see that the angel, when he declared this to Zechariah, meant something else, namely, that John would, while yet unborn, be filled with the Holy Spirit. Let us not attempt, then, to impose a law upon God to keep him from sanctifying whom he pleases, just as he sanctified this child, inasmuch as his power is not lessened.

18. ARGUMENT FROM THE INFANCY OF CHRIST

Truly, Christ was sanctified from earliest infancy in order that he might sanctify in himself his elect from every age without distinction. For, to wipe out the guilt of the disobedience which had been committed in our flesh, he took that very flesh that in it, for our sake, and in our stead, he might achieve perfect obedience. Thus, he was conceived of the Holy Spirit in order that, in the flesh taken, fully imbued with the holiness of the Spirit, he might impart that holiness to us. If we have in Christ the most perfect example of all the graces which God bestows upon his children, in this respect also he will be for us a proof that the age of infancy is not utterly averse to sanctification.

Howsoever this may be, we consider it incontrovertible that no one of the elect is called from the present life before being sanctified and regenerated by the Spirit of God. They counter with the objection that the Spirit in

Scripture recognizes no regeneration except from incorruptible seed, that is, from God's Word [^{<600123>} 1 Peter 1:23].^{F626} In this they wrongly interpret Peter's statement, which has reference only to believers who had been taught by the preaching of the gospel. We indeed admit that to such persons the Word of the Lord is the only seed of spiritual regeneration; but we deny the inference from this that infants cannot be regenerated by God's power, which is as easy and ready to him as it is incomprehensible and wonderful to us. Besides, it would be an unsafe argument that would take from the Lord the power to make himself known to them in any way he pleases.

19. OBJECTION: INFANTS CANNOT UNDERSTAND PREACHING

But faith, they say, comes by hearing [^{<451017>} Romans 10:17], the use of which infants have not yet acquired; nor can they be capable of knowing God, for, as Moses teaches, they are without the knowledge both of good and of evil [^{<050139>} Deuteronomy 1:39].^{F627} But these men do not perceive that when the apostle makes hearing the beginning of faith he is describing only the ordinary arrangement and dispensation of the Lord which he commonly uses in calling his people—not, indeed, prescribing for him an unvarying rule so that he may use no other way. He has certainly used such another way in calling many, giving them true knowledge of himself by inward means, that is, by the illumination of the Spirit apart from the medium of preaching. But since they think that it would be quite absurd for any knowledge of God to be attributed to infants, to whom Moses denies the knowledge of good and evil, let them only tell me, I ask, what the danger is if infants be said to receive now some part of that grace which in a little while they shall enjoy to the full? For if fullness of life consists in the perfect knowledge of God, when some of them, whom death snatches away in their very first infancy, pass over into eternal life, they are surely received to the contemplation of God in his very presence. Therefore, if it please him, why may the Lord not shine with a tiny spark at the present time on those whom he will illumine in the future with the full splendor of his light — especially if he has not removed their ignorance before taking them from the prison of the flesh? I would not rashly affirm that they are endowed with the same faith as we experience

in ourselves, or have entirely the same knowledge of faith — this I prefer to leave undetermined — but I would somewhat restrain the obtuse arrogance of those who at the top of their lungs confidently deny or assert whatever they please.

20. OBJECTION: INFANTS ARE CAPABLE NEITHER OF REPENTANCE NOR OF FAITH

But, to insist still more stoutly upon this point, they add that baptism is a sacrament of repentance and of faith. Accordingly, since neither of these can come about in tender infancy, we must guard against admitting infants into the fellowship of baptism, lest its meaning be made empty and fleeting.^{F628} But these darts are aimed more at God than at us. For it is very clear from many testimonies of Scripture that circumcision was also a sign of repentance [^{<240404>}Jeremiah 4:4; 9:25; cf. ^{<051016>}Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6]. Then Paul calls it the seal of the righteousness of faith from. 4:11]. Therefore, let a reason be required of God himself why he commanded it to be impressed on the bodies of infants. For since baptism and circumcision are in the same case, our opponents cannot give anything to one without conceding it to the other. If they have recourse to their usual way out, that the age of infancy then symbolized spiritual infants, their path is already blocked. We therefore say that, since God communicated circumcision to infants as a sacrament of repentance and of faith, it does not seem absurd if they are now made participants in baptism — unless men choose to rage openly at God's institution. But as in all God's acts, so in this very act also there shines enough wisdom and righteousness to repel the detractions of the impious. For although infants, at the very moment they were circumcised, did not comprehend with their understanding what that sign meant, they were truly circumcised to the mortification of their corrupt and defiled nature, a mortification that they would afterward practice in mature years. To sum up, this objection can be solved without difficulty: infants are baptized into future repentance and faith, and even though these have not yet been formed in them, the seed of both lies hidden within them by the secret working of the Spirit.

With this answer everything gleaned from the meaning of baptism that they twist against us is once for all overthrown. Such is the label with which Paul marks it when he calls it the washing of regeneration and of

renewal [^{<560305>}Titus 3:5]. From this they reason that it is to be conferred only on persons capable of experiencing these things.^{F629} But we are free to counter this by saying: neither was circumcision, which designated regeneration, to be conferred upon any but the regenerate. And thus a thing instituted by God will be condemned by us. Accordingly (as we have already suggested at various times), all the arguments that tend to shake circumcision are without force in assailing baptism.

And they do not escape by saying that what rests upon God's sure authority is established and fixed, even though there is no reason for it, but that such reverence is not due either infant baptism or other like things that are not commended to us by God's express word;^{F630} when once they are caught and held in this dilemma, they are held forever. God's command concerning circumcision of infants was either lawful and not to be trifled with, or it was deserving of censure. If there was in it nothing incongruous or absurd, neither can anything absurd be found in the observance of infant baptism.

(Operation of the Spirit in baptized children, 21-22)

21. THE CHILD GROWS INTO AN UNDERSTANDING OF HIS BAPTISM

The stigma of absurdity which they are trying to brand upon this topic we thus remove:^{F631} if those whom the Lord has deigned to elect received the sign of regeneration but depart from the present life before they grow up, he renews them by the power, incomprehensible to us, of his Spirit, in whatever way he alone foresees will be expedient. If they happen to grow to an age at which they can be taught the truth of baptism, they shall be fired with greater zeal for renewal, from learning that they were given the token of it in their first infancy in order that they might meditate upon it throughout life.

The teaching of Paul in two passages, that we are buried with Christ through baptism [^{<450604>}Romans 6:4; ^{<510212>}Colossians 2:12], one should understand in the same sense. For Paul does not mean by this that he who is to be initiated into baptism must previously be buried with Christ; rather, he simply declares the doctrine that underlies baptism — and declares it to those already baptized. Hence, not even madmen will

contend from this passage that burial precedes baptism. In this way Moses [^{<051016>}Deuteronomy 10:16] and the prophets [^{<240404>}Jeremiah 4:4] reminded the people of what was meant by circumcision, with which, however, they had been marked as infants.

To the same effect, Paul writes to the Galatians that when they were baptized they put on Christ [^{<480327>}Galatians 3:27]. With what intent? That they should thereafter live to Christ, for they had not lived to him before. And although in older persons the receiving of the sign ought to follow the understanding of the mystery, we shall soon explain that infants must be regarded as following another order.

We ought to interpret similarly the passage of Peter, in which they think they have strong support, where he says that it is not a washing to cleanse away the filth of the body, but the testimony of a good conscience before God, through Christ's resurrection [^{<600321>}1 Peter 3:21]. Indeed, they argue from this that nothing remains for infant baptism but empty smoke, that is, something from which this truth is far removed.^{F632} But they repeatedly go wrong through their deluded notion that the thing ought always to precede the sign in order of time. For the truth of circumcision too rested upon the same testimony of a good conscience. But if it ought of necessity to have preceded, infants would never have been circumcised by God's command. Still, in showing that the testimony of a good conscience underlies the truth of circumcision, yet at the same time commanding the infants to be circumcised, he clearly indicates that circumcision is conferred, in this case, for the time to come. Accordingly, in infant baptism nothing more of present effectiveness must be required than to confirm and ratify the covenant made with them by the Lord. The remaining significance of this sacrament will afterward follow at such time as God himself foresees.

22. THIS THING IS A COMFORT FOR CHILDREN; HENCE, THEY MUST NOT BE DEPRIVED OF THE SIGN

No one now, I think, fails to see clearly that all arguments of this type are sheer inversions of Scripture. We shall pursue cursorily the remaining ones like them. They object that baptism is given for forgiveness of sins.^{F633} When this is conceded, it abundantly supports our view. For since we are

born sinners, we need forgiveness and pardon even from the time in our mother's womb. Now, since God does not cut off from childhood the hope of mercy, but rather makes it sure, why should we take away the sign, much inferior to the thing itself? Consequently, we hurl back upon them what they try to cast against us: infants receive forgiveness of sins; therefore, they must not be deprived of the sign.

At the same time, they adduce the statement from the letter to the Ephesians that the church has been cleansed by the Lord with the washing of water in the word of life [^{<490516>}Ephesians 5:16]. Nothing better calculated to overturn their own error could be cited! For it offers us an easy proof. If Christ intends the washing with which he cleanses his church to be attested by baptism, it does not seem fair that he should not have his testimony in the little ones, who are rightly considered a part of the church, since they have been called heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven [^{<401914>}Matthew 19:14]. For Paul embraces the church universal when he speaks of it as cleansed with the washing of water.

From his statement elsewhere that we have been engrafted into the body of Christ through baptism [^{<461213>}1 Corinthians 12:13], we in the same way conclude that infants, whom he counts as his members, must be baptized, that they may not be sundered from his body.

Oh, the great violence and the many siege engines with which they assault the fortress of our faith!

(Infant baptism in the beginning of the church, 23-24)

23. SCRIPTURAL STATEMENTS WHICH REFER TO ADULTS SHOULD NOT WITHOUT FURTHER EVIDENCE BE APPLIED TO CHILDREN

Now they come to the practice and custom of the apostolic age, where they find that no one was admitted to baptism who had not previously professed his faith and repentance. For when those who had a mind to repent asked Peter what they should do, he advised them first to repent, then to be baptized for the forgiveness of sins [^{<440237>}Acts 2:37-38]. Similarly, Philip, when the eunuch asked to be baptized, answered that he could be, provided he believed with all his heart [^{<440837>}Acts 8:37]. ^{F634}

From this they seem able to make their point that baptism, unless preceded by faith and repentance, is unlawfully granted to anyone. But if we concede this reasoning, the first passage, where no mention is made of faith, will prove that repentance alone is enough; the second, where repentance is not required, will prove that faith alone suffices. They will answer, I believe, that one passage helps the other, and that both must therefore be connected. I also say in turn that, with these, other passages must be compared, which have some value for the solution of this difficulty. There are many statements in Scripture the meaning of which depends upon their context.^{F635} The present one offers an example: for those to whom these things were spoken by Peter and Philip were of fit age to think of repentance and to understand faith. We firmly deny that such ought to be baptized unless their conversion and faith have been observed, at least, so far as men can judge. But it is perfectly clear that infants ought to be put in another category, for in ancient times if anyone joined himself in religious fellowship with Israel, he had to be taught the Lord's covenant and instructed in the law before he could be marked with circumcision, because he was of foreign nationality,^{F636} that is, alien to the people of Israel, with whom the covenant, which circumcision sanctioned, had been made.

24. ABRAHAM AND ISAAC EXEMPLIFY THE DIFFERENCE OF ADULTS AND INFANTS

The Lord also, when he adopts Abraham, does not begin with circumcision, meanwhile concealing what he means by that sign, but first declares what the covenant is that he intends to make with him [^{<011501>}Genesis 15:1]; then after Abraham has faith in the promise, the Lord makes him partaker in the sacrament [^{<011711>}Genesis 17:11]. Why, in Abraham's case, does the sacrament follow faith, but in Isaac, his son, precede all understanding? Because it is fair that he who as a grown man is received into the fellowship of the covenant to which he had been till then a stranger should learn its conditions beforehand; but it is not the same with his infant son. The latter by hereditary right, according to the form of the promise, is already included within the covenant from his mother's womb. Or (to put the matter more clearly and briefly), if the children of believers are partakers in the covenant without the help of understanding,

there is no reason why they should be barred from the sign merely because they cannot swear to the provisions of the covenant. Surely this is why God sometimes affirms that children who arise from the Israelites have been begotten and born to him [^{<261620>}Ezekiel 16:20; 23:37]. For without doubt he counts as his children the children of those to whose seed he promised to be a father [cf. ^{<011707>}Genesis 17:7]. But he who is an unbeliever, sprung from impious parents, is reckoned as alien to the fellowship of the covenant until he is joined to God through faith. No wonder, then, if he does not partake in the sign when what is signified would be fallacious and empty in him! Paul also writes to this effect: that the Gentiles, so long as they were immersed in their idolatry, were outside the covenant [^{<490212>}Ephesians 2:12]. The whole matter, unless I am mistaken, can be clearly disclosed in this brief statement. Those who embrace faith in Christ as grown men, since they were previously strangers to the covenant, are not to be given the badge of baptism unless they first have faith and repentance, which alone can give access to the society of the covenant. But those infants who derive their origin from Christians, as they have been born directly into the inheritance of the covenant, and are expected by God, are thus to be received into baptism.^{F637} To this ought to be referred the Evangelist's statement that those who confessed their sins were baptized by John [^{<400306>}Matthew 3:6]. We think that this example ought to be observed today. For if a Turk should offer himself for baptism, we could not easily baptize him unless he gave a confession satisfactory to the church.

*(Certain passages adduced against infant baptism interpreted:
those who die unbaptized not all condemned, 25-30)*

25. REBORN “OF WATER AND THE SPIRIT”

Moreover, they bring forward the words of Christ recounted in the third chapter of John, by which they think that a present regeneration is required in baptism: “Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God” [^{<430305>}John 3:5]. See (they say) how by the Lord's lips baptism is called regeneration. Since infants are well known to be quite incapable of regeneration, what is our excuse for admitting them to baptism which cannot stand without it?^{F638}

First, they are deceived in thinking that because they hear the word “water,” baptism is mentioned in this passage. For after having explained the corruption of nature to Nicodemus and taught him that men must be reborn, because Nicodemus was dreaming of physical rebirth, Christ indicates here the way in which God regenerates us, namely, through water and the Spirit. It is as if he said: through the Spirit, who in cleansing and watering faithful souls performs the function of water. I therefore simply understand “water and Spirit” as “Spirit, who is water.” And this is no new expression, for it agrees completely with what is in the third chapter of Matthew: “He who follows me, is he who baptizes in the Holy Spirit and in fire” [^{<400311>} Matthew 3:11; ^{<420316>} Luke 3:16; cf. ^{<430126>} John 1:26, 33]. Therefore, just as to baptize by the Holy Spirit and by fire is to confer the Holy Spirit, who in regeneration has the function and nature of fire, so to be reborn of water and the Spirit is but to receive that power of the Spirit, which does in the soul what water does in the body. I know that others interpret it differently,^{F639} but I do not doubt that this is the real meaning, because Christ’s purpose is only to teach that all who aspire to the Kingdom of Heaven must put off their own nature.

Although, if we chose to cavil as unpleasantly as they do, it would be easy for us (when we have conceded what they wish) to throw back at them that baptism is prior to faith and repentance, since in Christ’s words it precedes the Spirit. It is certain that this is meant concerning spiritual gifts. If these follow baptism, I have made my point. But all cavils aside, we must hold to the simple interpretation which I have put forward: no one, until he has been renewed with living water, which is the Spirit, can enter into the Kingdom of God.

26. NOT ALL THE UNBAPTIZED ARE LOST

Now, consequently, we must utterly reject the fiction of those who consign all the unbaptized to eternal death.^{F640} Let us then fancy that, according to their assumption, baptism is administered to adults only. What will they say will become of a child who is duly and properly instructed in the rudiments of piety, and, when the day of baptism is at hand, happens to be snatched away by sudden death, contrary to the expectation of all? The promise of the Lord is clear: “Whosoever believes in the Son will not see death, nor come into judgment, but has passed from

death into life” [^{<430524>} John 5:24]. Nowhere do we find that he has ever condemned anyone as yet unbaptized. I do not want anyone on this account to think of me as meaning that baptism can be despised with impunity (by which contempt I declare the Lord’s covenant will be violated — so far am I from tolerating it!); it merely suffices to prove that baptism is not so necessary that one from whom the capacity to obtain it has been taken away should straightway be counted as lost. Yet if we assent to their fiction, we shall condemn without exception all those who are by any chance prevented from baptism, though they may otherwise be endowed with a faith so great as to possess Christ himself. Moreover, to eternal death they condemn all infants to whom they deny baptism, since by their own admission it is necessary for salvation. Now let them see how beautifully their opinion agrees with Christ’s words, by which the Kingdom of Heaven is awarded to that age group [^{<401914>} Matthew 19:14]. But, though we grant them everything that bears upon the understanding of this passage, they will still gain nothing from it, unless they first overturn the doctrine we have already established concerning the regeneration of infants.^{F641}

27. JESUS’ BAPTISMAL WORDS

But our adversaries boast that they have the strongest bastion of all in the very institution of baptism, which they derive from the final chapter of Matthew, where Christ, in sending the apostles to all nations, first gives a command to teach them, then a second one to baptize them [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19]. Then, to it they also join this from the last chapter of Mark: “He who believes and is baptized will be saved” [^{<411616>} Mark 16:16]. What further (they say) do we seek, when the words of the Lord ring clear that we must teach before we baptize, and assign to baptism the second place after faith? The Lord Jesus has also provided in himself an example of this order, as he chose not to be baptized until his thirtieth year [^{<400313>} Matthew 3:13; ^{<420321>} Luke 3:21-22].^{F642}

Good God! In how many ways do they entangle themselves here, and betray their ignorance! For it is more than a child’s mistake to derive the first institution of baptism from those instances, which from the beginning of his preaching Christ had commanded his disciples to administer. Therefore, there is no reason for their contention that the law and rule of

baptism are to be derived from these two passages, as if they contained its first institution.

Suppose we bear with this error of theirs, yet just how effective is this argument? Certainly, if we should want to evade it, not a hiding place but a very broad field lies open for escape. They cling so fast to the order of words that when it is said, “Go,...preach...and baptize” [^{<411615>} Mark 16:15], or, “He that believes and is baptized” [^{<411616>} Mark 16:16], they reason that one must preach before baptizing, and believe before one seeks baptism. Why, then, can we not answer them in turn that one must baptize before teaching those things which Christ has commanded us to observe? I refer to the words, “Baptize, teaching them to keep whatever I have commanded you” [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19-20 p.]. We have noted the same thing in that saying of Christ’s which we cited above concerning the regeneration of water and of the Spirit [^{<430305>} John 3:5].^{F643} For if it is understood as they insist, there it will be fitting for baptism to be prior to spiritual regeneration, seeing that it is named in the prior place. For Christ teaches that we must be reborn not “of the Spirit and water,” but “of water and the Spirit.”

28. INFANTS NOT REFERRED TO IN ^{<411616>} MARK 16:16

Now this unassailable reason in which they trust so much seems somewhat shaken. But because truth has sufficient defense in simplicity, I do not wish to slip out by such trivial shifts. Let them therefore have a substantial answer. The chief command here given by Christ is on the preaching of the gospel; he adds to it, as an appendix, the ministry of baptism. Then he speaks concerning baptism only in terms of the subordination of its administration to the office of teaching. For Christ sends the apostles to preach the gospel to all the nations of the earth, that they may by the teaching of salvation gather into his Kingdom from all places men previously lost. But who are they, and of what sort? Of course, mention is made only of those who are capable of receiving instruction. Afterward he adds that such, when they have been instructed, are to be baptized, and adds the promise, “They who believe and are baptized will be saved” [^{<411616>} Mark 16:16]. IS there even one syllable about infants in the whole discourse? What form of reasoning, then, is this with which they assail us? That those of mature age are to be instructed in

order to believe, before they are to be baptized; therefore, it is unlawful to make baptism common to infants as well! No, though they burst themselves, they will show nothing more from this passage than that the gospel must be preached to those who are capable of hearing, before they are baptized. For it deals with these only. Let them from this raise a barrier, if they can, against the baptism of infants!

29. JESUS AS PROTOTYPE OF ADULT BAPTISM

But, to make their deceits evident even to the blind, I shall indicate them by a quite clear comparison. If any man subtly reasons that infants ought to be denied food on the pretext that the apostle allows only those who labor to eat [^{<530310>} 2 Thessalonians 3:10], does not such a man deserve to be spat upon by all? Why so? Because he applies to all men without distinction what had been said of men of a definite kind and definite age. The skill of our opponents in the present case is no greater! For what everyone sees as applying only to grown men, they relate to infants, so as to subject this age group to a rule that had been laid down only for older persons.

As for the example of Christ, it does not in the least support their case.^{F644} He was not baptized before his thirtieth year [^{<420323>} Luke 3:23; ^{<400313>} Matthew 3:13, conflated]; indeed, this is true, but there is a ready reason: he determined by his preaching to lay a solid foundation of baptism, or rather to make firm the foundation laid by John a little while before. Therefore, when he intended by his teaching to establish baptism, in order to procure greater authority for his institution, he sanctified it with his own body, and did so at the most appropriate time, namely, when he began his preaching.^{F645} In short, they will reap nothing else here than that baptism took its origin and beginning from the preaching of the gospel. If it pleases them to set the thirtieth year, why do they not observe this but receive each one for baptism when in their judgment he has advanced far enough? But even Servetus, one of their teachers, although he persistently advocated this age, in his twenty-first year had already begun to boast himself a prophet.^{F646} As though anyone can be trusted who claims for himself the place of a teacher in the church before he is a member of the church itself!

30. BAPTISM AND LORD'S SUPPER

Furthermore, they object that there is no more reason to administer baptism to infants than the Lord's Supper,^{F647} which is not permitted to them. As if Scripture did not mark a wide difference in every respect! This permission was indeed commonly given in the ancient church, as is clear from Cyprian and Augustine, but the custom has deservedly fallen into disuse.^{F648} For if we consider the peculiar character of baptism, surely it is an entrance and a sort of initiation into the church, through which we are numbered among God's people: a sign of our spiritual regeneration, through which we are reborn as children of God. On the other hand, the Supper is given to older persons who, having passed tender infancy, can now take solid food.

This distinction is very clearly shown in Scripture. For with respect to baptism, the Lord there sets no definite age. But he does not similarly hold forth the Supper for all to partake of, but only for those who are capable of discerning the body and blood of the Lord, of examining their own conscience, of proclaiming the Lord's death, and of considering its power. Do we wish anything plainer than the apostle's teaching when he exhorts each man to prove and search himself, then to eat of this bread and drink of this cup [^{<461128>} 1 Corinthians 11:28]? A self-examination ought, therefore, to come first, and it is vain to expect this of infants. Again: "He who eats unworthily eats and drinks condemnation for himself, not discerning the body of the Lord" [^{<461129>} 1 Corinthians 11:29]. If only those who know how to distinguish rightly the holiness of Christ's body are able to participate worthily, why should we offer poison instead of life-giving food to our tender children?^{F649} What is that command of the Lord: "Do this in remembrance of me" [Luke 22: 19; ^{<461125>} 1 Corinthians 11:25]? What is that other command which the apostle derives from it: "As often as you eat this bread, you will proclaim the Lord's death until he comes" [^{<461126>} 1 Corinthians 11:26]? What remembrance of this thing, I ask, shall we require of infants when they have never grasped it? What preaching of the cross of Christ, the force and benefit of which their minds have not yet comprehended? None of these things is prescribed in baptism. Accordingly, there is a very great difference between these two signs, as we have noted in like signs also under the Old Testament. Circumcision, which is known to correspond to our baptism, had been

appointed for infants [^{<011712>}Genesis 17:12]. But the Passover, the place of which has been taken by the Supper, did not admit all guests indiscriminately, but was duly eaten only by those who were old enough to be able to inquire into its meaning [^{<021226>}Exodus 12:26]. If these men had a particle of sound brain left, would they be blind to a thing so clear and obvious?

(Answers to arguments of Servetus, and conclusion, 31-32)

31. SERVETUS' OBJECTIONS

It troubles me to burden my readers with a heap of trifles. Nevertheless, it behooves us to make short work of the specious reasons which Servetus, not the least among the Anabaptists — indeed, the great glory of that tribe — girding himself for conflict, decided to bring forward.

1. He claims that, as the symbols instituted by Christ are perfect, they also require perfect persons, or those capable of perfection.^{F650} But the answer is easy: the perfection of baptism, which extends even to death, is wrongly confined to one point of time. Besides, it is foolish to seek in a man on the first day that perfection to which baptism invites us to advance by continual steps throughout life.^{F651}

2. He objects, that Christ's symbols were instituted for remembrance, in order that everyone should remember that he was buried with Christ. I reply that what he has contrived out of his own head needs no refutation; indeed, what he applies to baptism rightly refers to the Sacred Supper, as Paul's words show: "that each one examine himself" [^{<461128>}1 Corinthians 11:28]; there is nowhere any such thing said of baptism. From this we conclude that those who, because of their youth, are not yet capable of examination may rightly be baptized.

3. He brings up a third objection: that all who do not believe in the Son of God remain in death, and God's wrath remains upon them [^{<430336>}John 3:36]. Therefore, infants, who cannot believe, lie in their own damnation. I reply: Christ does not speak there of the general guilt in which all the posterity of Adam is entangled, but only threatens the despisers of the gospel, who haughtily and stubbornly reject the grace offered them. But this has nothing to do with infants. At the same time, I bring forward a

contrary argument: anyone Christ blesses is freed from the curse of Adam and the wrath of God. Since, therefore, it is known that infants were blessed by him [^{<401915>} Matthew 19:15; ^{<411016>} Mark 10:16], it follows that they were freed from death. Servetus then falsely cites what is nowhere to be read: “Everyone who is born of the Spirit hears the Spirit’s voice” [cf. ^{<430308>} John 3:8]. But even if we grant this to have been written, it will still prove nothing except that believers are formed to obedience according as the Spirit works in them. Yet to apply to all equally what is said of a certain number is unreasonable.

4. His fourth objection is that because what is physical comes first [^{<461546>} 1 Corinthians 15:46], we must await a mature time for baptism, which is spiritual. But though I admit that all the offspring of Adam begotten of flesh bear their condemnation from the very womb itself, I still deny that this prevents God from providing an immediate remedy. For Servetus will not prove that many years were divinely prescribed for the newness of spiritual life to begin. As Paul testifies, although those who are born of believers may by nature be lost, they are holy by supernatural grace [^{<460714>} 1 Corinthians 7:14].

5. Then he puts forth an allegory, that David, ascending into the stronghold of Zion, took neither blind nor lame men with him, but strong soldiers [^{<100508>} 2 Samuel 5:8]. But suppose I counter with the parable in which God invites the blind and lame to the heavenly banquet [^{<421421>} Luke 14:21] — how will Servetus dispose of this difficulty? I also ask whether lame and disabled men had not previously served with David? Nevertheless, it is superfluous to dwell on this reason, which is fashioned out of sheer falsehood, as my readers will discover from the Sacred History.

6. Another allegory follows: that the apostles were fishers of men [^{<400419>} Matthew 4:19], not of babes. I ask in return what Christ meant in saying that in the net of the gospel all kinds of fish are gathered [^{<401347>} Matthew 13:47]. But because I do not want to play with allegories, I reply, that when the task of teaching was enjoined upon the apostles, they were surely not forbidden to baptize infants. Although I should still like to know, when the Evangelist calls them ἀνθρώπους

(which term includes, without exception, the human race) why Servetus should deny that infants are human beings.

7. His seventh objection is that, since spiritual things agree with spiritual [^{<460213>} 1 Corinthians 2:13-14], infants, who are not spiritual, are also not fit for baptism. But first it is very clear how perversely he twists Paul's statement. He is dealing with doctrine: when the Corinthians flattered themselves too much on their vain cleverness, Paul rebuked their stupidity, because they were still to be instructed in the first rudiments of the heavenly doctrine. Who will conclude from this that baptism ought to be denied to infants whom, begotten of flesh, God consecrates to himself by free adoption?

8. He objects that they must be fed spiritual food if they are new men. The answer is easy: by baptism they are admitted into Christ's flock, and the symbol of their adoption suffices them until as adults they are able to bear solid food. Therefore, we should wait for the time of examination, which God expressly requires in the Sacred Supper.

9. Afterward, he objects that Christ calls all his people to the Sacred Supper. Yet it is clear enough that he admits none but those who are already prepared to celebrate the remembrance of his death. From this it follows that infants, whom he vouchsafed to embrace, remain in their distinct and proper rank until they grow up, and yet are not strangers. He objects that it is monstrous for a man, after being born, not to eat. I answer: souls are fed in another way than by the outward eating of the Supper; therefore, to infants Christ is nonetheless food, though they abstain from the symbol. But the case is different in baptism, by which only the door into the church is opened to them.

10. Again Servetus objects: a good steward distributes food to his household at the proper time [^{<402445>} Matthew 24:45]. Even though I willingly admit this, by what rule will he define the time of baptism for us, to prove that infancy is not the right time to give it? Moreover, he adds that command of Christ's to the apostles, that they hasten to the harvest while the fields are becoming white [^{<430435>} John 4:35]. Now, Christ only means that the apostles, seeing the present fruit of their labor, should gird themselves more eagerly for teaching. Who will conclude from this that only the harvest time is ripe for baptism?

11. His eleventh argument is that in the first church Christians and disciples were identical [^{<441126>} Acts 11:26]; but already we have seen him clumsily reasoning from the part to the whole. Those called disciples are men of full age, who had already been taught and had been enrolled under Christ, just as the Jews under the law had to be disciples of Moses. Yet no one will rightly conclude from this that the infants, whom God attested to be of his own household, were strangers.

12. He claims further that all Christians are brothers, but that, to us, children are not of that number so long as we keep them away from the Supper. But I return to that principle that only those who are members of Christ are heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven; then Christ's embrace [^{<401913>} Matthew 19:13-15; ^{<411013>} Mark 10:13-16; ^{<421815>} Luke 18:15-17] was the true token of adoption,^{F652} by which infants are joined in common with adults, and that abstaining from the Supper for a time does not prevent them from belonging to the body of the church. Indeed, the thief converted on the cross [^{<422340>} Luke 23:40-43] did not fail to become a brother of the pious, although he never came to the Supper.

13. He afterward adds that no one can become our brother except through the Spirit of adoption [^{<450815>} Romans 8:15], which is conferred only through the hearing of faith [^{<480302>} Galatians 3:2]. I reply: he always falls back into the same false reasoning,^{F653} for he preposterously applies to infants what was said concerning adults alone. Paul teaches there [^{<451017>} Romans 10:17; ^{<480305>} Galatians 3:5] that this is God's ordinary manner of calling — to draw his elect to faith while he raises up for them faithful teachers, by whose ministry and labor he reaches out his hand. Who would dare, on the basis of this, to impose a law upon him, that he should not engraft infants into Christ by another secret means?

14. He objects that Cornelius, having received the Holy Spirit, was baptized [^{<441044>} Acts 10:44-48]. But he wrongly draws a general rule from one example, as is clear from the eunuch and the Samaritans [^{<440827>} Acts 8:27-38; 8:12], in whom the Lord followed a different order so that baptism should precede the gifts of the Spirit.

15. The fifteenth reason is more than absurd. He says that we become gods by regeneration, but gods are those "to whom the Word of God came" [^{<431034>} John 10:34-35; cf. ^{<198206>} Psalm 82:6], which is not possible

for infant children. It is one of his delusions to imagine deity in believers; but this is not the place to examine it. However, to twist a verse of a psalm [^{<198206>} Psalm 82:6] into such an alien meaning is an act of abandoned shamelessness. Christ says that kings and magistrates are called “gods” by the prophet because they bear an office divinely enjoined upon them. But this skilled interpreter applies to the doctrine of the gospel something directed to certain men concerning a special command of governing, in order that he may banish infants from the church.

16. Again, he objects that infants cannot be considered new men because they are not begotten through the Word. But I now repeat what I have often said already, that the doctrine of the gospel is an incorruptible seed [^{<600123>} 1 Peter 1:23] to regenerate us, if we are indeed fit to receive it; but when we are not old enough to be taught, God keeps his own timetable of regeneration.

17. Afterward, Servetus returns to his allegories, saying that in the law a sheep and a she-goat were not offered in sacrifice immediately at birth. If I wish to apply a figurative interpretation to this, I can readily retort that all the first-born, as they opened the womb, were sacred to God [^{<021302>} Exodus 13:2], and again, that a year-old male lamb had to be sacrificed [^{<021205>} Exodus 12:5]. From this it will follow that we are by no means to wait for the strength of manhood, but rather that the recently born and still tender are chosen for sacrifices by God.

18. He contends, moreover, that only those prepared by John could come to Christ. As if the office of John were not temporary! But to pass over this, surely the children whom Christ embraced and blessed [^{<401913>} Matthew 19:13-15; ^{<411013>} Mark 10:13-16; ^{<421815>} Luke 18:15-17] did not have that preparation. Good-by, then, to him with his false principle!

19. At length he calls upon Trismegistus^{F654} and the sibyls^{F655} to witness that holy washings befit only adults. See how honorably he thinks of the baptism of Christ, which he conforms to the profane rites of the heathen, that it may be administered only at the pleasure of Trismegistus! But we esteem more highly the authority of God, who was pleased to consecrate infants to himself, and to admit them by the holy symbol whose effect they were not yet old enough to understand. And we do not deem it lawful

to borrow from the expiation's of the heathen anything that may change in our baptism the eternal and inviolable law of God which he has established on circumcision.

20. In the final place, he reasons that if infants, without understanding, can be baptized, baptism can be administered by children at play as a farce and a mockery. Let him quarrel with God over this matter, according to whose precept circumcision was common to infants before they attained understanding. Was it therefore something for children to play with and fool over, so that they could overturn God's holy institution? But it is no wonder that those reprobate spirits, as if agitated by a frenzy, drag in the crassest absurdities in defense of their errors. For God justly avenges their pride and obstinacy by such irrationality. I trust I have made plain how weakly Servetus has supported his little Anabaptist brothers.

32. GRATITUDE DUE FOR GOD'S CARE OF OUR CHILDREN

Now I think no sober person will be in doubt how rashly they stir up Christ's church with their altercations and contentions over infant baptism. But it behooves us to note what Satan is attempting with this great subtlety of his. He is trying to take away from us the singular fruit of assurance and spiritual joy which is to be gathered from it, and also to diminish somewhat the glory of the divine goodness. For how sweet is it to godly minds to be assured, not only by word, but by sight, that they obtain so much favor with the Heavenly Father that their offspring are within his care? For here we can see how he takes on toward us the role of a most provident Father, who even after our death maintains his care for us, providing for and looking after our children. Should we not, following David's example, rejoice with all our heart in thanksgiving, that his name may be hallowed by such an example of his goodness [^{<194810>} Psalm 48:10]? It is precisely this which Satan is attempting in assailing infant baptism with such an army: that, once this testimony of God's grace is taken away from us, the promise which, through it, is put before our eyes may eventually vanish little by little. From this would grow up not only an impious ungratefulness toward God's mercy but a certain negligence about instructing our children in piety. For when we consider that immediately from birth God takes and acknowledges them as his children, we feel a strong stimulus to instruct them in an earnest fear of God and

observance of the law. Accordingly, unless we wish spitefully to obscure God's goodness, let us offer our infants to him, for he gives them a place among those of his family and household, that is, the members of the church.

CHAPTER 17

THE SACRED SUPPER OF CHRIST, AND WHAT IT BRINGS TO US^{F656}

(The Lord's Supper, with the signs of bread and wine, provides spiritual food, 1-3)

1. SIGN AND THING

God has received us, once for all, into his family, to hold us not only as servants but as sons. Thereafter, to fulfill the duties of a most excellent Father concerned for his offspring, he undertakes also to nourish us throughout the course of our life.^{F657} And not content with this alone, he has willed, by giving his pledge, to assure us of this continuing liberality. To this end, therefore, he has, through the hand of his only-begotten Son, given to his church another sacrament, that is, a spiritual banquet, wherein Christ attests himself to be the life-giving bread, upon which our souls feed unto true and blessed immortality [^{<430651>} John 6:51].

The knowledge of this high mystery is very necessary, and in view of its very greatness it demands a careful explanation. Furthermore, Satan, to deprive the church of this inestimable treasure, has long since spread clouds, and afterward, to obscure this light, has raised quarrels and conflicts to estrange the minds of simple folk from a taste for this sacred food, and also has tried the same trick in our own day.^{F658} For these reasons, after summarizing the matter in a way intelligible to the unlearned, I shall resolve those difficulties with which Satan has tried to ensnare the world.

First, the signs are bread and wine, which represent for us the invisible food that we receive from the flesh and blood of Christ. For as in baptism, God, regenerating us, engrafts us into the society of his church and makes us his own by adoption, so we have said, that he discharges the function of a provident householder in continually supplying to us the food to

sustain and preserve us in that life into which he has begotten us by his Word.

Now Christ is the only food of our soul, and therefore our Heavenly Father invites us to Christ, that, refreshed by partaking of him,^{F659} we may repeatedly gather strength until we shall have reached heavenly immortality.

Since, however, this mystery of Christ's secret union with the devout is by nature incomprehensible,^{F660} he shows its figure and image in visible signs best adapted to our small capacity. Indeed, by giving guarantees and tokens^{F661} he makes it as certain for us as if we had seen it with our own eyes. For this very familiar comparison penetrates into even the dumbest minds: just as bread and wine sustain physical life, so are souls fed by Christ. We now understand the purpose of this mystical blessing,^{F662} namely, to confirm for us the fact that the Lord's body was once for all so sacrificed for us that we may now feed upon it, and by feeding feel in ourselves the working of that unique sacrifice; and that his blood was once so shed for us in order to be our perpetual drink. And so speak the words of the promise added there: "Take, this is my body which is given for you" [^{<461124>} 1 Corinthians 11:24; cf. ^{<402626>} Matthew 26:26; ^{<411422>} Mark 14:22; ^{<422219>} Luke 22:19]. We are therefore bidden to take and eat the body which was once for all offered for our salvation, in order that when we see ourselves made partakers in it, we may assuredly conclude that the power of his life-giving death will be efficacious in us. Hence, he also calls the cup "the covenant in his blood" [^{<422220>} Luke 22:20; ^{<461125>} 1 Corinthians 11:25]. For he in some measure renews, or rather continues, the covenant which he once for all ratified with his blood (as far as it pertains to the strengthening of our faith) whenever he proffers that sacred blood for us to taste.

2. UNION WITH CHRIST AS THE SPECIAL FRUIT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Godly souls can gather great assurance and delight from this Sacrament; in it they have a witness of our growth into one body with Christ such that whatever is his may be called ours. As a consequence, we may dare assure ourselves that eternal life, of which he is the heir, is ours; and that the

Kingdom of Heaven, into which he has already entered, can no more be cut off from us than from him; again, that we cannot be condemned for our sins, from whose guilt he has absolved us, since he willed to take them upon himself as if they were his own. This is the wonderful exchange^{F663} which, out of his measureless benevolence, he has made with us; that, becoming Son of man with us, he has made us sons of God with him; that, by his descent to earth, he has prepared an ascent to heaven for us; that, by taking on our mortality, he has conferred his immortality upon us; that, accepting our weakness, he has strengthened us by his power; that, receiving our poverty unto himself, he has transferred his wealth to us; that, taking the weight of our iniquity upon himself (which oppressed us), he has clothed us with his righteousness.

3. THE SPIRITUAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST

In this Sacrament we have such full witness of all these things that we must certainly consider them as if Christ here present were himself set before our eyes and touched by our hands.^{F664} For his word cannot lie or deceive us: “Take, eat, drink: this is my body, which is given for you; this is my blood, which is shed for forgiveness of sins” [^{<402626>} Matthew 26:26-28, conflated with ^{<461124>} 1 Corinthians 11:24; cf. ^{<411422>} Mark 14:22-24; ^{<422219>} Luke 22:19-20]. By bidding us take, he indicates that it is ours; by bidding us eat, that it is made one substance with us; by declaring that his body is given for us and his blood shed for us, he teaches that both are not so much his as ours. For he took up and laid down both, not for his own advantage but for our salvation.

And, indeed, we must carefully observe that the very powerful and almost entire force of the Sacrament lies in these words: “which is given for you,” “which is shed for you.” The present distribution of the body and blood of the Lord would not greatly benefit us unless they had once for all been given for our redemption and salvation.^{F665} They are therefore represented under bread and wine so that we may learn not only that they are ours but that they have been destined as food for our spiritual life.

And so as we previously stated, from the physical things set forth in the Sacrament we are led by a sort of analogy to spiritual things.^{F666} Thus, when bread is given as a symbol^{F667} of Christ’s body, we must at once

grasp this comparison: as bread nourishes, sustains, and keeps the life of our body, so Christ's body is the only food to invigorate and enliven our soul. When we see wine set forth as a symbol of blood, we must reflect on the benefits which wine imparts to the body, and so realize that the same are spiritually imparted to us by Christ's blood. These benefits are to nourish, refresh, strengthen, and gladden.^{F668} For if we sufficiently consider what value we have received from the giving of that most holy body and the shedding of that blood, we shall clearly perceive that those qualities of bread and wine are, according to such an analogy, excellently adapted to express those things when they are communicated to us.

(The promise sealed in the Supper as we are made partakers of Christ's flesh — a mystery felt rather than explained, 4-7)

4. THE MEANING OF THE PROMISE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

It is not, therefore, the chief function of the Sacrament simply and without higher consideration to extend to us the body of Christ. Rather, it is to seal and confirm that promise by which he testifies that his flesh is food indeed and his blood is drink [^{<430656>} John 6:56], which feed us unto eternal life [^{<430655>} John 6:55]. By this he declares himself to be the bread of life, of which he who eats will live forever [^{<430648>} John 6:48, 50]. And to do this, the Sacrament sends us to the cross of Christ, where that promise was indeed performed and in all respects fulfilled. For we do not eat Christ duly and unto salvation unless he is crucified, when in living experience we grasp the efficacy of his death. In calling himself "the bread of life," he did not borrow that name from the Sacrament, as some wrongly interpret.^{F669} Rather, he had been given as such to us by the Father and showed himself as such when, being made a sharer in our human mortality, he made us partakers in his divine immortality; when, offering himself as a sacrifice, he bore our curse in himself to imbue us with his blessing; when, by his death, he swallowed up and annihilated death [cf. ^{<600322>} 1 Peter 3:22, Vg., and ^{<461554>} 1 Corinthians 15:54]; and when, in his resurrection, he raised up this corruptible flesh of ours, which he had put on, to glory and incorruption [cf. ^{<461553>} 1 Corinthians 15:53-54].

5. HOW WE ARE PARTAKERS BY FAITH^{F670}

tit remains for all this to be applied to us. That is done through the gospel but more clearly through the Sacred Supper, where he offers himself with all his benefits to us, and we receive him by faith. Therefore, the Sacrament does not cause Christ to begin to be the bread of life; but when qt reminds us that he was made the bread of life, which we continually eat, and which gives us a relish and savor of that bread, it causes us to feel the power of that bread. For it assures us that all that Christ did or suffered was done to quicken us; and again, that this quickening is eternal, we being ceaselessly nourished, sustained, and preserved throughout life by it. For, as Christ would not have been the bread of life for us if he had not been born and had not died for us, and if he had not arisen for us, so this would not now be the case at all if the effectiveness and result of his birth, death, and resurrection were not something eternal and immortal, Christ beautifully expresses the whole matter in these words: “The bread which I shall give you is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world” [^{<430651>} John 6:51; cf. ch. 6:52, Vg.]. By these words he doubtless means that his body will to us be as bread for the spiritual life of the soul, for it was to be made subject to death for our salvation; moreover, that it is offered to us to eat, when it makes us sharers in him by faith. Once for all, therefore, he gave his body to be made bread when he yielded himself to be crucified for the redemption of the world; daily he gives it when by the word of the gospel he offers it for us to partake, inasmuch as it was crucified, when he seals such giving of himself by the sacred mystery of the Supper, and when he inwardly fulfills what he outwardly designates.

Now here we ought to guard against two faults. First, we should not, by too little regard for the signs, divorce them from their mysteries, to which they are so to speak attached. Secondly, we should not, by extolling them immoderately,^{F671} seem to obscure somewhat the mysteries themselves.

None but the utterly irreligious deny that Christ is the bread of life by which believers are nourished into eternal life. But there is no unanimity as to the mode of partaking of him. For there are some who define the eating of Christ’s flesh and the drinking of his blood as, in one word, nothing but to believe in Christ. But it seems to me that Christ meant to teach something more definite, and more elevated, in that noble discourse in

which he commends to us the eating of his flesh [^{<430626>} John 6:26 ff.]. It is that we are quickened by the true partaking of him; and he has therefore designated this partaking by the words “eating” and “drinking,” in order that no one should think that the life that we receive from him is received by mere knowledge. As it is not the seeing but the eating of bread that suffices to feed the body, so the soul must truly and deeply become partaker of Christ that it may be quickened to spiritual life by his power.

We admit indeed, meanwhile, that this is no other eating than that of faith, as no other can be imagined. But here is the difference between my words and theirs: for them to eat is only to believe; I say that we eat Christ’s flesh in believing,^{F672} because it is made ours by faith, and that this eating is the result and effect of faith. Or if you want it said more clearly, for them eating is faith; for me it seems rather to follow from faith. This is a small difference indeed in words, but no slight one in the matter itself. For even though the apostle teaches that “Christ dwells in our hearts through faith” [^{<490317>} Ephesians 3:17, cf. Vg.], no one will interpret this indwelling to be faith, but all feel that he is there expressing a remarkable effect of faith, for through this believers gain Christ abiding in them. In this way the Lord intended, by calling himself the “bread of life” [^{<430651>} John 6:51], to teach not only that salvation for us rests on faith in his death and resurrection, but also that, by true partaking of him, his life passes into us and is made ours — just as bread when taken as food imparts vigor to the body.

6. AUGUSTINE AND CHRYSOSTOM ON THIS

And Augustine (whom they appeal to as their patron) did not write that we eat by believing in any other sense than to show that this eating is of faith, not of the mouth. I too do not deny this. At the same time, however, I add that by faith we embrace Christ not as appearing from afar but as joining himself to us that he may be our head, we his members. Yet I do not utterly disallow that expression, but only deny that it is the full interpretation, if they mean to define what it is to eat Christ’s flesh. Elsewhere, I see that Augustine has often used this expression. For example, he says in Book 3, *On Christian Doctrine*: “The phrase, ‘Unless you eat the flesh of the Son of man’ [^{<430654>} John 6:54, Vg.; ch. 6:53, EV], is a figure, teaching us that we must partake of the Lord’s Passion, and

sweetly and profitably store up in memory the fact that his flesh was crucified and wounded for us.” Again, when he says that those three thousand men who were converted by Peter’s preaching [^{<440241>} Acts 2:41] by believing drank Christ’s blood, which in cruel rage they had shed. But in very many other passages he highly commends that benefit of faith, for through it our souls are as much refreshed by partaking of Christ’s flesh as bodies are by the bread they eat.^{F673} And Chrysostom writes the same thing in another passage: “Christ makes us his body not by faith only but by the very thing itself.”^{F674} For he means that such good is not obtained from any other source than faith; but he only wishes to exclude the possibility that anyone, when he hears faith mentioned, should conceive of it as mere imagining.

I now pass over those who would have the Supper only a mark of outward profession; for it seems to me that I have refuted their error sufficiently when I dealt with the sacraments in general.^{F675} Let my readers only observe that when the cup is called the covenant “in...blood” [^{<422220>} Luke 22:20], a promise is expressed which serves to strengthen faith. From this it follows that unless we look to God and embrace what he offers, we do not rightly use the Sacred Supper.

7. THOUGHT AND WORDS INADEQUATE

Moreover, I am not satisfied with those persons who, recognizing that we have some communion with Christ, when they would show what it is, make us partakers of the Spirit only, omitting mention of flesh and blood.^{F676} As though all these things were said in vain: that his flesh is truly food, that his blood is truly drink [^{<430655>} John 6:55]; that none have life except those who eat his flesh and drink his blood [^{<430653>} John 6:53]; and other passages pertaining to the same thing! Therefore, if it is certain that an integral communion of Christ reaches beyond their too narrow description of it, I shall proceed to deal with it briefly, in so far as it is clear and manifest, before I discuss the contrary fault of excess. For I shall have a longer disputation with the extravagant doctors, who, while in the grossness of their minds they devise an absurd fashion of eating and drinking, also transfigure Christ, stripped of his own flesh, into a phantasm^{F677} — if one may reduce to words so great a mystery, which I see that I do not even sufficiently comprehend with my mind. I therefore

freely admit that no man should measure its sublimity by the little measure of my childishness.^{F678} Rather, I urge my readers not to confine their mental interest within these too narrow limits, but to strive to rise much higher than I can lead them. For, whenever this matter is discussed, when I have tried to say all, I feel that I have as yet said little in proportion to its worth. And although my mind can think beyond what my tongue can utter, yet even my mind is conquered and overwhelmed by the greatness of the thing. Therefore, nothing remains but to break forth in wonder at this mystery, which plainly neither the mind is able to conceive nor the tongue to express. Nevertheless, I shall in one way or another sum up my views; for, as I do not doubt them to be true, I am confident they will be approved in godly hearts.

(This life-giving communion is brought about by the Holy Spirit, 8-10)

8. CHRIST MAKES HIS ABODE IN OUR FLESH

First of all,^{F679} we are taught from the Scriptures that Christ was from the beginning that life-giving Word of the Father [^{<430101>} John 1:1], the spring and source of life, from which all things have always received their capacity to live. Therefore, John sometimes calls him “the Word of life” [^{<620104>} 1 John 1:4], sometimes writes that “in him was life” [^{<430104>} John 1:4], meaning that he, flowing even into all creatures, instilled in them the power to breathe and live.

The same John afterward adds that life was manifested only when, having taken our flesh, the Son of God gave himself for our eyes to see and our hands to touch [^{<620102>} 1 John 1:2]. For even though he previously poured out his power upon the creatures, still, because man (estranged from God through sin and having lost participation in life) saw death threatening from every side, he had to be received into communion of the Word in order to receive hope of immortality. For how little assurance would you grasp, if you heard that the Word of God (from which you are far removed) contains in itself fullness of life, but in and round about yourself nothing but death meets you and moves before your eyes? But when the Source of life begins to abide in our flesh, he no longer lies hidden far from us, but shows us that we are to partake of him. But he also quickens our very flesh in which he abides, that by partaking of him we may be fed

unto immortality. “I am,” he says, “the bread of life come down from heaven. And the bread which I shall give is my flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world.” [^{<430648>} John 6:48, 51; cf. ch. 6:51-52, Vg.] By these words he teaches not only that he is life since he is the eternal Word of God, who came down from heaven to us, but also that by coming down he poured that power upon the flesh which he took in order that from it participation in life might flow unto us.

From this also these things follow: that his flesh is truly food, and his blood truly drink [^{<430655>} John 6:55; cf. ch. 6:56, Vg.], and by these foods believers are nourished unto eternal life. It is therefore a special comfort for the godly that they now find life in their own flesh. For thus not only do they reach it by an easy approach, but they have it spontaneously presented and laid out before them. Let them but open the bosom of their heart to embrace its presence, and they will obtain it.

9. SENSE IN WHICH CHRIST’S BODY IS LIFE-GIVING

But the flesh of Christ does not of itself have a power so great as to quicken us, for in its first condition it was subject to mortality; and now, endowed with immortality, it does not live through itself. Nevertheless, since it is pervaded with fullness of life to be transmitted to us, it is rightly called “life-giving.” In this sense I interpret with Cyril that saying of Christ’s: “As the Father has life in himself, so he has granted the Son also to have life in himself” [^{<430526>} John 5:26, cf. Vg.]. For there he is properly speaking not of those gifts which he had in the Father’s presence from the beginning, but of those with which he was adorned in that very flesh wherein he appeared. Accordingly, he shows that in his humanity there also dwells fullness of life, so that whoever has partaken of his flesh and blood may at the same time enjoy participation in life.^{F680}

We can explain the nature of this by a familiar example. Water is sometimes drunk from a spring, sometimes drawn, sometimes led by channels to water the fields, yet it does not flow forth from itself for so many uses, but from the very source, which by unceasing flow supplies and serves it. In like manner, the flesh of Christ is like a rich and inexhaustible fountain that pours into us the life springing forth from the

Godhead into itself. Now who does not see that communion of Christ's flesh and blood is necessary for all who aspire to heavenly life?

This is the purport of the apostle's statements: "The church...is the body of Christ, and the fullness of him" [^{<490123>} Ephesians 1:23]; but he is "the head" [^{<490415>} Ephesians 4:15] "from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by...joints...makes bodily growth" [^{<490416>} Ephesians 4:16]; "our bodies are members of Christ" [^{<460615>} 1 Corinthians 6:15]. We understand that all these things could not be brought about otherwise than by his cleaving to us wholly in spirit and body. But Paul graced with a still more glorious title that intimate fellowship in which we are joined with his flesh when he said, "We are members of his body, of his bones and of his flesh" [^{<490530>} Ephesians 5:30]. Finally, to witness to this thing greater than all words, he ends his discourse with an exclamation: "This," he says, "is a great mystery"^{F681} [^{<490532>} Ephesians 5:32]. It would be extreme madness to recognize no communion of believers with the flesh and blood of the Lord, which the apostle declares to be so great that he prefers to marvel at it rather than to explain it.

10. THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST'S BODY IN THE LORD'S SUPPER

To summarize: our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ in the same way that bread and wine keep and sustain physical life. For the analogy of the sign applies only if souls find their nourishment in Christ — which cannot happen unless Christ truly grows into one with us, and refreshes us by the eating of his flesh and the drinking of his blood.

Even though it seems unbelievable that Christ's flesh, separated from us by such great distance, penetrates to us, so that it becomes our food, let us remember how far the secret power of the Holy Spirit towers above all our senses, and how foolish it is to wish to measure his immeasurableness by our measure. What, then, our mind does not comprehend, let faith conceive: that the Spirit truly unites things separated in space.^{F682}

Now, that sacred partaking of his flesh and blood, by which Christ pours his life into us, as if it penetrated into our bones and marrow, he also testifies and seals in the Supper-not by presenting a vain and empty sign, but by manifesting there the effectiveness of his Spirit to fulfill what he

promises. And truly he offers and shows the reality there signified to all who sit at ^{F683}that spiritual banquet, although it is received with benefit by believers alone, who accept such great generosity with true faith and gratefulness of heart.

In this manner the apostle said, “The bread which we break is a participation in the body of Christ; the cup which we consecrate to this by word and prayers is a participation in his blood” [^{<461016>} 1 Corinthians 10:16 p., order changed]. There is no reason for anyone to object that this is a figurative expression by which the name of the thing signified is given to the sign. ^{F684} I indeed admit that the breaking of bread is a symbol; it is not the thing itself. But, having admitted this, we shall nevertheless duly infer that by the showing of the symbol the thing itself is also shown. For unless a man means to call God a deceiver, he would never dare assert that an empty symbol is set forth by him. Therefore, if the Lord truly represents the participation in his body through the breaking of bread, there ought not to be the least doubt that he truly presents and shows his body. And the godly ought by all means to keep this rule: whenever they see symbols appointed by the Lord, to think and be persuaded that the truth of the thing signified is surely present there. For why should the Lord put in your hand the symbol of his body, except to assure you of a true participation in it. But if it is true that a visible sign is given us to seal the gift of a thing invisible, when we have received the symbol of the body, let us no less surely trust that the body itself is also given to us.

*(Relation of the outward sign and invisible reality variously
misstated by the Schoolmen, and in the doctrine of
transubstantiation, 11-15)*

11. SIGNIFICATION, MATTER, AND EFFECT OF THE SACRAMENT

I therefore say (what has always been accepted in the church and is today taught by all of sound opinion) that the sacred mystery of the Supper consists in two things: physical signs, which, thrust before our eyes, represent to us, according to our feeble capacity, things invisible; and spiritual truth, which is at the same time represented and displayed through the symbols themselves. ^{F685}

When I wish to show the nature of this truth in familiar terms, I usually set down three things: the signification, the matter that depends upon it, and the power or effect that follows from both. The signification is contained in the promises, which are, so to speak, implicit in the sign. I call Christ with his death and resurrection the matter, or substance. But by effect I understand redemption, righteousness, sanctification, and eternal life, and all the other benefits Christ gives to us.

Now, even though all these things have to do with faith, I leave no place for the sophistry that what I mean when I say Christ is received by faith is that he is received only by understanding and imagination.^{F686} For the promises offer him, not for us to halt in the appearance and bare knowledge alone, but to enjoy true participation in him. And indeed, I do not see how anyone can trust that he has redemption and righteousness in the cross of Christ, and life in his death, unless he relies chiefly upon a true participation in Christ himself. For those benefits would not come to us unless Christ first made himself ours.

I say, therefore, that in the mystery of the Supper, Christ is truly shown to us through the symbols of bread and wine, his very body and blood, in which he has fulfilled all obedience to obtain righteousness for us. Why? First, that we may grow into one body with him; secondly, having been made partakers of his substance, that we may also feel his power in partaking of all his benefits.

12. SPATIAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST'S BODY?

I now come down to the extravagant mixtures that superstition has brought in. For here Satan has disported himself with wonderful subtlety in order to draw men's minds from heaven and imbue them with a perverse error — imagining that Christ is attached to the element of bread!

And first we must not dream of such a presence of Christ in the Sacrament as the craftsmen of the Roman court have fashioned — as if the body of Christ, by a local presence, were put there to be touched by the hands, to be chewed by the teeth, and to be swallowed by the mouth. For Pope Nicholas dictated this form of recantation to Berengarius as proof of his repentance, that is, with words so monstrous that the author of the Gloss exclaims there is danger, unless readers exercise wise caution, of their

drawing from it a heresy worse than that of Berengarius.^{F687} But Peter Lombard, even though he toils hard to explain away this absurdity, inclines rather more to a divergent opinion.^{F688}

For as we do not doubt that Christ's body is limited by the general characteristics common to all human bodies, and is contained in heaven (where it was once for all received) until Christ return in judgment [^{<440321>} Acts 3:21], so we deem it utterly unlawful to draw it back under these corruptible elements or to imagine it to be present everywhere.^{F689}

And there is no need of this for us to enjoy a participation in it, since the Lord bestows this benefit upon us through his Spirit so that we may be made one in body, spirit, and soul with him. The bond of this connection is therefore the Spirit of Christ, with whom we are joined in unity, and is like a channel through which all that Christ himself is and has is conveyed to us.^{F690} For if we see that the sun, shedding its beams upon the earth, casts its substance in some measure upon it in order to beget, nourish, and give growth to its offspring — why should the radiance of Christ's Spirit be less in order to impart to us the communion of his flesh and blood? On this account, Scripture, in speaking of our participation with Christ, relates its whole power to the Spirit. But one passage will suffice for many. For Paul, in the eighth chapter of Romans, states that Christ dwells in us only through his Spirit [^{<450809>} Romans 8:9]. Yet he does not take away that communion of his flesh and blood which we are now discussing [^{<450809>} Romans 8:9], but teaches that the Spirit alone causes us to possess Christ completely and have him dwelling in us.^{F691}

13. ERROR OF THE SCHOOLMEN BREAD MISTAKEN FOR GOD

The Schoolmen, having a horror of such barbarous impiety, speak more modestly.^{F692} Yet they also do nothing but indulge in deceitful subtleties. They grant that Christ is not there contained in any circumscriptive or bodily fashion.^{F693} But they then devise a mode which they neither understand themselves nor can explain to others. However, it boils down to this: that Christ is to be sought in what they call "species of bread." What is this? When they say that the substance of bread is turned into Christ, do they not attach the substance to the whiteness which they

represent as remaining there? Yet, they say, he is so contained in the Sacrament that he remains in heaven; and we maintain no other presence than that of a relationship.^{F694}

But, whatever words they introduce to disguise it, this is the purpose of them all: through consecration, what was previously bread is made Christ, so that thereupon Christ lies hidden under the appearance of bread. And they are not ashamed to express this plainly. For Lombard's words are: "Christ's body, which in itself is visible, after consecration lies hidden and covered under the form of bread."^{F695} Thus that figure of bread is nothing but a mask to prevent our eyes from seeing the flesh, we have no need of many conjectures to discover what snares they meant to lay with these words, since the thing clearly speaks for itself. For one can see in what great superstition not only the common folk but also the leaders themselves have been held for some centuries, and today are held in papists' churches. They are little concerned about true faith by which alone we attain fellowship with Christ and cleave to him. Provided they have a physical presence of him, which they have fabricated apart from God's Word, they think that they have presence enough. Briefly, then, we see how through this ingenious subtlety bread came to be taken for God.

14. TRANSUBSTANTIATION

From this proceeds that fictitious transubstantiation for which today they fight more bitterly than for all the other articles of their faith.^{F696} For the first fabricators of this local presence could not explain how Christ's body might be mixed with the substance of bread without many absurdities immediately cropping up. They therefore had to take refuge in the fiction that a conversion of the bread into the body takes place; not that the body is properly made from the bread, but because Christ, to hide himself under the figure, annihilates its substance.^{F697}

But it is wonderful how they fell to such a point of ignorance, even of folly, that, despising not only Scripture but even the consensus of the ancient church,^{F698} they unveiled that monster.

Indeed, I admit that some of the old writers used the term "conversion" sometimes, not because they intended to wipe out the substance in the outward sign, but to teach that the bread dedicated to the mystery is far

different from common bread, and is now something else.^{F699} But they all everywhere clearly proclaim that the Sacred Supper consists of two parts, the earthly and the heavenly; and they interpret the earthly part to be indisputably bread and wine.

Surely, whatever our opponents may prate, it is plain that to confirm this doctrine they lack the support of antiquity, which they often dare oppose to God's clear Word. For transubstantiation was devised not so long ago; indeed, not only was it unknown to those better ages when the purer doctrine of religion still flourished, but even when that purity already was somewhat corrupted.^{F700} There is no one of the ancient writers who does not admit in clear words that the sacred symbols of the Supper are bread and wine, even though, as has been said, they sometimes distinguish them with various titles to enhance the dignity of the mystery. For because they say that in consecration a secret conversion takes place, so that there is now something other than bread and wine, as I have just observed,^{F701} they do not mean by this that the elements have been annihilated, but rather that they now have to be considered of a different class from common foods intended solely to feed the stomach, since in them is set forth the spiritual food and drink of the soul. This we do not deny.

If there is conversion (these men say), one thing must be made from another. If they mean that it is made something which it was not before, I agree. If they wish to conform it to that imagination of theirs, let them answer me what change they feel takes place in baptism. For the church fathers here also affirm a wonderful conversion when they say that the spiritual washing of the soul is made from a corruptible element, yet no one denies that the water remains. But there is, they say, no such thing in baptism as there is in the Lord's Supper: "This is my body." As though the question concerned those words, whose meaning is clear enough, and not, rather, that term "conversion," which ought to signify nothing more in the Supper than in baptism. Therefore, good-by to them with their syllable-snatching^{F702} by which they reveal only their own emptiness.

But the signification would have no fitness if the truth there represented had no living image in the outward sign. Christ's purpose was to witness by the outward symbol that his flesh is food; if he had put forward only the empty appearance of bread and not true bread, where would be the

analogy or comparison needed to lead us from the visible thing to the invisible? For, to be perfectly consistent, the signification extends no farther than that we are fed by the form of Christ's flesh. For instance, if in baptism the figure of water were to deceive our eyes, we would have no sure pledge of our washing; indeed, that false show would give us occasion to hesitate. The nature of the Sacrament is therefore canceled, unless, in the mode of signifying, the earthly sign corresponds to the heavenly thing. And the truth of this mystery accordingly perishes for us unless true bread represents the true body of Christ. Again I repeat:^{F703} since the Supper is nothing but a visible witnessing of that promise contained in the sixth chapter of John, namely, that Christ is the bread of life come down from heaven [^{<430651>} John 6:51], visible bread must serve as an intermediary to represent that spiritual bread — unless we are willing to lose all the benefit which God, to sustain our weakness, confers upon us. Now by what reason would Paul infer that we are all one bread and one body who partake together of one bread [^{<461017>} 1 Corinthians 10:17], if only the appearance of bread, and not rather the true nature of bread, remained?

15. THE ACTUAL BASIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF TRANSUBSTANTIATION AND THE ARGUMENTS ADDUCED FOR IT

They could never have been so foully deluded by Satan's tricks unless they had already been bewitched by this error, that Christ's body, enclosed in bread, is transmitted by the mouth of the body into the stomach. The cause of such crude imagination was that among them consecration was virtually equivalent to magic incantation. But this principle was hidden from them, that the bread is a sacrament only to those persons to whom the word is directed; just as the water of baptism is not changed in itself, but as soon as the promise has been attached it begins to be for us what it was not before.

This will appear more clearly from the example of a similar sacrament. The water gushing from the rock in the desert [^{<021706>} Exodus 17:6] was for the fathers a token and sign of the same thing as wine represents for us in the Supper. For Paul teaches that they drank the same spiritual drink [^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4]. And the watering place was common to people's beasts of burden and cattle. From this it is easily inferred that in

earthly elements, when they are applied to a spiritual use, no other conversion occurs than with respect to men, inasmuch as to them they are seals of the promises.

Moreover, since it is God's plan (as I often reiterate) to lift us to himself, by appropriate means, those who call us indeed to Christ, but to Christ hidden invisibly under bread, wickedly frustrate his plan by their obstinacy.^{F704} For it is not possible for the human mind, leaping the infinite spaces, to reach beyond heaven itself to Christ. What nature denied to them they tried to correct by a more harmful remedy, so that by remaining on earth we may need no heavenly nearness of Christ. Here, then, is the necessity that compelled them to transmute Christ's body.

Even in Bernard's time, although a blunter manner of speaking had been adopted, transubstantiation was not yet recognized. And in all ages before, this comparison flitted about on everybody's lips, that the spiritual reality is joined to bread and wine in this mystery.^{F705}

Concerning the terms, they make what they think to be a sharp reply, but adduce nothing pertaining to the present case.

Moses' rod (they say) changed into a serpent; although it receives the name of serpent, it still retains the former name and is called a rod [^{<020402>}Exodus 4:2-4; 7:10]. So according to them, it is just as probable that, although the bread may pass into a new substance, by misapplication^{F706} but yet not improperly, it is called what appears to the eyes. But what likeness or nearness do they find between that glorious miracle and their trumped-up illusion, to which no eye on earth is witness? Magicians by playing tricks persuaded the Egyptians that they were able by divine power beyond the order of nature to change the creatures. Moses comes forth and, putting their deceits to flight, shows that God's unconquerable power stands on his side, for his one rod consumes all the rest [^{<020712>}Exodus 7:12]. But as that conversion was visible, it has no relevance for the present case, as I have said; and after a short time the rod visibly returned to its own form [^{<020715>}Exodus 7:15]. Besides, it is not known whether that momentary conversion was of substance or not. We must also look at the allusion to the magician's rods, which the prophet would not call serpents, lest he seem to imply a change which was no change, because those sleight-of-hand artists had done nothing but blind

the eyes of the spectators.^{F707} How do these expressions resemble it: “The bread which we break...” [^{<461016>} 1 Corinthians 10:16, Vg.]; “As often as you eat this bread...” [^{<461126>} 1 Corinthians 11:26]; “They participated in the breaking of bread...” [^{<440242>} Acts 2:42]; and other such passages? It is certain that their eyes were only deceived by the incantation of the magicians. As for Moses, the matter is more doubtful, through whose hand it was no harder for God to make a serpent out of a rod, and again a rod out of a serpent, than to clothe angels with physical bodies, and shortly after to unclothe them. If the nature of this mystery were the same or closely related, their solution would have some plausibility. Let it therefore remain certain that in the Supper the flesh of Christ is not truly and fittingly promised to us to be truly food unless the true substance of the outward symbol corresponds to it.

And (as one error arises from another) a passage of Jeremiah is so absurdly twisted to prove transubstantiation that I dislike to mention it. The prophet complains that wood is put into his bread [^{<241119>} Jeremiah 11:19, Vg.], signifying that by the enemies’ cruelty his bread was infected with bitterness.^{F708} So David by a similar figure of speech deplores that his bread was corrupted by gall and his drink with vinegar [^{<196921>} Psalm 69:21]. These adversaries of ours would hold that Christ’s body was allegorically affixed to the wood of the cross. Indeed, they say, some of the ancient writers thought so. As if we ought not rather to pardon their ignorance and bury their disgrace than to add the shamelessness of compelling them still to fight as enemies against the prophet’s true meaning.

(Arguments for rejection of the doctrine of the ubiquity of the body as narrowly literal, together with exposition of the spiritual view of communion with Christ in heaven, 16-31)

16. THE OPPOSING STATEMENT

Others, who see that if the analogy of sign and thing signified is swept away, the truth of the mystery will fall, confess that the bread of the Supper is truly the substance of an earthly and corruptible element, and suffers no change in itself, but holds the body of Christ enclosed underneath itself.^{F709}

If they explained their meaning that, when bread is proffered in the mystery, a showing of the body is attached, on the ground that the truth is inseparable from its sign,^{F710} I would not strongly object. But because, placing the body itself in the bread, they assign to it a ubiquity contrary to its nature, and by adding “under the bread” mean that it lies hidden there, we must for a little while drag these subtleties out of their lurking-places. Not that it is my intention formally to treat the whole issue at this point; I wish only to lay a foundation for the discussion that will soon follow in its proper place.^{F711} They would therefore like to have the body of Christ considered invisible and immeasurable, so as to lie hidden under bread. For they think they only communicate with it if it descends into bread; but they do not understand the manner of descent by which he lifts us up to himself. They disguise it with every possible color, but when they have said everything, it is clear enough that they insist on the local presence of Christ. Why so? Because they cannot bear to conceive any other partaking of flesh and blood except that which consists in either local conjunction and contact or some gross form of enclosing.

17. THE DOCTRINE OF OUR OPPONENTS CANCELS THE TRUE CORPOREALITY OF CHRIST

Obstinately to defend an error once rashly conceived, some of them do not hesitate to boast that the only dimensions Christ’s flesh ever had, extended as far and wide as heaven and earth. That he was born as a child from the womb, that he grew, that he was stretched upon the cross, enclosed in the tomb — this came to pass by a certain dispensation, in order that he might discharge the office of birth, of death, and the other offices of men. That after his resurrection he was seen in his customary bodily form [^{<440103>} Acts 1:3; cf. ^{<461505>} 1 Corinthians 15:5], that he was taken up into heaven [^{<440109>} Acts 1:9; ^{<422451>} Luke 24:51; ^{<411619>} Mark 16:19], that finally also after his ascension he was seen by Stephen [^{<440755>} Acts 7:55] and Paul [^{<440903>} Acts 9:3] — this came to pass by the same dispensation, they assert, in order that men might see that he was made king in heaven.^{F712} What is this but to raise Marcion from hell?^{F713} For no one will doubt that if Christ’s body existed in this state, it was a phantasm or apparition.

Some use a more subtle evasion: this body which is given in the Sacrament is glorious and immortal; therefore, there is nothing absurd if under the Sacrament it is contained in several places, in no place, or in no form.

But I ask: What sort of body did Christ give to the disciples the day before he suffered? Do not the words testify that he gave them that very mortal body which a little later was to be given up? He had previously (these men say) presented his glory to be seen by three of his disciples on the mountain [^{<401709>}Matthew 17:9]. True, indeed, but he intended by that splendor to give them a foretaste of immortality. Meanwhile, they will not find a twofold body there, but the very one Christ bore, adorned with new glory, about when he distributed his body at the first Supper, the hour was already at hand when, stricken and humbled by God [^{<235304>}Isaiah 53:4], he should lie down in dishonor like a leper [cf. ^{<235304>}Isaiah 53:4] — so far was he from intending to manifest then the glory of his resurrection. And what a large window is here opened to Marcion, if Christ's body seemed mortal and lowly in this one place, but in another was considered immortal and glorified? Still, if their opinion is valid, the same thing happens daily. For they are compelled to confess that the body of Christ, visible in itself, lies invisibly concealed under the symbol of bread.^{F714} And yet those who give vent to such monstrosities are so unashamed of their own disgrace that unprovoked they assail us with frightful insults because we do not subscribe to them.

18. THE PRESENCE IS KNOWN WHEN OUR MINDS ARE LIFTED UP TO HEAVEN

Come now, if they wish to attach the Lord's body and blood to bread and wine, one will of necessity be torn apart from the other. For as the bread is presented separately from the cup, so the body united to the bread should be divided from the blood contained in the cup. For when they affirm that the body is in the bread, the blood in the cup, and bread and wine are distant from each other by the space that each occupies, they cannot by any shift evade the fact that the body must be separate from the blood.

Their customary claim that through concomitance the blood is in the body and the body, in turn, in the blood,^{F715} is quite absurd, since the symbols in which they are enclosed are thus distinct.

But if we are lifted up to heaven with our eyes and minds, to seek Christ there in the glory of his Kingdom, ‘as the symbols invite us to him in his wholeness, so under the symbol of bread we shall be fed by his body, under the symbol of wine we shall separately drink his blood, to enjoy him at last in his wholeness. For though he has taken his flesh away from us, and in the body has ascended into heaven, yet he sits at the right hand of the Father — that is, he reigns in the Father’s power and majesty and glory. This Kingdom is neither bounded by location in space nor circumscribed by any limits. Thus Christ is not prevented from exerting his power wherever he pleases, in heaven and on earth. He shows his presence in power and strength, is always among his own people, and breathes his life upon them, and lives in them, sustaining them, strengthening, quickening, keeping them unharmed, as if he were present in the body. In short, he feeds his people with his own body, the communion of which he bestows upon them by the power of his Spirit. In this manner, the body and blood of Christ are shown to us in the Sacrament.

19. HOW IS THE PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE LORD’S SUPPER TO BE THOUGHT OF?

But we must establish such a presence of Christ in the Supper^{F716} as may neither fasten him to the element of bread, nor enclose him in bread, nor circumscribe him in any way^{F717} (all which things, it is clear, detract from his heavenly glory); finally, such as may not take from him his own stature, or parcel him out to many places at once, or invest him with boundless magnitude to be spread through heaven and earth. For these things are plainly in conflict with a nature truly human. Let us never (I say) allow these two limitations to be taken away from us:

- (1) Let nothing be withdrawn from Christ’s heavenly glory — as happens when he is brought under the corruptible elements of this world, or bound to any earthly creatures.
- (2) Let nothing inappropriate to human nature be ascribed to his body, as happens when it is said either to be infinite or to be put in a number of places at once.

But when these absurdities have been set aside, I freely accept whatever can be made to express the true and substantial partaking of the body and blood of the Lord, which is shown to believers under the sacred symbols of the Supper — and so to express it that they may be understood not to receive it solely by imagination or understanding of mind, but to enjoy the thing itself as nourishment of eternal life.

There is no reason why this opinion should be so odious to the world and its defense forestalled by the prejudices of many — unless Satan has by a dreadful spell made them demented. Surely what we teach perfectly agrees in all respects with Scripture. It contains nothing either absurd or obscure or ambiguous. It does not repudiate true piety and sound edification. In short, it has nothing in it to offend unless that in certain periods — when the ignorance and barbarism of the Sophists reigned in the church — such clear light and revealed truth was unworthily oppressed. Yet Satan today through troublesome spirits also endeavors to besmirch it with whatever calumnies and slanders he can, exerting himself in this with greater effort than in anything else. Consequently, it is needful to assert and defend it even more carefully.

20. THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Now, before we proceed further, we must discuss Christ's act of institution itself, especially because here is our adversaries' most plausible objection: that we depart from Christ's words. Therefore, to relieve ourselves of the undeserved obloquy that they lay upon us, it will be most appropriate to begin with the interpretation of the words. Three Evangelists and Paul relate that Christ took the bread, and giving thanks broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said: [^{<402626>} Matthew 26:26 (cf. ^{<411422>} Mark 14:22; ^{<461124>} 1 Corinthians 11:24)]: "Take, eat; this is my body" [*ibid.*, Vg.] "which is given [or broken] for you" [^{<461124>} 1 Corinthians 11:24, Vg.]. Of the cup, Matthew and Mark speak as follows: "This cup is the blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for forgiveness of sins" [^{<402628>} Matthew 26:28; cf. ^{<411424>} Mark 14:24]. But Paul and Luke say, "This cup is the New Testament in my blood" [^{<461125>} 1 Corinthians 11:25, Vg.; cf. ^{<422220>} Luke 22:20].

The defenders of transubstantiation would have the pronoun “this” refer to form of bread, because the consecration is effected by the whole content of the utterance, and there is no substance that can be pointed to.^{F718} Yet if they must be so scrupulous about words,^{F719} because Christ testified that what he handed to his disciples was his body, obviously this fiction of theirs is utterly foreign to the proper meaning — that what was bread is now body. What Christ took into his hands and gave to the apostles he declares to be his body; but he had taken bread — who, therefore, cannot understand that bread is still shown? And, accordingly, that there is nothing more absurd than to transfer to the form what is predicated of the bread?

Others, in interpreting the particle *est* as meaning “to be transubstantiated,”^{F720} take refuge in a more forced and violently distorted gloss. There is therefore no reason why they should pretend to be moved by reverence for words. For it is something unheard of in all nations and languages that the word *est* should be taken to mean “to be converted into something else.”

As for those who leave bread in the Supper and affirm that it is the body of Christ, much difference exists among them. Those who speak more moderately, although they insist upon the letter, “This is my body,” still afterward abandon their rigor and say that it amounts to the same thing as that the body of Christ is with the bread, in the bread, and under the bread.^{F721} Of the thing itself, which they affirm, I have already made some mention, and I must soon say more about it. Now I am only discussing the words, by which they say they are constrained not to allow the bread to be called the body, because it is the sign of the body. But if they shun every metaphor, why do they leap from Christ’s simple designation to widely divergent phrases of their own? For there is a great difference between “the bread is the body” and “the body is with the bread.” But they saw that this simple proposition, “the bread is the body,” was untenable. Consequently, they tried to wriggle out of their difficulty by the use of these expressions.

Others again, being bolder, do not hesitate to assert that, properly speaking, the bread is the body, and in this way truly prove themselves literalists.^{F722} If it is objected that bread is therefore Christ and

consequently God, they will indeed deny it, for this is not expressly stated in Christ's words. But denial will gain them nothing, since all men agree that the whole Christ is offered us in the Supper. But it is an intolerable blasphemy to declare literally of an ephemeral and corruptible element that it is Christ. Now I ask of them whether these two propositions amount to the same thing: "Christ is the Son of God" and "The bread is the body of Christ." If they should admit that these are different (which they will be compelled unwillingly to grant), let them answer where lies the difference. They will bring forward no other reason, I think, than that bread is called the body in a sacramental sense.^{F723} From this it follows that Christ's words are not subject to the common rule and ought not to be tested by grammar, I also ask of all stern and stiff exactors of the letter, where Luke and Paul call the cup "the testament in the blood" [^{<422220>} Luke 22:20; ^{<461125>} 1 Corinthians 11:25], whether they are not expressing the same thing as in the previous clause, where they call the bread the body. For the same reverence was in one part of the mystery as in the other; and because brevity is obscure, a longer discourse better illumines the meaning. Therefore, however often they argue from one word that the bread is the body, from more than one word I shall bring forth an appropriate interpretation, that it is the testament in the body. Why so? Will we have to seek a more faithful and certain interpreter than Paul and Luke?

Yet I am not attempting to diminish anything of that communication of Christ's body, which I have confessed.^{F724} My sole purpose is to refute the foolish stubbornness with which they wrangle so violently over words. On Paul's and Luke's authority I understand the bread to be Christ's body, because it is the covenant in his body. But if they assail this, their quarrel is not with me but with the Spirit of God. However they may cry out that they are touched with such reverence for Christ's words as not to dare understand figuratively what is spoken plainly, this is still not a valid enough excuse for them to reject all the reasons that we bring forward against them.

Meanwhile, as I have already pointed out, it is expedient to grasp the nature of this testament in Christ's body and blood. For a covenant ratified by the sacrifice of his death would not benefit us unless there were

joined to it that secret communication by which we grow into one with Christ.

21. THE FIGURATIVE INTERPRETATION OF THE DECISIVE WORDS

It remains for us, therefore, to admit that, on account of the affinity which the things signified have with their symbols, the name of the thing was given to the symbol — figuratively, indeed-but not without a most fitting analogy, I pass over allegories and parables, lest someone accuse me of seeking a place to hide and of digressing from the present issue.

I say that this expression is a metonymy, a figure of speech commonly used in Scripture when mysteries are under discussion. For you could not otherwise understand such expressions as “circumcision is a covenant [^{<011713>}Genesis 17:13], the lamb is the passover” [^{<021211>}Exodus 12:11], “the sacrifices of the law are expiation’s” [^{<030711>}Leviticus 17:11; ^{<580922>}Hebrews 9:22], and finally, “the rock from which water flowed in the desert” [^{<021706>}Exodus 17:6], “was Christ” [^{<461004>}1 Corinthians 10:4], unless you were to take them as spoken with meanings transferred. Not only is the name transferred from something higher to something lower, but, on the other hand, the name of the visible sign is also given to the thing signified: as when God is said to have appeared to Moses in the bush [^{<020302>}Exodus 3:2]; the Ark of the Covenant is called God and God’s face [^{<198408>}Psalm 84:8; 42:3]; ^{F725} and the dove, the Holy Spirit [^{<400316>}Matthew 3:16]. For though the symbol differs in essence from the thing signified (in that the latter is spiritual and heavenly, while the former is physical and visible), still, because it not only symbolizes the thing that it has been consecrated to represent as a bare and empty token, but also truly exhibits it, why may its name not rightly belong to the thing? Humanly devised symbols, being images of things absent rather than marks of things present (which they very often even falsely represent), are still sometimes graced with the titles of those things. Similarly, with much greater reason, those things ordained by God borrow the names of those things of which they always bear a definite and not misleading signification, and have the reality joined with them. So great, therefore, is their similarity and closeness that transition from one to the other is easy.

Let our adversaries, therefore, cease to heap unsavory witticisms upon us by calling us “tropists,”^{F726} because we have explained the sacramental phraseology according to the common usage of Scripture. For as the sacraments agree in many respects, so in this metonymy they all have a certain common ground with one another. Accordingly, as the apostle teaches that the rock from which spiritual drink sprang forth for the Israelites was Christ [^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4] — because it was a visible sign under which that spiritual drink indeed truly was, but was not discernible to the eye — so the body of Christ today is called bread, inasmuch as it is the symbol by which the Lord offers us the true eating of his body.

And that no one may despise my view as something newly devised, Augustine felt and spoke the same way. “If sacraments,” he says, “did not have a certain likeness to those things of which they are sacraments, they would not be sacraments at all. Moreover, from this likeness they often also take the names of the things themselves. Therefore, just as in a certain manner the sacrament of Christ’s body is Christ’s body, the sacrament of Christ’s blood Christ’s blood — so the sacrament of faith is faith.” There are many similar passages in Augustine, which it would be superfluous to collect, since this one is enough, only, my readers should be made aware that that holy man teaches the same thing in his letter to Evodius.

But it is a frivolous evasion to reply that, where Augustine asserts that metonymy is frequent and common in the sacraments, he makes no mention of the Supper. For if this evasion is granted, we are not permitted to reason from the general to the particular. Thus, the argument that every animal has been endowed with motion, therefore the ox and the horse have been endowed with motion, would not be valid. However, further discussion is precluded by the words of the same holy man in another place, where he says that Christ, when he gave the sign of his body, did not hesitate to call it his body. And again, Augustine says: “Wonderful was Christ’s patience, because he received Judas at the banquet in which he instituted and gave the figure of his body and blood to his disciples.”^{F727}

22. THE WORD “IS”

But if some intransigent person, blind to all else, so insists upon the expression “this is”^{F728} as to regard this mystery as separate from all the others, the answer is easy. They say that the copulative verb^{F729} bears such emphasis as not to admit of a figure of speech. But if we grant this to them, to be sure, one reads the copulative verb in Paul’s words, where he calls bread “a participation”^{F730} in the body of Christ” [^{<461016>} 1 Corinthians 10:16]. But participation is something different from the body itself.

Indeed, where the sacraments are under consideration, almost the same word occurs: “This will be for you a covenant with me” [^{<011713>} Genesis 17:13 p.]; “This lamb will be the passover”^{F731} for you” [^{<021211>} Exodus 12:11; cf. ch. 12:43]. In short, when Paul says, “The rock was Christ” [^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4], why is the copulative verb, according to them, less emphatic in that place than in Christ’s utterance? Where John says, “The Holy Spirit was not yet, because Jesus was not yet glorified” [^{<430739>} John 7:39, cf. Vg.], let them also reply, what is the force of the copulative verb? For if they remain true to their rule, the eternal essence of the Spirit will be destroyed, as if he received his beginning from Christ’s ascension. Let them, finally, answer what the statement of Paul signifies: that baptism is “the washing of regeneration and renewal” [^{<560305>} Titus 3:5], inasmuch as baptism is clearly unprofitable for many.

But there is nothing stronger to refute them than the statement of Paul that the church is Christ [^{<461212>} 1 Corinthians 12:12]. For, having made a comparison with the human body, he adds, “So is Christ” [*ibid.*]; there he does not mean the only-begotten Son of God in himself but in his members.

Now I think I have made my point, that to sane and upright men the slanders of our enemies are loathsome when they broadcast that we discredit Christ’s words, which we embrace no less obediently than they, and treat with greater reverence. Indeed, their easy assurance indicates that they do not greatly care what Christ means if only his words supply them with a shield to defend their obstinacy — just as our examination of the matter ought to be a witness of how much Christ’s authority means to US.

They hatefully boast that human sense prevents us from believing what Christ uttered from his sacred lips, but how unfairly they burden us with this reproach, I have in great part already made plain, and it will appear more clearly below. Nothing, therefore, prevents us from believing Christ when he speaks, and from responding at once when he indicates this or that. The only question is whether it is a crime to investigate the true sense of his words.

23. THE IMPOSSIBILITY OF A PURELY LITERAL INTERPRETATION

These good masters, that they may appear men of letters, forbid even the slightest deviation from the letter.^{F732} On the contrary, where Scripture calls God “a man of war” [^{<021503>} Exodus 15:3], because I see that this saying would be too harsh without interpretation, I do not doubt that it is a comparison drawn from men.

And truly it was on this pretext only that the Anthropomorphites of old troubled the orthodox fathers when they avidly grasped at such utterances as these: “God’s eyes see” [^{<051112>} Deuteronomy 11:12; ^{<110829>} 1 Kings 8:29; ^{<180708>} Job 7:8; etc.]; “It came up to his ears” [^{<041118>} Numbers 11:18; ^{<102207>} 2 Samuel 22:7; ^{<121928>} 2 Kings 19:28; etc.]; “His hand extended” [^{<230525>} Isaiah 5:25; 23:11; ^{<240109>} Jeremiah 1:9; 6:12; etc.]; “The earth his footstool” [^{<236601>} Isaiah 66:1; ^{<400535>} Matthew 5:35; ^{<440749>} Acts 7:49]. They used to cry out that God’s body, which Scripture assigns to him, was taken from him.^{F733} Once this principle is accepted, a boundless barbarism will overwhelm the whole light of faith. For what monstrous absurdities will these fanatical men not draw forth from Scripture if they be allowed to raise in objection every tittle to establish what they please!

Their objection, that when Christ prepared a singular comfort for his disciples in adversity, it is not likely that he was speaking obscurely or in an enigma, actually supports us. For if it had not entered the apostles’ minds that the bread was figuratively called the body because it was the symbol of the body, they would without doubt have been troubled by such a monstrous thing. At almost the same moment, John relates that even on very slight difficulties they were nonplused by perplexity. They contend among themselves over how Christ will go to the Father, and raise

a question as to how he will depart from the world; they comprehend nothing of what is said concerning the Heavenly Father until they shall see him [^{<431405>} John 14:5-8; 16:17]. How, then, can they have been so ready to believe what all reason rejects: that Christ was sitting at table under their gaze, and, invisible, was contained under the bread? By eating the bread without hesitation they attest their consent. From this it therefore is evident that they understood Christ's words in the same sense as we do, for it occurs to them that the name of the thing signified is transferred to the sign, a thing that ought not to seem uncommon in sacraments. It was, therefore, a sure and clear consolation for the disciples, as it is for us, one not wrapped up in an enigma. The only reason that some recoil from our interpretation is that they are blinded by a spell from the devil, so that they conjure for themselves dark enigmas, while the interpretation of this striking figure is obvious.

Moreover, if we insist precisely upon the words, it would have been inconsistent for Christ to say about the bread something separate from what he says of the cup. He calls bread body; he calls wine blood. This must be either a confused repetition or a division that divides body from blood. Indeed, it will be as truly said of the cup, "This is my body," as of the bread itself; and it could conversely be said that the bread is the blood. If they reply that we must see for what purpose or use the symbols were appointed, I indeed admit it. But meanwhile, they will not at all extricate themselves without their error dragging this absurdity with it, that the bread is blood and the wine body.

Now I do not know what it can mean when they admit bread and body to be different things^{F734} yet assert that one is used in speaking of the other, properly and unfiguratively, as if one said that a garment is something different from a man, and yet is properly called a man. Meanwhile, as if victory for them consisted in stubbornness and insults, they say that to seek any explanation of the words is to accuse Christ of lying.

Now, it will be easy for my readers to judge what an unjust wrong these syllable-snatchers^{F735} do us by imbuing the simpleminded with the notion that we discredit Christ's words, when we have actually proved that they madly pervert and confound them but that we faithfully and rightly expound them.

24. DEFENSE AGAINST THE REPROACH THAT OUR INTERPRETATION IS DICTATED BY REASON

But the infamy of this falsehood cannot be completely purged until another accusation is wiped away. For they boast that we are so bound to human reason that we attribute no more to the power of God than the order of nature allows and common sense dictates.^{F736} From such wicked slanders I appeal to the very doctrine I have taught, which shows clearly enough that I do not at all measure this mystery with the measure of human reason, or subject it to the laws of nature. I ask you whether it is from physics we have learned that Christ feeds our souls from heaven with his flesh, but our bodies are nourished by bread and wine. Whence does this power to quicken souls come to flesh? All men will say it comes not by nature. It will be no more pleasing to human reason that Christ's flesh enters into us to be our food. In short, anyone who has tasted our doctrine will be seized with admiration for God's secret power.

But these good zealots fashion for themselves such a miracle that, when it is taken away, God himself vanishes with his power.

Once more I wish to warn my readers to consider diligently the purport of our doctrine: whether it depends upon common sense or, having surmounted the world on the wings of faith, soars up to heaven. We say Christ descends to us both by the outward symbol and by his Spirit, that he may truly quicken our souls by the substance of his flesh and of his blood. He who does not perceive that many miracles are subsumed in these few words is more than stupid. For nothing is more beyond the natural than that souls should borrow spiritual and heavenly life from a flesh that had its origin from earth, and underwent death. There is nothing more incredible than that things severed and removed from one another by the whole space between heaven and earth should not only be connected across such a great distance^{F737} but also be united, so that souls may receive nourishment from Christ's flesh. Therefore, let perverse men cease to engender hatred toward us by the foul misstatement that with wicked intent we would somewhat restrict God's boundless power. For here either they are too stupidly mistaken or they are basely lying.

For here it is not a question of what God could do, but what he willed to do. Now, we affirm that what was pleasing to him was done. But it

pleased him that Christ be made like his brethren in all things except sin [^{<580415>} Hebrews 4:15; cf. ch. 2:17]. What is the nature of our flesh? Is it not something that has its own fixed dimension, is contained in a place, is touched, is *seen*? And why (they say) cannot God make the same flesh occupy many and divers places, be contained in no place, so as to lack measure and form? Madman, why do you demand that God's power make flesh to be and not to be flesh at the same time! It is as if you insisted that he make light to be both light and darkness at the same time! But he wills light to be light; darkness, darkness; and flesh, flesh. Indeed, when he pleases he will turn darkness into light and light into darkness; but when you require that light and darkness not differ, what else are you doing than perverting the order of God's wisdom?^{F738} Flesh must therefore be flesh; spirit, spirit — each thing in the state and condition wherein God created it. But such is the condition of flesh that it must subsist in one definite place, with its own size and form. With this condition Christ took flesh, giving to it, as Augustine attests, incorruption and glory, and not taking away from it nature and truth.^{F739}

25. THE WORD REQUIRES UNDERSTANDING AND INTERPRETATION

They reply that they have the word by which the will of God has been made plain^{F740} — that is, if we concede to them the right to banish from the church the gift of interpretation [^{<461210>} 1 Corinthians 12:10], which sheds light upon the word.

I admit that they have the word, but a word such as the Anthropomorphites^{F741} had of old when they made God corporeal, or as Marcion and the Manichees when they devised for Christ either a heavenly or a spectral body. For they quoted proof texts: "The first Adam was of the earth, earthy; the Second Adam of heaven, heavenly" [^{<461547>} 1 Corinthians 15:47]. Again: "Christ emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, and was found in the likeness of man" [^{<502007>} Philippians 2:7 p.].^{F742}

But these trenchermen think no power of God exists, unless the whole order of nature be overturned by a monster fabricated in their own brains. This is rather to circumscribe God, when by our fictions we attempt to

test what he can do. For from what word have they inferred that the body of Christ is visible in heaven, but lies hidden invisible on earth under innumerable crumbs of bread? They will say that necessity demands this so that Christ's body may be given in the Supper. That is, because they have been pleased to deduce a physical eating from Christ's words, being carried away by their own prejudice, they had to coin this subtlety against which all Scripture cries aloud!

But utterly false is the charge that we diminish anything of God's power; on the contrary, by our teaching, highest praise is given to it. But they are always accusing us of defrauding God of his honor when we reject what is difficult for common sense to believe, although it has been promised by the mouth of Christ. To this I answer again what I lately said, that in the mysteries of the faith common sense is not our adviser, but with quiet teachableness and the spirit of gentleness (which James commends [^{<590121>} James 1:21]) we receive the doctrine given from heaven.

But where they perniciously err, I do not deny that we follow a useful moderation. Hearing Christ's words, "This is my body," they imagine a miracle, far from his mind. But when foul absurdities come forth from this fiction, because they have already with headlong haste ensnared themselves, they plunge into the abyss of God's omnipotence to extinguish by this means the light of truth. Hence arises that haughty fastidiousness: "We do not want to know how Christ lies hidden under bread, being content with his words, 'This is my body.'" 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. From this has arisen our explanation of Christ's words which even all those moderately versed in Scripture know from unvarying Biblical usage to be common to the sacraments. But, following the holy virgin's example, we do not regard it as unlawful for ourselves in a difficult matter to inquire how it can take place [^{<420134>} Luke 1:34].

26. THE BODY OF CHRIST IS IN HEAVEN

But because nothing will be more effective to strengthen the faith of the pious than to have learned that the doctrine which we have put forward has been drawn from the pure Word of God, and rests upon its authority — I shall also make this plain with as much brevity as I can. Not Aristotle, but the Holy Spirit teaches that the body of Christ from the time of his resurrection was finite,^{F743} and is contained in heaven even to the Last Day [cf. ^{<440321>} Acts 3:21]. Nor am I unaware that they cavalierly evade those passages which are quoted in proof of this. Whenever Christ says that he will depart [^{<431412>} John 14:12, 28; 16:7], forsaking the world [^{<431628>} John 16:28], they answer that this departure is nothing but a change of mortal state.^{F744} But according to such reasoning, Christ would not have substituted the Holy Spirit to supply, as they say, the defect of his absence, seeing that the Spirit does not succeed him; nor does Christ descend again from heavenly glory to reassume the state of mortal life. Surely, the coming of the Spirit and the ascent of Christ are antithetical; consequently, Christ cannot dwell with us according to the flesh in the same way that he sends his Spirit.

Besides, he plainly declares that he will not always be in the world with his disciples [^{<402611>} Matthew 26:11; ^{<431208>} John 12:8]. It also seems to them that they have neatly annulled this utterance, as though Christ simply meant that he would not always be poor and pitiable, or subject to the necessities of this fleeting life.^{F745} But the context of the passage openly cries out against this, since it is not a question of neediness and poverty, or of the miserable condition of earthly life, but of worship and honor. The anointing did not please the disciples, because they thought it a needless and useless expense and bordering on excess; consequently, they would have preferred to have the money, which they thought ill-spent, bestowed upon the poor. Christ answered that he would not always be present to be held in such honor [^{<402608>} Matthew 26:8-11].

And Augustine explained it in the same way, with words not in the least ambiguous: “When Christ said, ‘You will not have me with you always,’ he was speaking of the presence of the body. For with regard to his majesty, to his providence, to his ineffable and invisible grace, he fulfilled what he said, ‘Behold, I am with you even to the end of the age’

[^{<402820>}Matthew 28:20, Vg.]. But with regard to the flesh that the Word assumed, the fact that he was born of the virgin, the fact that he was seized by the Jews, was fastened upon the tree, taken down from the cross, wrapped in linen, laid in the tomb, manifested in the resurrection — ‘You will not always have me with you.’ Why? Because according to his bodily presence, he had fellowship for forty days with his disciples; and while they accompanied him, seeing but not following, he ascended [^{<450103>}Acts 1:3, 9]. ‘He is not here’ [^{<411606>}Mark 16:6, Vg.]: for he sits there at the right hand of the Father [^{<411619>}Mark 16:19]. And yet he is here, for the presence of his majesty has not departed [^{<580103>}Hebrews 1:3]. According to the presence of his majesty, we have Christ always; but according to the presence of the flesh, it is rightly said, ‘You will not always have me’ [^{<402611>}Matthew 26:11]. For the church had him according to the presence of the flesh for only a few days; now it holds him by faith, but does not see him with the eyes.”^{F746}

Here (to note this also briefly) Augustine conceives of Christ as present among us in three ways: in majesty, in providence, and in ineffable grace. Under grace I include that marvelous communion of his body and blood—provided we understand that it takes place by the power of the Holy Spirit, not by that feigned inclusion of the body itself under the element, indeed, our Lord testified that he had flesh and bones, which could be felt and seen [^{<432027>}John 20:27].

Also, “departing” and “ascending” do not signify giving the appearance of one ascending and departing, but actually doing what the words state. Shall we therefore, someone will say, assign to Christ a definite region of heaven? But I reply with Augustine that this is a very prying and superfluous question; for us it is enough to believe that he is in heaven.”^{F747}

27. THE MEANING OF THE ASCENSION FOR THE ABOVE-MENTIONED QUESTION

But why do we repeat the word “ascension” so often? Does it not imply moving from one place to another? They deny this: according to them, height signifies only the majesty of his rule. But what is the manner of the ascension itself? Is he not lifted up on high before his disciples’ very eyes? Do not the Evangelists clearly relate that he was received into heaven

[^{<440109>} Acts 1:9; ^{<411619>} Mark 16:19; ^{<422451>} Luke 24:51]? These clever Sophists reply that he was taken away from their sight in a cloud in order that believers might learn that he would not be visible thereafter in the world. As if, to make us certain of his invisible presence, he ought not rather to have vanished in a moment; or clouds ought not to have enveloped him before he moved a foot! But when he is borne high into the air, and by the cloud beneath him [^{<440109>} Acts 1:9], teaches us that he is no longer to be sought on earth, we safely infer that his abode is now in heaven — just as Paul also declares, and bids us look for him from heaven [^{<500320>} Philippians 3:20]. This is why the angels warn the disciples that they gaze toward heaven ill vain, for Jesus, who has been taken up into heaven, will come just as they had seen him ascend [^{<440111>} Acts 1:11].

Here also the adversaries of sound doctrine resort to what seems to them a clever shift: that he never left the earth but remains invisible among his own, and will then come in visible form.^{F748} As if the angels there imply a double presence, and do not simply make the disciples eyewitnesses of the ascension, that no doubt may remain! It is as if they said: received into heaven in your very sight, he has claimed his heavenly empire; it remains for you patiently to wait until he come again as judge of the world. For he has now entered heaven, not to possess it by himself, but to gather you and all godly people with him.

28. THE WITNESS OF AUGUSTINE

But since the defenders of this misbegotten doctrine are not ashamed to deck it with the approbation of ancient writers, and especially of Augustine,^{F749} I shall set forth in a few words how perversely they attempt this. For since their evidence has been gathered from learned and godly men,^{F750} I do not wish to do something already done: let him who will, seek such from their lucubrations. I shall not heap up — even out of Augustine — everything that pertains to the matter; but I shall be content to show by a few testimonies that he is wholly and incontrovertibly on our side.^{F751}

To wrest him from us, our adversaries pretend that the notion often occurs in his books that in the Supper are distributed Christ's flesh and blood, that is, the sacrificial victim once for all offered on the cross. This is

absurd; for he also calls it either eucharist [“thanksgiving”], or sacrament of the body. But we need not seek in a long roundabout way the sense in which he uses the words “flesh” and “blood,” since he explains himself, saying that sacraments take their names from their likeness to the things they signify; consequently, in a certain sense, the sacrament of the body is the body. Another quite familiar passage agrees with this: “The Lord did not hesitate to say, ‘This is my body,’ when he gave the sign.”

But Augustine, they again object, clearly writes that the body of Christ falls to earth and enters into the mouth. To be sure, he does so in the same sense in which he declares it consumed, for he joins both together. His statement that after the completion of the mystery the bread is consumed does not contradict this. For as he had said a little before, “Because these things are known to men, when they are done by men they can be honored as things sacred but not as miracles.”

And what our adversaries too rashly appropriate to themselves has the same purport: that Christ in a manner bore himself in his own hands when he extended the mystical bread to his disciples. For by inserting the adverb of likeness, Augustine makes sufficiently plain that He was not truly or really enclosed under the bread. No wonder! For he elsewhere contends openly that bodies, if deprived of location in space, will not be anywhere; and because they will not be anywhere, they will absolutely not exist. It is a paltry quibble that there Augustine is not dealing with the Supper, in which God exerts special power. For when a question has been raised concerning the flesh of Christ, the holy man deliberately answers: “Christ imparted immortality to his own flesh, but did not remove its nature from it. We ought not to think that it is everywhere diffused according to this fleshly form, for we ought to beware lest we so affirm the deity of the Man that we take away the reality of his body. And it does not follow that what is in God must be everywhere, as God is.” The reason is soon given: “For one person is God and man, and both are one Christ: everywhere, through the fact that he is God; in heaven, through the fact that he is man.” How stupid would it have been not to except the mystery of the Supper, a thing so serious and weighty, if there had been in it anything contrary to the doctrine that he was discussing? And yet, if anyone reads attentively what follows a little after, he will find that the Supper is also included under that general doctrine. For he says that

Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, and likewise the Son of man, is everywhere wholly present as God; that he is God dwelling in the temple of God (that is, in the church), and in some place in heaven, by reason of the measure of his true body. We see how, in order to unite Christ with the church, God does not withdraw Christ's body from heaven. This would surely have been the case if Christ's body were truly food for us only if enclosed under bread.

Elsewhere, explaining how believers now possess Christ, Augustine says, "*You* have Christ through the sign of the cross, through the sacrament of Baptism, through the food and drink of the altar." I am not discussing how correctly he reckons a superstitious rite among the symbols of the presence of Christ. But when he compares the presence of the flesh to the sign of the cross he sufficiently shows that he does not conceive of a Christ with two bodies, so that he who sits visible in heaven may lie hidden in secret under bread. But if a clearer explanation is needed, he adds immediately thereafter, "With regard to the presence of majesty we always have Christ; with regard to the presence of the flesh it has been rightly said, '*You* will not always have me'" [^{<402611>} Matthew 26:11, Cf. Vg.].

They retort that he adds at once: "With regard to ineffable and invisible grace, what he has said will be fulfilled: 'I am with you even to the end of the age'" [^{<402820>} Matthew 28:20, Vg.]. But from this they gain no advantage. For it is, after all, restricted to majesty, which is always set over against body; and flesh is expressly distinguished from grace and power. We find the same antithesis in another passage in Augustine: that Christ withdrew his bodily presence from his disciples in order to be with them in spiritual presence. There it is clear that he distinguishes the essence of the flesh from the power of the Spirit, by which we are joined to Christ, though we are otherwise separated from him by a great distance in space. He often uses the same type of expression, as when he says: "He will come again to the living and the dead in his bodily presence also, according to the rule of faith and sound doctrine. For in his spiritual presence he was also to come to them, and was to be with the whole church in the world even to the end of the age" [^{<402803>} Matthew 28:30; cf. ^{<431712>} John 17:12]. Therefore, this discourse is directed to believers whom Christ had already begun to save in his bodily presence, and whom he with

his bodily presence was to leave, so that he might save them in his spiritual presence with the Father. To understand “bodily” for “visible” presence is a quibble, since he contrasts the body to the divine power. And adding, “to save with the Father,” Augustine makes it clear that He pours down his grace from heaven through the Spirit upon us.

29. ON THE REALITY OF CHRIST’S BODY

Since they put so much confidence in this subterfuge of an invisible presence, come, let us see how well they hide themselves in it.

First, they cannot show a syllable from the Scriptures by which to prove that Christ is invisible. But they take what no sane man will grant them as a fact, that the body of Christ cannot be given in the Supper unless hidden under the mask of bread. And this is the very point of their quarrel with us — so far is it from obtaining the place of a principle!

And while they prate in this way, they are compelled to make Christ’s body double, because, according to them, it is visible ill itself in heaven, yet in the Supper invisible by a special mode of dispensation. But how beautifully this holds together is easy to judge, both from other passages of Scripture and from the testimony of Peter. Peter says that Christ must be received or embraced by heaven until he come again [^{<440321>} Acts 3:21]. These men teach that he is everywhere in space but without form. They object that it is wrong for the nature of the glorious body to submit to the laws of common nature.

But this answer drags with it that insane notion of Servetus (which all godly men rightly find abhorrent), that His body was swallowed up by his divinity.^{F752} I do not say that they think so. But if to fill all things in an invisible manner is numbered among the gifts of the glorified body, it is plain that the substance of the body is wiped out, and that no difference between deity and human nature is left. Then, if Christ’s body is so multiform and varied that it shows itself in one place but is invisible in another, where is the very nature of a body, which exists in its own dimensions, and where its unity? Tertullian far more rightly contends that Christ’s body was true and natural, since in the sacrament of the Supper the figure of it is set before us as a pledge and assurance of the spiritual life.^{F753} And Christ surely said of the glorious body, “See and touch, for a

spirit has no flesh and bones” [^{<422439>}Luke 24:39, cf. Vg.]. Observe that the truth of the flesh is proved by Christ’s own lips because he can be touched and seen. Take these away and flesh now ceases to be. They always take refuge in their dispensation, which they have devised for themselves. But it is our duty so to embrace what Christ declares absolutely that what he means to affirm may without exception be valued among us. He proves himself no specter for he is visible in his flesh. Take away what he claims as proper to the nature of his body; will not a new definition of body then have to be coined?

Now, in whatever direction they may dodge, their reigned dispensation has no place in that passage of Paul, where he says, “We await from heaven a Savior who will change our lowly body to be like his glorious body” [^{<500320>}Philippians 3:20-21]. For we ought not to hope for conformity in those qualities which they attach to Christ, that everyone should have an invisible and infinite body. But they will find no one dull enough to be convinced of so great an absurdity. Let them not, then, ascribe this property to Christ’s glorious body — that it is in many places at once and not held in any space. In short, let them either deny the resurrection of the flesh or grant that Christ, clad in heavenly glory, did not put off the flesh, but *that*, since we are to have a common resurrection with him, he will make us partners and companions of that same glory in our own flesh. For what does all Scripture more clearly teach than that Christ, as he took our true flesh when he was born of the virgin and suffered in our true flesh when he made satisfaction for us, so also received that same true flesh in his resurrection, and bore it up to heaven? For we have this hope of our resurrection and of our ascension into heaven: that Christ rose again and ascended, and, as Tertullian says, bore the guarantee of our resurrection with him to heaven.^{F754} But how weak and fragile that hope would be, if this very flesh of ours had not been truly raised in Christ, and had not entered into the Kingdom of Heaven! But it is the true nature of a body to be contained in space, to have its own dimensions and its own shape. Away, then, with this stupid fiction which fastens both men’s minds and Christ to bread!

To what purpose is the presence hidden under bread, if not that those who desire to have Christ joined to them may halt at this symbol? Yet the Lord himself willed us to withdraw not only our eyes but all our senses from

the earth, forbidding women to touch him until he had ascended to the Father [^{<432017>} John 20:17]. When he sees Mary hastening with devoted and zealous reverence to kiss his feet, why should he disapprove of and forbid this touching until he be received into heaven? There is no other reason but that he wishes to be sought there alone.

Their objection that he was afterward seen by Stephen [^{<440755>} Acts 7:55] is easily answered. For it was not therefore necessary for Christ to change his place, as he could give to his servant's eyes a clarity of vision to pierce the heavens. The same thing is to be said of Paul [^{<440904>} Acts 9:4]. ^{F755}

They object that Christ went forth from the closed sepulcher [^{<402806>} Matthew 28:6], and went in to his disciples through closed doors [^{<432019>} John 20:19]. This gives no more support to their error. For just as the water, like a solid pavement, provided Christ with a path as he walked upon the lake [^{<401425>} Matthew 14:25], so it is no wonder if the hardness of the stone yielded at his approach. Yet it is more probable that the stone was removed at his command, and immediately after he passed through, returned to its place. And to enter through closed doors means not just penetrating through solid matter but opening an entrance for himself by divine power, so that he suddenly stood among his disciples clearly, in a wonderful way, although the doors were locked.

Their quotation from Luke that Christ suddenly vanished from the eyes of the disciples with whom he had gone to Emmaus [^{<422431>} Luke 24:31] does them no good and helps us. For to take the sight of himself away from them, he did not make himself invisible but only disappeared. As, according to the same witness, Luke, when Christ went on a journey with them, he put on no new appearance so as to go unrecognized, but kept their eyes from recognizing him [^{<422416>} Luke 24:16]. But these men not only transform Christ, that he may abide on earth, but they make him one thing here, another there — and unlike himself. In short, by so imagining, not indeed directly but by circumlocution, they make a spirit out of Christ's flesh. And not content with this, they endow it with utterly contrary qualities. ^{F756} From this it necessarily follows that Christ's body is twofold.

30. THE UBIQUITY OF CHRIST'S BODY REJECTED

Now, although we concede to them what they chatter about the invisible presence, yet that immeasurableness will still not be proved, without which they will try in vain to enclose Christ under bread. Unless the body of Christ can be everywhere at once, without limitation of place, it will not be credible that he lies hidden under the bread in the Supper. To meet this necessity, they have introduced the monstrous notion of ubiquity.^{F757}

But as we have proved by firm and clear testimonies of Scripture, Christ's body was circumscribed by the measure of a human body. Again, by his ascension into heaven he made it plain that it is not in all places, but when it passes into one, it leaves the previous one.

Nor is the promise they cite, "I am with you even to the end of the age" [^{<402820>}Matthew 28:20, Vg.], to be applied to the body. First, an abiding connection will only stand if, apart from the use of the Supper, Christ may dwell in us bodily. And therefore they have no valid reason to contend so bitterly over Christ's words in order to enclose Christ under bread in the Supper. Secondly, the context shows that Christ is speaking with no reference whatever to his flesh, but promising invincible help to his disciples in order to protect and sustain them against all the assaults of Satan and the world. For when Christ laid a difficult assignment upon them, then, to keep them from hesitating to undertake it or from engaging in it too timidly, he strengthened them by the assurance of his presence, as if to say that they would not be left without his protection, which is invincible. Unless they wanted to confuse everything, did it not behoove them to distinguish the manner of his presence?

And surely certain men would rather manifest their ignorance to their great shame than yield even the least particle of their error. I am not speaking of the papists, whose doctrine is more tolerable or at least more modest. But some are carried away with such contentiousness as to say that because of the natures joined in Christ, wherever Christ's divinity is, there also is his flesh, which cannot be separated from it. As if that union had compounded from two natures some sort of intermediate being which was neither God nor man! So, indeed, did Eutyches^{F758} teach, and Servetus after him.^{F759} But from Scripture we plainly infer that the one person of Christ so consists of two natures that each nevertheless retains unimpaired its own

distinctive character. And they will be ashamed to deny that Eutyches was rightly condemned. It is a wonder they do not heed the cause of his condemnation; removing the distinction between the natures and urging the unity of the person, he made man out of God and God out of man. What sort of madness, then, is it to mingle heaven with earth rather than give up trying to drag Christ's body from the heavenly sanctuary?

They bring forward these passages for their side: "No one has ascended into heaven but he who descended from heaven, the Son of man, who is in heaven" [^{<430313>} John 3:13, cf. Vg.]; and again: "The Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known" [^{<430118>} John 1:18, Vg.]. It is, equally senseless to despise the "communication of properties,"^{F760} a term long ago invented to some purpose by the holy fathers. Surely, when the Lord of glory is said to be crucified [^{<460208>} 1 Corinthians 2:8], Paul does not mean that he suffered anything in his divinity, but he says this because the same Christ, who was cast down and despised, and suffered in the flesh, was God and Lord of glory. In this way he was also Son of man in heaven [^{<430313>} John 3:13], for the very same Christ, who, according to the flesh, dwelt as Son of man on earth, was God in heaven. In this manner, he is said to have descended to that place according to his divinity, not because divinity left heaven to hide itself in the prison house of the body, but because even though it filled all things, still in Christ's very humanity it dwelt bodily [^{<510209>} Colossians 2:9], that is, by nature, and in a certain ineffable way.^{F761} There is a commonplace distinction of the schools to which I am not ashamed to refer: although the whole Christ is everywhere, still the whole of that which is in him is not everywhere.^{F762} And would that the Schoolmen themselves had honestly weighed the force of this statement. For thus would the absurd fiction of Christ's carnal presence have been obviated. Therefore, since the whole Christ is everywhere, our Mediator is ever present with his own people, and in the Supper reveals himself in a special way, yet in such a way that the whole Christ is present, but not in his wholeness. For, as has been said, in his flesh he is contained in heaven until he appears in judgment.

31. CHRIST NOT BROUGHT DOWN TO US; WE ARE LIFTED UP TO HIM

But greatly mistaken are those who conceive no presence of flesh in the Supper unless it lies in the bread. For thus they leave nothing to the secret working of the Spirit, which unites Christ himself to us. To them Christ does not seem present unless he comes down to us. As though, if he should lift us to himself, we should not just as much enjoy his presence! The question is therefore only of the manner, for they place Christ in the bread, while we do not think it lawful for us to drag him from heaven. Let our readers decide which one is more correct. Only away with that calumny that Christ is removed from his Supper unless he lies hidden under the covering of bread! For since this mystery is heavenly, there is no need to draw Christ to earth that he may be joined to us.

(The true nature of the corporeal presence in which believers partake through the Spirit, 32-34)

32. INVOLVED SOLUTIONS OF THE MYSTERY REJECTED

Now, if anyone should ask me how this takes place, I shall not be ashamed to confess that it is a secret too lofty for either my mind to comprehend or my words to declare. And, to speak more plainly, I rather experience than understand it.^{F763} Therefore, I here embrace without controversy the truth of God in which I may safely rest. He declares his flesh the food of my soul. his blood its drink [^{<430653>} John 6:53 ff.]. I offer my soul to him to be fed with such food. In his Sacred Supper he bids me take, eat, and drink his body and blood under the symbols of bread and wine. I do not doubt that he himself truly presents them, and that I receive them.

I reject only absurd things which appear to be either unworthy of Christ's heavenly majesty, or incompatible with the reality of his human nature, since they are in necessary conflict with God's Word; for it also teaches that Christ was so received into the glory of the Heavenly Kingdom [^{<422426>} Luke 24:26] as to be lifted above all worldly estate, and no less carefully sets off in his human nature those things which are proper to true humanity.

This ought not to seem either incredible or out of accord with reason. For as Christ's whole Kingdom is spiritual, whatever he does with his church must not be subjected to the reason of this world. Or, to use Augustine's words, this mystery, like others, is performed by men, but divinely; on earth, but in a heavenly way.^{F764} Such is the presence of the body (I say) that the nature of the Sacrament requires a presence which we say manifests itself here with a power and effectiveness so great that it not only brings an undoubted assurance of eternal life to our minds, but also assures us of the immortality of our flesh. Indeed, it is now quickened by his immortal flesh, and in a sense partakes of his immortality.

They who are carried beyond this by their own exaggerations do nothing but obscure simple and plain truth with such involvement's. If anyone is not yet satisfied, should like him to ponder here for a little while with me, that we are now discussing a sacrament the whole of which must be referred to faith. But with this partaking of the body, which we have declared, we feed faith just as sumptuously and elegantly as those who draw Christ himself away from heaven.

Meanwhile, I frankly confess that I reject their teaching of the mixture, or transfusion, of Christ's flesh with our soul.^{F765} For it is enough for us that, from the substance of his flesh Christ breathes life into our souls — indeed, pours forth his very life into us — even though Christ's flesh itself does not enter into us. Besides, there is no doubt that the analogy of faith, to which Paul requires all interpretation of Scripture to conform [^{<451203>}Romans 12:3, 6], in this case remarkably supports my view. Let those who so cry out against plain truth see to what standard of faith they are conforming themselves. He who does not confess that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is not of God [I ^{<430402>}John 4:2-3]. These men, although they cover it up or do not notice it, deprive him of his flesh.

33. SPIRITUAL AND, HENCE, ACTUAL PARTAKING OF CHRIST; PARTAKING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER BY UNBELIEVERS

In the same way are we to judge concerning participation, which they do not recognize unless they swallow Christ's flesh under the bread. Yet a serious wrong is done to the Holy Spirit, unless we believe that it is through his incomprehensible power that we come to partake of Christ's

flesh and blood. Indeed, if the power of the mystery as it is taught by us, and was known to the ancient church, had been esteemed as it deserves for the past four hundred years, it was more than enough to satisfy us. The gate would have been closed to many foul errors that gave rise to frightful dissension's which both then^{F766} and in our time have plagued the church, while inquisitive men demand an exaggerated mode of presence, never set forth in Scripture. And they rant about this matter, stupidly and rashly conceived, as if the enclosing of Christ under the bread were the whole of piety, "from stem to stern,"^{F767} as they say. It was of chief importance to know how the body of Christ, as once for all it was given for us, is made ours, and how we become partakers of the blood once shed. For that is to possess Christ entire, crucified, that we may enjoy all his benefits. Now, overlooking these highly important things, in fact, neglecting and well-nigh burying them, they are pleased with this one thorny question: How does Christ's body lie hidden under the bread, or under the form of bread?

They falsely boast that all we teach of spiritual eating is contrary, as they say, to true and real eating, seeing that we pay attention only to the manner, which with them is carnal, while they enclose Christ in bread. For us the manner is spiritual because the secret power of the Spirit is the bond of our union with Christ.

Their other objection is no truer: that we touch only upon the benefit or effect which believers receive from eating Christ's flesh. For, as we have previously stated, Christ himself is the matter of the Supper; and the effect follows from the fact that by the sacrifice of his death we are cleansed of sins, by his blood we are washed, and by his resurrection we are raised to the hope of heavenly life. But the foolish imagination, of which Lombard was the author, that eating Christ's flesh is the sacrament, has perverted their minds. Here are his words: "The sacrament and not the thing are the forms of bread and wine; the sacrament and the thing are the flesh and blood of Christ; the thing and not the sacrament, his mystical flesh." Again a little later: "The thing signified and contained is Christ's proper flesh; signified and not contained, the mystical body." I agree with his distinction between the flesh of Christ and the effective nourishment, which inheres in it; but his pretending it to be a sacrament, and even one contained under bread, is an error not to be endured.

Hence arises their false interpretation of the sacramental eating. For they supposed that even the impious and the wicked eat Christ's body, however estranged from him they may be.^{F768}

Yet Christ's flesh itself in the mystery of the Supper is a thing no less spiritual than our eternal salvation. From this we infer that all those who are devoid of Christ's Spirit can no more eat Christ's flesh than drink wine that has no taste. Surely, Christ is too unworthily torn apart if his body, lifeless and powerless, is prostituted to unbelievers. And this is contradicted by his plain words: "Whosoever will eat my flesh and drink my blood will abide in me and I in him" [^{<F430656>} John 6:56]. They counter that in this passage sacramental eating is not in question. This I grant, provided they do not repeatedly stumble over the same stone, that no one can eat his very flesh without any benefit.

However, I should like to know from them how long they retain it when they have eaten it. Here, in my judgment, they will find no way out. But they object that nothing of the trustworthiness of God's promises can be diminished or fail through men's ungratefulness. This, of course, I grant, and say that the power of the mystery remains intact, no matter how much wicked men try to their utmost to nullify it. Yet it is one thing to be offered, another to be received. Christ proffers this spiritual food and gives this spiritual drink to all. Some feed upon them eagerly, others haughtily refuse them. Will the latter's rejection of them cause the food and drink to lose their nature? They will say that their opinion is supported by this comparison, namely, that the flesh of Christ, although it be without taste, is nonetheless flesh. But I deny that it can be eaten without some taste of faith. Or (if we prefer to speak as Augustine does), I hold that men bear away from this Sacrament no more than they gather with the vessel of faith.^{F769} Thus nothing is taken away from the Sacrament; indeed, its truth and effectiveness remain undiminished, although the wicked go away empty after outward participation in it.

If they object again that the word — "This is my body" — loses meaning if the wicked receive corruptible bread and nothing besides, there is a ready reply: God's will is that his truthfulness be acknowledged not in the reception itself, but in the constancy of his goodness, in that he is ready to give to the unworthy what they reject, indeed, offers it freely. And this is

the wholeness of the Sacrament, which the whole world cannot violate: that the flesh and blood of Christ are no less truly given to the unworthy than to God's elect believers. At the same time, it is true, however, that, just as rain falling upon a hard rock flows off because no entrance opens into the stone, the wicked by their hardness so repel God's grace that it does not reach them. Besides, to say that Christ may be received without faith is as inappropriate as to say that a seed may germinate in fire.

It is pointless for them to ask how Christ has come for the damnation of some, unless they receive him unworthily, since we nowhere read that men bring death upon themselves by receiving Christ unworthily, but rather by despising him.

And they gain no support from Christ's parable in which he says that seed sprang up among thorns and, afterward choked by them, was destroyed [^{<401307>} Matthew 13:7]. For there he is discussing the value of a temporary faith, which those who make Judas, in this respect, an equal partner with Peter do not think necessary for the eating of Christ's flesh and the drinking of his blood. Rather, their error is refuted by the same parable, where Christ says that some seed fell upon the path, others upon rocks, and neither took root [^{<401304>} Matthew 13:4-5]. From this it follows that in the case of unbelievers their own hardness is the hindrance which prevents Christ from coming to them.

Anyone who desires our salvation to be helped by this Sacrament will find nothing more fitting than that believers, led to the well [cf. ^{<430406>} John 4:6-15], may draw life from the Son of God. But its dignity is wonderfully enough commended when we hold that it is a help whereby we may be engrafted into Christ's body, or, engrafted, may grow more and more together with him, until he perfectly joins us with him in the heavenly life. They object that Paul ought not to have made them guilty of the body and blood of Christ [^{<461127>} 1 Corinthians 11:27] unless they partook of these.^{F770} But I reply that they are not condemned because they have eaten, but only for having profaned the mystery by trampling underfoot the pledge of sacred union with God, which they ought reverently to have received.

34. PARTAKING OF THE LORD'S SUPPER BY UNBELIEVERS, ACCORDING TO AUGUSTINE

Among ancient writers Augustine especially has affirmed this article of doctrine, that, by the unfaithfulness or ill will of men, nothing is taken away from the sacraments, nor is the grace which they symbolize nullified. Consequently, it will be useful to prove clearly from his words how ignorantly and wrongly those who cast Christ's body to dogs to eat apply his statement to the present case. Sacramental eating, according to them, is the way in which the wicked receive Christ's body and blood without the power of the Spirit or any effect of grace. Augustine, on the other hand, prudently weighs these words, "He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood [^{<430654>} John 6:54; 6:55, Vg.] will not die [^{<430650>} John 6:50] forever [^{<430651>} John 6:51]; that is, he who received the power of the Sacrament, not only the visible Sacrament; and indeed inwardly, not outwardly; and who eats with the heart, not who presses with the teeth." From this he at length concludes that the Sacrament of this thing, that is, of the unity of the body and blood of Christ, is set forth in the Lord's Supper for some to life, for others to death; but the thing itself of which it is a sacrament is set forth for all to life, for no one to death — whosoever may partake of it. Lest anyone quibble here that "the thing" is called not "the body" but the grace of the Spirit, which can be separated from it, the antithesis between *visible* and *invisible* scatters these clouds. For under *visible* Christ's body cannot be included. From this it follows that unbelievers communicate only in a visible symbol. And, the better to dispel all doubt, Augustine, having said that this bread requires the hunger of the inner man, adds: Moses and Aaron and Phineas and many others who ate the manna [^{<021614>} Exodus 16:14 ff.] pleased God. Why? Because they understood visible food spiritually, they hungered spiritually, they tasted spiritually that they might be spiritually filled. For we today also receive visible food; but the Sacrament is one thing, the power of the Sacrament, another. A little later he says: "And through this, he who does not abide in Christ and in whom Christ does not abide, doubtless does not spiritually eat his flesh or drink his blood, although he may carnally and visibly press the sign of the body and blood with his teeth." Again, we are told that the visible sign and spiritual eating are contrasted with each other. By this is refuted the error that Christ's invisible body is actually eaten sacramentally, although

not spiritually. Also we hear that to profane and impure men nothing is granted but the visible taking of the sign. Hence, Augustine's famous saying that the rest of the disciples ate the bread which was the Lord, but Judas ate the bread of the Lord. By this he clearly excludes unbelievers from partaking of the body and blood. What he says elsewhere has the same purport: "Why do you marvel if the bread of Christ was given to Judas, through which he was bound over to the devil, when you see, on the contrary, that a messenger of the devil was given to Paul to perfect him in Christ [^{<471207>} 2 Corinthians 12:7]?" Indeed, he says in another passage that Christ's body was the bread of the Supper for those to whom Paul said, "He who eats unworthily eats and drinks judgment upon himself" [^{<461129>} 1 Corinthians 11:29]. Nor do they, therefore, receive nothing because they receive wickedly. But in another place Augustine declares more fully in what sense this is said. For, undertaking purposely to define how the wicked and evildoers, who profess the Christian faith with their lips but deny it by their deeds, eat Christ's body (and indeed opposing the opinion of some who thought they ate not in the Sacrament alone but in reality), he says: "But it must not be said that they eat Christ's body, because they must not be reckoned among Christ's members. For not to mention other things, they cannot be at the same time members of Christ and members of a harlot [^{<460615>} 1 Corinthians 6:15]. Finally, when Christ himself says, 'He who eats my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me and I in him' [^{<430656>} John 6:56; 6:57, Vg.], he shows what it is to eat Christ's body, not only as a sacrament but in reality. For this is to abide in Christ, that Christ may abide in him. For he said this as if to say, Let not him who does not abide in me and in whom I do not abide say or think that he eats my body or drinks my blood."

Let my readers weigh this antithesis between eating sacramentally and in reality, and no doubt will remain. He confirms the same point as clearly in these words: "Do not prepare your jaws but your heart: for this the Supper is commended. Behold, we believe in Christ when we receive him in faith; in receiving him we know what we think. We receive a little and are nourished in heart. It is not what is seen, then, but what is believed, that feeds." Here also what the wicked take he confines to the visible sign; and he teaches that Christ is received by faith only. In another passage also, Augustine, expressly declaring that good and bad men partake

together in the signs, denies that the latter truly eat Christ's flesh. For if they received the thing itself, he would by no means have left unsaid what was more favorable to his case. Also, in another place, under the topic of eating and the benefit of it, he concludes as follows: "Then Christ's body and blood will be life for every man, if what is visibly received in the Sacrament in very truth be spiritually eaten and spiritually drunk. Therefore, let those who (in order to agree with Augustine) make unbelievers partakers of Christ's flesh and blood show us Christ's visible body, inasmuch as the whole truth is, according to him, spiritual. And it is certainly inferred from his words that sacramental eating, where unbelief closes the door to the reality, has no more value than visible or outward eating. But if Christ's body could be eaten truly, but yet not spiritually, what would his statement made elsewhere mean? "You will not eat this body which you see, and you will not drink the blood which those who crucify me will shed. I have enjoined a sacrament unto you; spiritually understood, it will give you life." Surely, he did not mean to deny that the same body which Christ has offered as a sacrifice is extended in the Supper; but he took note of the manner of eating; that is, having been received into heavenly glory, the body breathes life upon us by the secret power of the Spirit. Indeed, I admit that in his works one often finds this expression, that Christ's body is eaten by unbelievers; but he explains himself, adding, "in the Sacrament." And in another passage he describes spiritual eating, in which our bites do not consume grace. And lest my opponents assert that I fight them by piling up quotations, I should like to know how they can evade this one statement of his, where he says, "In the elect alone do the sacraments effect what they symbolize."^{F771} Surely, they dare not deny that in the Supper Christ's body is symbolized by the bread. From this follows that the wicked are barred from partaking of it. That Cyril also held the same view is shown by these words: "Just as a man by pouring other wax upon melted wax completely mixes both together, so it is necessary, if one receives the flesh and blood of the Lord, for him to be joined with Christ, so that Christ may be found in him and he in Christ." It is clear by these words, I believe, that those who only sacramentally eat Christ's body, which cannot be separated from its power, are deprived of its true and real eating; and that there is here no reason to lose faith in the promises of God, who does not stop the rain

from falling from heaven, although rocks and stones do not receive the moisture of the rain.

(Superstitious adoration of the elements excluded, 35-37)

35. ADORATION OF THE ELEMENTS REJECTED

This knowledge will easily draw us away also from physical adoration, which certain persons with perverted rashness have set up in the Sacrament,^{F772} because they reasoned as follows: if it is the body, then both soul and divinity are together with the body and cannot be separated from it; consequently, we must adore Christ there.

First, if their alleged concomitance^{F773} be denied them, what will they do? For though they greatly stress the absurdity of separating the body from the soul and divinity, still what sane and sober man can convince himself that Christ's body is Christ? Indeed, they think that they neatly prove this with their syllogisms. But since Christ speaks separately of his body and his blood, without describing the mode of his presence, how will they incontrovertibly prove what they wish by a thing that is indeterminate? What then? air their consciences happen to be troubled by some graver feeling, will they not, along with their syllogisms, at once be dissolved and melt away? So it will be when they see themselves bereft of God's sure Word, for upon it alone our souls stand fast when they are called to account; and without it they will faint the very first moment it dawns upon them that the apostles' teaching and examples are against them, and that they themselves are the only authorities they have. To such impulses other sharp pricks will be added. What? Was it a matter of no importance to adore God in this form as if nothing was prescribed for us? When the true worship of God was concerned, ought they to have undertaken so lightly what not a word of Scripture ever supports? But if with becoming humility they had kept all their thoughts under the Word of God, they would surely have heard what he said, "Take, eat, drink" [^{<402626>}Matthew 26:26-27], and would have obeyed this command, by which he bids us receive the Sacrament, not adore it.

But those who receive the Sacrament as God has commanded, without adoration, are confident that they are not turning aside from God's command. There is nothing better than this assurance when we undertake

any task. They have the example of the apostles, who, as we read, did not adore it prostrate, but received and ate it as they reclined.^{F774} They have the practice of the apostolic church, where Luke relates that the believers partook together, not in adoration, but in breaking of bread [^{<440242>} Acts 2:42]. They have the apostolic doctrine, with which Paul instructed the church of the Corinthians, professing that he had received from the Lord what he delivered [^{<461123>} 1 Corinthians 11:23].

36. SUPERSTITION AND IDOLATRY IN SUCH ADORATION

These things, moreover, incline pious readers to reflect how unsafe it is in things so lofty to wander from God's simple word to the fantasies of our own brains. But the things said above ought to free us from every misgiving in this matter. For, in order that pious souls may duly apprehend Christ in the Supper, they must be raised up to heaven. But if the function of the Sacrament is to help the otherwise weak mind of man so that it may rise up to look upon the height of spiritual mysteries, then those who are halted at the outward sign wander from the right way of seeking Christ. What then? Shall we deny that this is superstitious worship when men prostrate themselves before bread to worship Christ there? Doubtless the Council of Nicaea meant to forestall this evil when it forbade us to fix our humble attention upon the symbols set before us.^{F775} And for the same reason it was established of old that before consecration the people should be told in a loud voice to lift up their hearts.^{F776} Scripture itself also not only carefully recounts to us the ascension of Christ, by which he withdrew the presence of his body from our sight and company, to shake from us all carnal thinking of him, but also, whenever it recalls him, bids our minds be raised up, and seek him in heaven, seated at the right hand of the Father [^{<510301>} Colossians 3:1-2]. According to this rule, we ought rather to have adored him spiritually in heavenly glory than to have devised some dangerous kind of adoration, replete with a carnal and crass conception of God.

Therefore, those who have devised the adoration of the Sacrament have not only dreamed it by themselves apart from Scripture, where no mention of it can be shown — something that would not have been overlooked if it had been acceptable to God — but also, with Scripture crying out against it, they have forsaken the living God and fashioned a God after their own

desire. For what is idolatry if not this: to worship the gifts in place of the Giver himself? In this there is a double transgression: for both the honor taken from God has been transferred to the creature [cf. <450125> Romans 1:25], and he himself also has been dishonored in the defilement and profanation of his gift, when his holy Sacrament is made a hateful idol. But let us, on the other hand, to avoid falling into the same pit, fix our ears, eyes, hearts, minds, and tongues completely upon God's sacred teaching. For that is the school of that best schoolmaster, the Holy Spirit, in which we so advance that nothing need be acquired from elsewhere, but that we ought willingly to be ignorant of what is not taught in it.

37. SUPERSTITIOUS RITES WITH THE CONSECRATED HOST

But now (as superstition, once past the proper bounds, makes no end of sinning), they fell much further. For they devised rites utterly alien to the institution of the Supper, with the intent of paying divine honors to the sign. To Christ, they say, we yield this veneration.^{F777} First, if this were done in the Supper, I would say that the only lawful adoration is that which does not rest in the sign, but is directed to Christ seated in heaven. But now, what is their pretext for the boast that they worship Christ in that bread, when they have no promise of such a thing? They consecrate the host, as they call it, to carry it about in procession, to display it in solemn spectacle that it may be seen, worshiped, and called upon. I ask by what power they think it duly consecrated. To be sure, they will bring forward these words: "This is my body." But I object, to the contrary, that at the same time this was said: "Take and eat." And I shall do this with good reason. For when a promise is joined to a command, I say that the latter is included in the former, so that, separated from it, it becomes no promise at all. That will be made clearer by a similar example, God gave a command when he said, "Call upon me." He added a promise, "I shall hear you" [<195015> Psalm 50:15]. If any man, calling upon Peter and Paul, were to presume upon this promise, would not all cry out that he was doing wrong? And what else, I beg of you, do they do who, overlooking the command to eat, seize upon a mutilated promise, "This is my body," that they may misuse it for ceremonies alien to Christ's institution? Let us therefore remember that this promise was given to those who observe the

command joined to it, but that those who transfer the Sacrament to another usage are without any word of God.

awe previously discussed how the Sacrament of the Sacred Supper serves our faith before God.^{F778} But, the Lord here not only recalls to our memory, as we have already explained, the abundance of his bounty, but, so to speak, gives it into our hand and arouses us to recognize it. At the same time he admonishes us not to be ungrateful for such lavish beneficence, but rather to proclaim it with fitting praises and to celebrate it with thanksgiving. Therefore, when he gave the institution of the Sacrament itself to the apostles, he taught them to do it in remembrance of him [^{<422219>} Luke 22:19]. This Paul interpreted as “to declare the Lord’s death” [^{<461126>} 1 Corinthians 11:26], that is, with a single voice to confess openly before men that for us the whole assurance of life and salvation rests upon the Lord’s death, that we may glorify him by our confession, and by our example exhort others to give glory to him. Here again the purpose of the Sacrament is made clear, that is, to exercise us in the remembrance of Christ’s death. For the command to us to “declare the Lord’s death till he come” [^{<461126>} 1 Corinthians 11:26] in judgment means nothing else than that we should by the confession of our mouth declare what our faith recognizes in the Sacrament: that the death of Christ is our life. Here is the second use of the Sacrament, which pertains to outward confession.

(Points of special emphasis: mutual love; the accompaniment of preaching; medicine for sick souls; worthy partaking; suitable form and the frequency of administration, 38-46)

38. THE LORD’S SUPPER IMPLIES MUTUAL LOVE

Thirdly, the Lord also intended the Supper to be a kind of exhortation for us, which can more forcefully than any other means quicken and inspire us both to purity and holiness of life, and to love, peace, and concord.^{F779} For the Lord so communicates his body to us there that he is made completely one with us and we with him. Now, since he has only one body, of which he makes us all partakers, it is necessary that all of us also be made one body by such participation. The bread shown in the Sacrament represents this unity. As it is made of many grains so mixed together that one cannot

be distinguished from another, so it is fitting that in the same way we should be joined and bound together by such great agreement of minds that no sort of disagreement or division may intrude.^{F780} I prefer to explain it in Paul's words: "The cup of blessing which we bless is a communicating of the blood of Christ; and the bread of blessing which we break is a participation in the body of Christ.... Therefore...we...are all one body, for we partake of one bread" [^{<461016>} 1 Corinthians 10:16-17, cf. Vg.]. We shall benefit very much from the Sacrament if this thought is impressed and engraved upon our minds: that none of the brethren can be injured, despised, rejected, abused, or in any way offended by us, without at the same time, injuring, despising, and abusing Christ by the wrongs we do; that we cannot disagree with our brethren without at the same time disagreeing with Christ; that we cannot love Christ without loving him in the brethren; that we ought to take the same care of our brethren's bodies as we take of our own; for they are members of our body; and that, as no part of our body is touched by any feeling of pain which is not spread among all the rest, so we ought not to allow a brother to be affected by any evil, without being touched with compassion for him. Accordingly, Augustine with good reason frequently calls this Sacrament "the bond of love."^{F781} For what sharper goad could there be to arouse mutual love among us than when Christ, giving himself to us, not only invites us by his own example to pledge and give ourselves to one another, but inasmuch as he makes himself common to all, also makes all of us one in himself.^{F782}

39. THE LORD'S SUPPER CANNOT EXIST APART FROM THE WORD

This very well confirms what I have said elsewhere:^{F783} that the right administering of the Sacrament cannot stand apart from the Word. For whatever benefit may come to us from the Supper requires the Word: whether we are to be confirmed in faith, or exercised in confession, or aroused to duty, there is need of .preaching. Therefore, nothing more preposterous could happen in the Supper than for it to be turned into a silent action, as has happened under the pope's tyranny. For they wanted to have the whole force of the consecration depend upon the intention of the priest,^{F784} as if it did not matter at all to the people, to whom the mystery ought most of all to have been explained. Hence, moreover, arose

this error: they did not observe that those promises by which consecration is accomplished are directed not to the elements themselves but to those who receive them. Certainly Christ does not say to the bread that it shall become his body, but he commands his disciples to eat and promises them participation in his body and blood. Paul's teaching takes the same form, that the promises are offered to believers along with the bread and the cup.. Obviously, this is so. Here we should not imagine some magic incantation, supposing it enough to have mumbled the words, as if they were to be heard by the elements; but let us understand that these words are living preaching which edifies its hearers, penetrates into their very minds, impresses itself upon their hearts and settles there, and reveals its effectiveness in the fulfillment of what it promises.

By these reasons it clearly appears that the reservation of the Sacrament, which some urge, that in special circumstances it may be distributed to the sick, is useless. For either they will receive it without a recital of Christ's institution, or the minister will join with the sign the true explanation of the mystery. Silence involves abuse and fault. If the promises are recited and the mystery declared, so that they who are about to receive it may receive it with benefit, there is no reason to doubt that this is a true consecration. What purpose, then, will that other consecration have, whose effect does not even reach the sick? But, it is said, they who do this have the example of the ancient church.^{F785} I admit the statement, but in so great a matter, one in which error entails great peril, nothing is safer than to follow the truth itself.

40. OF UNWORTHY PARTAKING OF THE SACRAMENT

We see that this sacred bread of the Lord's Supper is spiritual food, as sweet and delicate as it is healthful for pious worshipers of God, who, in tasting it, feel that Christ is their life, whom it moves to thanksgiving, for whom it is an exhortation to mutual love among themselves. On the other hand, it is turned into a deadly poison for all those whose faith it does not nourish and strengthen, and whom it does not arouse to thanksgiving^{F786} and to love. Physical food, when it comes into a stomach occupied by evil humors, and is itself also vitiated and corrupted, harms rather than nourishes. So also this spiritual food, if it enters a soul corrupted by malice and wickedness, casts it down with a greater ruin — not by the

fault of the food itself, but because to polluted and unbelieving men nothing is clean [^{<560115>}Titus 1:15], however much it otherwise be sanctified by the Lord's blessing. "For," as Paul says, "any who eat and drink unworthily are guilty of the Lord's body and blood, and eat and drink judgment upon themselves, not discerning the body of the Lord" [^{<461127>}1 Corinthians 11:27 and 29, conflated]. Men of this sort who, without any spark of faith, without any zeal for love, rush like swine to take the Lord's Supper do not discern the Lord's body. In so far as they do not believe that that body is their life, so far do they dishonor it, robbing it of all its dignity; and finally they profane and pollute it by so receiving it. And, since they are estranged from and out of accord with their brethren, and dare mix the sacred symbol of Christ's body with their discords, it is not on their account that Christ's body is not torn and dismembered. Therefore, they are deservedly held guilty of the Lord's body and blood, which they so foully defile with sacrilegious impiety. Hence, by this unworthy eating they bring condemnation upon themselves. For while they have no faith fixed upon Christ, yet, in receiving the Sacrament, they profess that their salvation is nowhere but in him and abjure all other assurance. Therefore, they are their own accusers; they bear witness against themselves and seal their own condemnation. Then, although they are divided and separated by hatred and ill will from their brethren, that is, from the members of Christ, and thus have no part in Christ, they still testify that this alone is salvation — to partake of Christ and be united with him.

On this account, Paul enjoins that a man examine himself before eating of this bread or drinking from this cup [^{<461128>}1 Corinthians 11:28]. By this (as I interpret it), he meant that each man descend into himself,^{F787} and ponder with himself whether he rests with inward assurance of heart upon the salvation purchased by Christ; whether he acknowledges it by confession of mouth; then, whether he aspires to the imitation of Christ with the zeal of innocence and holiness; whether, after Christ's example, he is prepared to give himself for his brethren and to communicate himself to those with whom he shares Christ in common; whether, as he is counted a member by Christ, he in turn so holds all his brethren as members of his body; whether he desires to cherish, protect, and help them as his own members. Not that these duties both of faith and of love

can now be made perfect in us, but that we should endeavor and aspire with all our heart toward this end in order that we may day by day increase our faith once begun.

41. WHO IS “WORTHY”?

Commonly, when they would prepare men to eat worthily, they have tortured and harassed pitiable consciences in dire ways; yet they have not brought forward a particle of what would be to the purpose. They said that those who were in state of grace ate worthily. They interpreted “in state of grace” to mean to be pure and purged of all sin.^{F788} Such a dogma would debar all the men who ever were or are on earth from the use of this Sacrament. For if it is a question of our seeking worthiness by ourselves, we are undone; only despair and deadly ruin remain to us. Although we try with all our strength, we shall make no headway, except that in the end we shall be most unworthy, after we have labored mightily in pursuit of worthiness.

To heal this sore, they have devised a way of acquiring worthiness: that, examining ourselves to the best of our ability, and requiring ourselves to account for all our deeds, we expiate our unworthiness by contrition, confession, and satisfaction. We have already shown in a more appropriate place the nature of this expiation.^{F789} As far as applies to the present task, I say that these remedies are too feeble and fleeting for consciences dismayed and dejected and stricken with the horror of their own sin. For if our Lord by his prohibition admits no one to participation in his Supper who is not righteous and innocent, grave caution is needed by anyone to assure himself of his own righteousness, which he hears that God requires. On what ground are we confirmed in the assurance that those who have done their best have performed their duty before God? But even if this were so, when will it come about that anyone dare assure himself that he has done his best? So, since no definite assurance of our worthiness appears, the door will always remain locked by that dread prohibition which decrees that they who eat and drink unworthily eat and drink judgment upon themselves [^{<461129>} 1 Corinthians 11:29].

42. FAITH AND LOVE REQUISITE, BUT NOT PERFECTION

Now, it is easy to judge the nature of that doctrine which reigns in the papacy, and from what author it sprang. For by its immoderate harshness it deprives and despoils sinners, miserable and afflicted with trembling and grief, of the consolation of this Sacrament; yet in it, all the delights of the gospel were set before them. Surely the devil could find no speedier means of destroying men than by so maddening them that they could not taste and savor this food with which their most gracious Heavenly Father had willed to feed them. In order, therefore, not to rush headlong to such ruin, let us remember that this sacred feast is medicine for the sick, solace for sinners, alms to the poor; but would bring no benefit to the healthy, righteous, and rich — if such could be found. For since in it Christ is given to us as food, we understand that without him we would pine away, starve, and faint — as famine destroys the vigor of the body. Then, since he is given us unto life, we understand that without him in us we would plainly be dead. Therefore, this is the worthiness — the best and only kind we can bring to God — to offer our vileness and (so to speak) our unworthiness to him so that his mercy may make us worthy of him; to despair in ourselves so that we may be comforted in him; to abase ourselves so that we may be lifted up by him; to accuse ourselves so that we may be justified by him; moreover, to aspire to that unity which he commends to us in his Supper; and, as he makes all of us one in himself, to desire one soul, one heart, one tongue for us all. If we have weighed and considered these things well, these thoughts, though they may stagger us, will never lay us low. How could we, needy and bare of all good, befouled with sins, half-dead, eat the Lord's body worthily? Rather, we shall think that we, as being poor, come to a kindly giver; as sick, to a physician; as sinners, to the Author of righteousness; finally, as dead, to him who gives us life. We shall think that the worthiness, which is commanded by God, consists chiefly in faith, which reposes all things in Christ, but nothing in ourselves; secondly, in love — and that very love which, though imperfect, is enough to offer to God, that he may increase it to something better, inasmuch as it cannot be offered in completeness?^{F790}

Others, agreeing with us, that worthiness itself consists in faith and love, still are far in error on the standard itself of worthiness, requiring, as they do, a perfection of faith which cannot at all be attained, and a love equal to

that which Christ has shown toward us. But, by so doing, they, like those previously mentioned, drive all men from approaching this most holy Supper. For if their view obtained, no one would receive it except unworthily, since all to a man would be held guilty and convicted of their own imperfection. And it would be excessive stupidity — not to mention foolishness — to require such perfection in receiving the Sacrament as would make the Sacrament void and superfluous. For it is a sacrament ordained not for the perfect, but for the weak and feeble, to awaken, arouse, stimulate, and exercise the feeling of faith and love, indeed, to correct the defect of both.

43. ON THE PROPER CELEBRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

But as for the outward ceremony of the action — whether or not the believers take it in their hands, or divide it among themselves, or severally eat what has been given to each; whether they hand the cup back to the deacon or give it to the next person; whether the bread is leavened or unleavened; the wine red or white — it makes no difference. These things are indifferent, and left at the church's discretion.

However, it is certain that the practice of the ancient church was for all to take it in their hands. And Christ said, "Divide it among yourselves" [^{<422217>}Luke 22:17, Vg.]. The histories narrate that common leavened bread was used before the time of the Roman Bishop Alexander, who was the first who delighted in unleavened bread.^{F791} But I see no reason for this, unless to draw the eyes of the common people to wonderment by a new spectacle, rather than to instruct their minds in sound religion. I ask all who are in the least affected by a zeal for piety whether they do not clearly see both how much more brightly God's glory shines here, and how much richer: sweetness of spiritual consolation comes to believers, than in these lifeless and theatrical trifles, which serve no other purpose than to deceive the sense of a people stupefied. They call this the holding of the people by religion when they lead them at will — dulled and befooled with superstition. If anyone should like to defend such inventions by appealing to antiquity, I also am not ignorant of how ancient the use of chrism and exsuffiation is in baptism;^{F792} how soon after the apostolic age the Lord's Supper was corrupted by rust. But this, indeed, is the stubborn boldness of men, which cannot restrain itself from always

trifling and wantoning in God's mysteries. Let us, however, remember that God so esteems obedience to his Word that he would have us judge both his angels and the whole world in its light [^{<460602>} 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; ^{<480108>} Galatians 1:8].

Now, to get rid of this great pile of ceremonies, the Supper could have been administered most becomingly if it were set before the church very often, and at least once a week.^{F793} First, then, it should begin with public prayers. After this a sermon should be given. Then, when bread and wine have been placed on the Table, the minister should repeat the words of institution of the Supper. Next, he should recite the promises which were left to us in it; at the same time, he should excommunicate all who are debarred from it by the Lord's prohibition. Afterward, he should pray that the Lord, with the kindness wherewith he has bestowed this sacred food upon us, also teach and form us to receive it with faith and thankfulness of heart, and, inasmuch as we are not so of ourselves, by his mercy make us worthy of such a feast. But here either psalms should be sung, or something be read, and in becoming order the believers should partake of the most holy banquet, the ministers breaking the bread and giving the cup. When the Supper is finished, there should be an exhortation to sincere faith and confession of faith, to love and behavior worthy of Christians. At the last, thanks should be given, and praises sung to God. When these things are ended, the church should be dismissed in peace.^{F794}

44. THE LORD'S SUPPER SHOULD BE CELEBRATED FREQUENTLY

What we have so far said of the Sacrament abundantly shows that it was not ordained to be received only once a year^{F795} and that, too, perfunctorily, as now is the usual custom. Rather, it was ordained to be frequently used among all Christians in order that they might frequently return in memory to Christ's Passion, by such remembrance to sustain and strengthen their faith, and urge themselves to sing thanksgiving to God and to proclaim his goodness; finally, by it to nourish mutual love, and among themselves give witness to this love, and discern its bond in the unity of Christ's body. For as often as we partake of the symbol of the Lord's body, as a token given and received, we reciprocally bind ourselves to all the duties of love in order that none of us may permit anything that can

harm our brother, or overlook anything that can help him, where necessity demands and ability suffices.

Luke relates in The Acts that this was the practice of the apostolic church, when he says that believers "...continued in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayers" [^{<440242>} Acts 2:42, cf. Vg.]. Thus it became the unvarying rule that no meeting of the church should take place without the Word, prayers, partaking of the Supper, and almsgiving. That this was the established order among the Corinthians also, we can safely infer from Paul [cf. ^{<461120>} 1 Corinthians 11:20]. And it remained in use for many centuries after.

Hence arose those ancient canons attributed by them to Anacletus and Calixtus, that, after consecration is finished, all who do not wish to be outside the precincts of the church should partake.^{F796} And in those old canons which they call "apostolic," we read: "Those who do not stay until the end, and do not receive the sacred communion, should be corrected as disturbers of the church." In the Council of Antioch, also, it was decreed that those who enter the church and hear the Scriptures and abstain from communion should be removed from the church until they correct this fault. Although this was softened or at least set forth in milder language at the First Council of Toledo, still it was also decreed there that those who, having heard the sermon, have been found never to communicate are to be warned; if, after warning, they still abstain, they are to be excluded.^{F797}

45. AUGUSTINE AND CHRYSOSTOM ON THE DUTY OF PARTICIPATION

Obviously, by these constitutions holy men meant to retain and protect the frequent practice of communion, received, as it was, from the apostles themselves. For they saw that it was most wholesome for believers but that it gradually fell into disuse out of common neglect. Augustine testifies of his own day: "The Sacrament of this thing, namely, of the unity of the Lord's body, is set upon the Lord's Table and received from that Table daily in some places, in other places at certain intervals — by some men to life, by others to destruction." And in the first letter to Januarius, he says: "Some partake daily of the Lord's body and blood; others receive them on certain days; in some places no day passes when it is not offered;

elsewhere, only on Saturday and Sunday; still elsewhere, only on Sunday.” But since, as we have said, the common folk sometimes became more lax, holy men sharply rebuked them, to avoid seeming to wink at such indifference. There is an example of this in Chrysostom’s homilies on the Letter to the Ephesians: “It is not said to him who dishonored the banquet, ‘Why did you recline at Table?’ but, ‘Why did you come in?’ [^{<402212>}Matthew 22:12]. Whoever does not partake of the mysteries is wicked and shameless to be present there. I beg of you, if anyone, invited, comes to a banquet, washes his hands, reclines at table, and seems to get ready to eat, and then tastes nothing — does he not dishonor both the banquet and the host? So, when you stand among those who prepare themselves with prayer to receive the most holy food, in the fact that you have not withdrawn, you have confessed that you are one of their number, but at the end you do not partake! Would it not be better for you not to have been present? I am unworthy, you say. Therefore, you were also not worthy of the communion of prayer, which is the preparation for the receiving of the sacred mystery.”^{F798}

46. COMMUNICATING ONLY ONCE A YEAR CONDEMNED

Plainly this custom which enjoins us to take communion once a year is a veritable invention of the devil, whoever was instrumental in introducing it. They say that Zephyrinus was the author of this decree,^{F799} although it is not believable that it was in the form in which we now have it. For perhaps by his ordinance he did not provide too badly for the church, as times were then. For there is not the least doubt that the Sacred Supper was in that era set before the believers every time they met together; and there is no doubt that a majority of them took communion; but since all scarcely ever happened to take communion at once, and since it was necessary for those who were mingled with profane and idolatrous men to attest their faith by some outward sign — the holy man, for the sake of order and polity, appointed that day on which all Christian people should, by partaking of the Lord’s Supper, make a confession of faith. Posterity wickedly distorted Zephyrinus’ otherwise good ordinance, when a definite law was made to have communion once a year.^{F800} By this it has come about that almost all, when they have taken communion once, as though they have beautifully done their duty for the rest of the year, go about

unconcerned.^{F801} It should have been done far differently: the Lord's Table should have been spread at least once a week for the assembly of Christians, and the promises declared in it should feed us spiritually. None is indeed to be forcibly compelled, but all are to be urged and aroused; also the inertia of indolent people is to be rebuked. All, like hungry men, should flock to such a bounteous repast. Not unjustly, then, did I complain at the outset that this custom was thrust in by the devil's artifice, which, in prescribing one day a year, renders men slothful all the rest of the year. Indeed, we see that already in Chrysostom's day this degrading abuse had crept in; but we can see at the same time how much it displeased him. For in the passage which I just quoted he sadly complains of great inequality in this matter; at some times of the year they often did not come even when they were clean, but came at Easter, even when they were unclean. Then he exclaims: "O custom, O presumption! In vain, therefore, is a daily offering made; in vain we stand before the altar; there is no one who will partake along with us."^{F802} So far is Chrysostom from having approved this by lending it his authority!

(Withdrawal of the cup from the lay people condemned, 47-50)

47. REFUTATION OF "COMMUNION IN ONE KIND"

Out of the same shop came another regulation,^{F803} which has either stolen or snatched half the Supper from the greater part of God's people. The symbol of the blood, which, denied to lay and profane persons (these are titles they apply to God's inheritance [^{<600503>} 1 Peter 5:3]), was given as a special property to a few shaven and anointed men. The edict of the eternal God is that all should drink [^{<402627>} Matthew 26:27]; man dares supersede and abrogate it by a new and opposing law, decreeing that not all should drink.

And that such lawgivers may not irrationally contend against their God, they pretend perils that could occur if this sacred cup were commonly offered to all, as if those perils had not been foreseen and considered by God's eternal wisdom!

Then, indeed, they subtly reason that one is enough for two. "For if it is the body" (they say), "it is the whole Christ, who cannot be separated from his body. Therefore, the body, by concomitance, contains the blood

also.^{F804} See how much our human thought is in agreement with God, when with slackened reins it begins to go even a little wanton and wild! The Lord shows us bread and says that it is his body; he shows the cup and calls it his blood. The boldness of man's reason cries out to the contrary that bread is blood, wine is body — as if the Lord had for no reason distinguished his body from his blood by both words and signs, and it had ever been heard said that the body of Christ, or the blood, is called God and man. Obviously, if he had meant to signify his whole self, he could have said, "It is I" — as he is accustomed to speak in the Scriptures [^{<401427>}Matthew 14:27; ^{<431805>}John 18:5; ^{<422439>}Luke 24:39] — but not, "This is my body; this is my blood." But, intending to succor the weakness of our faith, he ordained the cup separately from the bread in order to teach us that he suffices for drink no less than for food. Suppose, now, that one part is taken away — then we shall find only one half the nourishment in him. Therefore, though what they pretend should be true — that by concomitance the blood is in the bread, and again, the body is in the cup — still they defraud pious souls of the confirmation of faith which Christ gives us as something necessary. Therefore, bidding farewell to their quibbles, we must hold fast to the benefit that, with double pledge, we receive from the ordinance of Christ.

48. FALSE ARGUMENT THAT THE APOSTLES ONLY AS "SACRIFICERS" RECEIVED THE CUP

I know, indeed, that the ministers of Satan (as it is their custom to mock the Scriptures) quibble over this. First, they claim that from a simple act one ought not to derive a rule which the church is bound to observe always. But they lie when they say that this is a simple act. For Christ not only proffered the cup but ordained that the apostles should do so thereafter. For these are the words of him who commands, "Drink ye all from this cup" [^{<402627>}Matthew 26:27, cf. Vg.]. And Paul recalls it to be such an act that he commends it as a fixed ordinance [^{<461125>}1 Corinthians 11:25].

Another evasion is that only the apostles, whom he had already chosen and enrolled in the order of "sacrificers," were admitted by Christ to participate in this Supper.^{F805}

But I should like them to answer me five questions, from which they cannot escape without being easily refuted with their lies.

First, what oracle has revealed this solution to them — so foreign to God's Word? Scripture lists twelve who reclined with Jesus [cf. ^{<402620>} Matthew 26:20], but it does not so obscure Christ's dignity as to call them "sacrificers." (We shall afterward deal with this term in its proper place.^{F806}) Even though he then gave it to the Twelve, he still bade them do the same, namely, distribute it among themselves.

Secondly, why from that better age, even to a thousand years after the apostles, did all, without exception, partake of both symbols? Did the ancient church not know whom Christ had admitted as guests to his Supper? It would be the most abandoned shamelessness to halt here or to dodge the question! There are extant church histories, there are books of ancient writers, which give clear evidence of this fact.^{F807} "The flesh," says Tertullian, "is fed with the body and blood of Christ, that the soul may be nourished of God." "How," says Ambrose to Theodosius, "will you with such hands receive the sacred body of the Lord? How will you make bold to partake of the cup of his precious blood with your lips?" Jerome mentions "the priests who perform the Eucharist and distribute the Lord's blood to the people." Chrysostom says: "Not as in the Old Law the priest ate part, the people part; but one body and one cup are offered to all. Those things which pertain to the Eucharist are all common to priest and people." Augustine in numerous passages attests the same thing.^{F808}

49. RECEPTION BY LAYMEN MAINTAINED TO A LATE DATE

But why do I argue over a thing so well known? Let all the Greek and Latin writers be read, and such evidence will be found in abundance. And this custom did not fall into disuse while one drop of integrity remained in the church. Gregory, whom you can rightly call the last bishop of Rome, taught that the custom was kept in his time: "What the blood of the Lamb is you have now learned not by hearing but by drinking." "His blood is poured into the mouths of believers."^{F809} Indeed, four hundred years after his death, when all things had already degenerated, it still endured. And it was considered not merely a custom but an inviolable law. Truly, a reverence for the divine institution then flourished; and they did not doubt

that it was a sacrilege to separate what had been joined by the Lord. For so speaks Gelasius: “We have found that some, receiving only the portion of the sacred body, refrain from the cup. Doubtless, since they seem to be bound by some sort of superstition, they are either to receive the sacraments entire or to be entirely barred from them.” For this mystery cannot be divided without great sacrilege. Men heeded those reasons of Cyprian which, of course, ought to move a Christian mind. “How,” he says, “do we teach or call upon them to shed their blood in confession of Christ, if we deny Christ’s blood to those about to fight? Or how do we make them fit for the cup of martyrdom, if we do not first in the church by the right of communion admit them to drink the cup of the Lord?” That the canonists restrict that decree of Gelasius to the priests^{F810} is too childish a quibble to require refutation.

50. THE WORDS OF SCRIPTURE PLAINLY ACCORD THE CUP TO ALL

Thirdly, why did Christ simply say of the bread that they should eat, but of the cup that they *all* should drink [^{<411422>} Mark 14:22-23; ^{<402626>} Matthew 26:26-27]? It is as if he deliberately intended to oppose Satan’s craftiness.

Fourthly, if the Lord (as they would have it) honored only “sacrificers” in his Supper, what man would ever have dared call strangers who had been excluded by the Lord to partake of it? And even to partake of that gift whose power was not in their possession, without the command of him who alone could give it? Indeed, with what assurance do they today presume to distribute to the common folk the symbol of Christ’s body, if they have neither command nor example of the Lord?

Fifthly, was Paul lying when he said to the Corinthians that he had received from the Lord what he delivered to them [^{<461123>} 1 Corinthians 11:23]? For afterward he declares the thing delivered to be that all indiscriminately should partake of both symbols [^{<461126>} 1 Corinthians 11:26]. If Paul had received from the Lord the practice that all be admitted without distinction, let those who drive away almost all God’s people see from whom they have received their practice, since they cannot now pretend that its author is God, with whom there is no Yes and No

[^{<470119>}2 Corinthians 1:19]. And still they dare cloak such abominations with the name of church and defend them on that pretext! It is as if these Antichrists, who so readily trample, scatter, and abolish the teaching and ordinances of Christ, were the church; or the apostolic church, in which religion flourished in full vigor, were not the church!

CHAPTER. 18

THE PAPAL MASS, A SACRILEGE BY WHICH CHRIST'S SUPPER WAS NOT ONLY PROFANED BUT ANNIHILATED

*(Rejection of the Mass as sacrilegious and as a nullification
of the Lord's Supper, 1-7)*

1. THE ROMANIST DOCTRINE

By these and similar devices Satan has tried to obscure with thick darkness and to defile Christ's Sacred Supper — in order at least to prevent its purity from being preserved in the church. But the height of frightful abomination was when the devil raised up a sign by which it was not only to be obscured and perverted, but — being completely erased and annulled — to vanish and pass out of human memory. This happened when he blinded nearly the whole world with a most pestilential error — the belief that the Mass is a sacrifice and offering to obtain forgiveness of sins.

I do not pause to ask how the saner Schoolmen^{F811} at the outset received this doctrine. Away with them and with their crabbed subtleties! Howsoever these can be defended by quibbling, they must nevertheless be rejected by all good men, because they do nothing but cast a great shadow over the brightness of the Supper. Bidding them farewell, therefore, let my readers understand that I am here contending against that opinion with which the Roman Antichrist and his prophets have infected the whole world: namely, that the Mass is a work by which the priest who offers up Christ, and the others who participate in the oblation, merit God's favor, or it is an expiatory victim, by which they reconcile God to themselves.^{F812}

And this has not been accepted: only as a popular notion, but the very action itself has been so framed as to be a kind of appeasement to make satisfaction to God for the expiation of the living and the dead. The words

which they use also express this notion;^{F813} and we can infer nothing else from its daily use. I know how deeply this plague has taken root, how much it lurks under the appearance of good, how it displays the name of Christ, and how numerous persons believe that in the one word “Mass” they embrace the whole sum of faith.

But when it is most clearly proved by the Word of God that this Mass, however decked in splendor, inflicts signal dishonor upon Christ, buries and oppresses his cross, consigns his death to oblivion, takes away the benefit which came to us from it, and weakens and destroys the Sacrament by which the memory of his death was bequeathed to us — will any of the roots be too deep for this most sturdy ax (I mean the Word of God) to slash and upturn? Is there any covering so dazzling that this light cannot disclose the lurking evil?

2. THE MASS AS BLASPHEMY AGAINST CHRIST

Let us therefore show what was set forth in the first place, that in it an unbearable blasphemy and dishonor is inflicted upon Christ. For he was consecrated priest and pontiff by his Father, not for a time, in the way in which we read of priests being appointed in the Old Testament. Their priesthood could not be immortal since their life was mortal.

Consequently, successors were needed from time to time, to replace those who died. But Christ, being immortal, needs no vicar to replace him.

Therefore, the Father designated him “priest forever, according to the order of Melchizedek,” that he should perform an everlasting priesthood

[^{<580506>} Hebrews 5:6, 10; 7:17, 21; 9:11; 10:21; ^{<19B004>} Psalm 110:4;

^{<011418>} Genesis 14:18]. This mystery had been long before prefigured in

Melchizedek; when Scripture has once introduced him as priest of the living God, it never afterward mentions him, implying that his life had been without end. From this similarity Christ was called priest according to his order.

But now those who sacrifice daily are required to appoint for their oblations priests whom they put in Christ’s place as successors and vicars. By this substitution they not only deprive Christ of his honor, and snatch from him the prerogative of that eternal priesthood, but try to cast him down from the right hand of his Father, where he cannot sit immortal

without at the same time remaining eternal priest. And let them not allege that their priestlings are not substituted for Christ as if he were dead, but are only suffragans of his eternal priesthood, which does not therefore cease to stand. For they are too strongly constrained by the apostle's words to be able to escape thus. He says that many new priests were made because death prevented them from continuing in office [^{<580723>}Hebrews 7:23]. Therefore, Christ, who is not prevented by death, is unique and needs no partners. Yet such is their depravity that they arm themselves with Melchizedek's example to defend their impiety. Because it is said that he offered bread and wine [^{<011418>}Genesis 14:18], they infer that this prefigured their Mass, as if there were a likeness between him and Christ in the offering of bread and wine.^{F814} This is too flimsy and foolish to need refutation. Melchizedek gave bread and wine to Abraham and his companions, to refresh them, wearied by their journey and battle. What has this to do with a sacrifice? Moses praises the humaneness of the holy king [^{<011418>}Genesis 14:18]. These men crudely coin a mystery of which no mention is made. Yet they paint their error in another color, for the words immediately follow, "And he was a priest of the Most High God" [^{<011418>}Genesis 14:18, Vg.]. I reply that they perversely apply to bread and wine what the apostle refers to blessing. Therefore, since Melchizedek was a priest of God, he blessed Abraham [^{<011419>}Genesis 14:19]. From this the same apostle (we need seek no better expositor than he) infers his excellence, for the lesser is blessed by the greater [^{<580707>}Hebrews 7:7]. But if Melchizedek's offering were a figure of the sacrifice of the Mass, would the apostle, I ask you, who sifts even the least things, have forgotten a matter so serious and grave? But now (whatever they babble) they will try in vain to annul the argument which the apostle himself brings forward: that the right and honor of a priesthood among mortal men has ceased, because Christ, who is immortal, is the sole and eternal Priest [^{<580717>}Hebrews 7:17-19].

3. THE MASS AS SUPPRESSION OF CHRIST'S PASSION

Another power of the Mass was set forth: that it suppresses and buries the cross and Passion of Christ. This is indeed very certain: that the cross of Christ is overthrown as soon as the altar is set up; for if he offered himself as a sacrifice on the cross in order to sanctify us forever, and to

acquire eternal redemption for us [^{<580912>}Hebrews 9:12], no doubt the force and effectiveness of this sacrifice continue without end. Otherwise, we would feel no more reverent about Christ than about the oxen and calves which used to be sacrificed under the law, the sacrifices of which are proved ineffective and weak by the fact that they were frequently repeated. Therefore, we shall have to confess either that Christ's sacrifice, which he fulfilled upon the cross, lacked the power to cleanse eternally, or that Christ had carried out one sacrifice, once for all, unto all ages. This is what the apostle says: that this High Priest, Christ, "has appeared, once for all, at the consummation of the age to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself" [^{<580926>}Hebrews 9:26p.]. Again: "By the will of God we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" [^{<581010>}Hebrews 10:10]. Also: "Christ by a single offering has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" [^{<581014>}Hebrews 10:14 p.]. To these words he adds the noteworthy statement that once we have acquired forgiveness of sins, no further offering remains [^{<581018>}Hebrews 10:18; cf. 5:26]. Christ also signified this by his last words, uttered with his last breath, when he said, "It is finished" [^{<431930>}John 19:30, Vg.]. We commonly regard the last words of the dying as oracles.^{F815} Christ, dying, testifies that by his one sacrifice all that pertained to our salvation has been accomplished and fulfilled. Are we to be allowed daily to sew innumerable patches upon such a sacrifice, as if it were imperfect, when he has so clearly commended its perfection? When God's Sacred Word not only affirms but cries out and contends that this sacrifice was performed only once and all its force remains forever, do not those who require another sacrifice accuse it of imperfection and weakness? But to what purpose is the Mass, which has been so set up that a hundred thousand sacrifices may be performed each day, except to bury and submerge Christ's Passion, by which he offered himself as sole sacrifice to the Father? Who, that is not blind, fails to see that it was Satan's boldness that grappled with such clear and open truth? Nor am I unaware of the tricks by which the father of lies is wont to disguise his fraud: that these are not varied or different sacrifices, but the same one often repeated.^{F816} But such smoke clouds are easily dispersed. For in the whole discussion the apostle contends not only that there are no other sacrifices, but that this one was offered only once and is never to be repeated. Subtler men escape through a more secret chink — that it is not a repetition but an

application. But it is just as easy to refute this sophism also. For Christ did not once for all offer himself up on condition that his sacrifice should be ratified by new oblations each day, but that the benefit of it should be communicated to us by the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the Sacred Supper. Thus Paul says, “Christ, our paschal lamb, has been sacrificed” [^{<460507>} 1 Corinthians 5:7], and he bids us feast [^{<460508>} 1 Corinthians 5:8]. This, I say, is the means whereby the sacrifice of the cross is duly applied to us, when it is communicated to us to be enjoyed, and we receive it in true faith.

4. THE ARGUMENT FROM ^{<390111>} MALACHI 1:11

But it behooves us to hear on what foundation beyond this they support the sacrifice of the Mass. For they adduce here the prophecy of Malachi, by which the Lord promises that the time will come when incense and a pure offering shall be offered to his name throughout the earth [^{<390111>} Malachi 1:11, cf. EV].^{F817} As though it were something new and unusual for the prophets, when they speak of the calling of the Gentiles, to designate the spiritual worship of God (to which they exhort them) by the outward ritual of the law! By this the prophets more intimately indicated to the men of their time that the Gentiles were to be called into the true fellowship of religion. Similarly, it was always their custom to describe through the types of their own time the truth which has been revealed by the gospel. For example: they represent turning to the Lord as ascent into Jerusalem [^{<230202>} Isaiah 2:2-3; ^{<330401>} Micah 4:1-2]; adoration of God, as the offering of all kinds of gifts [^{<196829>} Psalm 68:29; 72:10-11; ^{<236006>} Isaiah 60:6 ff.]; larger knowledge of him (to be given believers in the Kingdom of Christ), as dreams and visions [^{<290228>} Joel 2:28]. What they quote from Malachi, therefore, is like another prophecy of Isaiah, where the prophet foretells that three altars are to be erected, in Assyria [^{<231921>} Isaiah 19:21], Egypt [^{<231923>} Isaiah 19:23; cf. ch. 19:19], and Judah [^{<231924>} Isaiah 19:24]. I first ask, therefore, whether they do not concede the fulfillment of this prophecy in the Kingdom of Christ. Secondly, where those altars are, or when they were ever erected. Thirdly, whether they think that each of these three kingdoms has a temple assigned to it, like the one at Jerusalem. If they ponder these things, they will admit, I believe, that the prophet, under types suitable to his own time,

prophesied concerning the spread of the spiritual worship of God throughout all the earth. This, then, is the answer that we give them. But because we frequently meet with examples of this thing, I shall not be concerned with a longer enumeration. However, they are miserably deceived also in this, that they do not recognize any sacrifice but that of the Mass, although believers now truly sacrifice to the Lord, and offer a pure oblation, of which we shall soon speak. ^{F818}

5. THE MASS BRINGS FORGETFULNESS OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Now I come down to the third function of the Mass, where I must explain how it wipes out the true and unique death of Christ and drives it from the memory of men. For as among men the confirmation of a testament depends upon the death of the testator, so also our Lord has confirmed by his death the testament by which he has given us forgiveness of sins and everlasting righteousness [^{<580915>} Hebrews 9:15-17]. Those who dare alter, or add anything new to, this testament deny his death and hold it of no importance. What is the Mass but a new and wholly different testament? Why so? Do not individual masses promise new forgiveness of sins, and new acquiring of righteousness, so that there are now as many testaments as there are masses? Let Christ, therefore, come again and ratify by another death this new testament; or rather, by countless deaths, innumerable testaments of masses. Have I not therefore spoken the truth at the beginning, that the unique and true death of Christ is wiped out by masses? What of the fact that the Mass leads directly to the end that, if such can be, Christ be slain again? For where there is a testament (says the apostle), there the death of the testator must take place [^{<580916>} Hebrews 9:16]. The Mass displays a new testament of Christ; therefore, it requires his death. Moreover, it is necessary that the victim offered be slain and sacrificed. If Christ is sacrificed in each and every Mass, he must be cruelly slain in a thousand places at every moment. This is not my argument, but the apostle's: if Christ had had to offer himself often, he ought to have suffered repeatedly from the beginning of the world [^{<580925>} Hebrews 9:25-26]. I admit they have a ready answer, by which they also charge us with slander. For they say we object against them what they never thought, and even now cannot think. But we know that Christ's death and life are not at all in their hand. We are not concerned

with whether they have set out to slay him; our purpose is only to show the absurd consequence of their impious and wicked doctrine. This I prove from the apostle's own utterance. Though they cry out a hundred times to the contrary that this sacrifice is without blood.^{F819} I shall deny that sacrifices change their nature at men's whim; for by this means God's holy and inviolable institution would fall. From this it follows, as a firm principle of the apostle, that shedding of blood is required for any cleansing [^{<580922>} Hebrews 9:22].

6. THE MASS ROBBS US OF THE BENEFIT OF CHRIST'S DEATH

Now I must discuss the fourth function of the Mass, that it robs us of the benefit which was coming to us from Christ's death, while it causes us not to recognize or ponder it. For who can think himself redeemed by Christ's death, when he has seen new redemption in the Mass? Who can trust that his sins are forgiven, when he has seen a new forgiveness? And it is no way out to say that we obtain forgiveness of sins in the Mass solely because it has already been purchased by Christ's death. This amounts to nothing else than to boast that we have been redeemed by Christ on condition that we redeem ourselves; for this is the kind of doctrine that is spread abroad by Satan's ministers, and today is defended with shouting, sword, and fire: that we, when we offer Christ to the Father in the Mass, by this act of oblation obtain forgiveness of sins and are made participants in Christ's Passion.^{F820} What now remains of Christ's Passion, except that it is an example of redemption by which we learn that we are our own redeemers? Christ himself, when he seals the assurance of pardon in the Supper, does not command his disciples to stop at that action, but sends them to the sacrifice of his death, signifying that the Supper is a remembrancer, or memorial (as men commonly call it), from which men may learn that an expiatory victim, by which God was to be appeased, ought to have been offered but once. For it is not enough to understand that Christ is the sole victim, unless we add that there is only one sacrifice, so that our faith may be made fast to his cross.

7. THE MASS AS NULLIFICATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Now I come to the end:^{F821} namely, that the Sacred Supper (in which the Lord had left graven and inscribed the remembrance of his Passion) has

been taken away, destroyed, and abolished by the raising up of the Mass. Indeed, the Supper itself is a gift of God, which ought to have been received with thanksgiving. The sacrifice of the Mass is represented as paying a price to God, which he should receive by way of satisfaction. There is as much difference between this sacrifice and the sacrament of the Supper as there is between giving and receiving. And such is the most miserable ungratefulness of man that where he ought to have recognized and given thanks for the abundance of God's bounty, he makes God in this his debtor! The Sacrament promised that by Christ's death we are not merely once restored to life, but are continually revived, for all the parts of our salvation have then been fulfilled. The sacrifice of the Mass sings the far different tune that Christ ought to be sacrificed daily to be of any benefit to us. The Supper was to have been distributed in the public assembly of the church to teach us of the communion by which we all cleave together in Christ Jesus. The sacrifice of the Mass dissolves and tears apart this community. For after the error prevailed that there ought to be priests to perform sacrifice on the people's behalf as if the Supper had been turned over to them, it ceased to be communicated to the believers' church according to the Lord's commandment. An opening was made for private masses, which would seem to suggest an excommunication rather than that community established by the Lord. For the petty sacrificer, about to devour his victim by himself, separates himself from all believing folk.^{F822} I call it a private mass (that no man may be mistaken) wherever there is no participation in the Lord's Supper among believers, even though a large multitude of men may otherwise be present.

(Early practice and the rise of misconceptions, 8-11)

8. PRIVATE MASSES A REPUDIATION OF COMMUNION

I could never determine with certainty the origin of the term "Mass" — unless, as seems to me likely, it was derived from the offerings that were given.^{F823} From this fact the old writers generally use it in the plural. But to forbear disputing over the term, I say that private masses are diametrically opposed to Christ's institution, and are for that reason an impious profaning of the Sacred Supper. For what has the Lord bidden us? Is it not to take and divide among us [^{<422217>} Luke 22:17]? What kind of

observance of the command does Paul teach? Is it not the breaking of bread, which is the communion of body and blood [^{<461016>} 1 Corinthians 10:16]? When, therefore, one person receives it without sharing, what similarity is there? But that one man, they say, does it in the name of the whole church. By what command? Is this not openly to mock God, when one person privately seizes for himself what ought to have been done only among many? But because Christ's and Paul's words are clear enough, we may briefly conclude that wherever there is not this breaking of bread for the communion of believers, it is not the Lord's Supper, but a false and preposterous imitation of it. But a false imitation is a corruption. Further, a corruption of such a great mystery is not without wickedness. In private masses, accordingly, there is wicked abuse. And (as one fault in religion repeatedly breeds another) after that custom of offering without communion once crept in, they gradually began to make innumerable masses in every corner of the churches, and to drag the people hither and thither, when they should have come together in one assembly to recognize the mystery of their own unity. Now, let them go and deny that it is idolatry when they display bread in their masses to be worshiped in place of Christ. For they boast in vain about the promises of Christ's presence, which, howsoever these may be understood, have surely not been given so that unclean and profane men may, whenever they like and for whatever abuse they please, fashion the body of Christ, but so that believers, while they follow with reverent observance Christ's command in the celebration of the Supper, may enjoy true participation in him.

9. THE MASS NOT SCRIPTURAL AND NOT PRIMITIVE

Besides, this perversity was unknown to the purer church. For however much the more shameless among our adversaries try to gloss this over, it is very certain that the whole of antiquity is against them, as we have previously demonstrated in other matters,^{F824} and it may be more surely ascertained by an assiduous reading of the ancient writers, abut before I conclude my discourse, I ask our Mass-doctors — since they know that obedience to God is stronger than sacrificial victims and that he requires that men rather hearken to his voice than offer sacrifices [^{<091522>} 1 Samuel 15:22] — how they can believe that God is pleased by this way of sacrificing, for which they have no command, and which they see cannot

be proved by even one syllable of Scripture. Moreover, when they hear the apostle saying that no one takes upon himself the name and honor of the priesthood except him who has been called (as Aaron was) — indeed, that Christ himself did not rush into it, but obeyed his Father’s call [⁵⁸⁰⁵⁰⁴ Hebrews 5:4-5] — either they must bring God forward as author and founder of their priesthood, or they must confess that the honor is not of God, into which, uncalled, they have broken with wicked rashness. But they cannot claim even an iota that supports their priesthood. Why, now, will not their sacrifices vanish, which cannot be offered without a priest?

10. DID THE CHURCH FATHERS LOOK UPON THE MASS AS A SACRIFICE?

If anyone thrusts forward detached sentences of the ancient writers from here and there, and argues from their authority that the sacrifice executed in the Supper is to be understood far otherwise than we explain it, our answer briefly is: if it is a question of approving a sham sacrifice such as the papists have contrived in the Mass, the ancient writers do not support such sacrilege at all. Indeed, they use the word “sacrifice”; but at the same time they explain that they mean nothing else than the remembrance of that one true sacrifice which Christ, our sole Priest (as they everywhere proclaim), made upon the cross. “The Hebrews,” says Augustine, “in the animal victims which they offered to God celebrated a prophecy of the future victim which Christ offered; the Christians, by the most holy offering and partaking of the body of Christ, celebrate the remembrance of a sacrifice already made.” Here, indeed, he teaches exactly the same thing which is expressed more fully in the book, *Concerning Faith to Peter the Deacon*, whoever may be its author.^{F825} The words are: “Most steadfastly hold, and doubt not that the Only-begotten, made flesh for us, offered himself on our behalf a sacrifice and victim as a sweet savor to God; to him, with the Father and the Holy Spirit, in Old Testament times animals were sacrificed; and to him now, with the Father and the Holy Spirit (with whom he has one Godhead), Holy Church throughout the earth ceases not to offer the sacrifice of bread and wine. For in those carnal victims was a prefiguring of Christ’s flesh, which he was himself to offer for our sins, and of his blood, which he was to shed for the forgiveness of sins. Moreover, in this sacrifice are thanksgiving for and remembrance of

Christ's flesh, which he offered for us, and of his blood, which he shed for us."^{F826} Consequently, Augustine himself in many passages interprets it as nothing but a sacrifice of praise. Finally, in his writings you will repeatedly find that the Lord's Supper is called a sacrifice for no other reason than that it is a memorial, an image, and a testimony of that singular, true, and unique sacrifice by which Christ has atoned for us. There is also a memorable passage in *On the Trinity*, Book 4, Chapter 24, where, after he has discussed the unique sacrifice, he concludes thus: "In a sacrifice four things are to be considered — to whom offered, by whom, what is offered, and for whom. Accordingly, that same one true Mediator, reconciling us to God through the sacrifice of peace, remains one with him to whom he has offered; has made those for whom he offered one in himself; is himself, both he who has offered and what he has offered, one."^{F827} Chrysostom also speaks in the same sense. But they so claim the honor of the priesthood for Christ that, according to Augustine, it would be the voice of Antichrist to say that a bishop is intercessor between God and man.^{F828}

11. CHURCH FATHERS DEVIATE FROM THE DIVINE INSTITUTION

Nevertheless, we do not deny that the sacrifice of Christ is so shown to us there that the spectacle of the cross is almost set before our eyes — just as the apostle says that Christ was crucified before the eyes of the Galatians when the preaching of the cross was set before them [^{<480301>}Galatians 3:1]. But I observe that the ancient writers also misinterpreted this memorial in a way not consonant with the Lord's institution, because their Supper displayed some appearance of repeated or at least renewed sacrifice.^{F829} Hence, nothing would be safer for pious hearts than to rely upon the pure and simple ordinance of God, whose also the Supper is said to be, since his authority alone ought to be in force in it. Certainly, since I see that they have kept a devout and orthodox sense of this whole mystery, and I do not find that they intended even in the slightest degree to detract from the Lord's unique sacrifice, I cannot bring myself to condemn them for any impiety; still, I think they cannot be excused for having sinned somewhat in acting as they did. For they have followed the Jewish manner of sacrificing more closely than either Christ had ordained

or the nature of the gospel allowed. Therefore, one may rightly blame them only for that perverse anagogical interpretation^{F830} that, not content with the simple and genuine institution of Christ, they have turned aside too much to the shadows of the law.

(The idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist, and Scriptural use of the word “sacrifice”; the Mass a sacrilege, 12-18)

12. THE OBLATION OF THE OLD COVENANT AND THE LORD’S SUPPER

If anyone diligently ponders, he will observe that this difference between the Mosaic sacrifices and our Eucharist is established by the Lord’s word, that, although the former represented to the Jewish people the same effectiveness of Christ’s death as is today shown to us in the Supper [^{<030105>}Leviticus 1:5], yet the form of representation was different. For among the Jews the Levitical priests were commanded to prefigure the sacrifice that Christ was to perform; the victim was brought forward to take the place of Christ; there was an altar on which it was to be sacrificed; thus, in short, all things were carried out in order that there might be set before the people’s eyes a likeness of the sacrifice that was to be offered to God in expiation. But after Christ’s sacrifice was accomplished, the Lord instituted another method for us, that is, to transmit to the believing folk the benefit of the sacrifice offered to himself by his Son. He has therefore given us a Table at which to feast, not an altar upon which to offer a victim; he has not consecrated priests to offer sacrifice, but ministers to distribute the sacred banquet.^{F831} The loftier and holier the mystery is, the more piously and reverently it ought to be treated. There is, accordingly, nothing safer than for us to lay aside all the presumption of human understanding, and to cleave solely to what Scripture teaches. And surely, if we ponder that the Supper is of the Lord and not of men, there is no reason why we should allow ourselves to be moved even a hairsbreadth from it by any human authority or time-hallowed prescription. The apostle, therefore, when he intends to purge it of all the faults which had already crept into the church of the Corinthians, calls it back to that sole institution (the speediest way to this end), showing it is from this source that a perpetual rule is to be sought [^{<461120>} 1 Corinthians 11:20 ff.].

13. THE NATURE OF SACRIFICE

Now, that no wrangler may do battle against us over the words “sacrifice” and “priest,” I shall also explain, but in brief, what I have meant throughout the discussion by “sacrifice” and “priest.”

I do not see on what basis those who extend the term “sacrifice” to all sacred ceremonies and religious action do this.

We know that, according to the consistent usage of Scripture, what the Greeks sometimes call *θυσία*, sometimes *προσφορά*, sometimes *τελετή*, is called “sacrifice.” Generally understood, this includes every sort of thing offered to God.^{F832} We must therefore make a distinction, yet in such a way that this distinction may bear an anagogical interpretation,^{F833} from the sacrifices of the Mosaic law, under the shadows of which the Lord willed to represent to his people the universal truth of sacrifices. But although these were of various forms, still they can all be referred to two classes. For either an offering was made for sin by some kind of satisfaction, by which guilt was redeemed before God; or it was a symbol of divine worship and an attestation of religion — sometimes, in the mode of supplication, to ask God’s favor; sometimes, of thanksgiving, to testify gratefulness of heart for benefits received; sometimes, of the exercise of simple piety, to renew the confirmation of the covenant. To this latter sort belonged burnt offerings, libations, oblations, first fruits, and peace offerings.^{F834}

Let us accordingly divide ours into two kinds; and for the purpose of teaching let us call one “a sacrifice of praise and reverence,”^{F835} since it consists in veneration and worship of God, which believers both owe and render to him; or, if you prefer, “a sacrifice of thanksgiving,”^{F836} since it is given to God only by those who, laden with innumerable benefits from him, pay back to him their whole selves and all their acts. Let us call the other “a sacrifice of propitiation or of expiation.”

The sacrifice of expiation is that which is intended to appease God’s wrath, to satisfy his judgment, and so to wash sins and cleanse them that the sinner, purged of their filth and restored to the purity of righteousness, may return into favor with God. The sacrificial victims which were offered under the law to atone for sins [^{<022936>} Exodus 29:36] were so called, not

because they were capable of recovering God's favor or wiping out iniquity, but because they prefigured a true sacrifice such as was finally accomplished in reality by Christ alone; and by him alone, because no other could have done it. And it was done but once, because the effectiveness and force of that one sacrifice accomplished by Christ are eternal, as he testified with his own voice when he said that it was done and fulfilled [^{<431930>} John 19:30]; that is, whatever was necessary to recover the Father's favor, to obtain forgiveness of sins, righteousness, and salvation — all this was performed and completed by that unique sacrifice of his. And so perfect was it that no place was left afterward for any other sacrificial victim.

14. THE SALE OF MASSES

Therefore, I conclude that it is a most wicked infamy and unbearable blasphemy, both against Christ and against the sacrifice which he made for us through his death on the cross, for anyone to suppose that by repeating the oblation he obtains pardon for sins, appeases God, and acquires righteousness. But what else is done by performing masses except that by the merit of a new oblation we are made partakers in Christ's Passion? And that there might be no limit to their frenzy, they thought it a small thing to say that their sacrifice was made in common equally for the whole church, unless they added that it was their choice to apply it particularly to this man or that, as they pleased, or rather to everyone who was willing to buy such merchandise with coin. Now, although they could not reach Judas' price, still to resemble their author in some respect, they have kept a similarity in number. Judas sold him for thirty pieces of silver [Matthew 26: 15]; these persons, according to the French reckoning, ^{F837} sell him for thirty pieces of copper; ^{F838} Judas, once; these, as often as they find a buyer.

We also deny that they are priests in the sense that they by such oblation intercede before God for the people and, having appeased God, obtain atonement for sins. For Christ is the sole Pontiff and Priest of the New Testament [cf. Hebrews ch. 9], to whom all priesthood's have been transferred, and in whom they have been closed and terminated. And even if Scripture had mentioned nothing of Christ's eternal priesthood, still because, when God discontinued the old priesthood's, he instituted none,

the argument of the apostle remains invincible: “No one takes the honor upon himself, except him who has been called by God” [^{<580504>} Hebrews 5:4]. With what effrontery, then, do these sacrilegious persons, who boast that they are butchers of Christ, dare call themselves priests of the living God?

15. PLATO’S REMARKS ON SIMILAR PRETENSE AND DELUSION

There is a fine passage in Plato, in the second book of the *Republic*.^{F839} It is where he discusses the old propitiatory offerings, and ridicules the stupid confidence of depraved and wicked men who thought that their misdeeds were curtailed off by these offerings so as not to be seen by the gods, and who, as though they had covenanted with the gods, the more unconcernedly indulged themselves. Here he positively seems to be referring to the practice of expiation in the Mass as it exists today in the world. Everyone knows that it is unlawful to defraud and take advantage of another. Everyone confesses that it is impious to trouble widows with unjust dealings, to rob orphans, to afflict the poor, to seize the goods of others for oneself by devious tricks, to grasp after anyone’s possession by perjuries and frauds, to oppress anyone with violence and tyrannous fear. How, then, do so many dare repeatedly do all these things, as though daring with impunity? Indeed, if we duly examine it, no cause encourages them more than this — the belief that they will satisfy God by the Mass-sacrifice as a price that is paid, or at least that this is an easy way to settle with Him.

Then Plato goes on to make fun of the brutish stupidity of those who think that such propitiation’s pay for the penalties which they would otherwise have to undergo in the underworld.^{F840} And what is the purpose today of yearly memorials and the greater part of masses,^{F841} except that those who throughout life were the cruelest tyrants, or the most rapacious robbers, or men who stooped to every infamy, should, as if redeemed at this price, escape the fire of purgatory?

16. THE “THANK OFFERING” OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH

“Under the second class of sacrifice, which we have called that of “thanksgiving,”^{F842} are included all the duties of love. When we embrace our brethren with these, we honor the Lord himself in his members.^{F843} Also included are all our prayers, praises, thanksgivings, and whatever we do in the worship of God. All these things finally depend upon the greater sacrifice, by which we are consecrated in soul and body to be a holy temple to the Lord [^{<460316>} 1 Corinthians 3:16, etc.]. For it is not enough for our outward acts to be applied to his service; but first ourselves and then all that is ours ought to be consecrated and dedicated to him, so that all that is in us may serve his glory and may zealously aspire to increase it.

This kind of sacrifice has nothing to do with appeasing God’s wrath, with obtaining forgiveness of sins, or with meriting righteousness; but is concerned solely with magnifying and exalting God. For it cannot be pleasing and acceptable to God, except from the hands of those whom he has reconciled to himself by other means, after they have received forgiveness of sins, and he has therefore absolved them from guilt.

But this is so necessary for the church that it cannot be absent from it. Therefore, as already appeared above from the prophet,^{F844} it will continue forever, so long as God’s people shall abide. For in that sense we may understand the prophecy: “From the rising of the sun, even to its setting, my name is great among the nations; and in every place incense will be offered to my name, and a clean offering; for terrible is my name among the nations, says the Lord” [^{<390111>} Malachi 1:11, Cf. Vg.]. Far be it from us to remove it! Thus Paul bids us offer our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, a reasonable worship” [^{<451201>} Romans 12:1; cf. ^{<600205>} 1 Peter 2:5-6]. He spoke very meaningfully there when he added that this is “our reasonable worship,”^{F845} for he had in mind the spiritual manner of worshipping God, which he tacitly contrasted with the carnal sacrifices of the Mosaic law. Doing good and sharing are called sacrifices that are pleasing to God [^{<581316>} Hebrews 13:16]. Thus the generosity of the Philippians in relieving Paul’s poverty is a fragrant sacrifice [^{<500418>} Philippians 4:18]; and thus all the good works of believers are spiritual sacrifices.

17. SCRIPTURAL PHRASES ILLUSTRATE THE SACRIFICES OF PRAISE

And why do I seek after many proofs? For this expression is frequently encountered in Scripture. Even while the people of God as yet continued under the outward tutelage of the law, the prophets clearly enough announced that a truth, common to Christian church and Jewish nation, underlay those carnal sacrifices. In this way David prayed that his prayer might ascend like incense into God's presence [^{<19E102>} Psalm 141:2]. And Hosea called thanksgivings "the calves of lips" [^{<281402>} Hosea 14:2; 14:3, Vg.]; David elsewhere called them "the sacrifices of praise" [^{<195023>} Psalm 50:23; cf. 51:19]. The apostle, ^{F846} following him, also calls them sacrifices of praise and explains them as "the fruit of lips confessing his name" [^{<581315>} Hebrews 13:15, Vg.]. The Lord's Supper cannot be without a sacrifice of this kind, in which, while we proclaim his death [^{<461126>} 1 Corinthians 11:26] and give thanks, we do nothing but offer a sacrifice of praise. From this office of sacrificing, all Christians are called a royal priesthood [^{<600209>} 1 Peter 2:9], because through Christ we offer that sacrifice of praise to God of which the apostle speaks: "the fruit of lips confessing his name" [^{<581315>} Hebrews 13:15, Vg.]. And we do not appear with our gifts before God without an intercessor. The Mediator interceding for us is Christ, by whom we offer ourselves and what is ours to the Father. He is our Pontiff, who has entered the heavenly sanctuary [^{<580924>} Hebrews 9:24] and opens a way for us to enter [cf. ^{<581020>} Hebrews 10:20]. He is the altar [cf. ^{<581310>} Hebrews 13:10] upon which we lay our gifts, that whatever we venture to do, we may undertake in him. He it is, I say, that has made us a kingdom and priests unto the Father [^{<660106>} Revelation 1:6]. ^{F847}

18. THE MASS ITSELF, APART FROM ITS PROFANATION, IS SACRILEGE

What remains but that the blind may see, the deaf hear, and even children understand this abomination of the Mass? Offered in a golden cup, it has so inebriated all kings and peoples of the earth, from highest to lowest, and has so stricken them with drowsiness and dizziness, that, more stupid than brute beasts, they have steered the whole vessel of their salvation into this one deadly whirlpool. Surely, Satan never prepared a stronger

engine to besiege and capture Christ's Kingdom. This is the Helen^{F848} for whom the enemies of truth today do battle with so much rage, fury, and cruelty — a Helen indeed, with whom they so defile themselves in spiritual fornication, the most abominable of all. Here I do not even touch with my little finger those gross abuses which they might offer as an excuse for the profanation of the purity of their sacred Mass; the base traffickings^{F849} they practice; the unclean profits they make by their massings; the unrestrained greed with which they satisfy their covetousness. I only point out, and that in a few simple words, what sort of thing the holiest holiness itself of the Mass is, on account of which it has deserved for some centuries to be esteemed so respectable and venerable. For it would be a rather large task to set out these very great mysteries according to their dignity. And I am unwilling to mingle with them those obscene corruptions which show themselves before the eyes and faces of all men, in order that all may understand that the Mass, taken in the highest purity it can claim, without its appurtenances, from root to top, swarms with every sort of impiety, blasphemy, idolatry, and sacrilege.

(Conclusion of chapters 17 and 18: two Christian sacraments only, 19-20)

19. BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER ARE THE ONLY SACRAMENTS

My readers now possess, collected into summary form, almost everything that I thought should be known concerning these two sacraments, whose use has been handed down to the Christian church from the beginning of the New Testament even to the end of the world; that is, that baptism should be, as it were, an entry into the church, and an initiation into faith; but the Supper should be a sort of continual food on which Christ spiritually feeds the household of his believers. Therefore, as there is but one God, one faith, one Christ, and one church, his body; so baptism is but one [^{<490404>} Ephesians 4:4-6], and is not a thing oft-repeated. But the Supper is repeatedly distributed, that those who have once been drawn into the church may realize that they continually feed upon Christ.

Apart from these two, no other sacrament has been instituted by God, so the church of believers ought to recognize no other; for erecting and

establishing new sacraments is not a matter of human choice. We shall readily understand this if we remember what was explained plainly enough above:^{F850} that sacraments have been appointed by God to instruct us concerning some promise of his, and to attest to us his good will toward us. Moreover, we shall realize this if we bear in mind that no man has been God's counselor [^{<234013>} Isaiah 40:13; ^{<451134>} Romans 11:34], that he should be able to promise anything certain concerning God's will, or assure us and make us confident of what attitude he bears toward us, what he intends to give and what to deny us. At once it is indicated that no man can set forth a sign to be a testimony of any intention or promise of His. It is He alone who has given the sign and can bear witness Of himself among us. I will say it more briefly and perhaps more rudely, but more plainly: there can never be a sacrament without promise of salvation. All men assembled together can promise us nothing concerning our salvation. Therefore, they cannot of themselves produce and set up a sacrament.

20. THE ADDITION OF SACRAMENTS NOT PERMITTED

Let the Christian church be content with these two sacraments, therefore. And let the church not only refuse to admit and acknowledge any third one for the present but also not desire or expect any, even to the end of the age.

Various sacraments besides these ordinary ones were given to the Jews, according to the changing condition of the times (as manna [^{<021613>} Exodus 16:13; ^{<461003>} 1 Corinthians 10:3], water flowing from the rock [^{<021706>} Exodus 17:6; ^{<461004>} 1 Corinthians 10:4], the brazen serpent [^{<042108>} Numbers 21:8; ^{<430314>} John 3:14], and the like). By this variation the Jews were warned not to halt with such figures, whose condition was impermanent, but to await from God something better, which would abide without any destruction or end.

But conditions are far different with us, to whom Christ has been revealed. For in him "all treasures of knowledge and wisdom are hid" [^{<510203>} Colossians 2:3, cf. Vg.] with such great abundance and richness that either to hope for or to seek any new addition to these treasures is truly to arouse God's wrath and provoke him against us. It is for us to hunger for, seek, look to, learn, and study Christ alone, until that great day

dawns when the Lord will fully manifest the glory of his Kingdom [cf. ^{<461524>} 1 Corinthians 15:24] and will show himself for us to see him as he is [^{<620302>} 1 John 3:2]. And for this reason this age of ours is designated in the Scriptures as “the last hour” [^{<620218>} 1 John 2:18], the “last days” [^{<580102>} Hebrews 1:2], the “last times” [^{<600120>} 1 Peter 1:20], that no one should delude himself with a vain expectation of some new doctrine or revelation. “For at many times and in many ways the Heavenly Father formerly spoke through the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken in his beloved Son” [^{<580101>} Hebrews 1:1-2 p.], who alone can reveal the Father [^{<421022>} Luke 10:22]; and he has indeed manifested the Father fully, as far as we require, while we now see him in a mirror [^{<461312>} 1 Corinthians 13:12].

But now, as the capacity to coin new sacraments in the church has been denied to men, so it is to be wished that as little as possible of human invention be mingled with those sacraments which come from God. For just as when water is poured in, wine is displaced and diluted, and with yeast sprinkled over it the whole lump of dough goes sour, thus the cleanness of God’s mysteries is but polluted when man adds anything of his own.

And yet we see how much the sacraments, as even today they are performed, have degenerated from their pristine purity. Everywhere there is too much of processions, ceremonies, and mimes; yet at the same time there is no consideration or mention of God’s Word, without which even the sacraments themselves are not sacraments. Indeed, the very ceremonies established by God cannot lift their head in such a great crowd, but lie as if crushed down. In baptism how little does one see of that which alone ought to have shone and been looked upon (as we have elsewhere rightly complained^{F851}), that is, baptism itself? The Supper is completely buried since it has been turned into the Mass, except that it is seen once a year, although in a mangled, halved, and mutilated form.

CHAPTER 19

THE FIVE OTHER CEREMONIES,^{F852} FALSELY TERMED SACRAMENTS;

**ALTHOUGH COMMONLY CONSIDERED SACRAMENTS
HITHERTO, THEY ARE PROVED NOT TO BE SUCH, AND THEIR
REAL NATURE IS SHOWN**

*(Five alleged sacraments, not authorized by God's Word
or used in the early church, 1-3)*

1. IT IS NOT MERELY A MATTER OF THE TERM "SACRAMENT"

Our previous discussion of the sacraments would have been enough to persuade teachable and sober folk not to carry their curiosity any farther, or to accept any sacraments apart from God's Word, except those two which they knew to be ordained by the Lord. But the notion of seven sacraments, a commonplace of almost everybody's talk and pervading all schools and sermons, has taken root by its very antiquity and is still fixed in men's minds.^{F853} Consequently, it seemed to me that I should be doing something worth-while if I were to examine individually and more closely the five remaining rites, which are commonly reckoned among the true and genuine sacraments of the Lord, and, tearing away all camouflage, were to expose, for simple folk to see, what they are like and how falsely they have hitherto been reckoned as sacraments.

First, I wish to protest to all godly men that I do not undertake this contention about the name out of any desire to quarrel, but that I am led by weighty reasons to attack its misuse. I am quite aware that Christians are lords both of words and of al! things, and can therefore apply words to things as they choose. provided a pious sense be kept, even though there may be some incorrect usage in speaking. I grant all this, although it would be better for words to be subject to things rather than things to words. But in the word "sacrament" the case is different. For those who postulate

seven sacraments apply to all together the definition that they are visible forms of an invisible grace; they make all together vessels of the Holy Spirit, instruments for conferring righteousness, means of obtaining grace.

Indeed, the Master of the Sentences himself denies that the sacraments of the Mosaic law are properly called by that name, for they did not confer the things they prefigured.^{F854} Is it bearable, I ask, that those symbols which the Lord consecrated with his own mouth, and which he adorned with excellent promises, should not be reckoned as sacraments; and that all the while this honor should be transferred to those rites which men have either devised by themselves or at least observe without God's express command? Let them, therefore, either change the definition of the word, or abstain from this use of it, which afterward engenders false and absurd opinions. Extreme unction (they say) is the figure and cause of invisible grace because it is a sacrament. Since we can in no wise admit this inference of theirs, surely we have to challenge them in the word itself, lest at this price we allow it to be the occasion for such error. Again, when they approve it as a sacrament, they add the reason, that it consists of outward sign and word.^{F855} If we find neither command nor promise, what else can we do but contradict them?

2. GOD ALONE CAN ESTABLISH A SACRAMENT

Now, it appears that we are not quarreling over the word, but are raising a necessary controversy about the thing itself. Accordingly, we must stoutly maintain what we previously confirmed with invincible argument, that the decision to establish a sacrament rests with God alone. Indeed, a sacrament ought, by God's sure promise, to encourage and comfort believers' consciences, which could never receive this certainty from man. A sacrament ought to be for us a testimony of God's good will toward us, of which no man or angel can be the witness, since no one was God's counselor [^{<234013>} Isaiah 40:13; ^{<451134>} Romans 11:34]. Therefore, it is he alone who, with lawful authority, testifies concerning himself to us through his own Word. A sacrament is a seal by which God's covenant, or promise, is sealed. But it could not be sealed with physical things and the elements of this world, unless it were shaped and designed for this by God's power. Therefore, man cannot establish a sacrament, because it is not in man's power to cause such great mysteries of God to be concealed

under such humble things. The Word of God must precede, to make a sacrament a sacrament, as Augustine very well states.

Moreover, it is useful to keep some distinction between sacraments and other ceremonies — unless we wish to fall into many absurdities. The apostles prayed on bended knee [^{<440760>} Acts 7:60; 9:40; 20:36; 21:5; 26:14]; therefore, men will not kneel without a sacrament. The disciples are said to have prayed toward the east; looking toward the east should be a sacrament for us. Paul wishes men to lift up pure hands in every place [^{<540208>} 1 Timothy 2:8], and it is recalled that holy men often prayed with hands raised up [^{<196304>} Psalm 63:4; 88:9; 141:2; 143:6]; the stretching up of hands also should become a sacrament. In the end, all the gestures of the saints would turn into sacraments. I would not tarry even over these matters if only they were not connected with those greater difficulties.

3. THAT THE SACRAMENTS ARE SEVEN IN NUMBER WAS UNKNOWN IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH

If they would like to press us with the authority of the ancient church, I say that they are deceiving. For nowhere among ecclesiastical writers is this number “seven” found, and it is uncertain at what time it first crept in. I indeed admit that they are sometimes quite free in their use of the word “sacrament”; but what do they mean by it? They mean all ceremonies and outward rites, and all exercises of piety. But when they speak of those signs which ought to be testimonies of divine grace toward us, they are content with these two, Baptism and the Eucharist.

Lest anyone think I am falsely claiming this, I shall refer here to a few testimonies of Augustine. He says to Januarius: “First, I want you to grasp what is the chief point of this discussion, that our Lord Christ (as he himself says in the gospel) has laid upon us a gentle yoke and a light burden [^{<401129>} Matthew 11:29-30]. Accordingly, he has bound together the society of the new people by sacraments very few in number, very easy to observe, very excellent in meaning. Such are baptism, consecrated with the name of the Trinity, and the communion of the Lord’s body and blood, and any other that is approved in the canonical Scriptures.”^{F856} Again, he says in *On Christian Doctrine*: “Since the Lord’s resurrection, the Lord himself and the teaching of the apostles have authorized some

few signs instead of many, ones very easy to perform, most exalted in meaning, most chaste in observance. Such are baptism and the celebration of the Lord's body and blood."^{F857} Why does he make no mention of this sacred number "seven"? Is it likely that he would have omitted it if it had then been established in the church, especially since he is otherwise more bent on observing numbers than is necessary? Indeed, when he names Baptism and Supper, and says nothing of the Test, is he not sufficiently implying that these two mysteries excel in singular dignity, and the other ceremonies sink to a lower place? Therefore, I say that these sacramentary doctors are destitute not only of the Lord's Word but also of the agreement of the ancient church, however greatly they boast of this pretense. But let us now get down to the actual kinds of alleged sacraments.

(Confirmation not a sacrament: early practice of reception after instruction should be restored, 4-13)

4. CUSTOM OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH

In early times it was the custom for the children of Christians after they had grown up to be brought before the bishop to fulfill that duty which was required of those who as adults offered themselves for baptism. For the latter sat among the catechumens until, duly instructed in the mysteries of the faith, they were able to make confession of their faith before the bishop and people. Therefore, those who had been baptized as infants, because they had not then made confession of faith before the church, were at the end of their childhood or at the beginning of adolescence again presented by their parents, and were examined by the bishop according to the form of the catechism, which was then in definite form and in common use. But in order that this act, which ought by itself to have been weighty and holy, might have more reverence and dignity, the ceremony of the laying on of hands was also added. Thus the youth, once his faith was approved, was dismissed with a solemn blessing.

The ancient writers make frequent mention of this practice.^{F858} Pope Leo says, "If any man return from the heretics, let him not be baptized again, but let the power of the Spirit, lacking in his baptism, be conferred upon him by the laying on of the bishop's hands." Here our adversaries will cry

out that a rite in which the Holy Spirit is conferred is properly called a sacrament. But Leo himself elsewhere explains what he meant by these words: “Let not him who was baptized among the heretics be rebaptized, but let him be confirmed through the laying on of hands with the invoking of the Holy Spirit; for he received only the form of baptism without the sanctification.” Jerome also mentions this against the Luciferians.

Although I do not deny that Jerome is somewhat in error here, in saying that the observance is apostolic, he is nevertheless far, far away from these men’s follies. And he qualifies this when he adds that this act of blessing has been given to bishops alone, more in honor to the episcopate^{F859} than out of legal necessity.^{F860} Therefore, I warmly approve such laying on of hands, which is simply done as a form of blessing, and wish that it were today restored to pure use.

5. FULL DEVELOPMENT AND MEANING OF CONFIRMATION ACCORDING TO ROMANIST TEACHING

But a later age, having well-nigh blotted out the reality, has set up some sort of pretended confirmation as a sacrament of God.

They have reigned that the power of confirmation is to confer, for the increase of grace, the Holy Spirit, who was conferred in baptism for innocence; to confirm for battle those who in baptism were regenerated to life. This confirmation is performed with anointing and with this formula: “I mark thee with the sign of the holy cross, and confirm thee with the chrism of salvation, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”^{F861} All beautifully and charmingly done! But where is the Word of God, which promises the presence of the Holy Spirit here? They cannot show us one jot. How will they assure us that their chrism is a vessel of the Holy Spirit? We see the oil — the gross and greasy liquid — nothing else. Augustine says, “Let the word be added to the element, and it will become sacrament.”^{F862} Let them, I say, bring forth this word, if they would have us see in the oil anything else than oil. But if they acknowledged themselves, as they ought, to be ministers of the sacraments, we would have no reason to contend longer. This is the first law of a minister, to do nothing without a command. Come now, let them produce some command for this ministry, and I will not say another word. If they are without a command, they cannot excuse their sacrilegious

boldness. In this sense, the Lord asked the Pharisees whether John's baptism was from heaven or from men. If they had answered "from men," he would have proved it trifling and vain; if "from heaven," they would be compelled to acknowledge John's doctrine. Therefore, in order not to slander John too much, they dared not confess it to be from men [^{<402125>}Matthew 21:25-27]. If confirmation is therefore from men, it is proved vain and trifling; if our opponents wish to convince us that it is from heaven, let them prove it.

6. APPEAL TO APOSTOLIC LAYING ON OF HANDS IS UNFOUNDED

Indeed, they defend themselves with the example of the apostles, who, they judge, did nothing rashly.^{F863} Quite true; nor would we blame them if they showed themselves followers of the apostles. But what did the apostles do? Luke tells in The Acts that the apostles who were at Jerusalem, when they had heard that Samaria had received the word of God, sent Peter and John thither; these apostles prayed for the Samaritans that they might receive the Holy Spirit, who had not yet come upon any of them, for they had been baptized in Jesus' name only; when they had prayed, they laid their hands upon them, and through this laying on of hands the Samaritans received the Holy Spirit [^{<440817>}Acts 8:4-17, cf. Vg.]. And he frequently mentions this laying on of hands [^{<440606>}Acts 6:6; 8:17; 13:3; 19:6].

I hear what the apostles did, that is, that they faithfully fulfilled their ministry. The Lord willed that those visible and wonderful graces of the Holy Spirit, which he then poured out upon his people, be administered and distributed by his apostles through the laying on of hands. I think that no deeper mystery underlies this laying on of hands, but my interpretation is that they made use of such a ceremony to signify by their gesture that they commended to God, and, as it were, offered him on whom they laid their hands.

If this ministry which the apostles then carried out still remained in the church, the laying on of hands would also have to be kept. But since that grace has ceased to be given, what purpose does the laying on of hands serve? Surely, the Holy Spirit is still present among God's people, for the

church cannot stand unless he is its guide and director. For we have an eternal and permanently established promise by which Christ calls to himself those who thirst, that they may drink living waters [^{<430737>} John 7:37; cf. ^{<235501>} Isaiah 55:1; also ^{<430410>} John 4:10; 7:38]. But those miraculous powers and manifest workings, which were dispensed by the laying on of hands, have ceased; and they have rightly lasted only for a time. For it was fitting that the new preaching of the gospel and the new Kingdom of Christ should be illumined and magnified by unheard-of and extraordinary miracles. When the Lord ceased from these, he did not utterly forsake his church, but declared that the magnificence of his Kingdom and the dignity of his word had been excellently enough disclosed. In what respect, then, will these actors say they are following the apostles? They should have brought it about with laying on of hands, in order that the evident power of the Holy Spirit might be immediately expressed. This they do not accomplish. Why, then, do they boast that the laying on of hands is theirs, which we read was indeed in use among the apostles, but for a wholly different end?

7. ANOINTING WITH OIL IS A COUNTERFEIT SACRAMENT

This is as reasonable as to teach that the breath which the Lord breathed upon his disciples [^{<432022>} John 20:22] is a sacrament by which the Holy Spirit is given. But while the Lord did this once, he did not mean that we should also do it. In the same way also, the apostles laid on hands for the time when it pleased the Lord that the visible graces of the Holy Spirit be distributed at their prayers, not in order that their descendants should in mimicry only and without profit counterfeit a cold and empty sign, as these apes do.

But if they prove that in the laying on of hands they follow the apostles (in which they have no similarity to the apostles except some sort of perverted zeal), ^{F864} yet whence that oil, which they call “the oil of salvation”? Who taught them to seek salvation in oil? Who taught them to attribute to it the power to confirm? ^{F865} Did Paul, who draws us far away from the elements of this world [^{<480409>} Galatians 4:9], who condemns nothing more than clinging to such petty observances [^{<510220>} Colossians 2:20]? But I boldly declare this, not from myself, but from the Lord: Those who call oil “the oil of salvation” ^{F866} forswear the salvation which is

in Christ; they deny Christ, and they have no part in God's Kingdom. For oil is for the belly and the belly for oil, the Lord will destroy both [cf. ^{<460613>} 1 Corinthians 6:13]. For all these weak elements which decay with use have nothing to do with God's Kingdom, which is spiritual and will never decay. What, then? Will someone ask, "Do you measure with the same stick the water with which we are baptized, and the bread and wine under which the Lord's Supper is set forth?" I reply: in the divinely given sacraments two things are to be noted: the substance of the physical thing which is set forth to us, and the form which is impressed upon it by God's Word, in which its whole force lies. In so far as they, therefore, retain their substance — bread, wine, water, that are offered to our sight in the sacraments — Paul's statement holds good always: "Food for the belly, and the belly for food; God will destroy both" [^{<460613>} 1 Corinthians 6:13, cf. Vg.]. For they pass away and vanish with the form of this world [^{<460731>} 1 Corinthians 7:31]. But in so far as they are sanctified by God's word to be sacraments, they do not hold us within the flesh, but truly and spiritually teach us.

8. CONFIRMATION AS THE DEVALUATION OF BAPTISM

abut let us investigate still more closely how many monsters this grease feeds and nourishes. These anointers say that the Holy Spirit is given in baptism for innocence; in confirmation, for the increase of grace; that in baptism we are regenerated unto life; in confirmation we are equipped for battle. And they are so shameless as to deny that baptism can be duly completed without confirmation! What wickedness! Have not we then been buried in baptism with Christ, made partakers in his death, that we may also be sharers in his resurrection [^{<450604>} Romans 6:4-5]? Moreover, this fellowship with Christ's death and life Paul explains to be the mortifying of our flesh and the quickening of the Spirit, because "our old man has been crucified" [^{<450606>} Romans 6:6, Vg.] in order that "we may walk in newness of life" [^{<450605>} Romans 6:5, Vg.]. What is it to be equipped for battle, but this?

But if they accounted it nothing to trample God's word, why did they not at least reverence the church, to which they wish to seem in every respect so submissive? But what weightier argument can be brought forward against their doctrine than that decree of the Council of Milevis? It states:

“Whoever says that baptism is given only for forgiveness of sins, and not as a help for grace to come, let him be anathema.”

But Luke, in the passage we have cited, says that persons who had not received the Holy Spirit were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ [^{<440816>} Acts 8:16]. In saying, this, Luke does not simply deny that they who believe in Christ with their heart and confess him with their mouth are endowed with any gift of the Spirit [^{<451010>} Romans 10:10]. But he has in mind the receiving of the Spirit, by which manifest powers and visible graces were received. Thus the apostles are said to have received the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost [^{<440204>} Acts 2:4], while Christ long before had said to them, “It is not you who speak, but the Spirit of your Father, who speaks in you” [^{<401020>} Matthew 10:20, Vg.]. You who are of God observe here Satan’s malicious and dangerous fraud. In order stealthily to draw the unwary from baptism, he lies in saying that what was truly given in baptism is given in his confirmation. Who now can doubt that this is a doctrine of Satan, which, cutting off from baptism the promises proper to baptism, conveys and transfers them elsewhere? We have now detected, I say, upon what foundation this wonderful anointing rests. The word of God is: “All who have been baptized in Christ have put on Christ with his gifts” [^{<480327>} Galatians 3:27]. The word of the anointers is: “No promise has been received in baptism to prepare us for combat.”^{F867} The first is the voice of truth; the latter must be that of falsehood. Therefore, I can more truly define this confirmation than they have hitherto defined it: it is an overt outrage against baptism, which obscures, indeed, abolishes, its function; it is a false promise of the devil, which draws us away from God’s truth. Or, if you prefer, it is oil, befouled with the devil’s falsehood, which deceives and plunges the simple-minded into darkness.

9. THE DOCTRINE OF THE NECESSITY OF CONFIRMATION FOR SALVATION IS NONSENSE

Furthermore, they add that all believers ought to receive the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands after baptism so that they may be found complete Christians; for there will never be a Christian who is not anointed with chrism^{F868} by episcopal confirmation. These are their own words. Yet I thought that everything pertaining to Christianity was prescribed and included in the Scriptures. Now, as I see, the true form of

religion is to be sought and learned elsewhere than from the Scriptures. Therefore, the wisdom of God, heavenly truth, Christ's whole teaching, only begin Christians; oil perfects them. By this sentence all the apostles and many of the martyrs are condemned, who most certainly never received the chrism — since there was not yet holy oil to pour out upon them and make them complete in all the details of Christianity, or rather make Christians of those who were not yet Christians.

But, though I remain silent, these persons abundantly refute themselves. For what portion of their own people do they anoint after baptism? Why, then, do they allow such half-Christians in their flock, whose imperfection they could easily remedy? Why do they with such craven negligence allow people to omit what could not be omitted without grave incrimination? Why do they not more strictly require a thing so necessary and requisite for the obtaining of salvation, unless, perhaps, one has been prevented by sudden death? That is, when they allow it to be despised so freely, they tacitly confess that it is not so important as they claim.

10. THE PAPISTS WOULD PUT CONFIRMATION ABOVE BAPTISM

Finally, they determine that this sacred anointing ought to be held in higher veneration than baptism, because it is exclusively administered by the hands of the prelates, while baptism is commonly dispensed by all priests.^{F869} What can you say here but that they are plainly mad who are so fond of their own inventions that by comparison they carelessly despise God's most holy institutions? O sacrilegious mouth, do you dare oppose to Christ's sacrament a grease befouled only with the stench of your own breath, and under the spell of mumbled words, and to compare it with water sanctified by God's Word? Yet to your audacity this was but a trifle — for you even preferred it. These are the responses of the holy see, the oracles of the apostolic tripod.^{F870}

But some of these people begin to moderate a little this madness which even in their opinion was out of control. It is to be held in greater reverence, they say, perhaps not because of the greater power and profit that it confers, but because it is given by those who are more worthy, and on the more worthy part of the body, that is, on the forehead; or because

it provides a greater increase of virtues, although baptism avails more for forgiveness of sins.

But in the first reason, do they not betray themselves to be Donatists, who reckon the force of the sacrament from the worthiness of the minister? However, I shall admit that confirmation may be called worthier by the worthiness of the bishop's hand.^{F871} But if someone inquire of them the source of this very great privilege of the bishop, what reason will they bring forward but their own whim? The apostles (they will say) alone used that right, as they alone dispensed the Holy Spirit. Are the bishops alone apostles? Indeed, are they apostles at all? Still, suppose we concede this also. Why do they not contend by the same argument that bishops alone ought to touch the sacrament of blood in the Lord's Supper, which they deny to laymen for the reason that it was given by the Lord to the apostles alone? If to the apostles alone, why do they not infer, therefore, to the bishops alone? But in that place they make the apostles simple priests; now a dizziness of the head carries them off in another direction, so that suddenly they make them bishops. Finally, Ananias was not an apostle, yet Paul was sent to him to receive his sight, be baptized, and be filled with the Holy Spirit [^{<440917>} Acts 9:17-19]- I shall also add this to the pile: If this office had belonged to the bishops by divine right, why did they dare transfer it to common presbyters, as we read in a letter of Gregory?^{F872}

11. FRIVOLOUS ARGUMENTS FOR ESTEEMING CONFIRMATION ABOVE BAPTISM

How trifling, foolish, and stupid is their other reason for calling confirmation more worthy than God's baptism: that in it the forehead is smeared with oil, in baptism the top of the head^{F873} — as if baptism were performed with oil and not with water! I call all godly men to witness whether these rascals are not striving toward this one end, to corrupt the purity of the sacraments with their leaven. I have already said in another place^{F874} that in the sacraments, amidst the throng of human inventions, what is of God scarcely glimmers through crannies. If anyone did not trust me then in this matter, let him now at least believe his own teachers. Behold, while they neglect the water and reckon it of no account, they esteem only oil in baptism! We therefore say, on the contrary, that in

baptism the forehead is also moistened with water. In comparison with this, we esteem your oil — whether in baptism or in confirmation — not worth one piece of dung. But if anyone will claim that it is sold for more, by this increase in price whatever goodness would otherwise be in it is corrupted — so far is it from being allowable for them stealthily to peddle their utterly foul imposture!

They betray their impiety in the third reason when they prate that a greater increase of virtues is conferred in confirmation than in baptism.^{F875} By the laying on of hands the apostles administered the visible graces of the Spirit. In what respect does these men's grease show itself beneficial? But farewell to these directors,^{F876} who cover one sacrilege with many sacrileges. It is a Gordian knot which it is better to cut than to toil so hard to untie.

12. CONFIRMATION CANNOT BE UPHELD BY THE PRACTICE OF THE ANCIENT CHURCH

But now, when they see themselves deprived of God's word and of any demonstrable argument, they pretend, as usual, that this is a most ancient observance, confirmed by the consent of many ages. Even if this were true, they gain nothing. A sacrament is not of the earth, but of heaven; not of men, but of God alone. They must prove God the author of their confirmation if they wish to have it regarded as a sacrament.

But why do they claim antiquity, seeing that the ancient writers, when they mean to speak precisely, nowhere reckon more than two sacraments. If we had to seek from men a refuge for our faith, we have an impregnable citadel in that the ancients never recognized as sacraments what these fellows falsely call sacraments. The ancients speak of the laying on of hands, but do they call it a sacrament? Augustine openly affirms that it is nothing but prayer. Now let them not snarl at me with their foul distinctions, that Augustine meant this act not to be confirmatory, but curative or reconciliatory. The book is extant and circulates in men's hands; if I am twisting it into another meaning than Augustine himself wrote, I am content to let them not only rail at me as usual, but spit at me. For Augustine is speaking of those who were returning from schism to the unity of the church. He denies the necessity of rebaptizing them; for the

laying on of hands is enough, that through the bond of peace the Lord may bestow his Holy Spirit upon them. But since it might have seemed absurd to repeat the laying on of hands rather than baptism, he shows the difference. “For what else,” he says, “is laying on of hands than prayer over a man?” And that this is the meaning is clear from another passage, where he says, “For the sake of the bond of love, which is the greatest gift of the Holy Spirit, and without which whatever other holy things are in a man are valueless for salvation, the hand is laid upon corrected heretics.”^{F877}

13. TRUE CONFIRMATION

How I wish that we might have kept the custom which, as I have said, existed among the ancient Christians before this misborn wraith of a sacrament came to birth! Not that it would be a confirmation such as they fancy, which cannot be named without doing injustice to baptism; but a catechizing, in which children or those near adolescence would give an account of their faith before the church. But the best method of catechizing would be to have a manual drafted for this exercise, containing and summarizing in simple manner most of the articles of our religion, on which the whole believers’ church ought to agree without controversy. A child of ten^{F878} would present himself to the church to declare his confession of faith, would be examined in each article, and answer to each; if he were ignorant of anything or insufficiently understood it, he would be taught. Thus, while the church looks on as a witness, he would profess the one true and sincere faith, in which the believing folk with one mind worship the one God.

If this discipline were in effect today, it would certainly arouse some slothful parents, who carelessly neglect the instruction of their children as a matter of no concern to them; for then they could not overlook it without public disgrace. There would be greater agreement in faith among Christian people, and not so many would go untaught and ignorant; some would not be so rashly carried away with new and strange doctrines; in short, all would have some methodical instruction, so to speak, in Christian doctrine.

14. THE PRACTICE OF PENANCE IN THE ANCIENT CHURCH

In the next place, they put penance,^{F879} of which they speak in such confused and disorderly fashion that consciences can gain nothing certain or solid from their doctrine. We have already declared at length in another place^{F880} what we had learned concerning repentance from the Scriptures, and what our adversaries teach. Now we need only touch upon what reason they had who established the opinion, until now dominant in churches and schools, that this is a sacrament.

Still, I shall first say something briefly of the rite of the ancient church, which they have wrongly used as a pretext to establish their fiction. The ancients observed this order in public repentance, that those who had discharged the satisfactions enjoined upon them were reconciled by the solemn laying on of hands. That was a sign of absolution by which the sinner himself was raised up before God with assurance of pardon, and the church admonished to expunge the memory of his offense and receive him kindly into favor. Cyprian very often calls this “giving peace.”^{F881} But in order that this action might be weightier and be more commended among the people, it was ordained that the authority of the bishop should always intervene here. Hence that decree of the Second Council of Carthage: “A presbyter is not permitted to reconcile a penitent publicly in the Mass.” And another of the Council of Orange: “Let those who in time of penance depart from this life be admitted to communion without reconciliatory laying on of hands; if they should recover from the disease, let them stand in the order of the penitents and, when the time is finished, let them receive reconciliatory laying on of hands from the bishop.” Likewise, of the Third Council of Carthage: “Let not a presbyter reconcile a penitent without the authority of the bishop.”^{F882} All these statements have the purpose of ensuring that the severity which they wished to maintain in this matter may not lapse, out of excessive leniency. Therefore, they wished the bishop, who was likely to be more circumspect in holding the examination, to be judge. However, Cyprian, in another passage, shows that not only the bishop laid on hands but the entire clergy as well. For he speaks as follows: “They do penance for the proper period; then they

come to communion, and through the laying on of hands of bishop and clergy receive the right of communion.”^{F883}

As time passed, the matter deteriorated to the point that, apart from public penance, they also used this rite in private absolutions. Hence arose that distinction in Gratian between public and private reconciliation.^{F884}

I judge the ancient observance, which Cyprian mentions, to have been holy and wholesome for the church; and I would like to see it restored today. This more recent practice, although I dare not disallow it or speak too sharply against it, I nevertheless deem less necessary. However it may be, we still see that the laying on of hands in penance is a ceremony ordained by men, not by God, one that ought to be classed among things indifferent and outward exercises — things that are indeed not to be despised, but that ought to occupy a lower place than those commended to us by the Lord’s word.

15. PENANCE IS NO SACRAMENT

But the Romanists and Schoolmen (who have an inveterate habit of corrupting all things by perverse interpretation) anxiously labor to find a sacrament here. And it ought to seem no wonder, for they are seeking a knot in a bulrush.^{F885} Yet when they have done as best they can, they leave the matter involved, hanging, uncertain, confused, and troubled by a variety of opinions. They therefore say: either outward penance is a sacrament, and if it is, ought to be regarded as a sign of inner repentance, that is, of contrition of heart, which will be the matter of the sacrament; or both together are a sacrament, not two, but one complete. But they say: the outward penance is only a sacrament; the inner repentance is the sacramental matter and the sacrament.^{F886} Furthermore, forgiveness of sins is the matter only and not the sacrament.^{F887}

Let those who bear in mind the definition of sacrament given by us above examine against this what the Romanists say is a sacrament, and they will find that it is not an outward ceremony instituted by the Lord to confirm our faith. But if they reply that my definition is not a law that they must obey, let them hear Augustine, whom they pretend to consider sacrosanct. He says, “Visible sacraments were instituted for the sake of carnal men, that by the steps of sacraments they may ascend from things discernible

by the eyes to those understood.”^{F888} What similar thing do they themselves see or can they show to others in what they call “the sacrament of penance”? In another place, he says: “It is indeed called a sacrament because in it one thing is seen, another understood. What is seen has bodily form; what is understood has spiritual fruit.”^{F889} And those in no wise agree with the sacrament of penance (as they fancy it), where there is no bodily form to represent spiritual fruit.

16. WHY NOT MAKE ABSOLUTION THE SACRAMENT?

And, to kill these beasts in their own arena, if any sacrament is to be sought here, can it not be far more plausibly boasted that the priest’s absolution is more of a sacrament than penance, either inward or outward? For it could readily be said that it is a ceremony to confirm our faith in forgiveness of sins, and has the promise of the keys, as they call the statement, “Whatever you bind or loose on earth will be loosed and bound in heaven” [^{<401818>} Matthew 18:18; cf. ch. 16:19]. But someone might have objected that many who are loosed by priests get no such thing by such absolution, although according to their dogma the sacraments of the new law ought to carry out what they represent. Absurd. As they postulate a double eating in the Supper, a sacramental (common to good and bad equally) and a spiritual (confined to the good alone)^{F890} — why shouldn’t they imagine that a two-way absolution is also received? Yet I have not hitherto been able to understand what they mean with their dogma; we explained how far it differs from God’s truth when we specifically dealt with that argument.^{F891} Here I only wish to show that this scruple offers no hindrance to prevent them from calling the priest’s absolution a sacrament. For they could answer through Augustine’s mouth that there is sanctification without a visible sacrament and a visible sacrament without inner sanctification. Again: “that in the elect alone sacraments effect what they represent.” Again: “Some put on Christ as far as the receiving of the sacrament; others, as far as sanctification. The former, good and bad do equally; the latter, the good alone.”^{F892} Obviously, they were more than childishly deceived, and were blind in the sunshine,^{F893} who, while they strove with much difficulty, still did not perceive a thing so plain and obvious to everyone.

17. BAPTISM THE SACRAMENT OF REPENTANCE

But, to keep them from becoming puffed up, regardless of what they posit their sacrament upon, I deny that it is rightly reckoned as a sacrament. First, because no special promise of God to this effect—the only basis of a sacrament — exists. Secondly, because every ceremony displayed here is a mere invention of men, although we have already proved that the ceremonies of sacraments can be ordained only by God. What they fabricated about a sacrament of penance was therefore a falsehood and an imposture.

They have adorned this reigned sacrament with an appropriate title, “the second plank after shipwreck,” for if anyone has stained, by sinning, the garment of innocence received in baptism, he can restore it by penance. But it is, they assert, Jerome’s saying.^{F894} No matter whose it may be, it cannot be excused of manifest impiety, if it is explained according to their meaning. As if baptism were wiped out by sin, and is not rather to be recalled to the memory of the sinner whenever he thinks of forgiveness of sins, so that from it he may gather himself together, take courage, and confirm his faith that he will obtain the forgiveness of sins, which has been promised him in baptism! But what Jerome said harshly and improperly — that baptism (from which they who deserve to be excommunicated by the church fall away) is restored by repentance — these excellent interpreters turn to their own impiety.

You will therefore speak most aptly if you call baptism the sacrament of penance, since it has been given to those who are intent on repentance as a confirmation of grace and a seal of assurance, blest you think this to be a fiction of ours, besides conforming to the words of Scripture, but is clear that in the ancient church it was publicized as an assured principle. For in the little book, *Concerning Faith to Peter*, which is ascribed to Augustine, it is called “the sacrament of faith and repentance.”^{F895} And why do we take refuge in dubious writings? As if we should require anything plainer than what the Evangelist states: “John preached a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins” [^{<410104>}Mark 1:4; ^{<420303>}Luke 3:3]!

*(Extreme unction rests upon a misuse of ^{<590514>}James 5:14-15
and is no sacrament, 18-21)*

18. ALLEGED SCRIPTURE ON EXTREME UNCTION REJECTED

The third false sacrament is extreme unction, which is performed only by the priest, and that *in extremis* (as they say), with oil consecrated by the bishop and with this formula: "Through this holy anointing and through his most kindly mercy may God pardon thee for whatever sins thou has committed through see-rag, hearing, smelling, touching, or tasting." They fancy that its two powers are forgiveness of sins and easing of bodily sickness, if such be expedient; if not, salvation of the soul. They say that its institution was set by James, whose words are: "Is any among you sick? Let him call for the presbyters of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord [^{<590514>}James 5:14, Vg.]; band the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven" [^{<590515>}James 5:15].^{F896} This anointing is of the same sort as we demonstrated above^{F897} the laying on of hands to be, namely, merely playacting, by which without reason and without benefit, they wish to resemble the apostles. Mark relates that the apostles on their first mission, according to the command which they had received from the Lord, raised up the dead, cast out demons, cleansed lepers, healed the sick, and in curing the sick used oil. "They anointed," he says, "many sick persons with oil, and they were cured." [^{<410613>}Mark 6:13, cf. Vg.]. James had reference to this when he enjoined that the presbyters should be called to anoint the sick man. That no deeper mystery underlies such ceremonies will readily be decided by those who have observed how much freedom both the Lord and his apostles exercised in these outward matters. The Lord, about to restore sight to the blind man, made a clay of dust and spittle [^{<430906>}John 9:6]; some he healed by touch [^{<400929>}Matthew 9:29]; others by a word [^{<421842>}Luke 18:42]. In the same way, the apostles cured some diseases by word alone [^{<440306>}Acts 3:6; 14:9-10], some by touch [^{<440512>}Acts 5:12, 16], some by anointing [^{<441912>}Acts 19:12]. But it is likely that this anointing, along with the other methods, was not used without discrimination. I admit this: yet not that it was an instrument of

healing, but only a symbol, by which the unschooled in their ignorance might be made aware of the source of such great power, that they might not give the credit for it to the apostles. It is a well-worn commonplace that by oil the Holy Spirit and his gifts are signified [^{<194507>} Psalm 45:7].

But that gift of healing, like the rest of the miracles, which the Lord willed to be brought forth for a time, has vanished away in order to make the new preaching of the gospel marvelous forever. Therefore, even if we grant to the full that anointing was a sacrament of those powers which were then administered by the hands of the apostles, it now has nothing to do with us, to whom the administering of such powers has not been committed.

9. EXTREME UNCTION IS NO SACRAMENT

And for what greater reason do they make a sacrament out of this unction than out of all the other symbols mentioned to us in Scripture? Why do they not appoint some bathing pool of Siloam [^{<430907>} John 9:7] into which the sick at certain times may plunge themselves? That, they say, would be done in vain. Surely, no more in vain than anointing. Why not let them lie upon dead men, since Paul raised a dead child by lying upon him [^{<442010>} Acts 20:10]? Why is not clay made of spittle and dust a sacrament? But the others (they reply) were individual examples, while this was commanded by James. That is, James spoke for that same time when the church still enjoyed such a blessing of God. Indeed, they affirm that the same force is still in their anointing,^{F898} but we experience otherwise. Let no one now marvel how with such great boldness they have mocked souls, whom they know to be senseless and blind when deprived of the Word of God, which is life and light; for they are not ashamed to wish to deceive the living and feeling senses of the body. Therefore, they make themselves ridiculous when they boast that they are endowed with the gift of healing. The Lord is indeed present with his people in every age; and he heals their weaknesses as often as necessary, no less than of old; still he does not put forth these manifest powers, nor dispense miracles through the apostles' hands. For that was a temporary gift, and also quickly perished partly on account of men's ungratefulness.

20. UNCTION HAS NO DIVINE AUTHORIZATION OR PROMISE

Therefore, as by the symbol of oil the apostles have with good cause openly testified that the gift of healing committed to them was not their own power but that of the Holy Spirit, so on the other hand they wrong the Holy Spirit who make a putrid and ineffectual oil his power. That is as if someone had said that all oil is the power of the Holy Spirit, because it is called by that name in Scripture; that every dove is the Holy Spirit, because he appeared in that form [^{<400316>} Matthew 3:16; ^{<430132>} John 1:32]. But let them look into these things. As for us, it suffices for the present to recognize as a certainty that their anointing is not a sacrament, for neither is it a ceremony instituted by God, nor has it any promise. Indeed, when we require these two things in a sacrament — that it be a ceremony instituted by God, and that it have God's promise — at the same time we demand that that ceremony be delivered to us, and the promise apply to us. For no one argues that circumcision is now a sacrament of the Christian church, even though it both was an institution of God and had a promise attached. For it was neither enjoined upon us, nor was the promise joined with it given to us on the same condition. That the promise which they fiercely claim in extreme unction was not given for us we have clearly proved, and they themselves make clear by experience. The ceremony ought not to have been used except by those who had been endowed with the gift of healing, not by these butchers who are more able to slay and hack than to heal.

21. THE PAPISTS DO NOT PROCEED AT ALL ACCORDING TO JAMES'S "WORDS OF INSTITUTION"

However, even if they should win their point, as they are very far from doing, that what James prescribes concerning anointing applies to this age, even at that they would not make much headway in proving their anointing, with which they have hitherto daubed us. James wishes all sick persons to be anointed [^{<590514>} James 5:14]; these fellows smear with their grease not the sick but half-dead corpses when they are already drawing their last breath, or (as they say), *in extremis*.^{F899} If in their sacrament they have a powerful medicine with which to alleviate the agony of diseases, or at least to bring some comfort to the soul, it is cruel of them never to heal in time. James would have the sick man anointed by the elders of the

church; these men allow only a priestling^{F900} as anointer. It is highly absurd that they interpret “presbyters” in the passage of James as “priests,”^{F901} and imagine that the plural number is put there as embellishment — as though the churches of that time swarmed with sacrificers, so that they could proceed in a long parade, bearing holy oil on a litter.^{F902} James, when he bids simply that sick persons be anointed, to my mind indicates no other anointing than with common oil, and no other is found in Mark’s narrative [^{<410613>}Mark 6:13]. These men do not deign to use any oil but that consecrated by a bishop, that is, warmed with much breathing, muttered over with long incantations, and saluted with nine kneelings thus: thrice, “Hail, holy oil”; thrice, “Hail, holy chrism”; thrice, “Hail, holy balm.”^{F903} From whom have they drawn such exorcisms? James says that when the sick man has been anointed with oil and been prayed over, if he be in sins, they will be forgiven [^{<590514>}James 5:14-15], that is, the guilt being absolved, he will obtain release from penalty; not meaning that sins are wiped out with grease, but that the prayers of believers, with which the afflicted brother has been commended to God, will not be in vain. These fellows impiously lie that sins are forgiven through their “sacred,” that is, accursed, unction. Lo, how beautifully they profit when they have been allowed freely to abuse James’s testimony according to their own whim! band not to labor longer over this proof, even their own chronicles relieve us of this difficulty; for they relate that Pope Innocent, who presided over the church at Rome in Augustine’s day, established the practice that not only presbyters but also all Christians should use oil for anointing when they or their dependents should need it. The author of this is Sigebert in his Chronicles.^{F904}

(The alleged sacrament of holy orders complicated by the seven ranks of clergy; the ceremonies of institution and functions of these criticized, 22-33)

22. ONE SACRAMENT — OR SEVEN?

The sacrament of order^{F905} occupies the fourth place in their list, but it is so fruitful that it breeds of itself seven sacrament-lings. But this is quite ridiculous, that, while they affirm that there are seven sacraments, when they set out to count them, they reckon thirteen. And they cannot allege that these constitute one sacrament because all tend to one priesthood and

are as steps to it. For since it is clear that there are different ceremonies in each, and they say that there are different graces, no one can doubt that they ought to be called seven sacraments, if these men's opinions are accepted. And why do we argue over it as something doubtful, when they themselves plainly and distinctly proclaim seven?

But first, we shall touch in passing how many and what unsavory absurdities they thrust upon us, when they would commend their orders to us as sacraments. Secondly, we shall see whether the ceremony that the churches use in ordaining ministers ought to be called a sacrament at all.

They therefore make seven ecclesiastical orders, or grades, which they mark with the name "sacrament." These are: doorkeepers, readers, exorcists, acolytes, subdeacons, deacons, priests. And they even say that these are seven to correspond to the sevenfold grace of the Holy Spirit, with which they who are promoted to these offices ought to be endowed. But this grace is increased and more liberally heaped upon them as they are promoted.^{F906}

Now the number itself has been consecrated by perverted interpretation of Scripture, because they think that they have read in Isaiah of seven powers of the Holy Spirit, when Isaiah actually refers to no more than six [^{<231102>} Isaiah 11:2]; and the prophet did not wish to confine them all to that place, for He is elsewhere called "the Spirit of life" [^{<260120>} Ezekiel 1:20, Vg.], "of sanctification" [^{<450104>} Romans 1:4, Vg.], "of adoption of sons" [^{<450815>} Romans 8:15, Vg.]; while he is there called "the Spirit of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, and fear of the Lord."

However, others who are more discerning make not seven orders, but nine,^{F907} after the likeness, as they say, of the church triumphant. And there is a conflict among them because some would have the clerical tonsure as the first order of all, and the episcopate the last; others, excluding tonsure, include the archi-episcopate in the orders. Isidore divides them differently: he distinguishes between psalmists and readers. He puts the psalmists in charge of the singing; the readers, of the reading of the Scriptures for the instruction of the people. And this distinction is observed in the canons.

Amidst such great variety, what do they want us to follow or flee? Shall we say that there are seven orders? So the Master of the School teaches; but the most enlightened doctors determine otherwise. But again, they disagree among themselves. Moreover, the most sacred canons call us in another direction.^{F908} This is how men agree when they argue over divine things apart from God's word!

23. CHRIST MUST HAVE OCCUPIED ALL SEVEN OFFICES

But it surpasses all folly that in each order they make Christ their companion. First, they say, he fulfilled the office of doorkeeper when he cast the buyers and sellers from the Temple with a whip made of cords [^{<430215>} John 2:15; ^{<402112>} Matthew 21:12, conflated]. He indicates that he is a doorkeeper when he says, "I am the door" [^{<431007>} John 10:7, Vg.]. He assumed the function of reader when he read Isaiah in the synagogue [^{<420417>} Luke 4:17]. He discharged the office of exorcist when he touched with saliva the tongue and ears of the deaf-and-dumb man and restored his hearing [^{<410732>} Mark 7:32-33]. He testified that he was an acolyte by saying, "He who follows me does not walk in darkness" [^{<430812>} John 8:12, Vg.]. He performed the office of subdeacon when, girded with a linen cloth, he washed the disciples' feet [^{<431304>} John 13:4-5]. He played the role of deacon when he distributed body and blood in the Supper [^{<402626>} Matthew 26:26]. He fulfilled the function of priest when he offered himself as a sacrifice on the cross to his Father [^{<402750>} Matthew 27:50; ^{<490502>} Ephesians 5:2]. These things cannot be heard without such laughter that I marvel at their being written without laughter, if, after all, those who wrote them were men. But their subtlety is most remarkable when they philosophize over the title "acolyte," calling him a taperbearer,^{F909} a magic word (I suppose), certainly unheard of in all nations and languages, since ἀκόλουθος to the Greeks simply means "lackey." However, if I should seriously tarry over refuting these opinions, I also would rightly be laughed at — they are so trifling and absurd.

24. THE HOLDERS OF THE LOWER ORDERS DO NOT PRACTICE THEIR OFFICE AT ALL

Nevertheless, in order that they may not deceive even mere women, their vanity must be exposed in passing. With great pomp and solemnity they create their readers, psalmists, doorkeepers, and acolytes, to perform those services to which they appoint either boys or at least those whom they call “laymen.” For who most often lights the candles, pours wine and water from a cruets, but a boy or some wretched layman who gains his livelihood thereby? Do not the same men sing? Do not the same men open and shut the church doors? For who ever saw either an acolyte or a doorkeeper performing his function in their churches? Rather, he who as a boy did the office of acolyte, when he is taken into the order of acolytes, ceases to be what he has begun to be called; so that they seem to intend deliberately to throw off the office itself when they assume the title. See why they hold it needful to be consecrated by sacraments and to receive the Holy Spirit — just to do nothing!

If they pretend that it is due to the perversity of the age that they forsake and neglect their duties,^{F910} let them at the same time confess that today their sacred orders (which they wonderfully exalt) are of no use or benefit in the church, and that their whole church is full of anathema, inasmuch as it allows candles and cruets to be handled by boys and profane persons who are not worthy to touch them unless consecrated as acolytes, and since it relegates the chanting to boys, which ought to be heard only from consecrated lips.

But to what purpose do they consecrate exorcists? I hear that the Jews had their exorcists, but I see that they were called after the exorcisms that they exercised [^{<441913>} Acts 19:13]. Whoever heard it said of these fake exorcists that they showed one instance of practicing their profession? It is pretended that they have the power of laying hands on the insane, catechumens, and demoniacs,^{F911} but they cannot persuade the demons that they are endowed with such power, because the demons not only do not yield to their commands but even command the exorcists! For you can scarcely find a tenth of them not led by an evil spirit. Thus all their loose talk about their petty orders is a patchwork of ignorant and unsavory falsehood. We spoke^{F912} elsewhere of the old-time acolytes and

doorkeepers and readers when we were explaining the order of the church. Our purpose here is only to contend against this newfangled invention of a sevenfold sacrament in ecclesiastical orders; of which we never read anywhere else than among these silly pettifoggers, the Sorbonnists and Canonists.

25. THE CEREMONIES OF CONSECRATION, ESPECIALLY THE TONSURE

Now let us look at the ceremonies they use. First, all whom they enlist in their service they initiate into the clergy with a common symbol. For they shave them on the top of the head, that the crown may signify royal dignity, since clerics ought to be kings, to rule themselves and others. For Peter speaks of them as follows: “You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people of his possession” [^{<600209>} 1 Peter 2:9, Vg.]. But it was a sacrilege for them to take to themselves alone what was given to the whole church, and haughtily to boast of a title that they had snatched from the believers. Peter is speaking of the whole church; these fellows twist it to a few shaven men, as if to them alone it was said, “Be holy” [^{<600115>} 1 Peter 1:15-16; ^{<032007>} Leviticus 20:7; cf. ^{<031902>} Leviticus 19:2]; as if they alone were purchased by Christ’s blood [^{<600118>} 1 Peter 1:18-19]; as if they alone were made a kingdom and priesthood to God through Christ [^{<600205>} 1 Peter 2:5, 9]! Then they also give other reasons: the top of the head is made bare to show their mind free to the Lord, so “with face unveiled” [^{<470318>} 2 Corinthians 3:18, Vg.] to contemplate God’s glory,^{F913} or to teach them that the faults of the mouth and the eyes must be cut off. Or the shaving of the head is the putting away of temporal things; but the hairs remaining around the crown are remnants of the good things which are retained for their sustenance. Everything in symbols, obviously because “the veil of the Temple has” not yet “been rent” [^{<402751>} Matthew 27:51]. Persuaded, then, that they have discharged their duties with distinction because they have symbolized such things by their crown, they actually perform none of them. How long will they mock us with such deception and trickery? By shaving off a few hairs the clerics signify that they have cast away abundance of temporal goods, that they contemplate God’s glory, that they have mortified the lust of the ears and eyes. But is there no class of men more greedy, stupid, and lustful?^{F914}

Why do they not manifest holiness rather than make an outward show of it with false and lying signs?

26. TO CITE THE NAZARITES AND PAUL IS BESIDE THE POINT

Now, when they say that the clerical crown has its origin and reason from the Nazarites, what else do they claim but that their mysteries have arisen from Jewish ceremonies, or rather, are mere Judaism?

But when they add that Priscilla, Aquila, and Paul himself, taking a vow, shaved themselves that they might be purified [Acts 18: 18], they show their gross ignorance.^{F915} For it is not recorded of Priscilla, and in Aquila's case it is also uncertain; for the tonsure referred to can be referred as much to Paul as to Aquila. But not to leave to them what they claim — that they have an example from Paul — simpler readers should note that Paul never shaved his head for any sanctification, but only to serve his weaker brethren. It is my custom to call such vows the vows of love, not of piety; that is, not undertaken for any worship of God, but to treat gently the ignorance of the weak, as he himself says that to the Jews he became a Jew, etc. [^{<460920>} 1 Corinthians 9:20]. Therefore, he did this, once indeed and for a short time, to accommodate himself temporarily to the Jews. When these fellows pointlessly aim to imitate the purification's of the Nazarites, what are they doing but raising up another Judaism, while they falsely affect to emulate the old Judaism [^{<040618>} Numbers 6:18; cf. ch. 6:5]?

With the same religious scruple was composed that decretal epistle in imitation of the apostle which forbids clerics to let their hair grow, but requires them to shave it like a ball.^{F916} It is as if the apostle, teaching what is comely for all men [^{<461104>} 1 Corinthians 11:4], were concerned about the ball-like tonsure of the clergy! From this let my readers judge of the force and value of those other mysteries which follow, which have such a beginning as this.

27. HISTORICAL INTERPRETATION OF THE TONSURE

Even from Augustine alone it is abundantly clear where clerical tonsure had its origin. Since at that period only effeminate men and those who

affected a rather unmanly sleekness and elegance let their hair grow, it seemed not to be a good example to let clerics do this. The clergy were therefore ordered either to shear or shave the head, so as not to show any appearance of effeminate ornament. But this was so common that certain monks, in order to commend their greater holiness by an attire notable and distinct from that of other men, let their hair grow.^{F917} But when, later, long hair became the fashion again, and certain nations which had always been longhaired, as France, Germany, and England, accepted Christianity, it is likely that clerics everywhere shaved their heads that they might not seem to affect hair as an ornament. At length, in a more corrupt age, when all former customs were either perverted or had degenerated into superstition, because they saw no reason for clerical shaving (for they had kept nothing but a foolish imitation), they resorted to mystery, which they now superstitiously foist upon us to approve their sacrament.

Doorkeepers at their consecration receive the keys of the church, by which they are to understand that its custody has been entrusted to them.

Readers receive the sacred Bible. Exorcists receive the formulas of exorcisms to use on the insane and catechumens. Acolytes receive tapers and cruet. Here, then, are the ceremonies in which (if it please God) rests so much secret power that they can be not only signs and tokens but also causes of invisible grace. For they postulate this according to their definition when they would have it counted among the sacraments.

(a)But, to conclude briefly, I call it an absurdity that School-men and Canonists make these minor orders sacraments, while even by the confession of those who teach this they were unknown to the primitive church and devised many years after.^{F918} But since sacraments imply a promise of God, they ought to be instituted, not by angels, not by men, but by God alone, to whom alone it belongs to give the promise.

28. “PRIEST” AND “PRESBYTER”

There remain the three orders which they call “major.” Of these, what they term the subdiaconate was transferred to this group after that crowd of minor orders began to sprout. But because they seem to have authorization for these from God’s Word, they especially call them “holy

orders” to do them honor. We must see how they dishonestly abuse the Lord’s ordinances as an excuse for themselves.

We shall begin with the order of presbyter, or priest. For by these two words they indicate the same thing, and they so refer to those whose duty it is, they say, to perform the sacrifice of Christ’s body and blood on the altar, to frame prayers, and to bless God’s gifts. Therefore, in ordination they receive the paten with the host as tokens of the power given to them to offer sacrifices of expiation [cf. ^{<030508>}Leviticus 5:8] to God; and their hands are anointed, by which token they are taught that they have been given the power to consecrate.^{F919} But we shall speak of the ceremonies later.^{F920} The thing itself, I say, is so far from having an iota of the Word of God, which they pretend, that they could not more wickedly corrupt the order laid down by God.

First, indeed, this ought to be taken as an actual fact (which we have asserted in discussing the papal Mass^{F921}) that all who call themselves priests to offer a sacrifice of expiation do wrong to Christ. Christ was appointed and consecrated priest according to the order of Melchizedek by the Father with an oath [^{<19B004>}Psalm 110:4; ^{<580506>}Hebrews 5:6], without end, without successor [^{<580703>}Hebrews 7:3]. He once for all offered a sacrifice of eternal expiation and reconciliation; now, having also entered the sanctuary of heaven, he intercedes for us. In him we are all priests [^{<660106>}Revelation 1:6; cf. ^{<600209>}1 Peter 2:9],^{F922} but to offer praises and thanksgiving, in short, to offer ourselves and ours to God. It was his office alone to appease God and atone for sins by his offering. When these men take this office upon themselves, what remains but that their priesthood is impious and sacrilegious? Surely, they are utterly wicked when they dare designate this rite with the title of sacrament.

As far as the true office of presbyter is concerned, which is commended to us by Christ’s lips, I willingly accord that place to it. For in it there is a ceremony, first taken from Scripture, then one that Paul testifies not to be empty or superfluous, but a faithful token of spiritual grace [^{<540414>}1 Timothy 4:14]. However, I have not put it as number three among the sacraments because it is not ordinary or common with all believers, but is a special rite for a particular office. Yet, since this honor is given to the Christian ministry, there is no reason why the papist priests should be

proud. For Christ commanded that stewards of his gospel and sacraments be ordained, not that sacrificers be installed. He gave a command to preach the gospel [^{<402819>} Matthew 28:19; ^{<411615>} Mark 16:15] and feed the flock [^{<432115>} John 21:15], not to sacrifice victims. He promised the grace of the Holy Spirit, not to enable them to make atonement for sins, but duly to engage in and maintain the government of the church [cf. ^{<402820>} Matthew 28:20].

29. THE CEREMONIES IN ORDAINING PRIESTS

The ceremonies admirably correspond to the reality. Our Lord, when he sent forth the apostles to preach the gospel, breathed upon them [^{<432022>} John 20:22]. By this symbol he represented the power of the Holy Spirit, which he gave them. These good men have retained this insufflation, and, as if they are putting forth the Holy Spirit from their throat, they mutter over those whom they are making priestlings, “Receive the Holy Spirit” [^{<432022>} John 20:22, Vg.]. They leave nothing which they do not preposterously counterfeit: I do not say like actors whose gestures have some art and meaning, but like apes, which imitate everything wantonly and without any discrimination. We are following (they say) the Lord’s example. But the Lord did many things which he did not intend as examples for us. The Lord said to his disciples, “Receive the Holy Spirit” [^{<432022>} John 20:22, Vg.]. He also said to Lazarus, “Lazarus, come forth” [^{<431143>} John 11:43, Vg.]. He said to the paralytic, “Rise up and walk” [^{<400905>} Matthew 9:5, Vg.; cf. ^{<430508>} John 5:8]. Why do they not say the same to all dead men and paralytics? He gave evidence of his divine power when in breathing upon the apostles he filled them with the grace of the Holy Spirit. If they try to do this, they rival God and all but challenge him to a contest, but are very far from being effective, and by their inept gesture do nothing but mock Christ. Indeed, they are so shameless as to dare affirm that they confer the Holy Spirit. But how true that is, experience teaches, which cries out that all those who are consecrated as priests are turned from horses into asses, from fools *into* madmen. Nevertheless, it is not over this that I have a quarrel with them. I am only condemning the ceremony itself, which ought not to have been taken as an example, since Christ used it as symbol of a particular miracle — so far is the excuse of following him from being a just defense of their claim!

30. CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD SUPERSEDES THAT OF AARON

Finally, from whom have they received anointing? They answer that they have received it from the sons of Aaron, from whom also their order took its beginning.^{F923} They constantly prefer, therefore, to defend themselves by perverse examples, rather than to confess that what they rashly use they have themselves devised; but meanwhile they do not notice, when they profess themselves successors of the sons of Aaron, that they do wrong to the priesthood of Christ, which alone was foreshadowed and prefigured by all the ancient priesthoods. In Him, therefore, all those were contained and fulfilled, in him they ceased, as we have already repeated several times and as The Letter to the Hebrews, without the aid of glosses, testifies. But if they are so delighted with the Mosaic ceremonies, why do they not take oxen, calves, and lambs to sacrifice? Indeed, they have a good part of the andante Tabernacle and of the whole Jewish worship; but their religion is lacking in that they do not sacrifice calves and oxen. Who can fail to see that this observance of anointing is much more dangerous than circumcision; especially when they add superstition and a Pharisaical notion of the worthiness of the work? The Jews rested their assurance of righteousness in circumcision; these men place spiritual graces in anointing. Therefore, while they long to emulate the Levites, they become apostates from Christ and abdicate the office of pastors.

31. ANOINTING BELONGS WITH THE OUTWORN CEREMONIES

This is (if it please God) the sacred oil, which imprints an indelible character. As if oil could not be wiped away with dust and salt, or (if it clings harder) with soap! But (they tell us), the character is a spiritual one.^{F924} What has oil to do with the soul? Do they forget what they parrot from Augustine: "If the word be withdrawn from the water, it will be nothing but water; but it is the word that makes it a sacrament"?^{F925} What word will they show to accompany their grease? That Moses was commanded to anoint the sons of Aaron [^{<023030>}Exodus 30:30; cf. chs. 28:41; 29:7]? There also he was commanded concerning the coat, the ephod, the turban, the crown of holiness, with which Aaron was to be adorned [^{<030807>}Leviticus 8:7, 9]; concerning the coats, the girdles, and the caps, which his sons were to wear [^{<030813>}Leviticus 8:13]. He was

commanded concerning the slaughtering of the calf, the burning of its fat [^{<030814>}Leviticus 8:14-16], concerning the slaying and burning of rams [^{<030818>}Leviticus 8:18-21], concerning the consecration of their ear tips and garments with the blood of another ram [^{<030822>}Leviticus 8:22-24], and innumerable other observances. Since these are passed over, I wonder how it is that mere anointing with oil pleases them.^{F926} But if they are glad to be sprinkled, why are they sprinkled with oil rather than with blood? Obviously, they are attempting something ingenious: to shape one religion out of Christianity and Judaism and paganism by sewing patches together. Their unction therefore stinks because it lacks salt, that is, the word of God.

There remains the laying on of hands. As I concede that it is a sacrament in true and lawful ordinations, so I deny that it has place in this farce, where they neither obey Christ's command nor consider the end to which the promise should lead us. If they do not wish the sign to be denied them, they must apply it to the reality, to which it was appointed.

32. THE DEACONS

Also, I would not argue over the order of the diaconate, if that ministry which existed under the apostles and in the purer church were restored to its integrity.^{F927} But what likeness to this is there in the deacons which these men devise? I am not speaking of the men (lest they complain that I am unfairly judging their doctrine from the faults of the men), but I contend that it is dishonorable to seek from the example of those whom the apostolic church ordained as deacons a testimony for these very ones whom the Romanists present to us in their doctrine. They say that it is the office of their deacons to assist the priests; to minister in everything done in the sacraments, that is, in baptism, in chrism, in paten, in chalice; to bring in the offerings and lay them upon the altar; to set the Lord's Table and cover it; to bear the cross, to pronounce and chant the gospel and epistle to the people. Is there one word here of the true ministry of deacons?

Now, let us learn how they are instituted: when a deacon is ordained, the bishop alone lays his hand upon him. He lays a prayer book and stole on the ordinand's left shoulder, that he may understand that he has received

the Lord's light yoke [^{<401130>} Matthew 11:30], by which he may subject to the fear of God those things pertaining to his left side. The bishop gives him the text of the gospel, that he may acknowledge himself as a proclaimer of it. And what does all of this have to do with deacons? The papists do just as if someone said that he had ordained as apostles persons whom he had appointed only to burn incense, to dust images, to sweep churches, to catch mice, and to chase away dogs. Who would allow this class of men to be called apostles and be compared with the very apostles of Christ? Therefore, let them hereafter not falsely say that these are deacons, whom they have ordained only for their play acting. Indeed, by the very name itself they sufficiently declare the nature of the office. For they call them Levites, and would have their reason and origin referred to the sons of Levi.^{F928} To this I do not object, if only they do not afterward clothe them in the plumage of others.

33. SUBDEACONS

What is it pertinent to say concerning subdeacons? For although of old they were really put in charge of caring for the poor, the papists assign to them some trifling function or other, as to bring the chalice and paten, the cruet with water, and the towel to the altar; to pour water for washing hands, etc. Now in speaking of receiving and bringing in offerings, they mean those which they devour as offerings destined for anathema.

Their rite of consecration corresponds very well to this office: that the subdeacon receives from the bishop paten and cup, from the archdeacon cruet with water, the manual, and trash of this sort.^{F929} They require us to confess that the Holy Spirit is enclosed within these trifles. What pious man can bear to admit this? But, to end the whole matter, we may state the same thing of them as of the rest; and we do not need to repeat more fully the things explained above.^{F930}

This will suffice for modest and teachable persons (such as I have undertaken to instruct): there is no sacrament of God except where a ceremony is shown joined to a promise, or rather, except where a promise is seen in a ceremony. In this rite one finds not even one syllable of any definite promise; hence, it would be fruitless to seek a ceremony to

confirm the promise. Again, one reads of no ceremony ordained by God among those which they use. Therefore, there cannot be any sacrament.

(Erroneous claim that marriage is a sacrament from misunderstanding of ^{<490528>}Ephesians 5:28 and other passages: abuses connected with marriage, 34-37)

34. MARRIAGE IS NO SACRAMENT

The last one is marriage.^{F931} All men admit that it was instituted by God [^{<010221>}Genesis 2:21-24; ^{<401904>}Matthew 19:4 ff.]; but no man ever saw it administered as a sacrament until the time of Gregory.^{F932} And what sober man would ever have thought it such? Marriage is a good and holy ordinance of God; and farming, building, cobbling, and barbering are lawful ordinances of God, and yet are not sacraments. For it is required that a sacrament be not only a work of God but an outward ceremony appointed by God to confirm a promise. Even children can discern that there is no such thing in matrimony.

But it is, they say, the sign of a sacred tiling, that is, of the spiritual joining of Christ with the church.^{F933} If by the word “sign” they understand a symbol set before us by God to raise up the assurance of our faith, they are wandering far from the mark; if they simply understand “sign” as what is adduced for a comparison, I will show how keenly they reason. Paul says, “As star differs from star in brilliance, so will be the resurrection of the dead,” [^{<461541>}1 Corinthians 15:41-42.] There you have one sacrament. Christ says, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like a grain of mustard seed.” [^{<401331>}Matthew 13:31, Vg.] Here you have another. Again, “The Kingdom of Heaven is like leaven.” [^{<401333>}Matthew 13:33, Vg.] Behold a third. Isaiah says, “Behold, the Lord will feed his flock like a shepherd.” [^{<234010>}Isaiah 40:10-11, cf. Vg.] Behold a fourth. In another place, “The Lord shall go forth as a giant” [^{<234213>}Isaiah 42:13 p., cf. Comm.]. Here you have a fifth. Finally, what end or measure will there be? There is nothing that by this reasoning will not be a sacrament. There will be as many sacraments as there are parables and similitude’s in Scripture. In fact, theft will be a sacrament, inasmuch as it is written, “The Day of the Lord is like a thief” [^{<520502>}1 Thessalonians 5:2, Vg.]. Who can bear these Sophists when they prate so ignorantly?

I admit that whenever we see a vine, it is a very good thing to recall what Christ said: “I am the vine, you are the branches” [^{<431505>} John 15:5, Vg.]; “My Father is the vinedresser” [^{<431501>} John 15:1]. Whenever we meet a shepherd with his flock, it is good that this also come to mind: “I am the good shepherd” [John 10: 14, Vg.]; “My sheep hear my voice” [^{<431027>} John 10:27, Vg.]. But anyone who would classify such similitude’s with the sacraments ought to be sent to a mental hospital.^{F934}

35. THEY MISAPPLY ^{<490528>}EPHESIANS 5:28

But they still press us with Paul’s words, by which they say the term “sacrament” is applied to marriage: “He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.”^{F935} ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become as one flesh.’ This is a great sacrament. But I say, in Christ and the church” [^{<490528>} Ephesians 5:28-32, Vg.].^{F936} Yet so to handle the Scriptures is to mix earth with heaven. Paul, to show to married men with what singular love they ought to embrace their wives, sets forth Christ to them as prototype. For as he poured out his compassion upon the church, which he had espoused to himself, thus he wishes every man to feel toward his own wife. Then the words follow: “He who loves his wife loves himself...as Christ loved the church” [^{<490528>} Ephesians 5:28]. Now, to teach how Christ loved the church as himself, nay, how he made himself one with his bride the church, Paul applies to him what Moses relates that Adam said of himself. For when Eve (who he knew was formed from his rib) was brought into his sight, he said, “She is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh” [^{<010223>} Genesis 2:23, Vg.]. Paul testifies that all this was spiritually fulfilled in Christ and in us, when he says that we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones, and thus one flesh with him. Finally, he adds this summation: “This is a great mystery.” And that nobody may be deceived by an ambiguity, he explains that he is not speaking of carnal union of man and woman, but of the spiritual marriage of Christ and the church. Truly, indeed, this is a great mystery, that Christ allowed a rib to be removed from himself to form us; that is, when he was strong, he willed to be weak, in order that we might be strengthened by his

strength; so that we ourselves should no longer live, but he should live in us [^{<480220>} Galatians 2:20].

36. THIS CONFUSION ARISES FROM THE TRANSLATION OF “MYSTERY” AND THEIR LOW VIEW OF MARRIAGE

The term “sacrament” deceived them. But was it right that the whole church should suffer the punishment of their ignorance? Paul had said “mystery.” The translator could have left this word, as one not unfamiliar to Latin ears, or rendered it as “secret.” He preferred to use the word “sacrament” [^{<490532>} Ephesians 5:32, Vg.], but in the same sense that the word “mystery” had been used by Paul.^{F937} Let them now go, and clamorously rail against skill in languages, through ignorance of which they have so long been most shamefully deceived in a matter easy and obvious to anyone. But why do they press so hard for this word “sacrament” in this one place, but overlook it at other times? For in the first letter to Timothy [^{<540309>} 1 Timothy 3:9], and in this same letter to the Ephesians itself [^{<490109>} Ephesians 1:9; 3:3, 9, Vg.], the translator of the Vulgate has used it consistently for “mystery.” Still, let this slip be pardoned them; liars at least ought to have good memories.^{F938}

But, having graced marriage with the title of sacrament, to call it afterward uncleanness and pollution and carnal filth — what giddy levity is this? How absurd it is to bar priests from this sacrament! If they say they do not debar them from the sacrament, but only from the lust of copulation, they will not give me the slip. For they teach that copulation itself is a part of the sacrament, and that it alone is the figure of the union which we have with Christ, in conformity to nature; for man and woman are made one flesh only by carnal copulation. However, some of them have found two sacraments here: one of God and the soul, in the bridegroom and bride; the other, of Christ and the church, in the husband and wife. However, copulation is still a sacrament, from which it is unlawful to bar any Christian. Unless, perhaps, the sacraments of Christians are so out of accord that they cannot stand together. There is also another absurdity in their dogmas. They affirm that in the sacrament the grace of the Holy Spirit is conferred; they teach copulation to be a sacrament; and they deny that the Holy Spirit is ever present in copulation.^{F939}

37. OPPRESSIVE CONSEQUENCES OF THE ROMAN DOCTRINE

Not to have mocked the church simply in one thing, what a long train of errors, lies, frauds, and misdeeds have they attached to this one error? Thus, you may say that they sought nothing but a den of abominations when they made a sacrament out of marriage. For when they once obtained this, they took over the hearing of matrimonial cases; as it was a spiritual matter, it was not to be handled by secular judges. Then they passed laws by which they strengthened their tyranny, laws in part openly impious toward God, in part most unfair toward men. Such are these: That marriages between minors contracted without parental consent should remain firm and valid. That marriages between kinsfolk even to the seventh degree are not lawful, and if contracted, must be dissolved.^{F940} They forge the very degrees, against the laws of all nations and also against the ordinance of Moses [^{<031806>} Leviticus 18:6 ff.]: that a man who has put away an adulterous wife is not permitted to take another; that godparents may not be coupled in matrimony; that marriages may not be celebrated from Septuagesima to the octave of Easter, and in the three weeks before the nativity of John, and from Advent to Epiphany; and innumerable like regulations which would take too long to recount.^{F941} At length, we must extricate ourselves from their mire, in which our discourse has already stuck longer than I should have liked. Still, I believe that I have accomplished something in that I have partly pulled the lion's skin from these asses.

CHAPTER 20

CIVIL GOVERNMENT^{F942}

(How civil and spiritual government are related, 1-2)

1. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN SPIRITUAL AND CIVIL GOVERNMENT

Now, since we have established above that man is under a twofold government,^{F943} and since we have elsewhere discussed at sufficient length the kind that resides in the soul or inner man and pertains to eternal life,^{F944} this is the place to say something also about the other kind, which pertains only to the establishment of civil justice and outward morality.

For although this topic seems by nature alien to the spiritual doctrine of faith which I have undertaken to discuss, what follows will show that I am right in joining them, in fact, that necessity compels me to do so. This is especially true since, from one side, insane and barbarous men furiously strive to overturn this divinely established order; while, on the other side, the flatterers of princes, immoderately praising their power, do not hesitate to set them against the rule of God himself.^{F945} Unless both these evils are checked, purity of faith will perish. Besides, it is of no slight importance to us to know how lovingly God has provided in this respect for mankind, that greater zeal for piety may flourish in us to attest our gratefulness.

First, before we enter into the matter itself, we must keep in mind that distinction which we previously laid down^{F946} so that we do not (as commonly happens) unwisely mingle these two, which have a completely different nature. For certain men, when they hear that the gospel promises a freedom that acknowledges no king and no magistrate among men, but looks to Christ alone, think that they cannot benefit by their freedom so long as they see any power set up over them. They therefore think that nothing will be safe unless the whole world is reshaped to a new form, where there are neither courts, nor laws, nor magistrates, nor anything

which in their opinion restricts their freedom. But whoever knows how to distinguish between body and soul, between this present fleeting life and that future eternal life, will without difficulty know that Christ's spiritual Kingdom and the civil jurisdiction are things completely distinct. Since, then, it is a Jewish vanity to seek and enclose Christ's Kingdom within the elements of this world, let us rather ponder that what Scripture clearly teaches is a spiritual fruit, which we gather from Christ's grace;^{F947} and let us remember to keep within its own limits all that freedom which is promised and offered to us in him. For why is it that the same apostle who bids us stand and not submit to the "yoke of bondage" [^{<480501>} Galatians 5:1] elsewhere forbids slaves to be anxious about their state [^{<460721>} 1 Corinthians 7:21], unless it be that spiritual freedom can perfectly well exist along with civil bondage? These statements of his must also be taken in the same sense: In the Kingdom of God "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither male nor female, neither slave nor free" [^{<480328>} Galatians 3:28, Vg.; order changed]. And again, "there is not Jew nor Greek, uncircumcised and circumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, freeman; but Christ is all in all" [^{<510311>} Colossians 3:11 p.]. By these statements he means that it makes no difference what your condition among men may be or under what nation's laws you live, since the Kingdom of Christ does not at all consist in these things.

2. THE TWO "GOVERNMENTS" ARE NOT ANTITHETICAL

Yet this distinction does not lead us to consider the whole nature of government a thing polluted, which has nothing to do with Christian men. That is what, indeed, certain fanatics who delight in unbridled license shout and boast: after we have died through Christ to the elements of this world [^{<510220>} Colossians 2:20], are transported to God's Kingdom, and sit among heavenly beings, it is a thing unworthy of us and set far beneath our excellence to be occupied with those vile and worldly cares which have to do with business foreign to a Christian man.^{F948} To what purpose, they ask, are there laws without trials and tribunals? But what has a Christian man to do with trials themselves? Indeed, if it is not lawful to kill, why do we have laws and trials? But as we have just now pointed out that this kind of government is distinct from that spiritual and inward Kingdom of Christ, so we must know that they are not at variance. For spiritual

government, indeed, is already initiating in us upon earth certain beginnings of the Heavenly Kingdom, and in this mortal and fleeting life affords a certain forecast of an immortal and incorruptible blessedness. Yet civil government has as its appointed end, so long as we live among men, to cherish and protect the outward worship of God, to defend sound doctrine of piety and the position of the church, to adjust our life to the society of men, to form our social behavior to civil righteousness, to reconcile us with one another, and to promote general peace and tranquillity. All of this I admit to be superfluous, if God's Kingdom, such as it is now among us, wipes out the present life. But if it is God's will that we go as pilgrims upon the earth while we aspire to the true fatherland, and if the pilgrimage requires such helps, those who take these from man deprive him of his very humanity. Our adversaries claim that there ought to be such great perfection in the church of God that its government should suffice for law. But they stupidly imagine such a perfection as can never be found in a community of men. For since the insolence of evil men is so great, their wickedness so stubborn, that it can scarcely be restrained by extremely severe laws, what do we expect them to do if they see that their depravity can go scot-free — when no power can force them to cease from doing evil?

(Necessity and divine sanction of civil government, 3-7)

3. THE CHIEF TASKS AND BURDENS OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

about there will be a more appropriate place to speak of the practice of civil government.^{F949} Now we only wish it to be understood that to think of doing away with it is outrageous barbarity. Its function among men is no less than that of bread, water, sun, and air; indeed, its place of honor is far more excellent. For it does not merely see to it, as all these serve to do, that men breathe, eat, drink, and are kept warm, even though it surely embraces all these activities when it provides for their living together. It does not, I repeat, look to this only, but also prevents idolatry, sacrilege against God's name, blasphemies against his truth, and other public offenses against religion from arising and spreading among the people; it prevents the public peace from being disturbed; it provides that each man may keep his property safe and sound;^{F950} that men may carry on blameless intercourse among themselves; that honesty and modesty may

be preserved among men. In short, it provides that a public manifestation of religion may exist among Christians, and that humanity be maintained among men.^{F951}

Let no man be disturbed that I now commit to civil government the duty of rightly establishing religion, which I seem above to have put outside of human decision.^{F952} For, when I approve of a civil administration that aims to prevent the true religion which is contained in God's law from being openly and with public sacrilege violated and defiled with impunity, I do not here, any more than before, allow men to make laws according to their own decision concerning religion and the worship of God.

But my readers, assisted by the very clarity of the arrangement, will better understand what is to be thought of the whole subject of civil government if we discuss its parts separately. These are three: the magistrate, who is the protector and guardian of the laws; the laws, according to which he governs; the people, who are governed by the laws and obey the magistrate.^{F953}

Let us, then, first look at the office of the magistrate, noting whether it is a lawful calling approved of God; the nature of the office; the extent of its power; then, with what laws a Christian government ought to be governed; and finally, how the laws benefit the people, and what obedience is owed to the magistrate.

4. THE MAGISTRACY IS ORDAINED BY GOD

The Lord has not only testified that the office of magistrate is approved by and acceptable to him, but he also sets out its dignity with the most honorable titles and marvelously commends it to us.^{F954} To mention a few: Since those who serve as magistrate are called "gods" [^{<022208>} Exodus 22:8, Vg.; ^{<198201>} Psalm 82:1, 6], let no one think that their being so-called is of slight importance. For it signifies that they have a mandate from God, have been invested with divine authority, and are wholly God's representatives, in a manner, acting as his vicegerents. This is no subtlety of mine, but Christ's explanation. "If Scripture," he says, "called them gods to whom the word of God came..." [^{<431035>} John 10:35.] What is this, except that God has entrusted to them the business of serving him in their office, and (as Moses and Jehoshaphat said to the judges whom they appointed in

every city of Judah) of exercising judgment not for man but for God [^{<050116>}Deuteronomy 1:16-17; ^{<141906>}2 Chronicles 19:6]? To the same purpose is what God's wisdom affirms through Solomon's mouth, that it is his doing "that kings reign, and counselors decree what is just, that princes exercise dominion, and all benevolent judges of the earth" [^{<200814>}Proverbs 8:14-16]. This amounts to the same thing as to say: it has not come about by human perversity that the authority over all things on earth is in the hands of kings and other rulers, but by divine providence and holy ordinance. For God was pleased so to rule the affairs of men, inasmuch as he is present with them and also presides over the making of laws and the exercising of equity in courts of justice. Paul also plainly teaches this when he lists "ruling" among God's gifts [^{<451208>}Romans 12:8, KJV or RV], which, variously distributed according to the diversity of grace, ought to be used by Christ's servants for the upbuilding of the church. For even though Paul is there speaking specifically of a council of sober men, who were appointed in the primitive church to preside over the ordering of public discipline (which office is called in the letter to the Corinthians, "governments",^{F955} [^{<461228>}1 Corinthians 12:28]), yet because we see the civil power serving the same end, there is no doubt that he commends to us every kind of just rule.

But Paul speaks much more clearly when he undertakes a just discussion of this matter. For he states both that power is an ordinance of God [^{<451302>}Romans 13:2], and that there are no powers except those ordained by God [^{<451301>}Romans 13:1]. Further, that princes are ministers of God, for those doing good unto praise; for those doing evil, avengers unto wrath [^{<451303>}Romans 13:3-4]. To this may be added the examples of holy men, of whom some possessed kingdoms, as David, Josiah, and Hezekiah; others, lordships, as Joseph and Daniel; others, civil rule among a free people, as Moses, Joshua, and the judges. The Lord has declared his approval of their offices. Accordingly, no one ought to doubt that civil authority is a calling, not only holy and lawful before God, but also the most sacred and by far the most honorable of all callings in the whole life of mortal men.

5. AGAINST THE “CHRISTIAN” DENIAL OR REJECTION OF MAGISTRACY

Those who desire to usher in anarchy^{F956} object that, although in antiquity kings and judges ruled over ignorant folk, yet that servile kind of governing is wholly incompatible today with the perfection which Christ brought with his gospel.^{F957} In this they betray not only their ignorance but devilish arrogance, when they claim a perfection of which not even a hundredth part is seen in them. But whatever kind of men they may be, the refutation is easy. For where David urges all kings and rulers to kiss the Son of God [^{<190212>} Psalm 2:12], he does not bid them lay aside their authority and retire to private life, but submit to Christ the power with which they have been invested, that he alone may tower over all. Similarly, Isaiah, when he promises that kings shall be foster fathers of the church, and queens its nurses [^{<234923>} Isaiah 49:23], does not deprive them of their honor. Rather, by a noble title he makes them defenders of God’s pious worshipers; for that prophecy looks to the coming of Christ. I knowingly pass over very many passages which occur frequently, and especially in the psalms, in which the right of rulers is asserted for them all [Psalm 21; 22; 45; 72; 89; 110; 132]. But most notable of all is the passage of Paul where, admonishing Timothy that prayers be offered for kings in public assembly, he immediately adds the reason: “That we may lead a peaceful life under them with all godliness and honesty” [^{<540202>} 1 Timothy 2:2]. By these words he entrusts the condition of the church to their protection and care.

6. MAGISTRATES SHOULD BE FAITHFUL AS GOD’S DEPUTIES

This consideration ought continually to occupy the magistrates themselves, since it can greatly spur them to exercise their office and bring them remarkable comfort to mitigate the difficulties of their task, which are indeed many and burdensome. For what great zeal for uprightness, for prudence, gentleness, self-control, and for innocence ought to be required of themselves by those who know that they have been ordained ministers of divine justice? How will they have the brazenness to admit injustice to their judgment seat, which they are told is the throne of the living God? How will they have the boldness to pronounce an unjust sentence, by that

mouth which they know has been appointed an instrument of divine truth? With what *conscience* will they sign wicked decrees by that hand which they know has been appointed to record the acts of God? To sum up, if they remember that they are vicars of God, they should watch with all care, earnestness, and diligence, to represent in themselves to men some image of divine providence, protection, goodness, benevolence, and justice. And they should perpetually set before themselves the thought that “if all are cursed who carry out in deceit the work of God’s vengeance” [^{<244810>}Jeremiah 48:10 p.], much more gravely cursed are they who deceitfully conduct themselves in a righteous calling. Therefore, when Moses and Jehoshaphat wished to urge their judges to do their duty, they had nothing more effective to persuade them than what we have previously mentioned [^{<050116>}Deuteronomy 1:16].^{F958} “Consider what you do, for you exercise judgment not for man but for the Lord; since he is beside you in giving judgment. Now then, let the fear of the Lord be upon you. Take heed what you do, for there is no perversity with the Lord our God” [^{<141906>}2 Chronicles 19:6-7 p.]. And in another place it is said: “God stood in the assembly of the gods, and holds judgment in the midst of the gods” [^{<198201>}Psalms 82:1]. This is to hearten them for their task when they learn that they are deputies of God, to whom they must hereafter render account of the administration of their charge. And this admonition deserves to have great weight with them. For if they commit some fault, they are not only wrongdoers to men whom they wickedly trouble, but are also insulting toward God himself, whose most holy judgments they defile [cf. ^{<230314>}Isaiah 3:14-15]. Again, they have the means to comfort themselves greatly when they ponder in themselves that they are occupied not with profane affairs or those alien to a servant of God, but with a most holy office, since they are serving as God’s deputies.

7. THE COERCIVE CHARACTER OF MAGISTRACY DOES NOT HINDER ITS RECOGNITION

Those who, unmoved by so many testimonies of Scripture, dare rail against this holy ministry as a thing abhorrent to Christian religion and piety — what else do they do but revile God himself, whose ministry cannot be reproached without dishonor to himself? And these folk do not

just reject the magistrates, but cast off God that he may not reign over them. For if the Lord truly said this of the people of Israel because they refused Samuel's rule [^{<090807>} 1 Samuel 8:7], why will it less truly be said today of these who let themselves rage against all governments ordained by God? The Lord said to his disciples that the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over Gentiles, but it is not so among the disciples, where he who is first ought to become the least [^{<422225>} Luke 22:25-26]; by this saying, they tell us, all Christians are forbidden to take kingdoms or governments.^{F959} O skillful interpreters! There arose a contention among the disciples over which one would excel the others. To silence this vain ambition, the Lord taught them that their ministry is not like kingdoms, in which one is pre-eminent above the rest. What dishonor, I ask you, does this comparison do to kingly dignity? Indeed, what does it prove at all, except that the kingly office is not the ministry of an apostle? Moreover, among magistrates themselves, although there is a variety of forms, there is no difference in this respect, that we must regard all of them as ordained of God. For Paul also lumps them all together when he says that there is no power except from God [^{<451301>} Romans 13:1]. And that which is the least pleasant of all has been especially commended above the rest, that is, the power of one. This, because it brings with it the common bondage of all (except that one man to whose will it subjects all things), in ancient times could not be acceptable to heroic and nobler natures. But to forestall their unjust judgments, Scripture expressly affirms that it is the providence of God's wisdom that kings reign [cf. ^{<200815>} Proverbs 8:15], and particularly commands us to honor the king [^{<202421>} Proverbs 24:21; ^{<600217>} 1 Peter 2:17].

*(Forms of government, and duties of magistrates.
Issues of war and taxation, 8-13)*

8. THE DIVERSITY OF FORMS OF GOVERNMENT

Obviously, it would be an idle pastime for men in private life, who are disqualified from deliberating on the organization of any commonwealth, to dispute over what would be the best kind of government in that place where they live. Also this question admits of no simple solution but requires deliberation, since the nature of the discussion depends largely upon the circumstances. And if you compare the forms of government

among themselves apart from the circumstances, it is not easy to distinguish which one of them excels in usefulness, for they contend on such equal terms. The fall from kingdom to tyranny is easy; but it is not much more difficult to fall from the rule of the best men to the faction of a few; yet it is easiest of all to fall from popular rule to sedition. For if the three forms of government which the philosophers discuss be considered in themselves, I will not deny that aristocracy, or a system compounded of aristocracy and democracy,^{F960} far excels all others: not indeed of itself, but because it is very rare for kings so to control themselves that their will never disagrees with what is just and right; or for them to have been endowed with such great keenness and prudence, that each knows how much is enough. Therefore, men's fault or failing causes it to be safer and more bearable for a number to exercise government,^{F961} so that they may help one another, teach and admonish one another; and, if one asserts himself unfairly, there may be a number of censors and masters to restrain his willfulness. This has both been proved by experience, and also the Lord confirmed it by his authority when he ordained among the Israelites an aristocracy bordering on democracy, since he willed to keep them in best condition [^{<021813>}Exodus 18:13-26; ^{<050109>}Deuteronomy 1:9-17] until he should bring forward the image of Christ in David. And, as I freely admit that no kind of government is more happy than one where freedom is regulated with becoming moderation and is properly established on a durable basis, so also I reckon most happy those permitted to enjoy this state; and if they stoutly and constantly labor to preserve and retain it, I grant that they are doing nothing alien to this office. Indeed, the magistrates ought to apply themselves with the highest diligence to prevent the freedom (whose guardians they have been appointed) from being in any respect diminished, far less be violated.^{F962} If they are not sufficiently alert and careful, they are faithless in office, and traitors to their country.

But if those to whom the Lord has appointed another form of government should transfer this very function to themselves, being moved to desire a change of government — even to think of such a move will not only be foolish and superfluous, but altogether harmful, however, as you will surely find if you fix your eyes not on one city alone, but look around and glance at the world as a whole, or at least cast your sight upon regions

farther off, divine providence has wisely arranged that various countries should be ruled by various kinds of government. For as elements cohere only in unequal proportion, so countries are best held together according to their own particular inequality. However, all these things are needlessly spoken to those for whom the will of the Lord is enough. For if it has seemed good to him to set kings over kingdoms, senates or municipal officers^{F963} over free cities, it is our duty to show ourselves compliant and obedient to whomever he sets over the places where we live.

9. CONCERN FOR BOTH TABLES OF THE LAW

Now in this place we ought to explain in passing the office of the magistrates, how it is described in the Word of God and the things in which it consists. If Scripture did not teach that it extends to both Tables of the Law, we could learn this from secular writers: for no one has discussed the office of magistrates, the making of laws, and public welfare, without beginning at religion and divine worship. And thus all have confessed that no government can be happily established unless piety is the first concern; and that those laws are preposterous which neglect God's right and provide only for men.^{F964} Since, therefore, among all philosophers religion takes first place, and since this fact has always been observed by universal consent of all nations, let Christian princes and magistrates be ashamed of their negligence if they do not apply themselves to this concern. And we have already shown that these duties are especially enjoined upon them by God; and it is fitting that they should labor to protect and assert the honor of him whose representatives they are, and by whose grace they govern.

Also, holy kings are greatly praised in Scripture because they restored the worship of God when it was corrupted or destroyed, or took care of religion that under them it might flourish pure and unblemished. But on the contrary, the Sacred History places anarchies among things evil: because there was no king in Israel, each man did as he pleased [^{<072125>} Judges 21:25].

This proves the folly of those who would neglect the concern for God and would give attention only to rendering justice among men. As if God appointed rulers in his name to decide earthly controversies but

overlooked what was of far greater importance — that he himself should be purely worshiped according to the prescription of his law. But the passion to alter everything with impunity drives turbulent men to the point of wanting all vindicators of violated piety removed from their midst.^{F965}

As far as the Second Table is concerned, a Jeremiah admonishes kings to “do justice and righteousness,” to “deliver him who has been oppressed by force from the hand of the oppressor,” not to “grieve or wrong the alien, the widow, and the fatherless” or “shed innocent blood” [^{<242203>} Jeremiah 22:3, cf. Vg.]. The exhortation which we read in Psalm 82 has the same purpose: that they should “give justice to the poor and needy, rescue the destitute and needy, and deliver the poor and needy from the hand of the oppressor” [^{<198203>} Psalm 82:3-4]. And Moses commands the leaders whom he had appointed as his representatives to “hear the cases between their brethren, and judge...between a man and his brother, and the alien” and “not recognize faces in judgment, and hear small and great alike, and be afraid of no man, for the judgment is God’s” [^{<050116>} Deuteronomy 1:16-17 p.]. But I pass over such statements as these: that kings should not multiply horses for themselves; nor set their mind upon avarice; nor be lifted up above their brethren; that they should be constant in meditating upon the law of the Lord all the days of their life [^{<051716>} Deuteronomy 17:16-19]; that judges should not lean to one side or take bribes [^{<051619>} Deuteronomy 16:19] — and like passages which we read here and there in Scripture. For in explaining here the office of magistrates, it is not so much my purpose to instruct the magistrates themselves as to teach others what magistrates are and to what end God has appointed them. We see, therefore, that they are ordained protectors and vindicators of public innocence, modesty, decency, and tranquillity, and that their sole endeavor should be to provide for the common safety and peace of all. Of these virtues David professes that he will be a pattern: when he has been elevated to the royal throne, he will not consent to any crimes, but will detest the impious, slanderers, and the proud, and will seek out from everywhere upright and faithful counselors [Psalm 101, esp. vs. 4, 5, 7, 6].

But since they cannot perform this unless they defend good men from the wrongs of the wicked, and give aid and protection to the oppressed, they

have also been armed with power with which severely to coerce the open malefactors and criminals by whose wickedness the public peace is troubled or disturbed [cf. ^{<451303>}Romans 13:3].^{F966} For from experience we thoroughly agree with the statement of Solon that all commonwealths are maintained by reward and punishment; take these away and the whole discipline of cities collapses and is dissolved.^{F967} For the care of equity and justice grows cold in the minds of many, unless due honor has been prepared for virtue; and the lust of wicked men cannot be restrained except by severity and the infliction of penalties. And the prophet has included these two functions, when he bids kings and other rulers execute judgment and justice [^{<242203>}Jeremiah 22:3; cf. ch. 21:12]. Justice, indeed, is to receive into safekeeping, to embrace, to protect, vindicate, and free the innocent. But judgment is to withstand the boldness of the impious, to repress their violence, to punish their misdeeds.

10. THE MAGISTRATES' EXERCISE OF FORCE IS COMPATIBLE WITH PIETY

But here a seemingly hard and difficult question arises: if the law of God forbids all Christians to kill [^{<022013>}Exodus 20:13; ^{<050517>}Deuteronomy 5:17; ^{<400521>}Matthew 5:21], and the prophet prophesies concerning God's holy mountain (the church) that in it men shall not afflict or hurt [^{<231109>}Isaiah 11:9; 65:25] — how can magistrates be pious men and shedders of blood at the same time?

Yet if we understand that the magistrate in administering punishments does nothing by himself, but carries out the very judgments of God, we shall not be hampered by this scruple. The law of the Lord forbids killing; but, that murders may not go unpunished, the Lawgiver himself puts into the hand of his ministers a sword to be drawn against all murderers. It is not for the pious to afflict and hurt; yet to avenge, at the Lord's command, the afflictions of the pious is not to hurt or to afflict. Would that this were ever before our minds — that nothing is done here from men's rashness, but all things are done on the authority of God who commands it; and while his authority goes before us, we never wander from the straight path! Unless perhaps restraint is laid upon God's justice, that it may not punish misdeeds. But if it is not right to impose any law upon him, why should we try to reproach his ministers? They do not bear the sword in

vain, says Paul, for they are ministers of God to execute his wrath, avengers of wrongdoers [^{<451304>}Romans 13:4]. Therefore, if princes and other rulers recognize that nothing is more acceptable to the Lord than their obedience, let them apply themselves to this ministry, if, indeed, they are intent on having their piety, righteousness, and uprightness approved of God [cf. ^{<550215>}2 Timothy 2:15].

Moses was impelled by this desire when, realizing that he had been destined by the Lord's power to be liberator of his people, he laid his hand upon the Egyptian [^{<020212>}Exodus 2:12; ^{<440724>}Acts 7:24]: This was the case again, when, by slaying three thousand men in one day, he took vengeance upon the people's sacrilege [^{<023227>}Exodus 32:27-28]. David also, when at the end of his life he ordered his son Solomon to kill Joab and Shimei [^{<110205>}1 Kings 2:5-6, 8-9]. Accordingly, he also includes this among kingly virtues: to destroy the wicked of the land, that all evildoers may be driven out of the city of God [^{<19A108>}Psalms 101:8]. To this also pertains the praise which is given to Solomon: "You have loved righteousness and hated iniquity" [^{<194507>}Psalms 45:7; 44:8, Vg.].

How does Moses' gentle and peaceable nature flame up into such savageness that, sprinkled and dripping with the blood of his brethren, he dashes through the camp to new carnage? How can David, a man of such great gentleness throughout life, as he breathes his last, make that bloody testament, that his son should not allow the hoary heads of Joab and Shimei to go in peace to the grave [^{<110205>}1 Kings 2:5-6, 8-9]? But both men, by executing the vengeance ordained of God, hallowed by cruelty their hands, which by sparing they would have defiled. "It is an abomination among kings," says Solomon, "to do iniquity, for the throne is established in righteousness." [^{<201612>}Proverbs 16:12.] Again: "A king who sits on the throne of judgment casts his eyes upon every evildoer" [^{<202008>}Proverbs 20:8 p.]. Again: "A wise king scatters the evildoers and turns them upon the wheel" [^{<202026>}Proverbs 20:26 p.]. Again: "Remove the dross from the silver, and a vessel will come forth to the metal caster; remove the impious from the king's sight, and his throne will be established in righteousness" [^{<202504>}Proverbs 25:4-5, cf. Geneva]. Again: "He who justifies the wicked and he who condemns the righteous are both alike an abomination to the Lord" [^{<201715>}Proverbs 17:15]. Again: "A rebel seeks evil for himself, and a cruel messenger is sent to him"

[^{<201711>}Proverbs 17:11 p.]. Again: “He who says to the wicked, ‘You are righteous,’ will be cursed by peoples...and nations” [^{<202424>}Proverbs 24:24 p.]. Now if their true righteousness is to pursue the guilty and the impious with drawn sword, should they sheathe their sword and keep their hands clean of blood, while abandoned men wickedly range about with slaughter and massacre, they will become guilty of the greatest impiety, far indeed from winning praise for their goodness and righteousness thereby!

Begone, now, with that abrupt and savage harshness, and that tribunal which is rightly called the reef of accused men!^{F968} For I am not one either to favor undue cruelty or think that a fair judgment can be pronounced unless clemency, that best counselor of kings and surest keeper of the kingly throne (as Solomon declares) [^{<202028>}Proverbs 20:28] is always present — clemency, which by a certain writer of antiquity was truly called the chief gift of princes.^{F969}

Yet it is necessary for the magistrate to pay attention to both, lest by excessive severity he either harm more than heal; or, by superstitious affectation of clemency, fall into the cruelest gentleness, if he should (with a soft and dissolute kindness) abandon many to their destruction. For during the reign of Nerva it was not without reason said: it is indeed bad to live under a prince with whom nothing is permitted; but much worse under one by whom everything is allowed.^{F970}

11. ON THE RIGHT OF THE GOVERNMENT TO WAGE WAR

But kings and people must sometimes take up arms to execute such public vengeance. On this basis we may judge wars lawful which are so undertaken. For if power has been given them to preserve the tranquillity of their dominion, to restrain the seditious stirrings of restless men, to help those forcibly oppressed, to punish evil deeds — can they use it more opportunely than to check the fury of one who disturbs both the repose of private individuals and the common tranquillity of all, who raises seditious tumults, and by whom violent oppressions and vile misdeeds are perpetrated? If they ought to be the guardians and defenders of the laws, they should also overthrow the efforts of all whose offenses corrupt the discipline of the laws. Indeed, if they rightly punish those robbers whose

harmful acts have affected only a few, will they allow a whole country to be afflicted and devastated by robberies with impunity? For it makes no difference whether it be a king or the lowest of the common folk who invades a foreign country in which he has no right, and harries it as an enemy. All such must, equally, be considered as robbers and punished accordingly. Therefore, both natural equity and the nature of the office dictate that princes must be armed not only to restrain the misdeeds of private individuals by judicial punishment, but also to defend by war the dominions entrusted to their safekeeping, if at any time they are under enemy attack. And the Holy Spirit declares such wars to be lawful by many testimonies of Scripture.^{F971}

12. RESTRAINT AND HUMANITY IN WAR

But if anyone object against me that in the New Testament there exists no testimony or example which teaches that war is a thing lawful for Christians, I answer first that the reason for waging war which existed of old still persists today; and that, on the other hand, there is no reason that bars magistrates from defending their subjects. Secondly, I say that an express declaration of this matter is not to be sought in the writings of the apostles; for their purpose is not to fashion a civil government, but to establish the spiritual Kingdom of Christ. Finally, that it is there shown in passing that Christ by his coming has changed nothing in this respect. For if Christian doctrine (to use Augustine's words) condemned all wars, the soldiers asking counsel concerning salvation should rather have been advised to cast away their weapons and withdraw completely from military service. But they were told: "Strike no man, do no man wrong, be content with your wages" [^{<420314>} Luke 3:14 p.]. When he taught them to be content with their wages, he certainly did not forbid them to bear arms.

But it is the duty of all magistrates here to guard particularly against giving vent to their passions even in the slightest degree. Rather, if they have to punish, let them not be carried away with headlong anger, or be seized with hatred, or burn with implacable severity. Let them also (as Augustine says) have pity on the common nature in the one whose special fault they are punishing.^{F972} Or, if they must arm themselves against the enemy, that is, the armed robber, let them not lightly seek occasion to do so; indeed, let them not accept the occasion when offered, unless they are driven to it by

extreme necessity. For if we must perform much more than the heathen philosopher required when he wanted war to seem a seeking of peace,^{F973} surely everything else ought to be tried before recourse is had to arms. Lastly, in both situations let them not allow themselves to be swayed by any private affection, but be led by concern for the people alone. Otherwise, they very wickedly abuse their power, which has been given them not for their own advantage, but for the benefit and service of others.

Moreover, this same right to wage war furnishes the reason for garrisons, leagues, and other civil defenses. Now, I call “garrisons,” those troops which are stationed among the cities to defend the boundaries of a country; “leagues,” those pacts which are made by neighboring princes to the end that if any trouble should happen in their lands, they may come to one another’s aid, and join forces to put down the common enemies of mankind. I call “civil defenses,” things used in the art of war.

13. CONCERNING THE RIGHT OF THE GOVERNMENT TO LEVY TRIBUTE

Lastly, I also wish to add this, that tributes and taxes are the lawful revenues of princes, which they may chiefly use to meet the public expenses of their office; yet they may similarly use them for the magnificence of their household, which is joined, so to speak, with the dignity of the authority they exercise. As we see, David, Hezekiah, Josiah, Jehoshaphat, and other holy kings, also Joseph and Daniel (according to the dignity of their office) were, without offending piety, lavish at public expense, and we read in Ezekiel that a very large portion of the land was assigned to the kings [^{<264802>} Ezekiel 48:2 1]. There, although the prophet portrays the spiritual Kingdom of Christ, he seeks the pattern for his picture from a lawful human kingdom.

But he does so in such a way that princes themselves will in turn remember that their revenues are not so much their private chests as the treasuries of the entire people (for Paul so testifies [^{<451306>} Romans 13:6]), which cannot be squandered or despoiled without manifest injustice. Or rather, that these are almost the very blood of the people,^{F974} which it would be the harshest inhumanity not to spare. Moreover, let them consider that their imposts and levies, and other kinds of tributes are

nothing but supports of public necessity; but that to impose them upon the common folk without cause is tyrannical extortion.

These considerations do not encourage princes to waste and expensive luxury, as there is surely no need to add fuel to their cupidity, already too much kindled of itself. But as it is very necessary that, whatever they venture, they should venture with a pure conscience before God, they must be taught how much is lawful for them, that they may not in impious self-confidence come under God's displeasure. And this doctrine is not superfluous for private individuals in order that they should not let themselves rashly and shamelessly decry any expenses of princes, even if these exceed the common expenditures of the citizens.

(Public law and judicial procedures, as related to Christian duty, 14-21)

14. OLD TESTAMENT LAW AND THE LAWS OF NATIONS

Next to the magistracy in the civil state come the laws, stoutest sinews^{F975} of the commonwealth, or, as Cicero, after Plato, calls them, the souls, without which the magistracy cannot stand, even as they themselves have no force apart from the magistracy. Accordingly, nothing truer could be said than that the law is a silent magistrate; the magistrate, a living law.^{F976}

But because I have undertaken to say with what laws a Christian state ought to be governed, this is no reason why anyone should expect a long discourse concerning the best kind of laws. This would be endless and would not pertain to the present purpose and place. I shall in but a few words, and as in passing, note what laws can piously be used before God, and be rightly administered among men.

I would have preferred to pass over this matter in utter silence if I were not aware that here many dangerously go astray. For there are some who deny that a commonwealth is duly framed which neglects the political system of Moses, and is ruled by the common laws of nations.^{F977} Let other men consider how perilous and seditious this notion is; it will be enough for me to have proved it false and foolish.

We must bear in mind that common division of the whole law of God published by Moses into moral, ceremonial, and judicial laws.^{F978} And we

must consider each of these parts, that we may understand what there is in them that pertains to us, and what does not. In the meantime, let no one be concerned over the small point that ceremonial and judicial laws pertain also to morals, For the ancient writers who taught this division, although they were not ignorant that these two latter parts had some bearing upon morals, still, because these could be changed or abrogated while morals remained untouched, did not call them moral laws. They applied this name only to the first part, without which the true holiness of morals cannot stand, nor an unchangeable rule of right living.

15. MORAL, CEREMONIAL, AND JUDICIAL LAW DISTINGUISHED

The moral law (to begin first with it) is contained under two heads, one of which simply commands us to worship God with pure faith and piety; the other, to embrace men with sincere affection. Accordingly, it is the true and eternal rule of righteousness, prescribed for men of all nations and times, who wish to conform their lives to God's will. For it is his eternal and unchangeable will that he himself indeed be worshiped by us all, and that we love one another.

The ceremonial law was the tutelage of the Jews, with which it seemed good to the Lord to train this people, as it were, in their childhood, until the fullness of time should come [^{<480403>} Galatians 4:3-4; cf. ch. 3:23-24], in order that he might fully manifest his wisdom to the nations, and show the truth of those things which then were foreshadowed in figures.

The judicial law, given to them for civil government, imparted certain formulas of equity and justice, by which they might live together blamelessly and peaceably.

Those ceremonial practices indeed properly belonged to the doctrine of piety, inasmuch as they kept the church of the Jews in service and reverence to God, and yet could be distinguished from piety itself. In like manner, the form of their judicial laws, although it had no other intent than how best to preserve that very love which is enjoined by God's eternal law, had something distinct from that precept of love. Therefore, as ceremonial laws could be abrogated while piety remained safe and

unharmful, so too, when these judicial laws were taken away, the perpetual duties and precepts of love could still remain.

But if this is true, surely every nation is left free to make such laws as it foresees to be profitable for itself. Yet these must be in conformity to that perpetual rule of love, so that they indeed vary in form but have the same purpose. For I do not think that those barbarous and savage laws such as gave honor to thieves, permitted promiscuous intercourse, and others both more filthy and more absurd, are to be regarded as laws. For they are abhorrent not only to all justice, but also to all humanity and gentleness.

16. UNITY AND DIVERSITY OF LAWS

What I have said will become plain if in all laws we examine, as we should, these two things: the constitution of the law, and the equity on which its constitution is itself founded and rests. Equity, because it is natural, cannot but be the same for all, and therefore, this same purpose ought to apply to all laws, whatever their object. Constitutions have certain circumstances upon which they in part depend. It therefore does not matter that they are different, provided all equally press toward the same goal of equity.

It is a fact that the law of God which we call the moral law is nothing else than a testimony of natural law and of that conscience which God has engraved upon the minds of men.^{F979} Consequently, the entire scheme of this equity of which we are now speaking has been prescribed in it. Hence, this equity alone must be the goal and rule and limit of all laws.

Whatever laws shall be framed to that rule, directed to that goal, bound by that limit, there is no reason why we should disapprove of them, howsoever they may differ from the Jewish law, or among themselves.

God's law forbids stealing. The penalties meted out to thieves in the Jewish State are to be seen in Exodus [^{<022201>}Exodus 22:1-4]. The very ancient laws of other nations punished theft with double restitution; the laws which followed these distinguished between theft, manifest and not manifest. Some proceeded to banishment, others to flogging, others finally to capital punishment. False testimony was punished by damages similar and equal to injury among the Jews [^{<051918>}Deuteronomy 19:18-21];

elsewhere, only by deep disgrace; in some nations, by hanging; in others, by the cross. All codes equally avenge murder with blood, but with different kinds of death. Against adulterers some nations levy severer, others, lighter punishments. Yet we see how, with such diversity, all laws tend to the same end. For, together with one voice, they pronounce punishment against those crimes which God's eternal law has condemned, namely, murder, theft, adultery, and false witness. But they do not agree on the manner of punishment. Nor is this either necessary or expedient. There are countries which, unless they deal cruelly with murderers by way of horrible examples, must immediately perish from slaughters and robberies. There are ages that demand increasingly harsh penalties. If any disturbance occurs in a commonwealth, the evils that usually arise from it must be corrected by new ordinances. In time of war, in the clatter of arms, all humaneness would disappear unless some uncommon fear of punishment were introduced. In drought, in pestilence, unless greater severity is used, everything will go to ruin. There are nations inclined to a particular vice, unless it be most sharply repressed. How malicious and hateful toward public welfare would a man be who is offended by such diversity, which is perfectly adapted to maintain the observance of God's law?

For the statement of some, that the law of God given through Moses is dishonored when it is abrogated and new laws preferred to *it*, is utterly vain.^{F980} For others are not preferred to it when they are more approved, not by a simple comparison, but with regard to the condition of times, place, and nation; or when that law is abrogated which was never enacted for us. For the Lord through the hand of Moses did not give that law to be proclaimed among all nations and to be in force everywhere; but when he had taken the Jewish nation into his safekeeping, defense, and protection, he also willed to be a lawgiver especially to it; and — as became a wise lawgiver — he had special concern for it in making its laws.

17. CHRISTIANS MAY USE THE LAW COURTS, BUT WITHOUT HATRED AND REVENGE

It now remains for us to examine what we had set in the last place: what usefulness the laws, judgments, and magistrates^{F981} have for the common society of Christians. To this is also joined another question: how much

deference private individuals ought to yield to their magistrates, and how far their obedience ought to go. To very many the office of magistrate seems superfluous among Christians, because they cannot piously call upon

them for help, inasmuch as it is forbidden to them to take revenge, to sue before a court, or to go to law.^{F982} But Paul clearly testifies to the contrary that the magistrate is minister of God for our good [^{<451304>}Romans 13:4]. By this we understand that he has been so ordained of God, that, defended by his hand and support against the wrongdoing and injustices of evil men, we may live a quiet and serene life [^{<540202>}1 Timothy 2:2]. But if it is to no purpose that he has been given by the Lord for our defense unless we are allowed to enjoy such benefit, it is clear enough that the magistrate may without impiety be called upon and also appealed to.

But here I have to deal with two kinds of men. There are very many who so boil with a rage for litigation that they are never at peace with themselves unless they are quarreling with others. And they carry on their lawsuits with bitter and deadly hatred, and an insane passion to revenge and hurt, and they pursue them with implacable obstinacy even to the ruin of their adversaries. Meanwhile, to avoid being thought of as doing something wrong, they defend such perversity on the pretense of legal procedure. But if one is permitted to go to law with a brother, one is not therewith allowed to hate him, or be seized with a mad desire to harm him, or hound him relentlessly.

18. THE CHRISTIAN'S MOTIVES IN LITIGATION

Such men should therefore understand that lawsuits are permissible if rightly used. There is right use, both for the plaintiff in suing and for the accused in defending himself, if the defendant presents himself on the appointed day and with such exception, as he can, defends himself without bitterness, but only with this intent, to defend what is his by right, and if on the other hand, the plaintiff, undeservedly oppressed either in his person or in his property, puts himself in the care of the magistrate, makes his complaint, and seeks what is fair and good. But he should be far from all passion to harm or take revenge, far from harshness and hatred, far from burning desire for contention. He should rather be prepared to yield

his own and suffer anything than be carried away with enmity toward his adversary. On the other hand, where hearts are filled with malice, corrupted by envy, inflamed with wrath, breathing revenge, finally so inflamed with desire for contention, that love is somewhat impaired in them, the whole court action of even the most just cause cannot but be impious. For this must be a set principle for all Christians: that a lawsuit, however just, can never be rightly prosecuted by any man, unless he treat his adversary with the same love and good will as if the business under controversy were already amicably settled and composed. Perhaps someone will interpose here that such moderation is so uniformly absent from any lawsuit that it would be a miracle if any such were found. Indeed, I admit that, as the customs of these times go, an example of an upright litigant is rare; but the thing itself, when not corrupted by the addition of anything evil, does not cease to be good and pure. But when we hear that the help of the magistrate is a holy gift of God, we must more diligently guard against its becoming polluted by our fault.

19. AGAINST THE REJECTION OF THE JUDICIAL PROCESS

As for those who strictly condemn all legal contentions, let them realize that they therewith repudiate God's holy ordinance, and one of the class of gifts that can be clean to the clean [^{<560115>} Titus 1:15], unless, perchance, they wish to accuse Paul of a shameful act, since he both repelled the slanders of his accusers, exposing at the same time their craft and malice [^{<442412>} Acts 24:12 ff.], and in court claimed for himself the privilege of Roman citizenship [^{<441637>} Acts 16:37; 22:1, 25], and, when there was need, appealed from the unjust judge to the judgment seat of Caesar [^{<442510>} Acts 25:10-11].

This does not contradict the fact that all Christians are forbidden to desire revenge, which we banish far away from Christian courts [^{<031918>} Leviticus 19:18; ^{<400539>} Matthew 5:39; ^{<053235>} Deuteronomy 32:35; ^{<451219>} Romans 12:19]. For if it is a civil case, a man does not take the right path unless he commits his cause, with innocent simplicity, to the judge as public protector; and he should think not at all of returning evil for evil [Romans 12: 17], which is the passion for revenge. If, however, the action is brought for some capital or serious offense, we require that the accuser be one who comes into court without a burning desire for revenge or resentment over

private injury, but having in mind only to prevent the efforts of a destructive man from doing harm to society. For if you remove a vengeful mind, that command which forbids revenge to Christians is not broken.

But, some will object, not only are they forbidden to desire revenge, but they are also bidden to wait upon the hand of the Lord, who promises that he will be present to avenge the oppressed and afflicted [^{<451219>} Romans 12:19]; while those who seek aid from the magistrate, either for themselves or for others, anticipate all the vengeance of the Heavenly Protector. Not at all! For we must consider that the magistrate's revenge is not man's but God's, which he extends and exercises, as Paul says [^{<451304>} Romans 13:4], through the ministry of man for our good.

20. THE CHRISTIAN ENDURES INSULTS, BUT WITH AMITY AND EQUITY DEFENDS THE PUBLIC INTEREST

We are not in any more disagreement with Christ's words in which he forbids us to resist evil, and commands us to turn the right cheek to him who has struck the left, and to give our cloak to him who has taken away our coat [^{<400539>} Matthew 5:39-40].^{F983} He indeed wills that the hearts of his people so utterly recoil from any desire to retaliate that they should rather allow double injury to be done them than desire to pay it back. And we are not leading them away from this forbearance. For truly, Christians ought to be a kind of men born to bear slanders and injuries, open to the malice, deceits, and mockeries of wicked men. And not that only, but they ought to bear patiently all these evils. That is, they should have such complete spiritual composure that, having received one offense, they make ready for another, promising themselves throughout life nothing but the bearing of a perpetual cross. Meanwhile, let them also do good to those who do them harm, and bless those who curse them [^{<420628>} Luke 6:28; cf. ^{<400544>} Matthew 5:44], and (this is their only victory) strive to conquer evil with good [^{<451221>} Romans 12:21]. So minded, they will not seek an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, as the Pharisees taught their disciples to desire revenge, but, as we are instructed by Christ, they will so suffer their body to be maimed, and their possessions to be maliciously seized, that they will forgive and voluntarily pardon those wrongs as soon as they have been inflicted upon them [^{<400538>} Matthew 5:38 ff.].

Yet this equity and moderateness of their minds will not prevent them from using the help of the magistrate in preserving their own possessions, while maintaining friendliness toward their enemies; or zealous for public welfare, from demanding the punishment of a guilty and pestilent man, who, they know, can be changed only by death. For Augustine truly interprets the purpose of all these precepts. The righteous and godly man should be ready patiently to bear the malice of those whom he desires to become good, in order to increase the number of good men—not to add himself to the number of the bad by a malice like theirs. Secondly, these precepts pertain more to the preparation of the heart which is within than to the work which is done in the open, in order that patience of mind and good will be kept in secret, but that we may openly do what we see may benefit those whom we ought to wish well.^{F984}

21. PAUL CONDEMNS A LITIGIOUS SPIRIT, BUT NOT ALL LITIGATION

But the usual objection — that Paul has condemned lawsuits altogether — is also false [^{<460605>} 1 Corinthians 6:5-8]. It can easily be understood from his words that there was an immoderate rage for litigation in the church of the Corinthians — even to the point that they exposed to the scoffing and evil speaking of the impious the gospel of Christ and the whole religion they professed. Paul first criticized them for disgracing the gospel among believers by the in-temperateness of their quarrels. Secondly, he rebuked them also for contending in this way among themselves, brethren with brethren. For they were so far from bearing wrongs that they greedily panted after one another's possessions, and without cause assailed and inflicted loss upon one another. Therefore, Paul inveighs against that mad lust to go to law, not simply against all controversies.

But he brands it a fault or weakness for them not to accept the loss of their goods, rather than to endeavor to keep them, even to the point of strife. That is, when they were so easily aroused by every loss, and dashed to the court and to lawsuits over the least causes, he speaks of this as proof that their minds are too prone to anger, and not enough disposed to patience. Christians ought indeed so to conduct themselves that they always prefer to yield their own right rather than go into a court, from which they can scarcely get away without a heart stirred and kindled to

hatred of their brother. But when any man sees that without loss of love he can defend his own property, the loss of which would be a heavy expense to him, he does not offend against this statement of Paul, if he has recourse to law. To sum up (as we said at the beginning^{F985}), love will give every man the best counsel. Everything undertaken apart from love and all disputes that go beyond it, we regard as incontrovertibly unjust and impious.

(Obedience, with reverence, due even unjust rulers, 22-29)

22. DEFERENCE

The first duty of subjects toward their magistrates is to think most honorably of their office,^{F986} which they recognize as a jurisdiction bestowed by God, and on that account to esteem and reverence them as ministers and representatives of God. For you may find some who very respectfully yield themselves to their magistrates and desire somebody whom they can obey, because they know that such is expedient for public welfare; nevertheless, they regard magistrates only as a kind of necessary evil. But Peter requires something more of us when he commands that the king be honored [^{<600217>} 1 Peter 2:17]; as does Solomon when he teaches that God and king are to be feared [^{<202421>} Proverbs 24:21]. For Peter, in the word “to honor” includes a sincere and candid opinion of the king. Solomon, yoking the king with God, shows that the king is full of a holy reverence and dignity. There is also that famous saying in Paul: that we should obey “not only because of wrath, but because of conscience” [^{<451305>} Romans 13:5, cf. Vg.]. By this he means that subjects should be led not by fear alone of princes and rulers to remain in subjection under them (as they commonly yield to an armed enemy who sees that vengeance is promptly taken if they resist), but because they are showing obedience to God himself when they give it to them; since the rulers’ power is from God.

I am not discussing the men themselves, as if a mask of dignity covered foolishness, or sloth, or cruelty, as well as wicked morals full of infamous deeds, and thus acquired for vices the praise of virtues; but I say that the order itself is worthy of such honor and reverence that those who are

rulers are esteemed among us, and receive reverence out of respect for their lordship.

23. OBEDIENCE

From this also something else follows: that, with hearts inclined to reverence their rulers, the subjects should prove their obedience toward them, whether by obeying their proclamations, or by paying taxes, or by undertaking public offices and burdens which pertain to the common defense, or by executing any other commands of theirs. “Let every soul,” says Paul, “be subject to the higher powers.... For he who resists authority, resists what God has ordained.” [^{<451301>}Romans 13:1-2, Vg.] “Remind them,” he writes to Titus, “to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready for every good work.” [^{<560301>}Titus 3:1, cf. Vg.] And Peter says, “Be subject to every human creature^{F987} (or rather, as I translate it, ordinance) for the Lord’s sake, whether it be to the king, as supreme, or unto governors who are sent through him to punish evildoers, but to praise doers of good.” [^{<600213>}1 Peter 2:13-14.]^{F988} Now, in order that they may prove that they are not pretending subjection, but are sincerely and heartily subjects, Paul adds that they should commend to God the safety and prosperity of those under whom they live. “I urge,” he says, “that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all men, for kings, and all that are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, with all godliness and honesty.” [^{<540201>}1 Timothy 2:1-2, Cf. Vg.]

Let no man deceive himself here. For since the magistrate cannot be resisted without God being resisted at the same time, even though it seems that an unarmed magistrate can be despised with impunity, still God is armed to avenge mightily this contempt toward himself.

Moreover, under this obedience I include the restraint which private citizens ought to bid themselves keep in public, that they may not deliberately intrude in public affairs, or pointlessly invade the magistrate’s office, or undertake anything at all politically. If anything in a public ordinance requires amendment, let them not raise a tumult, or put their hands to the task — all of them ought to keep their hands bound in this respect — but let them commit the matter to the judgment of the

magistrate, whose hand alone here is free. I mean, let them not venture on anything without a command. For when the ruler gives his command, private citizens receive public authority. For as the counselors are commonly called the ears and eyes of the prince,^{F989} so may one reasonably speak of those whom he has appointed by his command to do things, as the hands of the prince.

24. OBEDIENCE IS ALSO DUE THE UNJUST MAGISTRATE

But since we have so far been describing a magistrate who truly is what he is called, that is, a father of his country,^{F990} and, as the poet expresses it, shepherd of his people,^{F991} guardian of peace, protector of righteousness, and avenger of innocence — he who does not approve of such government must rightly be regarded as insane.

But it is the example of nearly all ages that some princes are careless about all those things to which they ought to have given heed, and, far from all care, lazily take their pleasure. Others, intent upon their own business, put up for sale laws, privileges, judgments, and letters of favor. Others drain the common people of their money, and afterward lavish it on insane largesse. Still others exercise sheer robbery, plundering houses, raping virgins and matrons, and slaughtering the innocent.

Consequently, many cannot be persuaded that they ought to recognize these as princes and to obey their authority as far as possible. For in such great disgrace, and among such crimes, so alien to the office not only of a magistrate but also of a man, they discern no appearance of the image of God which ought to have shone in the magistrate; while they see no trace of that minister of God, who had been appointed to praise the good, and to punish the evil [cf. ^{<600214>} 1 Peter 2:14, Vg.]. Thus, they also do not recognize as ruler him whose dignity and authority Scripture commends to us. Indeed, this inborn feeling has always been in the minds of men to hate and curse tyrants as much as to love and venerate lawful kings.

25. THE WICKED RULER A JUDGMENT OF GOD

But if we look to God's Word, it will lead us farther. We are not only subject to the authority of princes who perform their office toward us uprightly and faithfully as they ought, but also to the authority of all who,

by whatever means, have got control of affairs, even though they perform not a whit of the princes' office. For despite the Lord's testimony that the magistrate's office is the highest gift of his beneficence to preserve the safety of men, and despite his appointment of bounds to the magistrates — he still declares at the same time that whoever they may be, they have their authority solely from him. Indeed, he says that those who rule for the public benefit are true patterns and evidences of this beneficence of his; that they who rule unjustly and incompetently have been raised up by him to punish the wickedness of the people; that all equally have been endowed with that holy majesty with which he has invested lawful power.

I shall proceed no farther until I have added some sure testimonies of this thing. Yet, we need not labor to prove that a wicked king is the Lord's wrath upon the earth [^{<183430>} Job 34:30, Vg.; ^{<281311>} Hosea 13:11; ^{<230304>} Isaiah 3:4; 10:5; ^{<052829>} Deuteronomy 28:29], for I believe no man will contradict me; and thus nothing more would be said of a king than of a robber who seizes your possessions, of an adulterer who pollutes your marriage bed, or of a murderer who seeks to kill you. For Scripture reckons all such calamities among God's curses.

But let us, rather, pause here to prove this, which does not so easily settle in men's minds. In a very wicked man utterly unworthy of all honor, provided he has the public power in his hands, that noble and divine power resides which the Lord has by his Word given to the ministers of his justice and judgment. Accordingly, he should be held in the same reverence and esteem by his subjects, in so far as public obedience is concerned, in which they would hold the best of kings if he were given to them.

26. OBEDIENCE TO BAD KINGS REQUIRED IN SCRIPTURE

First, I should like my readers to note and carefully observe that providence of God, which the Scriptures with good reason so often recall to us, and its special operation in distributing kingdoms and appointing what kings he pleases. In Daniel, the Lord changes times and successions of times, removes kings and sets them up [^{<270221>} Daniel 2:21, 37]. Likewise: "to the end that the living may know that the Most High rules the kingdom of men, and gives it to whom he will" [^{<270417>} Daniel 4:17; cf.

ch. 4:14, Vg.]. Although Scripture everywhere abounds with such passages, this prophecy particularly swarms with them, Now it is well enough known what kind of king Nebuchadnezzar was, who conquered Jerusalem — a strong invader and destroyer of others. Nevertheless, the Lord declares in Ezekiel that He has given him the land of Egypt for the service he had done him in devastating it [^{<262919>} Ezekiel 29:19-20]. And Daniel said to him: “You, O king, are a king of kings, to whom the God of heaven has given the kingdom, powerful, mighty, and glorious; to you, I say, he has given also all lands where the sons of men dwell, beasts of the forest and birds of the air: these he has given into your hand and made you rule over them” [^{<270237>} Daniel 2:37-38, cf. Vg.]. Again, Daniel says to Nebuchadnezzar’s son Belshazzar: “The Most High God gave Nebuchadnezzar, your father, kingship and magnificence, honor and glory; and because of the magnificence that he gave him, all peoples, tribes, and tongues were trembling and fearful before him” [^{<270518>} Daniel 5:18-19, Cf. Vg.]. When we hear that a king has been ordained by God, let us at once call to mind those heavenly edicts with regard to honoring and fearing a king; then we shall not hesitate to hold a most wicked tyrant in the place where the Lord has deigned to set him. Samuel, when he warned the people of Israel what sort of things they would suffer from their kings, said: “This shall be the right of the king that will reign over you: he will take your sons and put them to his chariot to make them his horsemen and to plow his fields and reap his harvest, and make his weapons. He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. Finally, he will take your fields, your vineyards, and your best olive trees and will give them to his servants. He will take the tenth of your grain and of your vineyards, and will give it to his eunuchs and servants. He will take your men-servants, maidservants, and asses and set them to his work. He will take the tenth of your flocks and you will be his servants” [^{<090811>} 1 Samuel 8:11-17, with omissions; cf. Hebrew]. Surely, the kings would not do this by legal right, since the law trained them to all restraint [^{<051716>} Deuteronomy 17:16 ff.]. But it was called a right in relation to the people, for they had to obey it and were not allowed to resist. It is as if Samuel had said: The willfulness of kings will run to excess, but it will not be your part to restrain it; you will have only this left to you: to obey their commands and hearken to their word.

27. THE CASE OF NEBUCHADNEZZAR IN JEREMIAH CH. 27

But in Jeremiah, especially, there is a memorable passage, which (although rather long) it will not trouble me to quote because it very clearly defines this whole question. “I have made the earth and men, says the Lord, and the animals which are upon the face of the earth, with my great strength and outstretched arm; and I give it to him who is pleasing in my eyes. Now, therefore, I have given all these lands into the hand of Nebuchadnezzar...my servant.... All the nations and great kings shall serve him...until the time of his own land comes.... And it shall be that any nation and kingdom that will not serve the king of Babylon, I shall visit that nation with sword, famine, and pestilence Therefore, serve the king of Babylon and live.” [^{<242705>} Jeremiah 27:5-8, 17, cf. Vg.] We see how much obedience the Lord willed to be paid to that abominable and cruel tyrant for no other reason than that he possessed the kingship. But it was by heavenly decree that he had been set upon the throne of the kingdom and assumed into kingly majesty, which it would be unlawful to violate. If we have continually present to our minds and before our eyes the fact that even the most worthless kings are appointed by the same decree by which the authority of all kings is established, those seditious thoughts will never enter our minds that a king should be treated according to his merits, and that it is unfair that we should show ourselves subjects to him who, on his part, does not show himself a king to us.^{F992}

28. GENERAL TESTIMONIES OF SCRIPTURE ON THE SANCTITY OF THE ROYAL PERSON

It is vain for anyone to object that that command was peculiar to the Israelites. For we must note with what reason the Lord confirms it: “I have given,” he says, “the kingdom to Nebuchadnezzar” [^{<242706>} Jeremiah 27:6, cf. Vg.]. “Therefore, serve him and live.” [^{<242717>} Jeremiah 27:17, cf. Vg.] Let us not doubt that we ought to serve him to whom it is evident that the kingdom has been given. And when once the Lord advances any man to kingly rank, he attests to us his determination that he would have him reign. For there are general testimonies of Scripture concerning this. Solomon, in the twenty-eighth chapter of The Proverbs, says: “Because of the iniquity of the land there are many princes” [^{<202802>} Proverbs 28:2 p.]. Likewise, the twelfth chapter of Job: “He takes away subjection from

kings, and girds them again with a girdle” [^{<181218>} Job 12:18 p.]. Once this has been admitted, nothing remains but that we should serve and live.

In Jeremiah the prophet, there is also another command of the Lord by which he enjoins his people to seek the peace of Babylon, where they have been sent as captives, and to pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its peace will be their peace [^{<242907>} Jeremiah 29:7]. Behold, the Israelites, divested of all their possessions, driven from their homes, led away into exile, and cast into pitiable bondage, are commanded to pray for the prosperity of their conqueror — not as we are commanded in other passages to pray for our persecutors [cf. ^{<400544>} Matthew 5:44], but in order that his kingdom may be preserved safe and peaceful, that under him they too may prosper. So David, already designated king by God’s ordination and anointed with his holy oil, when he was persecuted by Saul without deserving it, still regarded the head of his assailant as inviolable, because the Lord had sanctified it with the honor of the kingdom. “The Lord forbid,” he said, “that I should do this thing before the Lord, to my lord, the Lord’s anointed, to put forth my hand against him, since he is the Lord’s anointed.” [^{<092406>} 1 Samuel 24:6, cf. Vg.] Again: “My soul has spared you; and I have said, ‘I shall not put forth my hand against my lord, for he is the Lord’s anointed’” [^{<092411>} 1 Samuel 24:11, cf. Vg.]. Again: “Who will put forth his hand against the anointed of the Lord and be innocent?... The Lord lives; unless the Lord strike him, or the day come for him to die, or he fall in battle, the Lord forbid that I should put forth my hand against the Lord’s anointed” [^{<092609>} 1 Samuel 26:9-11, cf. Vg.].

29. IT IS NOT THE PART OF SUBJECTS BUT OF GOD TO VINDICATE THE RIGHT

We owe this attitude of reverence and therefore of piety toward all our rulers in the highest degree, whatever they may be like. I therefore the more often repeat this: that we should learn not to examine the men themselves, but take it as enough that they bear, by the Lord’s will, a character upon which he has imprinted and engraved an inviolable majesty.

But (you will say) rulers owe responsibilities in turn to their subjects. This I have already admitted. But if you conclude from this that service ought to be rendered only to just governors, you are reasoning foolishly.

For husbands are also bound to their wives, and parents to their children, by mutual responsibilities. Suppose parents and husbands depart from their duty. Suppose parents show themselves so hard and intractable to their children, whom they are forbidden to provoke to anger [^{<490604>}Ephesians 6:4], that by their rigor they tire them beyond measure. Suppose husbands most spitefully use their wives, whom they are commanded to love [^{<490525>}Ephesians 5:25] and to spare as weaker vessels [^{<600307>}1 Peter 3:7]. Shall either children be less obedient to their parents or wives to their husbands? They are still subject even to those who are wicked and undutiful.

Indeed, all ought to try not to “look at the bag hanging from their back,”^{F993} that is, not to inquire about another’s duties, but every man should keep in mind that one duty which is his own. This ought particularly to apply to those who have been put under the power of others. Therefore, if we are cruelly tormented by a savage prince, if we are greedily despoiled by one who is avaricious or wanton, if we are neglected by a slothful one, if finally we are vexed for piety’s sake by one who is impious and sacrilegious, let us first be mindful of our own misdeeds, which without doubt are chastised by such whips of the Lord [cf. ^{<270907>}Daniel 9:7]. By this, humility will restrain our impatience. Let us then also call this thought to mind, that it is not for us to remedy such evils; that only this remains, to implore the Lord’s help, in whose hand are the hearts of kings, and the changing of kingdoms [^{<202101>}Proverbs 21:1 p.]^{F994} “He is God who will stand in the assembly of the gods, and will judge in the midst of the gods.” [^{<198201>}Psalm 82:1 p.] Before His face all kings shall fall and be crushed, and all the judges of the earth, that have not kissed his anointed [^{<190210>}Psalm 2:10-11], and all those who have written unjust laws to oppress the poor in judgment and to do violence to the cause of the lowly, to prey upon widows and rob the fatherless [^{<231001>}Isaiah 10:1-2, cf. Vg.].

(Constitutional magistrates, however, ought to check the tyranny of kings; obedience to God comes first, 30-31)

30. WHEN GOD INTERVENES, IT IS SOMETIMES BY UNWITTING AGENTS

Here are revealed his goodness, his power, and his providence. For sometimes he raises up open avengers from among his servants, and arms them with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways, from miserable calamity. Sometimes he directs to this end the rage of men with other intentions and other endeavors. Thus he delivered the people of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh through Moses [^{<020307>} Exodus 3:7-10]; from the violence of Chusan, king of Syria, through Othniel [^{<070309>} Judges 3:9]; and from other servitudes through other kings or judges. Thus he tamed the pride of Tyre by the Egyptians, the insolence of the Egyptians by the Assyrians, the fierceness of the Assyrians by the Chaldeans; the arrogance of Babylon by the Medes and Persians, after Cyrus had already subjugated the Medes. The ungratefulness of the kings of Judah and Israel and their impious obstinacy toward his many benefits, he sometimes by the Assyrians, sometimes by the Babylonians, crushed and afflicted — although not all in the same way.

For the first kind of men, when they had been sent by God's lawful calling to carry out such acts, in taking up arms against kings, did not at all violate that majesty which is implanted in kings by God's ordination; but, armed from heaven, they subdued the lesser power with the greater, just as it is lawful for kings to punish their subordinates. But the latter kind of men, although they were directed by God's hand whither he pleased, and executed his work unwittingly, yet planned in their minds to do nothing but an evil act.

31. CONSTITUTIONAL DEFENDERS OF THE PEOPLE'S FREEDOM

But however these deeds of men are judged in themselves, still the Lord accomplished his work through them alike when he broke the bloody

scepters of arrogant kings and when he overturned intolerable governments. Let the princes hear and be afraid.^{F995}

But we must, in the meantime, be very careful not to despise or violate that authority of magistrates, full of venerable majesty, which God has established by the weightiest decrees, even though it may reside with the most unworthy men, who defile it as much as they can with their own wickedness. For, if the correction of unbridled despotism is the Lord's to avenge, let us not at once think that it is entrusted to us, to whom no command has been given except to obey and suffer.

I am speaking all the while of private individuals. For if there are now any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain the willfulness of kings (as in ancient times the ephors were set against the Spartan kings, or the tribunes of the people against the Roman consuls, or the demarchs against the senate of the Athenians; and perhaps, as things now are, such power as the three estates exercise in every realm when they hold their chief assemblies), I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings, that, if they wink at kings who violently fall upon and assault the lowly common folk, I declare that their dissimulation involves nefarious perfidy, because they dishonestly betray the freedom of the people, of which they know that they have been appointed protectors by God's ordinance.^{F996}

32. OBEDIENCE TO MAN MUST NOT BECOME DISOBEDIENCE TO GOD

But in that obedience which we have shown to be due the authority of rulers, we are always to make this exception, indeed, to observe it as primary, that such obedience is never to lead us away from obedience to him, to whose will the desires of all kings ought to be subject, to whose decrees all their commands ought to yield, to whose majesty their scepters ought to be submitted.^{F997} And how absurd would it be that in satisfying men you should incur the displeasure of him for whose sake you obey men themselves! The Lord, therefore, is the King of Kings, who, when he has opened his sacred mouth, must alone be heard, before all and above all men; next to him we are subject to those men who are in authority over us, but only in him. If they command anything against him, let it go

unesteemed. And here let us not be concerned about all that dignity which the magistrates possess; for no harm is done to it when it is humbled before that singular and truly supreme power of God. On this consideration, Daniel denies that he has committed any offense against the king when he has not obeyed his impious edict [^{<270622>} Daniel 6:22-23, Vg.]. For the king had exceeded his limits, and had not only been a wrongdoer against men, but, in lifting up his horns against God, had himself abrogated his power.^{F998} Conversely, the Israelites are condemned because they were too obedient to the wicked proclamation of the king [^{<280513>} Hosea 5:13]. For when Jeroboam molded the golden calves, they, to please him, forsook God's Temple and turned to new superstitions [^{<111230>} 1 Kings 12:30]. With the same readiness, their descendants complied with the decrees of their kings. The prophet sharply reproaches them for embracing the king's edicts [^{<280511>} Hosea 5:11]. Far, indeed, is the pretense of modesty from deserving praise, a false modesty with which the court flatterers cloak themselves and deceive the simple, while they deny that it is lawful for them to refuse anything imposed by their kings. As if God had made over his right to mortal men, giving them the rule over mankind! Or as if earthly power were diminished when it is subjected to its Author, in whose presence even the heavenly powers tremble as suppliants! I know with what great and present peril this constancy is menaced, because kings bear defiance with the greatest displeasure, whose "wrath is a messenger of death" [^{<201614>} Proverbs 16:14], says Solomon. But since this edict has been proclaimed by the heavenly herald, Peter — "We must obey God rather than men" [^{<440529>} Acts 5:29] — let us comfort ourselves with the thought that we are rendering that obedience which the Lord requires when we suffer anything rather than turn aside from piety. And that our courage may not grow faint, Paul pricks us with another goad: That we have been redeemed by Christ at so great a price as our redemption cost him, so that we should not enslave ourselves to the wicked desires of men — much less be subject to their impiety [^{<460723>} 1 Corinthians 7:23].

GOD BE PRAISED

BIOGRAPHIES AND INDEXES

BIBLIOGRAPHIES

1. Editions of the *Institutes* and of Translations and Abridgments of It
 - A. Latin and French Editions of the *Institutes* of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries
 - B. Later Latin and French Editions
 - C. Translations
 - D. Abridgments
2. A Select List of Books and Studies Referred to in the Introduction and Footnotes

INDEXES

1. Biblical References
2. Author and Source Index to the References in the Introduction, Text, and Footnotes
3. Subjects
4. Names and Places
5. Hebrew Words Quoted or Alluded to in the *Institutes*
6. Chief Greek Words Quoted or Alluded to in the *Institutes*
7. Latin Words and Phrases Referred to in the Footnotes

NOTE ON THE BIBLIOGRAPHIES AND INDEXES

In the Introduction, reference is made to the history of indexes to the *Institutes*. Even before the final Latin edition during Calvin's lifetime (1559) was reached, the author realized the need for comprehensive tables and indexes to lay open the subjects treated (especially in the editions of 1553 and 1554) and the Scriptural passages used in the work; from

Marlorat onward, efforts were made to correct and expand these helps. After his time a notable subject index was produced for the Elzevir edition, promptly copied and corrected in the Schipper (Amsterdam) edition. Tholuck reprinted this index and Henry Beveridge translated it for his English version of 1845. Baum, Cunitz, and Reuss incorporated entries from CR Calvin 1 and 2 in their Latin Index (CR 22) of the first half of Calvin's Works. Fresh subject indexes have been produced by Weber (German) and Cadier (French) which in approach afford interesting contrasts to each other. The compiler of the present Subject Index (Index 3) owes a debt to all previous indexers, but has added a substantial number of new subject entries in the following main classes:

- (1) additional entries for subjects previously indexed,
- (2) historical topics previously not covered,
- (3) persistent and characteristic Calvinian figures of speech discussed in the notes,
- (4) topics illustrative of Calvin's vocabulary (in so far as English titles can reflect the Latin usage).

Where these entries are the subject of notes, the note number is carried after the book, chapter, and section reference. The result is the fullest index of the contents of the *Institutes* yet published, although it is in no sense of the word a concordance.

While the Subject Index is the key to the content of this great treatise, it is to be used in close connection with the other specialized indexes.

Two indexes are chiefly concerned with Calvin's documentation and with parallels and contrasts to his thought. The first of these is the Biblical References (Index I), which rests, independent of previous compilations, upon the Scripture references cited in the present translation. A full explanation concerning the Scriptural Index is found at the beginning of it. A second Scriptural index — to the citations made in the notes — was compiled, but deemed unnecessary for the present edition.

The second index concerned primarily with Calvin's documentation and with parallels and contrasts to his thought is the Author and Source Index (Index 2). To keep it within limits, the compiler included, with a few

exceptions, only references to authors earlier than, or contemporaneous with, Calvin. A comparison of it with Cadier's Index (*Table des auteurs cites*), the only previous attempt to reflect in index form something of the copious Barth and Niesel documentation, will disclose omissions in both lists. Sinits, Vol. 2, has been invaluable in enlarging the references to Augustine, but here many entries have been consolidated, or omitted as mere extra parallels. As a scholarly tool, marginal references to Peter Martyr Vermigli's *Loci communes* have been adapted from the Vautrollier edition of the *Institutes*. It is hoped that users will find the Author and Source Index sufficiently comprehensive for most purposes.

Closely allied to the Author and Source Index is the Index of Names and Places (Index 4), which is so extensive that it was felt advisable to treat it as a separate entity. Where these indexes overlap, all references are carried in the Author and Source Index, but in each case a "see-reference" is carried in the Index of Names and Places.

An arbitrary division between works (cited in the footnotes) to the time of Calvin and those of the post-Calvinian era had to be made. The latter are carried in Bibliography 2, with no attempt at further indexing (outside of the Introduction). Comments on the bibliographies will be found below.

Three language indexes are provided for scholarly users of the present edition. The Hebrew (Index 5) and Greek (Index 6) tables have been collated with those of CR 22, but a number of additions (chiefly strong allusions without explicit mention of the word) can be noted. To these has been appended a list of Latin words and phrases which are referred to in the footnotes (Index 7). While no complete key to Calvin's Latin, this last index notes some of the crucial words in his vocabulary and signals their contexts as well as the footnotes that deal with them. In Indexes 5-7, all entries are carried in the form in which they appear in the *Institutes* (if quoted there); words to which allusion only is made are carried in the normal dictionary form of entry. To conserve space in these indexes, the usual method of identifying passages in the *Institutes* through the use of both Roman and Arabic numerals is abandoned in favor of Arabic numerals alone to indicate book, chapter, and section.

There remain for comment the two bibliographies. Bibliography I, divided into four classes, has to do with the *Institutes* itself, and lists in

chronological order the books referred to in the Introduction. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Latin and French editions are listed in Bibliography

1a; in Bibliography

1b later Latin and French editions are entered; Bibliography

1c is concerned with translations; while Bibliography

1d attempts a comprehensive listing of abridgments of the *Institutes* in various languages.

Bibliography 2 gathers in alphabetical order such titles of post-Calvinian works as are cited in the footnotes, together with a few modern editions of earlier authors.

The compiler has seriously aimed to make the list both accurate and comprehensive. It will be appreciated if faults detected by readers are reported to the publishers.

BIOGRAPHY 1

*Editions Of The Institutes And Of Translations And Abridgments Of
It, Mentioned In The Introduction And Footnotes*

A. LATIN AND FRENCH EDITIONS OF THE INSTITUTES OF THE SIXTEENTH AND SEVENTEENTH CENTURIES

Christianae religionis institutio... (a)

Basel: Platter and Lasius, 1536

Institutio Christianae Religionis... (b)

Strasbourg: Rihel, 1539

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Girard, 1541

Institutio Christianae Religionis... (c)

Strasbourg: Rihel, 1543

Institutio Christianae Religionis...

Strasbourg: Rihel, 1545

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Girard, 1545

Institutio Totius Christianae Religionis... (d)

Geneva: Girard, 1550

Institutio Christianae Religionis...

Geneva: Estienne, 1553

Institutio Christianae Religionis...

Geneva: Rivery, 1554

Institutio Christianae religionis... (e)

Geneva: Estienne, 1559

Institutio de la religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Crespin, 1560

Institutio Christianae religionis...

Strasbourg: Rihel (?), 1561

Institutio Christianae religionis...

Geneva: Reboul, 1561

Institutio Christianae religionis...

Leiden: Elzevir, 1654

Institutionum Christianae Religionis Libri Quatuor...

in *Opera Calvini*, Vol. 9

Amsterdam: Schipper, 1667

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Badius, 1561

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Bourgeois, 1561

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

[two editions without indication of place or printer, 1562]

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Bourgeois, 1562

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Caen: Pierre Philippe, 1562

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Lyons: Honorati, 1563

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne...

Geneva: Courteau, 1564

Institutio Christianae Religionis...

Geneva: Perrin, 1568

Institutio Christianae Religionis...

London: Vautrollier, 1576

B. LATER LATIN AND FRENCH EDITIONS

Christianae Religionis Institutio... (1536)

ed. Wm. Baum, Edw., Edw. Reuss (CR 29: *Calvini Opera*, 1)
Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1863

Christianae Religionis Institutio... (1586)

in *Johannis Calvini Opera Selecta*, Vol. 1
ed. P. Barth and W. Niesel
Munich: Kaiser, 1926

Institutio Christianae Religionis... (1539-1554 eds.)

ed. Baum, Cunitz, Reuss (CR 29: *Calvini Opera*, 1)
Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1863

Institutio Christianae Religionis... (1559)

ed. A. Tholuck from the Amsterdam (Schipper) ed.
Berlin: 1834-1835; repr. Edinburgh: 1874

Institutio Christianae Religionis... (1559)

ed. Baum, Cunitz, Reuss (CR 30: *Calvini Opera*, 2)
Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1864

Institution de la Religion Chretienne... (1560)

ed. Baum, Cunitz, Reuss (CR 31: *Calvini Opera*, 3)
Brunswick: Schwetschke, 1865

Institutio Christianae religionis... (1559)

in *Johannis Calvin Opera Selecta*. Vols. 3-5, ed. P. Barth and W. Niesel Munich: Kaiser, 1928-1936; 2d ed.: Vol. 3 (1957), Vol. 4 (1959)

Institution de la religion Chrestienne... (1541)

ed. A. Lefranc Paris: 1909

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne... (1541)

ed. J. Pannier
Paris: Societe des Belies Lettres, 1936-1939

L'Institution Chretienne... (1560, modernized)

ed. J. Cadier (4 vols.)
Geneva: Labor et Fides, 1955-1958

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne... (1560, but *variorum*)
 ed. J. D. Benoit (3 vols. published)
 Paris: Vrin, 1957-1960

Institution de la Religion Chrestienne, tr. C. Icard
 Breme: 1713 [tr. of VL 1559]

C. TRANSLATIONS

Italian — tr. Giulio Cesare Pascali
 Geneva: 1557

Dutch — *Institutie ofte onderwijsinghe der Christlichen religie*
 tr. I[ohannes] D[yrkinus]
 Emden and Dort: 1560; repr. 1566, 1578 (Dort), 1596 (Leiden)
 tr. Charles Agricola, Leiden: 1602 tr. Wm. Cotsman, Amsterdam:
 1650. Reprinted, with a preface A. Kuyper. Kampen: 1891

*Johannes Calvijn Institutie of onderwijzung in de Christelijke
 Godsdienst*, tr. A. Sizoo
 Delft: Meinema, 1949 (2d ed.)

German — *Institutio Christianae Religionis*. Das ist underweisung
 inn Christlicher Religion...
 tr. Theological Faculty of Heidelberg
 Heidelberg: 1572, repr. 1582; also Hanau: 1597

Johannes Calvin: Unterricht in der Christlichen Religion tr.
 O. Weber Neukirchen Kreis Moers: Buchhandlung des
 Erziehungsverein, 1955

Spanish — *Institucion de la religion Cristiana: compuesta en
 quatro libros y divide en capitulos. Por Juan Calvino. Yahora
 nuevamente traduzida en Romane Caste. hano, por Cipriano de
 Valera* London: en Casa de Ricardo del Campo [Richard Field],
 1597 reprinted, ed. Usoz y Rto, in *Reformistas: antiguos espaoles*
 Madrid: 1858. Book I reprinted in facsimile, ed. B. F. Stockwell.
 Buenos Aires: "La Aurora," 1952

Spanish (of the 1536 Latin ed.) —

Breve 1 compendiosa institucion de la religion Christiana, tr. Francisco de Elao [Enzinas] Topeia [Ghent]: Adam Coruo, 1540. Institucion de la Religion Cristiana. Traducion del Latin por Jacinto Teron con una Introducion por B. Foster Stockwell Buenos Aires: "La Aurora," 1936 (1 vol.), 1958 (2 vols.)

Czech — tr. Jirik Streje (Georg Vetter) 1-2, 1617

Hungarian — tr. Albert Molnar (1574-1634)
Hanau: 1624

Japanese-tr. Masaki Nakayama
Tokyo: Shinhyo Shuppansha, 1934, 1949
tr. Nobuo Watanabe
Tokyo: Shinhyo Shuppansha, 1962

Chinese (sel.) — tr. Ching Yu Hsu (2 vols.)
Hong Kong: Nanking Theological Seminary, Board of Founders, 1955, 1957 *English* —

The Life and Comunicacion of a Christen Man, 1549
tr. Thomas Broke [of what became in the 1559 ed., 3:6-10]

The Institution of the Christian Religion...

tr. Thomas Norton
London: Wolfe and Harison, 1561
2d ed., 1562; 3d ed., 1574; later eds., 1578, 1582, 1587, 1599, 1611, 1634; last ed., Glasgow, 1762

Institutes of the Christian Religion... tr. John Allen London: Walker, 1813 Later eds.: 30 in America [minor revision by Joseph Paterson Engles, 1841] Last ed.: Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1936

The Institutes of the Christian Religion...

tr. Henry Beveridge
Edinburgh: Calvin Translation Society, 1845
Latest repr.: Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1958

D. ABRIDGMENTS

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London: 1576 tr. Edward May. The Institutions of Christian Religion... London: 1580
- Delaune, William.** Institutionis Christianae Religionis... Epitome
London: 1583 tr. Christopher Fetherstone Edinburgh: 1585, repr. 1837
Dutch tr.: J. de Raedt, 1594; repr. 1630, 1650
- Olevianus, Caspar.** Institutionis Christianae religionis... epitome
Herborn: 1586 Anonymous. Summa der wahren christlichen Religion
Herborn: 1586
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1667; Tholuck ed., 1834, 1846, repr. 1874 Eng. tr. as appendix in
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1596 ("An Hundreth Aphorisms...") also in Beveridge's tr., 1845
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Kampen: Kok, 1934

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Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1939

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1920; repr., 1921 further abridged in:

Fuller, D. O. John Calvin's Instruction in Christianity... Grand Rapids:
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2947

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FOONOTES

CHAPTER ONE

^{FT1} The space accorded by Calvin to the doctrine of the church in the *Institutes* is evidence of the high importance it assumed for him. Yet until our century this part of his theology has attracted little attention from his interpreters. The following list of titles may serve to illustrate the now widening interest in his treatment of the church: Th. Werdermann, "Calvins Lehre von der Kirche in ihrer geschichtlichen Entwicklung" in *Calvinstudien*, pp. 236-338; Doumergue, *Calvin* V; L. Goumaz, *La Doctrine du salut*, pp. 312-336; A. Lecerf, "La Doctrine de l' Eglise dans Calvin," *Revue de thgologie et de philosophie religieuses* IX (1929), 256-270; P. Barth, "Calvins Versfiindnis der Kirche," *Zwischen den Zeiten* VIII. 216-233; P. Imbart de la Tour, *Les Origines de la Reforme* IV. 98-115; H. R. Percy, *The Meaning of the Church in the Thought of Calvin*; R. C. Petry, "Calvin's Conception of the 'Communio Sanctorum,'" *Church History* V (1936), 227-238; P. T. Fuhrmann,

God-centered Religion, chapter 6; J. T. McNeill, "The Church in Sixteenth-Century Reformed Theology," *Journal of Religion* XXII (1942), 251-269; W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, chapter 13; LCC XXIII. 361-406 (selections from the Commentaries); W. Mueller, *Church and State in Luther and Calvin*, pp. 77-125; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi: The Nature of the Church According to the Reformed Tradition*.

^{FT2} Book 4 is outlined in this sentence. Throughout, the church is treated as the divine institution to assemble and minister to the elect in the earthly condition in which they are, as stated in the previous sentence, "*ergastulo carnis . . . inclusi*," "shut in the prison of the flesh." Cf. Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Loci communes*, 1576 edition, "*Simplex expositio*" 35, p. 484.

- FT3 “You cannot have God for your Father unless you have the church for your Mother.” Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* 6 (CSEL 3. 1. 214; tr. LCC V. 127 f.); Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 88. 2. 14 (MPL 37. 1140; tr. LF *Psalms* IV. 269 f.); *Against the Writings of Petilianus* III. 9. 10 (MPL 43. 353); Pseudo-Augustine, *On the Creed (De Symbolo)* 4. 13 (MPL 40. 668). On early parallels, see J. H. Plumpe, *Mater Ecclesiae*, chapter 3.
- FT4 The Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creed is so given, not in the *Ecclesiastical History* by Eusebius, but in the *Acts of the Council of Chalcedon*, where the preposition [εἰς] appears. Cf. Schaff, *Creeds* I. 22; II. 45-51, 58. The form “*in ecclesiare*” occurs in the *Tripartite History* of Cassiodorus III. 6 (MPL 69. 950). It is impossible to bring out the meaning in English, a virtually inflectionless language, of a distinction that stretches even the Latin.
- FT5 Augustine, *On Faith and the Creed* 10. 21 (MPL 40. 193; tr. NPNF III. 331); Pseudo-Augustine, *On the Creed*, *loc. cit.*, note 3, above; Pseudo-Cyprian (i.e., Rufinus), *On the Exposition of the Apostles’ Creed* xxxvi (MPL 21. 373; tr. NPNF 2 ser. III. 557; ACW XX. 71).
- FT6 “*Quasi in latebris.*” The church is invisible in the sense that it is spiritual, but also in the sense that it is able at times to survive only in a hidden state. On its perpetuity, cf. II. 15. 3, note 10; Comm. Ezekiel 16:53: “God always preserves a hidden seed, for there must always be a church in the world [*oportet enim semper esse ecclesia in mundum*].”
- FT7 Rufinus, *op. cit.*, 39 (MPL 21. 377; tr. NPNF 2 ser. III. 558; ACW XX. 74); cf. W. A. Curtis, *A History of Creeds and Confessions*, pp. 61 f., 64.
- FT8 Calvin’s thought of the functioning church as a communion in which the divine gifts are shared is close to that of Luther. Cf. Luther’s *Treatise on the Sacrament and on the Brotherhoods* 1. 4 (*Werke* WAIL. 743; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* II. 10); McNeill, *Unitive Protestantism*, pp. 27-33, and in Rouse and Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 30 ff.; P. Althaus, *Communio Sanctorum, Die Gemeinde in Lutherischem Kirchengedanken*; R. C. Petty, as cited in section 1, note 1, above; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, p. 9.
- FT9 Cf. “secret election,” etc., section 2, above.

- FT10 Note that the church, here called “Mother,” is the visible church, and that the mother function of the church, bearing and nourishing believers, is necessary to salvation. Cf. Cyprian, *Letters* 4. 4; lxxiii. 21 (CSEL 3. 2. 477, 795; tr. ANF V. 282, 384); Augustine, *Enchiridion* 17. 65; “the church, . . . without whom there is no forgiveness of sins” (MPL 40. 262 f.; tr. LCC VII. 377); Augustine, *Sermons* 56. 4, 5 (MPL 38. 379; tr. LF *Sermons* I. 69 f.); *First Epistle of John* 3:1 (MPL 35. 1998; tr. NPNF VII. 476). In Comm. Ephesians 4:13, Calvin says, “The church is the common mother of all the godly, which bears, nourishes, and brings up children to God, kings and peasants alike; and this is done by the ministry.” Cf. Wendel, *Calvin*, p. 224.
- FT11 The ministers of “the heavenly doctrine” (above) speak with God’s own voice. Cf. Calvin’s *Homilies on 1 Samuel* <LOOKEHERE DENNIS>42, where the prophets and pastors of the Christian church are said to be “the very mouth of God” (CR XXXIX. 705). Such is his high doctrine of the preaching ministry; and he goes on to warn against the pride that refuses to hearken. Cf. G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, p. 52.
- FT12 Cicero relates this, *Laws* II. 10. 26 (LCL edition, pp. 405 f.).
- FT13 Editors have supposed that the above sentences characterize the attitudes of Lutherans and Zwinglians respectively. But no texts are cited for this, and it remains possible that Calvin is thinking of individual rather than of group opinions.
- FT14 The concept of the invisible church of all the elect is present in Augustine and was habitually employed by Wycliffe. Cf. Augustine, *City of God*, *passim*; *On Baptism* III. 19. 26 (MPL 43. 152; tr. NPNF IV. 445); Wycliffe, *De ecclesia*, Wyclif Society edition, p. 37: “*Universitas fidelium praeordinatorum*”; so also Hus, *De ecclesia* 1, ed. S. H. Thomson, pp. 2 f., 8; tr. D. S. Schaff, *The Church by John Hus*, pp. 3, 6; J. T. McNeill, “Some Emphases in Wyclif’s Teaching,” *Journal of Religion* VII (1927), 452 IT.; *Unitive Protestantism*, pp. 25 f. The idea is also familiar to such conciliarists as Dietrich of Niem (see LCC XIV. 150 f.). Luther employs similar language frequently, e.g., in his *Preface to Revelation* (*Sammtliche Schriften* XIV [St. Louis, 1898]; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* VI. 488). Other citations from Luther and Zwingli are found in OS V. 12, note 1. Cf. J. Courvoisier, *La notion*

d'Eglise chez Bucer, pp. 68 fl.; Wendel, *Calvin*, pp. 225 f.; H. Strohl, *La Pensée de la Réforme*, pp. 174-181; McNeill, *Unitive Protestantism*, pp. 39-45; Augsburg Confession, articles 7, 8.

FT15 Section 2, above.

FT16 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 45. 12 (MPL 35. 1725; tr. NPNF VII. 253 f.).

FT17 Cf. Luther, *Enchiridion piarum precationum* (1529) (*Werke* WA X. 2. 394). Cf. section 20, note 30, below.

FT18 Cf. Augsburg Confession, art. 7, where the church is defined as “the congregation of saints in which the gospel is rightly taught and the sacraments are rightly administered.” Important as discipline is for Calvin, he does not distinctly make it one of the *notae*, or marks, by which the church is recognized, as does Bucer, *Scripta Anglicana*, p. 36. Cf. Wendel, *Calvin*, p. 228. The First Scots Confession, chapter xviii, makes discipline the third “mark,” as does the Belgic Confession, art. 29.

FT19 Section 9, above. Note the important phrase presently added: “where the preaching of the gospel is reverently heard.” Cf. Calvin’s *Articles of the Faculty of Paris with the Antidote*, art. xviii (CR VII. 29, 31: “*ubi verbum eius auditur*”; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* I. 103). See also Comm. John 5:24: “Now he affirms that life is obtained by hearing his word, and by the word ‘hearing’ he means faith. . . . But faith has its seat not in the ears but in the heart.”

FT20 “*Ad Lydium lapidem*.” The Lydian stone (a velvet-black variety of jasper) was used in testing the purity of gold.

FT21 Cf. IV. 2. 1. The distinction of fundamental and nonfundamental articles of belief is woven into Calvin’s thought, though not definitively treated by him. F. Wendel remarks on the importance of this doctrine in Calvin’s championing of church unity, and cites Comm. 1 Corinthians 3:11 (CR XLIX. 1354): “The fundamental doctrine, which it is nowise permissible to break, is that we cleave to Christ, for he is the only foundation [*unique fondament*] of the church.” The doctrines here named are introduced by the word *qualia* (such as) and are of course not a full enumeration of those which Calvin would hold requisite. The notion of fundamental articles formed

the core of various liberal projects of union in the seventeenth century when it was advanced by Georg Calixtus, Pierre Jurieu, Samuel Werenfels, J. A. Turretin, and others. See Rouse and Neill, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement*, pp. 79 ff., 92 f., 107, 111.

FT22 On <461429> 1 Corinthians 14:29-33, 40, Reformed and Puritan churches have rested their principle of participation by the members in Scriptural discussions as an expression of the priesthood of all Christians. (Calvin has inserted “better” in verse 30.) Cf. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, pp. 301, 318 f.; Pannier, *Institution II*. 133, note *a*, p. 386.

FT23 “*Aerii daemones.*” VG: “*Anges de Paradis,*” “Angels of Paradise.” Cf. Luther’s phrase “the heavenly prophets” (1525), ridiculing the fanaticism of Carlstadt and Muntzer.

FT24 By “Cathari” Calvin evidently refers to the Novatianists (ca. 250), who were often called Cathari, rather than the Albigensians (ca. 1900). Cf. section 23, below. VG explains “*Cathares*” by the phrase, “that is, the pure ones.” Though especially directed against the Anabaptists, this section is a vigorous rebuke to the sectarian claim of superiority, in all its forms. The Anabaptist denial that a church exists if it is not completely pure is illustrated in the *Acts of the Conference Between Preachers and Baptist Brethren in Bern* (1558) (*Acta des Gesprächs zwischen, predicanten uund Teuffbruederen inn der Stadt Bern*, Staatsarchiv Bern, “Unnutze Papiere,” t. 80) (film copy in Goshen College Library). Cf. Zwingli, *Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess. III. 390; Jackson, *Selected Works of Huldreich Zwingli*, pp. 180 f. On the defective but advancing holiness of the church, see H. Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, pp. 27-35. In sections 13-16 here Calvin rejects various positions of the Swiss Anabaptists. In section 17 he turns from the discussion of the holiness of the church in general to the personal holiness of its members.

FT25 “*Morositatem.*” Cf. I. 13. 3, note 9, and section 20, below, “surliness.”

FT26 Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* III. 1. 1; III. 2. 15 (MPL 43-81 ff., 94; CSEL 51. 98,118). W. E. Keeney has examined various aspects of Anabaptist perfectionism in his dissertation, *The*

Development of Dutch Anabaptist Thought and Practice, 1539-1564.
See esp. pp. 178-185.

- FT27 Cf. section 13, above. The future tense is carried over from the 1539 edition, in chapter 4, of which the material of the present section 13 follows this passage (CR I. 540, 546). Consult Pannier, *Institution* II. 123, 133.
- FT28 Cyprian, *Letters* 54. 3 (CSEL 3. 2. 622 f.; tr. ANF V. 327).
- FT29 Cf. *Acts of the Conference*, Staatsarchiv Bern, “Unnutze Papiere,” t. 80, fo. 87 f.
- FT30 The absurdity of demanding absolute holiness as a condition of participation is evident from the fact that forgiveness of sins is a perpetual activity within the church in its aspect as the communion of saints, and does not take place apart from that communion. *Eine kurze Form . . . des Glaubens* (1520) (*Werke* WA VII. 219; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* II. 373): “I believe that in this congregation, and nowhere else, there is forgiveness of sins.” Cf. *Enchiridion piarum precatationum* (*Werke* WA X. 2. 394).
- FT30x “And clearly . . . brought to them.” (Addition of 1555.)
- FT31 IV. 12. Cf. Pannier, *Institution* II. 146 f.; notes on pp. 388 f.
- FT32 Cf. section 13, note 24, above.
- FT33 *Acts of the Conference* . . . Staatsarchiv Bern, “Unnutze Papiere,” t. 80, fo. 106 ff., 110 ff.; OS V. 26, note 3.
- FT34 “*Dispositione*,” i.e., the order of the clauses in the Apostles’ Creed.
- FT35 Referring to the Anabaptist opinion stated in article 2 of the Confession, in seven articles, adopted February 24, 1527, at Schleithem near Schaffhausen. See translation from the German text by J. C. Wenger, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* XIX (1945), 243-256. Calvin used a French version (*ibid.*, p. 243). The Latin text by Zwingli of these articles (*Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, III. 388-413) has been translated by W. J. McGlothlin, *Baptist Confessions of Faith*, pp. 3-9. Cf. III. 3. 21, note 42; IV. 16. 1, note 2; IV. 20. 2, note 7.
- FT36 Cf. Augustine, *Against Two Letters of the Pelagians* I. 13. 27; 14. 28 (MPL 44. 563 f.; tr. NPNF V. 385 f.); Clement of Alexandria (arguing that frequent repentance is only the semblance of repentance),

Stromata II. 13. 57 (GCS 15. 143; MPG 8. 995-998; tr. ANF II. 360 f.); Tertullian, *On Repentance* 7, 9 (CCL Tertullianus I. 332 ff., 336; tr. ANF III. 662 f., 664, and Elucidation 2. p. 669).

FT37 Sections 23 to 29 first appeared in the 1539 edition, where the reference “*supra*” was appropriate. Cautions against severity in discipline are in IV. 12. 8-11.

CHAPTER TWO

FT38 IV. 1. 9-12.

FT39 Cf. IV. 1. 12, note 21.

FT40 This sentence strikes the note of antagonism to the medieval papacy that is to be dominant in many chapters of Book 4. Cf. Pannier, *Institution* II. 142.

FT41 Fisher, *Assertionis Lutheranae confutatio*, pp. 15 ff., 32 ff., 390 ff.

FT42 Luther, as early as 1519, in his Leipzig Disputation, soundly condemned the view expressed by Eck that by separation from Rome the Greeks had lapsed from the faith and were damned: “Nothing more detestable than this blasphemy could be spoken” (*Werke* WA II. 262, 276). On this section, cf. P. Wernle, *Der evangelische Glaube* III, Calvin, 362.

FT43 Correctly, the eleventh chapter. Cf. Comm. Romans 11:35.

FT44 Cf. II. 3. 4, note 5.

FT45 Alluding to Cicero’s (*On Duties* III. 33. 117 [LCL edition, p. 398]) “*Sed aqua haeret, ut aiunt.*”

FT46 Augustine, *Letters* xciii. 9. 30 f. (MPL 33. 336 f.; CSEL 34. 2. 476 f.; tr. FC 18. 85 ff.).

FT47 Cf. Eck, *Enchiridion locorum communium*, chapter 1. Numerous defenders of papal authority might have been so characterized.

FT48 Augustine, *Questions on the Gospel According to Matthew* 11. 1-2 (MPL 35. 1367 f.). Cf. Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Loci communes* IV. 6. 33 (Latin, 1576, p. 80x; English, 1583, IV. 86).

- FT49 Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* 5 (MPL 4. 501 f.; CSEL 3. 1. 213 f.; tr. ANF V. 423; LCC V. 127).
- FT50 “*Notorios et pertinaces haereticos . . . fuisse declarantes, eosdem . . . condemnamus.*” Leo X’s bull *Exsurge Domine* (June 15, 1520); Mansi XXXII. 1051; Kidd, *Documents*, p. 79.
- FT51 Cf. II. 15. 6; IV. 18. 15.
- FT52 An oft-quoted statement indicating Calvin’s recognition of sound elements left in the Roman communion, while the papacy as an entity is repudiated. Cf. IV. 8. 11,12, below; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, p. 51.
- FT53 Antichrist (2 Thessalonians 2:4), a term in frequent use by Calvin as a designation of the papacy (cf. III. 20. 42; IV. 7. 4, 25; IV. 17. 1; Comm. 1 John 2:18). The word had an extensive pre-Reformation use in this sense, especially on the part of the spiritual Franciscans, Wycliffe, and the Bohemian predecessors of Hus. Cf. art. “Antichrist” in the HDRE I. 582; H. Preuss, *Die Vorstellungen vom Antichrist im späteren Mittelalter*, pp. 145, 153; Luther, *On the Execrable Bull of Antichrist* (1520) (*Werke* WA VI. 597-622). On “the pope as Antichrist” in Calvin’s thought, see H. Berger, *Calvin’s Geschichtsaussage*, chapter 8, pp. 73,92; H. Quistorp, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Last Things*, pp. 117-122.

CHAPTER THREE

- FT54 IV. 1. 5.
- FT55 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, Prologue 6; IV. 27. 59 (MPL 34. 18, 118; tr. NPNF II. 520, 595).
- FT56 IV. 1. 5; IV. 3. 1.
- FT57 Referring chiefly to Luther, whom he elsewhere often praises. Cf. Calvin’s *Defensio adversus Pighium*, where Luther is called “a distinguished apostle of Christ by whose ministry the light of the gospel has shone” (CR VI. 250).
- FT58 The office of the “doctor,” or teacher, had high importance in Calvin’s scheme of the ministry. Cf. *The Ecclesiastical Ordinances of Geneva*

(1541) (CR XI. 15 f., 21; tr. LCC XXII. 58, 62 f.); J. Bannerman, *The Church of Christ* (Edinburgh, 1868) I. 426 ff.; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, p. 218; R. W. Henderson, *The Doctoral Ministry in the Reformed Churches* (Harvard Dissertation, 1959).

FT59 Section 4, above.

FT60 “*Veluti glebae addictus.*” “*Gleba*” is a portion of land. In classical times one legally required to serve in order to pay off a debt was called *addictus*. Cf. A. Berger, *Encyclopedic Dictionary of Roman Law*, s.vv. “*Addictus, . . . Adscriptus, . . . Gleba.*” In feudal law one who was *glebae addictus* was an attached peasant (German, *horiger*), bound to the soil and having rights in it.

FT61 Thus on the basis of relevant Scripture passages Calvin affirms a cardinal principle of Presbyterian polity: “bishop” and “presbyter” are names for the same office. This section should be compared with such other utterances as that in IV. 4. 4, where he approves of the function in discipline of the early bishops, archbishops, and patriarchs. Cf. also IV. 9. 4, note 6. This view had been made familiar in the Middle Ages, especially by Marsilius of Padua. See his *Defensor Pacis*, ed. and tr., A. Gewirth, I. 271 ff. On the preference of John Whitgift, John Jewel, and Richard Hooker for the use in English of the word “presbyter” rather than “priest,” see N. Sykes, *Old Priest and New Presbyter*, pp. 43 f.

FT62 “For a bishop “etc., 1543 as modified in 1545.

FT63 Section 4, above, on Ephesians 4:11.

FT64 The ministers constituted a *senatus*, with authority for discipline. Cf. IV. xi. 6, note 10, below.

FT65 Two classes of deacons were employed in the church of Geneva: one for the distribution of charities, and the other for service to the sick. Calvin calls the Seven elected to administer relief in Acts, chapter 6, “deacons.” The word does not appear in the text of The Acts, but in Philippians 1:1 and 1 Timothy 3:8-13. See T.M. Lindsay’s argument that the Seven are to be classed rather as presbyters than as deacons: *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, pp. 115-118. See also the comments in IV. 19.32 f.

- FT66** Cf. *The True Method of Reforming the Church* (1548) (CK VII. 624 f.; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* III. 281 ff.). On sections 10-16, see also J. L. Ainslie, *The Doctrines of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches of the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, chapter 6: On the inner call of the Spirit, cf. J. Bannerman, *The Church of Christ* I. 428 f.
- FT67** In political as well as in ecclesiastical government, Calvin habitually expresses a preference for plural authority rather than that of individuals. Cf. IV. 4. 10-11; IV. 20. 8. Here, for example, he excludes the unchecked authority of a single bishop or other dignitary to appoint a minister over a congregation. Cf. Comm. Acts 14:23: the election of elders (pastors) “decided by the votes [*sugragiis*] of all.” Cf. *The True Method of Reforming the Church* (CR VII. 634 f.; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* III. 294 ff.).
- FT68** One of the meanings of [*χειροτονέω*] is “to elect by a show of hands,” a common procedure in the Greek polls. (Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*; Arndt and Gingrich, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, s.w. [*χειροποτονέω*]; [*χείροτονεία*].)
- FT69** Cyprian, *Letters* lxvii. 4 (CSEL 3. ff. 738; tr. ANF V. 370). The word rendered “priest” is *sacerdos*: in the later fathers it commonly means bishop.
- FT70** On the “presbytery” ([*πρεσβυτέριον*], ^{<540414>} 1 Timothy 4:14), cf. H. Lietzmann, *The Founding of the Church Universal* (tr. B. L. Woolf, pp. 59 ff.); T. M. Lindsay, *The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries*, pp. 196, 198. Lindsay translates [*πρεσβυτέριον*] “kirk session” and supplies twelve references to the Letters of Ignatius (p. 198, note 4). The laying on of hands by the presbytery in 1 Timothy 4:14 is referred to as “Presbyterian ordination exhibited in a Scripture example” by J. Bannerman (*op. cit.*, II. 284). In *The Apostolic Ministry*, ed. K. E. Kirk, p. 232, T. G. Jalland renders [*πρεσβυτέριον*] “the pres byterate.” RSV loses the collective character of the word by translating in a simple plural, “the elders,” although with reference to Jews the word is rendered “assembly of the elders” (RSV, Luke 22:66). In Comm. 1 Timothy 4:14, Calvin takes [*πρεσβυτέριον*] as a collective noun meaning “the college of presbyters or elders,” but does not exclude the meaning “eldership,” the name of an office. Here the

emphasis is on the act of ordination, not the ordaining body. Cf. Cadier's comment, *Institution IV*. 67, note 1.

CHAPTER 4

- FT71** In chapters 4 to 7, Calvin has employed in his argument all impressive body of historical data. The notes will lead the reader to many of the source documents he employs. While H. Berger (*Calvins Geschichtsauffassung*), H. Quistorp (*Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things*), and others have expounded Calvin's conceptions of history, we still lack a full examination of his historical reading.
- FT72** IV. 1. 5, 6; IV. 3.
- FT73** Section 9, below.
- FT74** Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah IV* (Isaiah 19:18) (MPL 24. 185 f., 191).
- FT75** Ignatius, *Letters*, Magnesians 6; Trallians 3 (LCL *Apostolic Fathers I*. 200-202, 214 f.); Cyprian, *Letters* 14. 4; 19; 34. 4 (CSEL 3. 2. 512, 526, 570; tr. ANF [letters 5, 13, 18, respectively] V. 283, 293, 297); *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua*, canons 22, 23 (Mansi III. 953; on this document, see H. Leclercq, in Hefele-Leclercq II. 1. 108-120); Jerome, *Commentary on Titus*, chapter 1 (MPL 26. 562 f.).
- FT76** Jerome, *Letters* cxlvi, 1 (CSEL 56. 310; MPL 22. 1193; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 288).
- FT77** The [χωρεπίσκοποι], "bishops of the place," i.e., rural bishops, during the spread of Christianity from larger to smaller communities were under the authority of the bishop of the central town and church. Pellicia identifies them with the [περιοδευταί], or circuit visitors: A. A. Pellicia, *The Polity of the Christian Church*, tr. J. C. Billet, sec. II, chapter 11, pp. 88-90. Chorepiscopi were recognized and placed under restrictions by the Council of Antioch (341), canon 10 (Mansi II. 1311; text and translation, J. Fulton, *Index canonum* [2d ed., 1883], p. 238 f.; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, p. 364). They never became a separate order of clergy.

- FT78** Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* IX. 38 (MPL 69. 1156), from Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 5. 21 (MPG 67. 623-626; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 129).
- FT79** Jerome, *Letters* 52. 7 (CSEL 54. 428; tr. LCC V. 322; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 93).
- FT80** Gregory the Great, *Letters* I. 24 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 32; MPL [I. 25] 77. 472 f.); *Homilies on Ezekiel* I, hom. 11:10 (MPL 76. 910). Note that Calvin views the age of Gregory (pope, 589-604) as between the ancient purity of the church and its medieval decay. Cf. IV. 7. 26,27, and notes appended.
- FT81** Council of Nicaea (325) canons 4, 6 (Mansi II. 670 f.; Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 122 f., 124 f.; tr., with comment, H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, pp. 26, 30 f.); Council of Constantinople (381) canon 2 (Mansi III. 589; Fulton, *op. cit.*, pp. 174 f.; Schroeder, *op. cit.*, p. 90): those who ordain for money forfeit their rank;
- Council of Chalcedon (452) canon 28 (Mansi VII. 369; Fulton, *op. cit.*, pp. 290 f.; Schroeder, *op. cit.*, pp. 125 f.). Cf. IV. 3. 8; IV. 7. 15; Pseudo-Dionysius, *De ecclesiastica hierarchia* (MPG 3. 369 ff.).
- FT82** cf. IV. 3. 15, note 13; IV. 5. 11. Calvin distinctly approves a jurisdictional and disciplinary episcopate if guarded against arbitrary domination, and he dislikes the term “hierarchy.” On the whole issue, see J. Pannier, *Calvin et l’épiscopat*. The antiepiscopal interpretation of Calvin’s teaching by J. L. Ainslie, *The Doctrines of Ministerial Order in the Reformed Churches*, appears to me misleading. Cf. McNeill, “The Doctrine of the Ministry in Reformed Theology,” *Church History* XII (1943), 77-97; review of Ainslie’s book, *Journal of Religion* XXII (1942), 219 ff.; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 197-211.
- FT83** IV. 3. 6.
- FT84** *Apostolic Canons* xl; text and translation in Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 93 f.; cited in Gratian, *Decretum* II. 12. 1. 24 (MPL 187. 893; Friedberg I. 685).
- FT85** Council of Antioch (341) canon 25 (Mansi II. 1319; Fulton, *op. cit.*, pp. 247 f.).

- FT86 Jerome, *Letters* cxlvi. 1 (CSEL 56. 310; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 288; LCC V. 386 f.).
- FT87 Augustine, *Sermons* ccclvi. 1 (MPL 39. 1574). Gregory I's numerous letters to and about Maximus, the archdeacon who assumed the bishopric of Salona, demanded his appearance to answer charges of usurpation, simony, and misappropriation. Cf. Gregory, *Letters* IV. 20; VI. 3; VI. 25 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 254, 382, 402 ff.; MPL 77. 750, 795 f., 815-818; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 12. 172 f., 189, 195 ff.). Maximus in the end made satisfaction to Gregory.
- FT88 *Apostolic Constitutions* 8. 9, 12, 13 (MPG 1. 1086, 1091, 1110; tr. ANF VII. 485, 486 f., 490).
- FT89 On the above section, see Augustine, *Letters* clxxxv. 9, 35; cxxvi. 8-10 (MPL 33. 809, 480 f.); *Sermons* ccclv. 2. 2 (MPL 39. 1570); *Apostolic Canons* xli (J. Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 92 f.), cited in Gratian, *Decretum* II. 12. 1. 23 f.; II. 1. 2. 6 (MPL 187. 822 f., 543; Friedberg I. 685, 409). Gratian, in the second of these passages, attributes the last statement to Jerome, but it is not found in his extant writings.
- FT90 Sallust, *The War with Catiline* 9. 1 (LCL edition, pp. 16 f.); Augustine, *City of God* II. 17 (LCL edition, I. 196 f.).
- FT91 Gratian, *Decretum* II. 16. 3. 2; 12. 2. 30 (MPL 187. 1029. 909; Friedberg I. 789, 697), from Gregory I, *Letters* 56 (MGH *Epistolae* II. 333; tr. NPNF [letter liv] 2 ser. XIII. 74 f.). Various proposals for the salutary impoverishment of the clergy had been advanced in the Middle Ages. Cf. esp. Marsilius of Padua, *Defensor Pacis* II. 4. 6; tr. and ed. A. Gewirth, II. 218.
- FT92 Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* V. 37; XI. 16 (MPL 69. 1017, 1198), from Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* 4. 24 (tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 319 f.) and Socrates *Ecclesiastical History* 7. 21 (tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 164).
- FT93 "Exuperius, Tolosae episcopus, viduae sareptensis imitator, esuriens pascit alios" ("Exuperius, bishop of Toulouse, in imitation of the widow of Zarephath [1 Kings 17:9], when hungry himself, feeds others"). Jerome, *Letters* cxxv. 20 (MPL 22. 1085; CSEL 56. 141; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 251).

- FT94 Ambrose, *On the Duties of the Clergy* II. 28. 137 f.; *Letters* 18. 16; 20. 16 (MPL 16. 140, 977, 997; tr. NPNF 2 ser. X. 14, 419, 424).
- FT95 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* VI. xliii, 11 (MPG 20. 622; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 1. 288, with notes); Cyprian, *Letters* 55. 8; xxxviii, 1 (CSEL 3. 2:629, 649 ff.; tr. ANF [letter li] V, 311 f., 329); Jerome, *Letters* 52. 5 (MPL 22. 531; CSEL 54. 421; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 91; LCC V. 319). Calvin is uneasy about the word “clergy”; cf. IV. 12. 2.
- FT96 Clement of Rome, *First Letter* 44 (LCL *Apostolic Fathers* I. 82-85; tr. LCC I. 63 f.); Cyprian, *Letters* lv. 6; lxvii. 4 (CSEL 3. 2:629, 738; tr. ANF [letter 51. 4] V. 828, 870).
- FT97 On celibacy of the clergy, cf. IV. 12. 23; IV. 13. 8; Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 411-418; F. Cabrol, *Dictionnaire*, art. “Calibat”; H. C. Lea, *History of Sacerdotal Celibacy*; H. Leclercq, “La Legislation conciliaire relatif au eglibat ecclgsiastique,” in Hefele-Leclercq II. 2. 1314-1848; art. “Celibacy” in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Eleventh edition, by G. G. Coulton. Clerical celibacy was stoutly defended by many opponents of the Reformation. See, for example, J. Latomus, *Adversus Bucerum de controversiis quibusdam altera plena defensio* (Cologne, 1541), fo. N 1a-V 2b (CC 8. 73-101; A. Pighius, *Controversiarum praecipuarum in comitiis Ratisbonensibus tractatarum . . . explicatio* (Cologne, 1542), chapter 13, FF 1a-HH 1b; A. de Castro, *Adversus haereses* (1543), fo. 199 D.
- FT98 Cyprian, *Letters* xxxviii (CSEL 3. 2. 579 ff.; tr. ANF [letter xxxii] V. 312).
- FT99 *Apostolic Canons* xlii-xliv (J. Fulton, *Index canonurn*, PP-94 f.); Gratian, *Decretum* I. lxvii. 1; lxxv. 7 (Friedberg I. 253, 267; MPL 187. 351, 368).
- FT100 Council of Antioch (341) canon xviii (Mansi II. 1315; Fulton, *op. cit.*, pp. 242 f.), requiring a “full synod,” the metropolitan being present.
- FT101 Leo I, *Letters* 10. 6; clxvii (MPL 54-634, 1203; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 10, 110). In letter clxvii, the requirement is that the bishop be “elected by the clergy, wanted by the laity, and consecrated by the bishops of the province with the approval [*judicio*] of the metropolitan.” Cf. *Letters* 14. 5 (MPL 54. 673): “The decision of the metropolitan should prefer him who is supported by a preponderance of votes and merits.”

- FT102 Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 5. 9 (ed. T. Gaisford, p. 414; MPG 82. 1217 f.; GCS 19. 312; tr. NPNF 2 ser. III. 138). Augustine, *Letters* ccxiii (MPL 33. 966 ff.; tr. FC 32. 52-57); a vivid account of the election of Eraclius (*falso* Eradius) as Augustine's coadjutor and successor.
- FT103 Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 4. 20 (ed. T. Gaisford, pp. 346 f.; MPG 82. 1181 f.; GCS 19. 69; tr. NPNF 2 ser. III. 126).
- FT104 Council of Laodicea (ca. 363) canon 13 (Mansi II. 565; text and translation in Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 254 f.; tr. with notes NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 131). While Calvin requires the vote of the people in the choice of ministers, he rejects, with the canon of Laodicea (employed also by Gratian), the action of tumultuous crowds in elections. There must be regularity of procedure and no turbulence.
- FT105 "*Incertum scindi studia in contraria vulgus*," a variation of Vergil, *Aeneid* II. 39 (LCL Vergil I. 296).
- FT106 Leo I, *Letters* 9. 1; 10. 4, 6; clxvii (MPL 54. 625 f., 632, 634, 1203; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 7 f., 10 f., 109 ff.). In letter 9. 1, Leo approves fixed days for ordaining, especially Saturday evening or Sunday, the rite including imposition of hands; in 10. 6, he points to the custom of Easter Day ordinations. Cf. Gratian, *Decretum* I. 62. 9 (Friedberg I. 234; MPL 187. 325).
- FT107 Cf. note 83, above.
- FT108 Gregory the Great, *Letters* III. 30, to John the subdeacon (MPL 77. 627 f.; MGH *Epistolae* I. 188; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 129 f.). Cf. *Letters* III. 35, to Peter, a subdeacon in Campania, regarding the episcopate in Capua (MPL 77. 631 f.; MGH *Epistolae* I. 190; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 131): an assembly of clergy in Naples to send two or three "as representing all," who in turn would treat with Neapolitan nobles *re* the election of a bishop.
- FT109 Pope Nicholas II, in 1049, instituted the College of Cardinals for the election of popes. (Mansi XIX. 915; tr. O. J. Thatcher and E. H. McNeal, *Source Book for Medieval History*, p. 129: note editors' summary, p. 127); Gratian, *Decretum* I. xxiii, 1 (MPL 187. 128; Friedberg I. 77).

- FT110 Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 4. 30 (MPG 67. 543 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 113 f.).
- FT111 Gregory I, *Letters* I. 5: “The most serene Lord Emperor has commanded an ape to become a lion (*“fieri simiam leonam iussit”*) (MGH *Epistolae* I. 6; MPL 77. 450; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 76).
- FT112 Cf. Gratian, *Decretum* I. 63. 18. 1. 2. (MPL 187. 333 f., 327-330 f.; Friedberg I. 234 ff.).
- FT113 The Greek words are [*χεροτονίαν*] and [*χειροθεσίαν*], p. Cf. IV. 3. 15, note 14, and section 15, note 48, below.
- FT114 The Council of Carthage (397) canon 39 requires that three bishops participate in the consecration of a bishop (Mansi III. 886). Cf. Second Council of Nicaea (787) canon in (Mansi XIII. 748; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 557); Council of Nicaea (325) canons 9, 14 (Mansi II. 671, 678; text and translation, Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 122 f., 126 f., 132 f.; tr. with notes NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 23 f., 40).
- FT115 Cyprian, *Letters* lxxvii. 3, 5 (CSEL 3. 2.787 ff.; tr. ANF V. 370 f.). Here Cyprian speaks of the bishop of Rome as “our colleague Stephen” (section 5).
- FT116 Gratian, *Decretum* I. 64. 1 f. (MPL 187. 313; Friedberg I. 247).
- FT117 Leo I, *Letters* 10. 5 (MPL 54. 633; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 10; FC 34. 43); Gregory I, *Letters* III. 14; IV. 39; IX. 81, 185; XIII. 17; III. 30 f. (MPL 77. 315 f., 713 f. [no. 76], 1010, 1269 f., 627; MGH *Epistolae* I. 173, 276; II. 97, 177, 384; I. 188 f.; tr. [except III. 14 and IX. 81] NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 129 f., 160; XIII. 21).
- FT118 Cf. Cyprian, *Letters* lxxvii. 5 (CSEL 3. 2. 339; tr. ANF V. 300).
- FT119 *Statuta antiqua* canons 3, 4 (Mansi III. 950; *Apostolic Constitutions* 8. 16 (MPG I. 1114; tr. ANF VII. 491 f.); Gratian, *Decretum* I. 23. 8. 11 (MPL 187. 133 f.; Friedberg I. 82 f.).
- FT120 Jerome, *Letters* clvi. 1 (CSEL 56. 310; tr. LCC V. 386); Jerome, *Commentary on Titus*, chapter 1 (MPL 26. 562); *Apostolic Constitutions* 8. 16, 18 (MPG I. 1123; tr. ANF VII. 492-494).

CHAPTER 5

FT121 There is nothing novel in Calvin's caustic denunciation of clerical vices and abuses. Such charges were familiar more than a century before Luther and were voiced not only by Wycliffe and Hus but by such writers as Dietrich of Niem, John of Wesel, George Gascoyne, Dionysius the Carthusian, Savonarola. At the beginning of Paul III's reforms, the *Consilium de emendanda ecclesia* (1537), a report by a commission of cardinals, freely admitted deplorable and widespread evils (Kidd, *Documents*, pp. 307-318; Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*, no. 427; summary in Kidd, *The Counter Reformation*, pp. 12-15, 42, 48). The document was published in Germany (1538) and was incorporated in Book XII of J. Sleidan's *De statu religionis et reipublicae, Carolo Quinto Caesare, libri commentarium* xxvi (1555) (Latin edition of 1631, pp. 171-184; English edition, 1560, fo. 154b-158a). Sleidan had been Calvin's friend and (lay) co-worker in the French congregation in Strasbourg, 1534-1541. Calvin begins his attack by calling attention to the failure of a valid call and election to office. Eight of the twenty-six abuses listed in the *Consilium* have to do with ordination and appointment of clergy. Cf. LCC XIV. 32-60 (Wyclif, *On the Pastoral Office*); G. G. Coulton, *Ten Medieval Studies*, pp. 122-165, 8: "Priests and People Before the Reformation."

FT122 Leo I, *Letters* clxvii, answer to question 1 (MPL 54. 1203; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1:110).

FT123 Cyprian, *Letters* lxxvii. 4; Iv. 8; 59. 6; 38 (CSEL 3. 2. 738, 629, 67g, 579 ff.; tr. ANF V. 370 f., 329 [li. 8], 34x [liv. 6], 311 f. [xxxii]).

FT124 Cf. IV. 4. 11, and notes appended.

FT125 Cf. IV. 4. 12.

FT126 Strict regulations and penalties were enacted in the Third Lateran Council (1179) canons 1, 3 (Mansi XXII. 217 ff.; tr. H. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Canons of the General Councils*, pp. 214-217).

FT127 Alluding to the right of investiture with the bishop's crozier, which involved the right of appointment. It was claimed and practiced in medieval Europe from about 865. Cf. J. T. McNeill, "The Feudalization of the Church," *Environmental Factors in Christian*

History, edited by J. T. McNeill, M. Spinka, and H. R. Willoughby, pp. 196 ff. Calvin makes the point that election by the cathedral canons is not election by the people, even where there was no royal interference, disgraceful though such interference is.

FT128 Third Lateran Council (1179) canon 1 (Mansi XXII. 218; tr. Schroeder, *op. cit.*, p. 215).

FT129 Council of Chalcedon (451) canon 6 (Mansi VII. 362; J. Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 178 f.; tr. Schroeder, *op. cit.*, p. 95). Schroeder comments: "This canon forbids ordination without a title, i.e., something which guarantees a cleric an honorable subsistence." It is just this association of "title" and economic "subsistence" that Calvin rejects in the ensuing sentences. Cf. Gratian, *Decretum* I. lxx. 2: "*Nemo ordinandus est absolute*" (MPL 187. 355; Friedberg I. 257).

FT130 Decretals of Gregory IX, III. 5. 16 (Friedberg II. 469).

FT131 "Asses," plural of *as*, a Roman copper coin of small value.

FT132 Cf. IV. 4. 3-5; *Ecclesiastical Ordinances of Geneva* (1541) (GR. X. 1. 17-25; tr. LCC XXII. 59-66).

FT133 In the Roman *Pontifical*, to the bishop's question, "Do you know these men to be worthy?" the archdeacon responds, "As far as human weakness permits, I both know and testify that they are worthy [*ipsos dignos esse*]." (M. Andrieu, *Le pontifical Romain au rodyen age* II. 337, 342.)

FT134 On Ceres, see Horace, *Odes* III. 2. 26-28 (LCL edition, pp. 176 f.). Cf. section 9, below. See also Schaff-Herzog, *Encyclopedia of Religious Knowledge*, art. "*Beneficium*."

FT135 "Collation" was the bestowal of a benefice by a bishop or pope who held the right of collation, a right increasingly claimed by popes during and after the Avignon period of the papacy (1309-1377).

FT136 Cf. Calvin's thoughtful discussion of simony in Comm. Acts 8:20-21; Council of Chalcedon (451) canon 2 (Mansi VII. 373; Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 174 f.; tr., with notes, NPNF 2 set. XIV. 268 f.); Gregory I, *Letters* IX. 218 (MGH *Epistolae* II. 206 f.).

FT137 "*Principum donativa*," a gratuity, or bonus, given usually to soldiers after a victory.

- FT138 Calvin himself in his twelfth year had received a benefice at Noyon, May 19, 1521. On May 4, 1534, he resigned his benefices.
- FT139 Examples of this abound. In Scotland, James IV made his brother, the Duke of Ross, aged eighteen, archbishop of St. Andrews, and soon added to the young prelate's benefices two rich abbeys. When the archbishop died (1504), the king placed his illegitimate son, Alexander Stuart, aged nine, in the archiepiscopal office. Calvin's Scottish teacher in Paris, John Major, disapproved of the nonresidence and luxury of the Scottish bishops. Cf. C. J. Maxie, *King James IV of Scotland*, pp. 158 ff. Leo X, at thirteen, was made a cardinal: W. Roscoe, *Life of Leo X* (4th edition, 1846), p. 12; G. B. Picotti, *La Jeunesse de Leon X*, chapters 2, 3, pp. 41-134. See also *Consilium de emendanda ecclesia* (report by six cardinals, 1537), first abuse (Kidd, *Documents*, p. 310; Mirbt, *Quellen*, no. 427 (4th edition, p. 268).
- FT140 Cf. section 11, below. Despite frequent conciliar prohibitions, pluralism and absenteeism had long been exceedingly prevalent when this was written in 1543; cf. *Consilium de emendanda ecclesia* (1537), seventh abuse (Kidd, *Documents*, p. 312).
- FT141 Gregory I, *Letters* IV. 11 (MGH *Epistolae* I. a44; MPL 77. 680; tr. NPNF ser. XII. 2. 149); Gratian, *Decretum* II. 16. 1. 38 (MPL 187. 1003; Friedberg I. 770).
- FT142 Gratian, *Decretum* II. 16. 1. 22, 25 (MPL 187. 997 ff.; Friedberg I. 766).
- FT143 Epiphanius, in a letter to John of Jerusalem, translated from the Greek and quoted by Jerome, *Letters* 51. 1 (CSEL 54. 396; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 83).
- FT144 Pseudo-Basil, *Monastic Constitutions* 9 (MPG 31. 1370).
- FT145 Cf. section 6, above, note 14.
- FT146 "Dignitates"; see *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. "Dignitary."
- FT147 IV. 18. 3, 7.
- FT148 Cf. IV. 4. 3. Formerly the canonical clergy, such as those organized by Chrodegang of Metz (ca. 760), represented a reform in discipline and education.
- FT149 Cf. section 7, above, note 10.

- FT150 Gregory I, *Homilies on the Gospels* I. homily 17. 3,4,8,14 (MPL 76. 1139 ff., 1146).
- FT151 Bernard, *On the Morals and Duties of Bishops*, 2. 4. 3. 8; 7. 25, 27-29 (MPL 182. 813-817, 825-828).
- FT152 See A. Pighius, *Hierarchiae ecclesiasticae assertio* (Cologne, 1538), *passim*; Clichtove, *Antilutherus* II. 2, fo. 65a-67b. In I. 5, fo. 8b-11a, Clichtove defends the traditional view of the genuineness of Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy and Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*. This influential work, long ascribed to Dionysius the Areopagite (Acts 17:34), was written about 500. See LCC XIII. 33-37. Cf. I. 14. 4, note 14.
- FT153 Cf. Lombard, *Sentences* IV. 24. 8 (MPL 192. 903).
- FT154 Cf. IV. 5. 5; IV. 19. 32.
- FT155 Cf. IV. 4. 7, note 20.
- FT156 Cassiodorus, *Historia tripartita* IX. 30 (MPL 69. 1145), from Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* 7. 25 (tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 394).
- FT157 Ambrose, *Letters* 9. 2 (MPL 16. 940; tr. LCC [letter 10:2] V. 185: “the poverty which is a bishop’s glory”).
- FT158 Cf. IV. 4. 8, and notes appended.
- FT159 *Statuta antiqua* canons 14, 15 (Mansi III. 952). Cf. IV. 4. 2, note 5.
- FT160 Cf. section 17, above, note 36.
- FT161 Jerome, *Letters* 52. 5, 6 (MPL 22. 531; CSEL 54. 422-425; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 91 f.; LCC V. 319-322).

CHAPTER 6

- FT162 Calvin discusses this topic in *Acts of the Council of Trent with the Antidote* (1547), Preface (CR VII. 365 ff.), and often elsewhere.
- FT163 Thomas de Vio Caietanus, *De divina institutione pontificatus Romani pontifici* (1522), chapter 2, interpreting “Thou art Peter” (Matthew 16:18). “*Tu es Petrus, tu, non vos, ut unitas fundamenti ecclesiae, unitas quoque personalis, intelligatur*” (CC 10. 12; cf. ch. 5, p. 43);

Cochlaeus, *Philippicae quatuor* (1534) IV. 35; Latomus, *Adversus 31. Bucerum . . . altera defensio* (1544) (CC 8. 73, 154 f.).

FT164 Eck, *De primatu Petri* (1520) II. 27, fo. 30a.

FT165 Cf. IV. 20. 8. Jerusalem was “*in medio terrae*” in the thought of the medieval church. See G. H. T. Kimble, *Geography in the Middle Ages*, p. 186: “the occupation by Jerusalem of an orbo-centric position on world maps.” This view was still held by Eugene Roger, author of *La Terre Sainte*, 1664; Kimble, *op. cit.*, pp. 89 ff., note 5.

FT166 Leo I, in a strong letter on papal authority, observes: “To Peter more especially was entrusted the care of feeding the sheep,” letter 10. 1 (MPL 54. 630; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 9). Cf. “to Peter, principally,” in Leo’s *Sermons* 63. 6 (MPL 54. 356 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 177). Cf. Cochlaeus, *De auctoritate ecclesiae et scripture* (1524) I. 3, fo. B 3a. The Decrees of the Vatican Council (1870) state that the jurisdiction of chief pastor was bestowed “on Simon Peter alone” in John 21:15-17 (Schaff, *Creeds* II. 259). Cf. *Profession of Faith of the Council of Trent* (1564) x (Schaff, *Creeds* II. 209).

FT167 III. 4. 20.

FT168 IV. 11. 1-2.

FT169 The translation of this sentence is indebted to VG. See also IV. 11. 1, note 2. Variant statements on the power of the keys (Matthew 16:18-19) appear in Scholastic theology. Aquinas states that this power to open or close the gates of heaven is not restricted to Peter personally but was meant to spread out from him to others (*Contra gentes* 4. 72), and can be exercised by any authorized priest (*Quodlibeta* 19. 30) like the power to celebrate the Mass (*Summa Theol.* III. Suppl. 17. 2, note 1). Caietan, however, restricts the interpretation of the passage to the supreme pontiff alone: *De divina institutione pontificatus Romani pontificis* (1521) V (CC 10. 35 ff.). This passage, Matthew 16:19, is prominent in the Decrees of the Vatican Council (1870), First Dogmatic Constitution, chapter 1, chapter 4 (Schaff, *Creeds* II. 259, 268).

FT170 Leo I, *Sermons* 4. 3 (MPL 54. 151); Eck, *De primatu Petri* (1520) I. 3; I. 14; I. 33 (fo. 4b, 21a, 52b); De Castro, *Adversus haereses* XII (1543, fo. 180 D).

- FT171 Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* 4 (CSEL 3. 1. 212; tr. LCC V. 126).
- FT172 Augustine, *John's Gospel* l. 12; 11. 5; cxxiv. 5 (MPL 35. 1762 f., 1478. 1973 f.; tr. NPNF VII. 282, 78). The last statement is also in cxviii. 4 (MPL 35. 1949; tr. NPNF VII. 405) and in his *Sermons* ccxcv. 2 (MPL 38. 1349).
- FT173 cf. section 7, below.
- FT174 Reading “*quasi*” for “*quia*.” With this statement, cf. Augustine, *John's Gospel* cxxiv. 5: “*Petra enim erat Christus: super quod fundamentum ipse aedificatus est Petrus*” (MPL 35. 1975; tr. NPNF VII. 450); *Sermons* lxxvi. 1. 1 (MPL 38. 479; tr. LF *Sermons* I. 215); ccxliv. 1; cclxx. 2 (MPL 38. 1148, 1239); CCXCV. 1. 1: “*Unus pro multis dedit responsum . . . Christus petra, Petrus populus Christianus*” (MPL 38. 1348 f.). On the fluctuations of Augustine's interpretation of the passage, see P. Schaff, *History of the Christian Church* III. 306 ff. Cf. Luther, *The Papacy at Rome: An Answer to the Celebrated Romanist at Leipzig* (*Werke* WA VI. 306, 311; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* I. 369, 373).
- FT175 Cf. Luther, *Resolutio Lutheriana super propositione sua decima tertia de potestate papae* (1519) (*Werke* WA II. 189 ff., 248 f., 716); *Von dem Papsttum zu Rom* (*Werke* WA VI. 309 ff.); *De ministerio* (1523) (*Werke* WA XII. 179 f.; tr. *Luther's Works*, American Edition 40. 26 ff.).
- FT176 On Peter's primacy, see O. Culhmann, *Petrus, Junger—Apostel—Martyrer*; tr. F. Filson, *Peter: Disciple—Apostle—Martyr* Part I, chapter 3; Part II, chapter 1.
- FT177 “[Ὅν ἀγαθὸν πολυκοιρανίη]”: Homer, *Iliad* II. 204 (LCL edition, I. 64 f.). On “bees and cranes,” cf. Seneca, *On Clemency* I. 19. 2 (LCL *Moral Essays* I. 410 f.).
- FT178 Lucan, *Pharsalia* I. 92 f. (LCL Lucan, *Civil War*, pp. 8 f.).
- FT179 Eck, *De primatu Petri* I. 14, fo. 21a.
- FT180 Cf. section 1, note 2, above.
- FT181 Glichtove, *Antilutherus* II. 2, fo. 65ab. The VG text here may be rendered: “The comparison they make between the celestial and the

terrestrial hierarchy is frivolous, for of the celestial hierarchy we ought to know and feel only what is said in the Scripture.”

FT182 Fisher, *Assertionis Lutheranae confutatio*, pp. 422 f.

FT183 *Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals*, letter of Pope Marcellus to the bishops of Antioch. Marcellus is made to say to the bishops: “He to whom the Lord said, ‘Thou art Peter,’ . . . is the head of the whole church. For his see was originally in your midst, but at the Lord’s command it was transferred to Rome, in which by the help of divine grace we preside at this day.” (*Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae et Capitula Angilramni*, ed. P. Hinschius, p. 223.) Cf. Gratian, *Decretum* II. 24. 1. 15 (MPL 187. 1270; Friedberg I. 970).

FT184 Arguing in terms of the *Pandects* of Justinian 9:A. (ed. I. Baron, p. 33).

FT185 Cf. section 16, below. The Council of Constantinople (381) canon in gave to the bishop of Constantinople “the prerogative of honor after the bishop of Rome,” on the ground that “Constantinople is new Rome.” The Council of Chalcedon (451) canon 28 explains this decision in the words: “For the fathers rightly granted privileges to the throne of the elder Rome because that city was the capital” (Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 190 f.; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 354, 521). Both Constantinople canon 3 and Chalcedon canon 28 were rejected by Rome. Cf. H. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Canons*, pp. 65 ff., 125 ff., and IV. 7. 15, note 36.

FT186 Gregory I, *Letters* VII. 37 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 485; MPL 77. 899; tr. NPNF [letter 40] 2 ser. XII. 2. 229); *Liber Pontificalis*, ed. L. M. O. Duchesne, I. 118; tr. L. R. Loomis, *The Book of the Popes*, p. 4.

FT187 O. Cullmann, *Peter: Disciple—Apostle—Martyr*, German edition, pp. 37 f., 82 ff.; English edition, pp. 113, 231 f. Cullmann would confine Peter’s presence in Rome to a very short period.

FT188 The chronology and sequence of the first-century bishops of Rome still present difficulties. Irenaeus states that Peter and Paul founded the Roman Church and entrusted the episcopate to Linus, and that after him came two bishops named Anacletus before Clement. *Against Heresies* III. 3. 3 (MPG 7. 848; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, p. 113).

- FT189 Augustine, *Letters* 36. 21 (MPL 33. 145 f.; tr. FC 12. 156). The citation “Epist. 2 ad Januar.” in the 1559 edition is in error. The Simon Magus of Acts 8:5-24 was confused with the later Simon of Gitta and became a legendary figure, engaging in controversy with Peter, performing fantastic miracles, and voicing extravagant Gnostic doctrines.
- FT190 Racial peculiarities are not elsewhere recognized in the *Institutes*. The preceding sentences are indebted to Augustine, *Letters* 43. 7; 209. 8, 9 (MPL 33. 163, 955 f.; tr. FC 12. 187).
- FT191 Jerome, *Letters* cxxv. 15 (CSEL 56. 133; tr. NPNF 2 ser. III. 249). The name “Nepotian” should be “Rusticus,” a monk.
- FT192 Cyprian, *On the Unity of the Catholic Church* 3, 5, 6 (CSEL 3. 1:212, 214; tr. LCC V. 125-128).

CHAPTER 7

- FT193 Council of Nicaea (325) canon 6 (Mansi II. 670 f.; Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 124 f.; tr. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Canons*, pp. 29 ff.). “Julius” is an error: the pope was Silvester I (314-335). E. Giles, *Documents Illustrating Papal Authority, A.D. 96-454*, can be usefully consulted for a number of documents involved in the argument of this chapter.
- FT194 Sozomen lists, before the Roman delegates, the bishops of Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria: *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 17; Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* II. 10 (MPL 69. 920 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 253). Calvin’s argument is illustrated by the words of a Roman Catholic scholar: After Miltiades, the long episcopate of Silvester was “the emptiest of the century.” “By the will of the prince, and perhaps through the weakness of the pontiff, the Roman Church remained outside the events of Christendom; his legates sat indeed in the great councils, at Aries in 314 and later at Nicaea, but without playing a noteworthy part, much less a decisive role.” J. R. Palanque, *et al.*, *The Church in the Christian Roman Empire*; tr. E. C. Messenger, p. 30.
- FT195 Calvin erroneously supposes that Athanasius presided at the Council of Nicaea. The only known presiding officer was Hosius, bishop of

Cordova (d. 356), whose name leads the signers of the canons (Mansi II. 692).

- FT196** The reference is to the Third Ecumenical Council, that of Ephesus, 431 (Mansi IV. 1279 ff.; cf. NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 193, 223, 227).
- FT197** The “robber synod” of Ephesus, 449 (Mansi VI. 587; Ayer, *Source Book*, p. 511; B. J. Kidd, *History of the Christian Church to 461* III. 285-310). Two letters of Leo I, written to the synod but suppressed in it by Dioscorus of Alexandria (cf. IV. 7. 15), who presided, are of special interest here: Leo I, *Letters* xxviii (the so-called Tome of Leo); 23 (MPL 54. 755-782, 797-800; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 38-43, 46 f.; XIV. 254; cf. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 515 f.).
- FT198** Although Leo’s delegates to the Synod of Ephesus (449) sat with the others, they “stoutly protested” the decisions, and one of them, the deacon Hilary, made his escape to avoid being forced to sign them. See Leo I, *Letters* xliii, xlv (MPL 54. 821-832; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 52-54). Eutyches, who taught a doctrine of the absorption of the human in the divine nature of Christ, was acquitted in this disorderly synod, but his view was to be soundly condemned at Chalcedon, 451.
- FT199** Leo I, *Letters* xcvi, l; ciii; cvi. 3; lxxxix (MPL 54. 951 f., 988, 1005, 921; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 72, 78; letter ciii not in NPNF or FC; letter lxxxix tr. in FC 34. 162 f.; cvi tr. in FC 34. 182-188).
- FT200** The Council of Constantinople referred to is that of 553, during which Pope Vigilius made, under stress, concessions to the Monophysites: Mansi IX. 181, 367, 655; MPL 69. 67 f., 143, 147; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 544, 547 ff. At the Council of Aquileia (381) “only Spain and Rome were not represented”: H. Burn-Murdoch, *The Development of the Papacy*, p. 184. On Ambrose in this connection, see his *Letters* li (MPL 16. 1209-1214; tr. NPNF 2 sermon 10. 450-453; FC 26 [as no. 3]. 20-26. The letter was written from Aquileia. See also B. J. Kidd, *History of the Christian Church* II. 361 ff.
- FT201** Cyprian, *Letters* lxviii, l; 44. 1; 45. 1; xlvii; xlviii, l; lxxii. 3; lxxv. 3, 17, 25 (CSEL 3. 2. 724, 597, 599, 605 f., 777, 817, 821, 826; tr. ANF [letters are 56. 1; 40. 1; 42. 1; 44. 1; lxxi. 3; 54. 3, 17, 25] V. 367 f., 319 f., 321, 322, 379, 390, 394, 396).

- FT202 Jerome, *Letters* cxlvi, 1, 2 (CSEL 56. 310 f.; tr. LCC V. 386 f.): “*Si auctoritas quaeritur orbis maior est urbe.*” Calvin has altered the order of Jerome’s sentence, but not the meaning. It had been utilized in altered form by John of Paris in support of the authority of councils over that of popes: “*Et quod orbis maior est urbe et papa, concilium maius est papa solo.*” *De papali et regia potestate* (1302) (M. Goldast, *Monarchia seu Romani imperii* II. 339). Cf. McNeill, “The Emergence of Conciliarism,” in E. N. Anderson and J. L. Cate, *Medieval and Bibliographical Essays in Honor of James Westphal Thompson*, p. 294, note 63. Cf. Luther, “The Holy Church is not bound to Rome, but is as wide as the world”: *Answer to the Celebrated Romanist at Leipzig* (*Werke* WA VI. 300; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* I. 361).
- FT203 Cf. IV. 7. 17, 21 f. Calvin bases the first part of section 4 on letters of Gregory I, with some use of letters of Leo I: Gregory I, *Letters* V. 37, 39, 41, 44, 45 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 322, 327, 332, 341, 344; MPL [the nos. are V. 20, 21, 43, 18, 19, respectively] 77. 745, 749, 771, 740, 743; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 170, 171, 179, 166, 169); VII. 24, 30 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 469, 477 f.; MPL [nos. 27, 33] 77. 883, 89.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 222, 225 f.); IX. 156 (MGH *Epistolae* II. 157 (MPL [no. 148] 77. 1004; not in NPNF); Leo I, *Letters* civ. 2; cv. 2; c. 3; ci. 4, 5 (MPL 54. 993, 998 f., 972, 979; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 75, 76 f.; last two not in NPNF or FC 34). (At the second mention of Anastasius, the Latin text has “*Alexandrino*” by error for *Antioceno* [OS V. 107].)
- FT204 IV. 11. 10-15. An example of the modern assertion that the claim of supreme jurisdiction was made by the popes of the fourth to the sixth century is found in Dom J. Chapman, *Studies in the Early Papacy*, chapters 5-8.
- FT205 Cf. B. J. Kidd, *History of the Christian Church* II. 298 ff.
- FT206 The Second Synod of Milevis (beside Carthage), by Smits (II. 276) dated 416, canon 22 (Mansi IV. 332; Hefele-Leclercq II. 1.125); Gratian, *Decretum* II. ff. 6. 35 (MPL 187. 633; Friedberg I. 479; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XIV [canon 28]. 456 [canon cxxv]. 502).
- FT207 These are treated, however, in the order of the first, fourth, second, and third.

- FT208 Gregory I, *Letters* III. 29 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 186 f.; MPL 77. 627; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 129). Later Gregory sends Constantine “a pallium to be worn at the sacred rite of the Mass”: *Letters* IV. 1 (MPL 77. 679; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 144); see also *Letters* I. 25; VII. 5; I. 24 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 38 f., 447, 28; MPL 77. 479 f., 858 f., 468 ff. [I. 26; VII. 4; I. 25, respectively]; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 80 gf. [VII. 5 not given]).
- FT209 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* V. 24. 11 ff. (GCS 9. 494 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. I. 243 f.).
- FT210 Cyprian, *Letters* lxxviii; lxxiv. 1, 3, 4, 7, 8 (CSEL 3. 2. 746, 799, 801 f., 805; tr. ANF [letters lxvi and lxxiii, respectively] V. 368, 386 ff.). In letter lxxiv. 8 (lxxiii. 8), Cyprian calls Pope Stephen “a friend of heretics and an enemy of Christians.”
- FT211 Eusebius states that Constantine “convoked the general council”: *Life of Constantine* III. 6 (GCS 7. 79; tr. NPNF 2 ser. I. 521). Cf. Leo I, *Letters* cliv. 3, to the emperor: “All the bishops entreat Your Benevolence with groans and tears to order the holding of a general council in Italy” (MPL 54. 829; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 54; FC 34. 125).
- FT212 Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 2. 8, 15, 3 Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* IV. 9 (MPL 69. 960, 964; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 38, 42).
- FT213 Cf. section 5, notes 22 and 24, above. Leo I, in *Letters* 10. 2, rebukes the bishops of the province of Vienne for failing to observe “the old usage” in matters of appeal (MPL 54. 630; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 9; FC 34. 38). The medieval phase of the Gallican movement, and especially the resistance of the French government and bishops to papal authority in the time of Philip IV and Boniface VIII (ca. 2296-2303), may also have been in Calvin’s mind.
- FT214 Second Synod of Milevis canon 22. Cf. section 5, note 24, above (Mansi IV. 332 f.). Cf. the letter of the African Council (429) to Boniface I (Mansi III. 830 ff.). The Synod of Sardica (344) canons 3, 5, authorized appeals to “our beloved brother and fellow bishop Julius” of Rome. These canons were represented by popes Zosimus (417-418) and Leo I (440-461) as canons of the Ecumenical Council of Nicaea. Cf. H. Burn-Murdoch, *The Development of the Papacy*, pp. 258-263; NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 423; Hefele-Leclercq II. 1. 763 f., 769 f.

The repudiation of the papal claim was given in 424 by an African council in a letter to Pope Celestine I (Mansi IV. 525 f.).

- FT215 The Latin text contains here the bracketed words: “*Haec habentur I volum. conc.*” By “the first volume of the councils,” Calvin doubtless alludes to the collection of Peter Crabbe, a Franciscan who (revising a work of J. Merlin) edited *Concilia omnia . . . ab apostolorum temporibus in hunc usque diem . . .* 2 vols. Cologne, 1538 (copy in the Library of Congress). The Forged Decretals occupy I. 13-213. The passage here referred to is in I, fo. 571. Cf. P. Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, p. 703.
- FT216 Gratian, *Decretum* II. 2. 6. 35, with the note appended by Gratian: “*Nisi forte Romanam sedem appellaverint.*” (MPL 187. 633; Friedberg I. 479.)
- FT217 Augustine, *De unico baptismo* 16. 18 (MPL 43. 610 f.); *Breviculus collationis cure Donatistis* III. 12. 24 (MPL 43. 637); *Letters* 43. 2, 4; lxxxviii. 3; cv. 2, 8; 53. 2, 5 (MPL 33. 161, 303, 399, 198; tr. FC 12. 184, 186; FC 18. 24, 201 f.; FC 12. 247 ff.). The appeal was really to the Council of Arles rather than to the bishop.
- FT218 For the beginnings of the Donatist schism and the Council of Arles (314), see Burn-Murdoch, *Development of the Papacy*, pp. 194 ff.; Palanque, *et al.*, *The Church in the Christian Roman Empire*, pp. 30-33; W. H. C. Frend, *The Donatist Church*, chapter 11, pp. 141-159. Palanque calls Arles “a striking example of the effacement of the papacy” (p. 30). Melchiades (or Miltiades) was Roman pontiff 310-314.
- FT219 The fraudulent decretals attributed to early popes in the ninth-century Pseudo-Isidorian collection (cf. section 9, note 23, above) were cited as genuine in Gratian’s *Decretum*. For Anacletus (ca. 79-91), *Epistle* 3. 33, see *Decretum* I. 22. 2 (MPL 187. 224; Friedberg I. 74); Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, p. 83. Though rejected by Erasmus, George Cassander, and other scholars, the collection was defended by Eck, *De pirrnatu Petri contra Ludderum* (1526), and (against the *Magdeburg Centuries*) by the Jesuit Francisco Torres (1572). The devastating reply to Torres by the Huguenot scholar D. Blondel (1620) closed the controversy, although “*Febronius*” (Nicholas von Hontheim), in his *De statu ecclesiae* (1763), felt it still

necessary to urge the abandonment of claims based on these forged documents. Cf. T. G. Jalland, *The Church and the Papacy*, pp. 376 ff., 469 f. The derisive expression *fumos vendere*, “to sell smoke,” is used by Plautus, *Mostellaria* IV. 2. 10 (LCL Plautus III. 380 f.). Cf. IV. 16. 11.

FT220 Based on Leo I’s *Letters* 14. 1; 10. 9; 15. 17; 14. 2; 13. 1 (MPL 54. 668, 636, 692, 672, 664; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 16, 22, 25, 27; FC 34-58 f., 46 f.). The editor of FC 34, E. Hunt, regards no. 15 (MPL 54. 692) as spurious (p. 67).

FT221 Gregory I, *Letters* III. 29; II. 50; IX. 27 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 187, 156; II. 60 f.; MPL 77. 627, 588 [II. 47], 996 [IX. 59]; the first two of these are tr. in NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 129, 115).

FT222 Gregory I, *Letters* II. 1; 1. 16; 1. 5; 1. 7; 1. 25 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 155, 17, 5, 9, 38; MPL 77. 596 [II. 52], 462 f., 448, 453, 479 [I. 36]).

FT223 Cf. section 4, above.

FT224 Gratian, *Decretum* I. lxxx. 1, 2, from Pseudo-Isidore (MPL 187. 383f.; Friedberg I. 279 f.). See also Hinschius, *op. cit.*, pp. 39, 185.

FT225 Council of Turin (400 canon 1 (Mansi III. 880; Hefele-Leclercq II. 1:133 f.).

FT226 Innocent I, *Letters* 24. 1 (MPL 20. 547 f.).

FT227 Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 5. 8, in Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* IX. 13 (MPL 69. 1129; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 121; see note 7); Gratian, *Decretum* I. 22. 3 (MPL 187. 124 f.; Friedberg I. 75), from Council of Constantinople (380 canon 3 (Mansi III. 559; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 178). Cf. H. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Canons*, pp. 65 ff.

FT228 Cf. IV. 6. 13, note 24. For Leo’s protests against canon 28 of the Council of Chalcedon (451), see his *Letters* civ. 2-4; cv. 4 (MPL 54. 993, 995, 1000; tr. FC 34. 179 ff.; NPNF 2 ser. XII. 1. 287-290, notes and “Excursus on the History”); cf. Schroeder, *op. cit.*, pp. 126 f.

FT229 Gregory I was bitterly offended when John the Faster, patriarch of Constantinople, began (588) to style himself “Ecumenical Patriarch,” although this title had been used earlier in imperial state documents. See Gregory’s *Letters* V. 37, 39, 41, 44, 45, cited section 4, note 11, above, and VIII. 29, to Eulogius of Alexandria (MGH *Epistolae* II. 31;

MPL [VIII. 30] 77. 933). On the whole controversy, see F. H. Dudden, *Gregory the Great: His Place in History and Thought* II. 201-237; E. Caspar, *Geschichte des Papsttums* II. 452-456.

FT230 Calvin, in this section, comments on two centuries of church history. He apparently regards the agreement between Pepin the Short and Pope Zachary (75Q (cf. O. J. Thatcher and E. McNeal, *Source Book for Medieval History*, pp. 102 ff.) as marking the beginning of an era in papal temporal power. Cf. G. Kriiger, *Das Papsttum: Seine Idee und ihre Triiger*, 2d edition, chapter 4, "Der Pakt mit den Franken," esp. pp. 35 ff. (this work translated from the first edition, *The Papacy: The Idea and Its Exponents*). Calvin's reference to the Paris archives may represent information given him by his friend John Sleidan, the historian (1506-1556), who had spent years in Paris. Sleidan's *De quatuor summis imperiis* remained unpublished until 1559. A history of the papacy widely read and certainly used by Calvin was that of Bartholomew Platyna (Platina), *De vita Christi et omnium pontificum* (1479), a work more readable than reliable, on the whole favorable to the popes but with barbed allusions to contemporary abuses (tr. *Lives of the Popes*, London, 1605). Platyna admires Pope Zachary and extols Gregory VII as "a man beloved of God, prudent, just, and merciful," but has only vituperation for Paul II (d. 1471). Barth and Niesel suggest also (OS V. 120) that Calvin may have used the *Vitae Rornanorum pontificum* of Robert Barnes. Cf. IV. XL 13, note 23.

FT231 Bernard, *De consiaeratione* I. 4. 5; 10. 13; IV. 2. 4, 5; IV. 4. 77; III. 2. 6-12; III. 4. 14 (MPL 182. 732, 740 f., 774 f., 780, 761-764, 766; tr. G. Lewis, *Bernard on Consideration*, pp. 20, 32, 84, 109, 101 f., 75-82, 85).

FT232 IV. 11. 8-14.

FT233 Gratian, *Decretum* I. 12. 2; 22. 2; II. 24. 1. 15 (MPL 187. 62, 128 f., 1270; Friedberg I. 27, 73, 970).

FT234 Calvin takes these typical phrases to describe papal authority from Gratian's *Decretum*. The numerous references are in OS V. 122 f. Gratian's source for the last statement, however, is the Forged Decretals. Innumerable utterances of this sort emanated from Gregory VII and certain of the thirteenth-century popes. Cf. Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*, nos. 250, 255, 271 f., 299 f., 309; Thatcher

and McNeal, *Source Book*, pp. 142, 144, 156, 208, 214, 219 ff., 311. 357; E. Emerton, *The Correspondence of Gregory VII*, pp. 124, 126, 151 f., 163, 166-175. The sentence of Gregory VII (addressed to Peter and hence to the pope), “You are able also on earth to grant and to take away . . . empires, kingdoms, principalities, dukedoms . . . and the property of all man” (Emerton, page 52), is quoted with approval by Platyna (English edition, page 214).

FT235 Forged letter ascribed to Athanasius: “Anastasius” is Gratian’s error, followed by Calvin: Gratian, *Decretum* II. 9. 3, 12, from Pseudo-Isidore, *Epistola Athanasii*, chapter 4 (MPL 187. 798; Friedberg I. 610; Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, p. 480).

FT236 The papal claim of infallibility is strongly asserted in the *Dictatus Papae*, a papal document usually attributed to Hildebrand, but possibly to be dated a few years later than his death (1085). One of its propositions is: “The Roman Church has never erred and according to the witness of Holy Scripture [cf. Luke 22:31 f.] will never err to all eternity” (from Gregory VII, *Registrum* II. 55a, no. 22; MGH *Epistolae selectae*, ed. E. Caspar (1923), II. 207; tr. O. J. Thatcher and E. McNeal, *Source Book for Medieval History*, p. 138). The sources for this and the following section are cited in detail in OS V. 124 f. On the authority of popes, cf. LCC XIV. 28, 115-126. Cf. IV. 11. 13.

FT237 *Sententiae episcoporum de haereticis baptizandis*, Council of Carthage under Cyprian (256): CSEL 3. 1. 436; Council of Carthage (397) canon 26 (Mansi III. 884); Augustine, *On Baptism* III. 3. 5 (MPL 43. 141 f.; tr. NPNF IV. 437). The opening sentences of this section constitute one of the best examples of Calvin’s use of preterition, the figure of speech by which allusion is briefly made to matters on which silence is professed.

FT238 Gregory I, *Letters* V. 54 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 340; MPL [V. 18] 77. 739; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 16 ff.); *Letters* VIII. 29 (MGH *Epistolae* II. 31; MPL [VIII. 30] 77. 933; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 241).

FT239 Gregory I, *Letters* I. 5, 7, 25, 24 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 5 f., 9, 38, 35; MPL [nos. of last two, I. 27; I. 25, respectively] 77. 448, 455, 480, 476; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 75, 77, 85).

FT240 “*Labyrinthus*.” Cf. I. 5.12, note 36.

FT241 Cf. section 18, note 39, above.

FT242 This telling comparison has implications for Calvin's political thought; cf. IV. 11. 5; IV. 20. 8.

FT243 IV. 3. 6-8.

FT244 Referring to Leo X (1513-1521), Clement VII (1523-1534), and Paul III (1534-1549). Calvin wrote this in 1543.

FT245 Cf. IV. 2. 12, note 16.

FT246 Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History* III. 5. 3 (GCS 9. 1. 196; MPG 20. 223; tr. NPNF a ser. I. 138).

FT247 "*In illo . . . magisterio.*" VG has the variant: "*en cette boutique*," "shop," or "trading place."

FT248 Julius II (1503-1513). Cf. Sec. 23 note 51, above.

FT249 In 1537, Erasmus wrote to Augustinus Steuchus Eugubinus of Bologna, the author of *On Behalf of the Christian Religion Against the Lutherans* (1530): "It may be that in Germany there are those who do not shrink from blasphemies against God; but they are corrected with the severest penalties. But at Rome I have heard with these ears some who raged in abominable blasphemies against Christ and his apostles, in my presence and that of many, and that with impunity." (H. M. Allen and H. W. Garrod, *Opus epistolarum Des. Erasmi Roterodami* IX, p. 218.) Cf. Beveridge, *Institutes* II. 385, note 1. Steuchus later (1547) attempted to reply to Valla's exposure of the Donation of Constantine.

FT250 John Gerson, *Sermon on the Feast of Easter* (*Opera Gersoni*, ed. L. E. Du Pin, III. 1205). Cf. Calvin, *Psychopannychia*, Preface (CR V. 171; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* I. 415); *Brieve instruction contre les erreurs de la secte commune des Anabaptistes* (CR VII. 127).

FT251 Calvin is caustic, but it is noteworthy that he does not dwell here on details of the degradation of the unreformed papacy and omits reference to some of its worst features: the name of Alexander VI is not mentioned.

FT252 Gregory I, *Letters* I. 15, 77, 79; II. 12, 37; III. 13, 14 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 16, 97 ff., 110, 133, 172 f.; MPL 77. 461, note e; 531; 533, note h;

575; 614 f.; tr. (2d, 4th, and 5th only) NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 99 f., 103, 111).

FT253 Augustine, *Letters* lxxxii. 4. 33 (MPL 33. 290; CSEL 34. 2. 385; tr. FC 12. 4,8).

FT254 Council of Carthage (4,8) (Mansi III. 699); cf. section 9, note 22, above.

CHAPTER 7

FT255 Gregory, *Letters* V. 57a, 58, 62, 63; VI. 7 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 365, 369, 377, 379, 386; MPL 77. 790, 793, 799; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2 [3d and last citations only]. 187, 191).

CHAPTER 8

FT256 In IV. 11. 1, jurisdiction is called the third and principal part of ecclesiastical power.

FT257 In IV. 10, the legislative power is treated as the second part of ecclesiastical power. On Reformed conceptions of church power, as viewed from the standpoint of Scottish Free-Church Presbyterianism of the nineteenth century, the extended study of J. Bannerman, *The Church of Christ* (Edinburgh, 1868), Volume 1, is still useful. Part 2 of Volume 1 is entitled “Power of the Church” (I. 187-275); Part 3, Division 1, treats of church power as respects doctrine (*potestas* [δογματική]) (I. 276-334). Fr. Turretin gives a typical Reformed definition of the *potestas*, [δογματική], [διατακτική], and [διακριτική], the power of the church to declare its faith, to make laws and constitutions, and to exercise discipline: *Institutio theologiae elencticae* (Geneva, 1680-1683 and later editions), Part 3, Book 18, qu. 29. Cf. the United Church of Canada, *Statement Concerning Ordination to the Ministry*, pp. 46-50.

FT258 VG: *Dieu*. Latin has verb only.

FT259 Cf. I. 6. 2.

FT260 In quoting the psalms, Calvin habitually refers to their presumed author, David, as “the Prophet.”

FT261 Gf. II. 11. 4-6, 11, 14.

FT262 Cf. H. Quistorp, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Last Things*, pp. 158 ff., 177 ff., 181 ff.

FT263 “*Verba quodammodo dictante Christi Spiritu.*” The adverb is, however, a deliberate qualification, discounting any doctrine of exact verbal inspiration. The context has reference to teaching, not words merely, showing that Calvin’s point is not verbal inerrancy, but the authoritative message of Scripture.

FT264 IV. 3. 5-8.

FT265 “*Certi et authentici Spiritus sancti amanuenses.*” This passage has been held to support the view that Calvin’s doctrine of the inspiration of Scripture was one of verbal inerrancy. Yet he has no explicit support of such a view anywhere else, and here he immediately makes it clear that his interest is in the teaching rather than in the form of expression. The statement is prelude to the warning against “any new dogma.” See L. Goumaz, *La Doctrine du salut d’après les commentaires de Jean Calvin sur le Nouveau Testament*, pp. 110-117; H. Clavier, *Etudes sur le Calvinisme*, pp. 26, 81 f.; E. A. Dowey, *The Knowledge of God in Calvin’s Theology*, pp. 90 ff.; W. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 31-36; J. K. S. Reid, *The Authority of Scripture*, pp. 44, 53 ff.; J. T. McNeill, “The Significance of the Word of God for Calvin,” *Church History* XXVIII (1959), 140-145.

FT266 Cf. IV. 9. 1, note 1. The conception that rightly constituted general councils of the church are inerrant is extremely uncommon even among the ardent conciliarists. See the passages cited by J. c. L. Gieseler, *A Text-Book of Church History*, tr. H. B. Smith, III. 322, note 6. Marsilius of Padua is credited with this view by his editor, A. Gewirth (*Marsilius of Padua, The Defender of Peace* I. 357), but the text adduced (II. 19. 2-4) leaves a somewhat ambiguous impression. Certainly he affirms the presence of the Holy Spirit in the general council, but the “infallible deduction” of which he speaks seems to be a deduction from Scripture not explicitly by a council *op. cit.*, II. 274 f.). The emphasis is rather on the superiority of councils to popes. This

position is declared, without the claim of infallibility, in the celebrated decree *Sacrosancta*, of the Council of Constance, April 6, 1415, reaffirmed by the Council of Basel, February 15, 1432. But Dietrich of Niem (1410) goes so far as to say that the decisions of a general council are “immutable” (LCC XIV. 160). Cf. A. C. Flick, *The Decline of the Medieval Church* I. 375; II. 5, 49 f., 53. On the authority of councils, see also B. Tierney’s penetrating study, *Foundations of the Conciliar Theory*, esp. chapter 2, “Pope and General Council.” In the sixteenth century, Silvester Prierias, in his *Dialogue on Papal Power* (1517), asserts that a (papal) council, *faciens quod in se est*, cannot err (Kidd, *Documents*, p. 31). J. Clichtove, in a chapter “*De conciliorum generalium indeviabilitate*,” states that the infallibility of a general council depends not on the pope but on the divine assistance, the Holy Spirit’s presence, and the promise of Christ: *Compendium . . . veritatum . . . contra erroneas Lutheranorum assertiones* (1529), fo. 126. Eck holds a like view (*Enchiridion*, chapter 1); cf. IV. 9. 1; IV. 9. 11, note 17. J. Latomus states that “the supreme authority of the church is in ecumenical councils”: *A dversus M. Bucerum . . . altera plenaque defensio* (1545).

FT267 Cochlaeus, *De auctoritate ecclesiae* . . . (1524) I. 6, fo. D 1a.

FT268 Clichtove, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*, and *Antilutherus* I. 10, fo. 22b; I. 14, fo. 311; Eck, *Enchiridion*, chapter 1. “Advocate” here is in Calvin’s text “*Paracletum*.”

FT269 Calvin’s view of the daily progress in holiness of the true visible church is carefully stated here and set over against historical sectarian perfectionism. Cf. Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* III. 3 (MPL 43. 95 ff.; CSEL 51. 121).

FT270 Cf. IV. 1. 10; IV. 2. 1.

FT271 Cochlaeus, *De auctoritate ecclesiae* (1524) I. v, fo. C 1b; I. 6, fo. C 3b; De Castro, *Adversus haereses* I (1543, fo. 8 B-10 G).

FT272 Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Sermo de sancto Spiritu* 10 (MPG 52. 824).

FT273 Cochlaeus, *op. cit.*, I. 4, fo. B 4a; I. 8, fo. E 2a; Eck, *Enchiridion* (1535), fo. 21ab.

FT274 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* xcvi. 2 (MPL 35. 1874; tr. NPNF VII. 372).

- FT275 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* I. 11, fo. 23a; Cochlaeus, *De autoritate ecclesiae* I. 3, fo. B 4a; I. 5, fo. C 2b.
- FT276 Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), chapter 2, fo. 7ab.
- FT277 IV. 16.
- FT278 Cochlaeus, *De autoritate ecclesiae* I. 4, fo. B 4a.
- FT279 Cf. I. 13. 5.
- FT280 “*Nativum Scripturae sensum simpliciter enarrant.*” Calvin insists on a straightforward interpretation of Scripture, but this may call for the use of nonscriptural terms. Cf. II. 5. 19, note 39.
- FT281 Vg: *sensum numinis*; VG: *la volonte de Dieu*.
- FT282 Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 7, ed. T. Gaisford, p. 40; Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* II. 5 (MPL 69. 925; tr. NPNF 2 ser. III. 44 ff.). In passages taken from a homily of Eustathius, bishop of Antioch, and from a letter of Athanasius describing the arguments at the Council of Nicaea (325), Athanasius indicates that Scriptural arguments were used to confute the opposition to the homoousion. Cf. Calvin’s defense of the word “Person” in I. 13. 3.
- FT283 Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History*, *loc. cit.*

CHAPTER 9

- FT284 Calvin shows by many citations his veneration for the ancient councils and his acquiescence in their doctrinal decisions “so far as they agree with the rule of the Word.” Cf. *Reply to Sadoleto* (CK V. 415; tr. LCC XXII. 255); McNeill, *Unitive Protestantism*, chapter 3, section 4, “The Conciliarism of Calvin.”
- FT285 Section 9, below. On Calvin’s sources for the councils, cf. IV. 7. 9, note 23.
- FT286 The pastor’s duty to teach *ex ore Domini* (Malachi 2:7) is here called a *pactum*, “covenant,” or “contract.”
- FT287 Eck, *Enchiridion*, chapter 2 (1533 ed., fo. 7b).

- FT288 The citation of Jeremiah chapter 40, is erroneous. Cadier thinks Jeremiah chapter 44, is meant: *Institution* IV. 159; but see also Jeremiah 10:21; 22:22; 25:34-36.
- FT289 “*Episcopos*.” Cf. IV. 3. 8, note 8, and Comm. Acts 10:18: “Paul calls all the elders [*presbuteros*] by this name.”
- FT290 Augustine, *Against Maximin the Arian* II. 14. 3 (MPL 42. 772). The Council of Ariminum (359), after discussions with Arius at Nice in Thrace, attempted, in the so-called Dated Creed, a compromise in the Arian controversy. Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 2. 16 (MPG 82. 1049; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 318 f.). Its noncommittal statement that “the Son is like the Father” was not acceptable to the Athanasian party.
- FT291 Calvin names with full approval (as faithful to Scripture) the four general councils commonly held of special authority, e.g., by Anglican writers such as Jewel and Hooker. This passage is of 1543, earlier than Bullinger’s *Decades* (1550). The latter work is introduced by a statement on the four general synods, giving their essential definitions, with supporting patristic documents. The *Decades* became highly influential in England, especially after its authorization as required reading for the clergy by a convocation under Archbishop Whitgift, 1586. Jewel was a disciple of Bullinger.
- FT292 The date of the closing sentence of this section is 1543. Calvin may have had in mind data given in Peter Crabbe’s *Concilia omnia*, a work also used by Luther in his German treatise *On the Councils and Churches*. Calvin may also have known something of the contents of this vigorous and critical treatise of Luther: it appeared while he was in Strasbourg, 1539. (*Werke* WA L. 509-653; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* V. 131-300.)
- FT293 The Iconoclastic Council referred to was held not under the Emperor Leo III but under Constantine V (754). Images were again approved by the Second Council of Nicaea (787), held under the Empress Irene (Mansi XIII. 215, 377-400; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 572 f.; Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 694-697; H. Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, p. 130). For the period, E. J. Martin, *A History of the Iconoclastic Controversy*, may be consulted; see esp. pp. 45, 89-105. Cf. I. 11. 14, note 27.

- FT294 Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 113. 2. 5 (MPL 37. 1484; tr. LF *Psalms* [Psalm 115] V. 287 f.).
- FT295 Epiphanius, *Letter to John of Jerusalem* (394) in Jerome, *Letters* 51. 9 (CSEL 54. 411; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 89); Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 113. 2. 3-6 (MPL 37. 1483 f.; tr. LF *Psalms* [Psalm 114] V. 90 f.).
- FT296 I. 11. 14-16.
- FT297 Cf. IV. 7. 1, note 5; IV. 7. 2.
- FT298 Theodoret tells us that Constantine was handed a packet of the mutual accusations of the bishops, and that he had these sealed and kept, but later burned. *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 11 (ed. T. Gaisford, pp. 60 f.; MPG [chapter 10] 82. 937 f.; GCS 19. 47; tr. NPNF [letter 10] 2 ser. III. 48 f.).
- FT299 Leo I, *Letters* civ. 2-4, cv, cvi (MPL 54. 993 ff.; tr. FC 34. 178 ff., 182-188).
- FT300 Eck, *Enchiridion*, chapter 2 (1533 edition, fo. 9ab), quoting Augustine: local councils [*concilia particularia*] may err, and are corrected by general councils.
- FT301 “I never saw any good come of councils. So far from ending the mischief, they increase it”: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Letters* cxxx (MPG 37. 228); cf. Athanasius, *On the Councils* 1. 1-3 (MPG 26. 682-688; tr. NPNF 2 ser. IV. 451-467 f.); B. J. Kidd, *History of the Church to 461* II. 27, 293, 304.
- FT302 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1525), fo. 23b.
- FT303 Council of Constantinople (381) (Mansi III. 557 ff.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 172 f.). At the time of this council, the semi-Arian Macedonius was bishop of Constantinople; Eunomius, the leader of the Anomoeans (i.e., the party asserting the “unlikeness” of the Father and the Son), then held no episcopal see.
- FT304 Synod of Ephesus (449), dubbed by Leo I “the robber synod [*latrocinium*].” Cf. IV. 7. 1, notes 5 and 6. Under the leadership of Dioscorus of Alexandria, this synod approved the heretic Eutyches. Flavian of Constantinople was assaulted, and soon afterward died from his injuries. Calvin, observing that “the church was not there,” uses this tumultuous synod as evidence that not all councils may be trusted

in their interpretations of Scripture. He apparently used here Peter Crabbe's *Concilia omnia* I. 403 ff. Cf. IV. 7. 9, note 23. See Mansi VI. 587 ff.; Hefele-Leclercq II. 1. 584-621. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 511 ff., and Bettenson, *Documents*, pp. 68 ff., have some related materials.

FT305 Most of the legislation here disapproved by Calvin had been specifically defended by J. Clichtove in his painstaking *Compendium veritatum ad fidem pertinentium contra erroneas Lutheranorum assertiones* (Paris, 1529). Clichtove argues that some things are to be held firmly in the church that are not expressly contained in Holy Scripture (chapter 5); that the church has authority to enact laws which it is mortal sin to contravene (6), and to bind its subjects in matters not laid down in Scripture (7). These include fasts and foods (8), the celibacy of priests (9), monastic vows (10), and communion in one kind (11). He further defends (citing decretals and canons) clerical wealth, the seven sacraments, minor orders of clergy, the Mass, penance, purgatory, the honoring of saints, relics, and images. Here and in chapters 10-12, below, Calvin may have had this work in mind.

FT306 Council of Constance, session 13 (1415), "Definition of Communion in one kind [*sub una specie*]." (Mansi XXVII. 727.)

FT307 Council of Elvira (ca. 305) canon 33 (Mansi II. 11; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, p. 415); Pope Siricius, Letter to Himerius (385), ch. vii (MPL 13. 1138; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 415 f.); First Lateran Council (1123) canons in and xxi (Mansi XXI. 282; tr. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, pp. 180, 192 f.).

FT308 Book 1. 7; Book 1 8:9.

FT309 Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 8 (ed. T. Gaisford, p. 46; tr. [chapter 7] NPNF 2 ser. III. 45), quoting Athanasius who, in describing the discussions at Nicaea, implies that the Arians had no answer to John 10:30.

FT310 Jerome, *Preface to the Books of Samuel and Malachi* (MPL 28. 596 ff.); Cochlæus, *De autoritate ecclesiae et scripturae* I. 9, fo. E 4b; II. 1, fo. H 4a; 2. 2, fo. J 1a.

CHAPTER 10

FT311 Cf. IV. 8. 1, note 1.

FT312 III. 4. 17 f.

FT313 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1525) I. 10, fo. 22a; *Compendium veritatum*, chapter 6; cf. IV. 9. 24, note 12.

FT314 Above, this section.

FT315 III. 19. 7-9.

FT316 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1525) I. 15, fo. 31ab.

FT318 Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), chapter 7, fo. 40b.

FT319 “*Conscientiae forum*,” a term frequently used by Aquinas, e.g., *Summa Theol.* II IIae. lxxxix. 7, obj. 3; III. Suppl. 22:1, obj. 2. Cf. R. J. Deferrari and others, *A Lexicon of St. Thomas Aquinas*, s. 5: “*Forum conscientiae*”; cf. III. 19. 15, note 23. Calvin’s acute discussion of conscience in IV. 10. 3-5 (1550) is closely related to passages in III. 19. 1 (1559); 4 (1536); 14-16 (various dates).

FT320 “*Proximo capite*.” An uncorrected reference carried from the editions of 1543 and 1553, where this chapter on “Christian Freedom” (here III. 19) immediately preceded that “On Human Traditions” containing material of the present chapter.

FT321 The Latin words here rendered “conception,” “mind,” “understanding,” “to know,” and “knowledge” are respectively “*notitia*,” “*mens*, *intelligentia*,” “*scire*,” and “*scientia*.”

FT322 Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 5. 11. 41 (LCL Quintilian II. 294 f.). Cf. III. 19. 15, note 23.

FT323 “*Interrbigationem*,” rendered in VG *response*, the equivalent for the word [ἐπερώτημα] in 1 Peter 3:21. In his commentary on this passage (CR LV. 269), Calvin renders this word *examen*, but remarks, “*Primum interrogatio hic vice responsionis vel testimonii capitur*” (“interrogation” is here taken for “response,” or “testimony”). Vg. has “*interrogatio*”; KJV has “answer”; RSV reads “appeal to God for a clear conscience.” Cf. *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, tr. from W. Bauer’s *Greek-German Lexicon* by W. F. Arndt and F. W.

Gingrich, s. v. [ἐπερώτημα]; *The Interpreter's Bible* 12. 134. The translation is based on this evidence.

FT324 In the opening sentence of this section.

FT325 Referring to Romans chapter 13, and the beginning of section 3, above.

FT326 Cf. section 8, below.

FT327 II. 8. 5.

FT328 Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), chapter 7, fo. 40b.

FT329 IV. 5. 5-11.

FT330 Cf. IV. 9. 14, note 22.

FT331 Cf. section 6, above. On ecclesiastical constitutions (sections 8, 9, 14), cf. Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1525) I. 13; I. 29, fo. 21b-22b, 60b-62b; Eck, *Enchiridion* (1535), chapter 12, fo. 406 ff.; *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. "Constitutions Ecclesiastical." Note the exceptions to Calvin's condemnation of ecclesiastical constitutions, sections 29 and 30, below.

FT332 "[ἐθελοθησκείας]."

FT333 "*Nomothetas*." Calvin has transliterated the Greek work for "lawmakers": cf. James 5:12. The reference may be to the persecuting edicts of rulers, since the punishments referred to below in this section are like those mentioned in the Prefatory Address to the King, pp. 10 f., above.

FT334 Cf. Prefatory Address to the King, *loc. cit.*: esp. such phrases as "bloody sentences," "a thousand fires," "return safely to my native land."

FT335 Cf. II. 8. 33 f.; IV. 19. 26; Erasmus, *Enchiridion*, Fifth Rule (LCC XIV. 340, note 2).

FT336 Calvin shared with other Reformers the experience of disillusionment with the unreformed worship he had known in his youth.

FT337 Augustine, *Letters* 55. 19. 35 (MPL 33. 321; tr. FC 12. 290 f.). An octave is an appointed period of eight days of religious observance: the translation of VG has here "the octave of his baptism."

FT338 IV. 12. 22-27.

- FT339 Augustine, *Letters* 54. 1. 1 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 12. 252).
- FT340 Cf. I. 9. 3, note 3; IV. 14. 20, note 47.
- FT341 Cf. Comm. Acts 8:21; *On the Necessity of Reforming the Church*, *passim* (CR VI. 453-530; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* I. 140-183; LCC XXII. 184-216).
- FT342 Section 1, above.
- FT343 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1525) I. 10, fo. 22b. Many writers on the councils similarly argued for their authority from Acts, chapter 15; see e.g., John Major in LCC XIV. 178 f.
- FT344 IV. 2. 4.
- FT345 IV. 1. 3-6; *Reply to Sadoletto*, in the passage where the lay Christian testifies that the Reforming ministers “spoke nobly of the church” (CK V 412; tr. LCC XXII. 252).
- FT346 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1525) I. 4; I. 6, fo. 5 (with citation of Pseudo-Dionysius against Luther); I. 10, fo. 9, 12b, 21b.
- FT347 IV. 8. 8, 13, 14.
- FT348 “*Nec nare sciunt, nec literas*”; Plato, *Laws* III. 689 D.
- FT349 “[κακοξηλία].”
- FT350 Augustine, *Letters* 54. 1. 1 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 12. 252 f.). Cf. Vincent of Lorins, *Commonitorium* 2. 3 (tr. LCC IX. 38).
- FT351 Platyna, following the Forged Decretals and Gratian, attributes it to Alexander I (109-116) (English edition [1685], p. 16). Cf. Hinschius, *Decretales Pseudo-Isidorianae*, p. 99 (First Letter of Alexander, chapter 9); Gratian, *Decretum* III. 2:20 (Friedberg I. 1358; MPL 187. 1739).
- FT352 Augustine, *Letters* 55. 18. 33 (MPL 33-320; tr. FC 12. 289).
- FT353 Cf. IV. 10. 17, note 31.
- FT354 cf. I. 5. 13.
- FT355 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* I. 11, fo. 23b.
- FT356 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 46. 5, 6 (MPL 35. 1730; tr. NPNF VIII. 257 f.). The closing words were added in 1553.
- FT357 Cf. IV. 20. 2.

FT358 IV. 10. 1, above.

FT359 This section well expresses Calvin's basic ideas of the simplicity, decency, and dignity of public worship.

FT360 Cf. III. 20. 16, note 27. In his *Sermons on Jacob and Esau* 9, Calvin says, "It is true that God will not be entertained *s'amusera* with any ceremonies when we pray to him, but while we are kneeling we have our hands turned toward heaven, and our heads uncovered" (CK LIX. 140 f.).

FT361 Cf. section 8, above, note 19.

FT362 While Calvin warmly approves the kneeling posture in prayer, for reasons both of human tradition and of divine sanction, he finally leaves the choice of posture (with like matters) to the best interest of the church (*ecclesiae utilitas*) and the judgment of charity. A sensible freedom in such secondary matters is illustrated in the reference to women's headwear in church, in section 31, where the limiting factors mentioned are custom, humanity, and the rule of modesty. On this passage, F. Wendel observes that Calvin does not require "a servile imitation of the primitive church" (Wendel, *Calvin*, pp. 229 f.).

FT363 Section 29, above.

FT364 "*Quod diximus* [τὸ πρέπον]." Cf. sections 18, 19, above.

FT365 In this closing passage of the chapter Calvin characteristically affirms the predominant importance of the *aedificatio ecclesiae* and cautions against feelings of superiority between churches over matters of external discipline. We may suppose that he had in mind here the possibility of improved relations between Lutherans and Reformed. Cf. W. Nijenhuis, *Calvinus Oecumenicus*, pp. 131-194. The admission of Lutherans to communion in French Reformed churches was specifically authorized by the Synod of Charenton (1631); J. Aymon, *Tous les Synodes nationaux des eglises reformges de France* II. 501; McNeill, *Unitire Protestantism*, p. 269; Heppe RD, p. 669.

CHAPTER 11

FT366 Note the high importance given to jurisdiction, the third part of church power, the *potestas* [διακριτική], exercised in corrective

discipline. Cf. IV. 8. 1, note 2; J. Bannerman, *The Church of Christ* I. 227 f.; Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 197 ff.; Wendel, *Calvin*, pp. 46 ff., 56, 226-234; J. Courvoisier, “La Sense de la discipline sous la Geneve de Calvin” in *Hommage a Karl Barth*.

FT367 Cf. III. 4. 14, 15; IV. 6. 4, note 8. The power of the keys, associated by the Reformers with the authority of the Word, became a prominent topic of disputation in the Reformation era. The arguments here assailed by Calvin had been notably affirmed by Bishop John Fisher, who declares in his *Confutatio*, p. 244, “*Petro claves committuntur coelorum.*” Cf. Faber, *Opus adversus nova quaedam . . . dogmata Martini Lutheri* (Leipzig, 1528) G gg 1-GG 2 and *passim*; A. Pighius, *Hierarchiae ecclesiasticae assertio* (Cologne, 1536), fo. 94 E-95 D.

FT368 One of Calvin’s descriptions of a sound interpretation of Scripture. Cf. Comm. Galatians 4:22: “the natural and obvious meaning . . . let us abide by it resolutely”; II. 5. 19, note 39; III. 4. 4, note 8.

FT369 CL IV. 8. 8, note 7; IV. 8. 9, note 9: the divine authorship of Scripture is the authorship of its doctrine.

FT370 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* III, Suppl. 21; 17. 2; 25. 2; J. Faber, *Malleus in haeresim Lutherianorum* (Cologne, 1524), fo. 80b f.

FT371 Apparently an allusion to opinions of Zwingli and Bullinger, who accorded to the Christian state an active and authoritative role in church government. Cf. W. Kohler, *Das Zurcher Ehegericht und seine Auswirkung*; R. Staehelin, *Huldreich Zwingli, sein Leben und Wirken* II. 144, states that under Zwingli’s influence the synod accorded to the state the right of excommunication. R. Ley, *Kirchenzucht bei Zwingli*, indicates how Zwingli justified the government control of discipline, pp. 99-105. While Bullinger states strongly the function of the magistrates in the oversight of religion, he excludes them from sacramental acts: *Decades* II. vii (The Parker Society, Bullinger I. 323 ff., 329).

FT372 Cf. section 4, below, and IV. 12. 7.

FT373 Ambrose, *Sermon Against Auxentius . . . on Yielding the Milan Basilica* 36 (MPL 16. 1018; tr. NPNF 2 set. 10. 436); cf. IV. 12. 7.

FT374 Calvin's preference for government by a number of persons rather than by one has been noted in IV. 3. 15. Cf. IV. 4. 10, 9 and esp. IV. 20. 8,

FT375 Cf. note 9, above. The "assembly of elders" (*consensus Seniorum*) is the consistory or session, the body exercising discipline.

FT376 Cyprian, *Letters* 16. 2; 17. 2; 14. 4 (CSEL 3. 2. 518, 522, 512; tr. ANF [letters 9, 5, and 11, respectively] V. 290, 283, 292). In the first of these letters Cyprian uses the phrase "by imposition of the hand of the bishop and clergy."

FT377 The distinction between ruling and teaching presbyters is touched upon in IV. 4. 1; IV. 11. 1. Cf. *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* (1541) (CR X. 1. 18, 22; tr. LCC XXII. 60, 63). The subject was debated in the Westminster Assembly, Erastians and Independents opposing the Presbyterian majority (1644). The Form of Presbyterial Church-Government adopted by the Assembly authorizes, besides the ministers of the Word, "other church governors . . . commonly called elders." On the ruling elder in the background and development of Congregationalism,

see H. M. Dexter, *The Congregationalism of the Last Three Hundred Years*, pp. 238, 260 ff., 276, 314, 398 f., 424 ff.

FT378 Ambrosiaster, *Commentary on I Timothy* 5. 1 (MPL 17. 475 f.).

FT379 "*officiales*." The "official," more often called "vicar-general," was, from the twelfth century, the bishop's deputy for matters of diocesan jurisdiction. See *Catholic Encyclopedia*, art. "Vicar-General."

FT380 In section 5, above, a distinction is made between the "*ius gladii*," or right to exercise the sword in punishment, and the spiritual power exercised in church discipline. The power of the sword was, however, explicitly claimed for the papacy by Innocent III and later popes. See Innocent III, *Regestae* VII. 212 (MPL 215. 527); Innocent IV, "*Potestas gladii apud ecclesiam estimplicata*"; Mirbt, *Quellen zur Geschichte des Papsttums*, 5th edition, p. 198; Boniface VIII, "The temporal sword is in the power of Peter": *Unamsanctam* (1302) (Mirbt, *op. cit.*, p. 210; tr. O. J. Thatcher and E. McNeal, *Source Book for Medieval History*, p. 315).

FT381 Cf. section 5, above; IV. IX. 10.

FT382 Ambrose, *Letters* 20. 23, 19 (MPL 16. 1001, 999).

FT383 For historical perspective here, J.P. Whitney, *Reformation Essays* V, “The Growth of Papal Jurisdiction Before Nicholas I,” pp. 130-168, and W. Hobbhouse, *The Church and the World in Idea and History*, lecture 5, “The Pope and the Empire,” pp. 167-215, may be profitably consulted. Cf. Luther, *Why the Books of the Pope and His Followers Were Burned* (*Werke* WA VII. 161-182; tr. B. Woolf, *Reformation Writings of Martin Luther*, pp. 76-88).

FT384 Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 118. 24 (MPL 37. 1570; tr. LF [Psalm 119:115] *Psalms* V. 418).

FT385 Bernard, *On Consideration* I. 6. 7; II. 6. 9-11 (MPL 182. 736, 747 f.; tr. G. Lewis, *Bernard on Consideration*, pp. 24, 45 ff.).

FT386 Cf. section 8, above, note 15. The reference to the Council of Arles (presumably that of 1234) is in error. Cf. OS V. 207, note 5.

FT387 Gregory I, *Letters* I. 5; IV. 20; III. 61; V. 36, 39 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 6, 254, 221, 318, 329; MPL 77. 449, 689 [III. 65], 662, 766 [V. 40], 750 [V. 21]; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 75 f., 150 f., 141, 176, 173.).

FT388 The Donation of Constantine (*Donatio*, or *Constitutum*, *Constantini*) was a document forged apparently in the papal chancery in the time of Pope Paul I (757-767). It takes the form of a deed of gift by Constantine the Great to Pope Silvester I by which the pope becomes ruler of a wide area (Judea, Greece, Asia, Thrace, Africa, and Italy). It really gave pseudohistorical justification for the actual Donation of Pippin (754) by which a tract stretching across Italy and containing twenty-two cities captured from the Lombards came under papal rule. There were exposures of the forgery by Reginald Pecock and Nicolas of Cusa, and that of Lorenzo Valla (1440) presented ample and indisputable evidence of its falsity. See C. B. Coleman, *The Treatise of Lorenzo Valla on the Donation of Constantine* (text and translation), p.p. 5-7, 10-19. Valla ridicules the “barbarous” language of the document, using its late vocabulary as proof of a late date. Ulrich von Hutten’s edition (1520) of Valla’s work was the basis of Luther’s strongly worded tract, *Einer aus den hohen Artikeln des papstlichen Glaubens, genannt Donatio Constantini* (*Werke* WA L. 69-89). Calvin’s friend Sleidan follows Valla in his *De quatuor summis*

imperiis (1559), p. 147; tr. el *Brief Chronycle of the Principall Empires, Babylon, Persia, Grecia, and Rome* (London, 1563), fo. 45 (cf. IV. 7. 17, note 38; OS V. 120, note 4), as does also Robert Barnes, in *Vitae Romanorum pontificum* (Wittenberg, 1536). Defenses of the *Donation* were undertaken by Cochlaeus, *De Petro et Roma* . . . (1525), fo. C 2a-3a, N 4a, and by Augustinus Steuchus Eugubinus, *Contra Laurentium Vallam in falsa donatione Constantini* (Lyon, 1547): Cf. IV. 7. 27, note 57; W. Ullmann, *The Growth of Papal Government in the Middle Ages*, pp. 62-65, 74-86.

FT389 Henry IV, emperor 1056-1106.

FT390 Calvin's opinion of Hildebrand is wholly at variance from that seen in Platyna's admiring account, and corresponds to that of Barnes, *op. cit.*, P 8a-S 3b, and of Sleidan, *The Four Empires* (Latin, p. 262; English, fo. 79b ff.).

FT391 Gregory I, *Letters* V. 57a (MGH *Epistolae* I. 364).

FT392 Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* I. 20; IV. 8 (ed. T. Gaisford, pp. 91, 310; MPG [I. 19] 82. 962-966, 1139 f.; GCS 19. 69; tr. NPNF [I. 19] 2 ser. III. 56, 113).

FT393 Ambrose, *Letters* 21. 2, 4, 17 (MPL 16. 1003 f., 1006; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 10. 422 ff.).

FT394 Ambrose, *Sermon Against Auxentius on Surrendering the Basilicas*, chapters 1, 2, 3, 33 (MPL 16. 1007 f., 1017; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 10. 430, 435).

FT395 Gregory I, *Letters* IV. 20 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 254; MPL 77. 689; tr. NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2).

FT396 Gregory I, *Letters* I. 43; V. 37, 39, 45 (MGH *Epistolae* I. 69, 320 ff., 327, 344; MPL 77. 689, 503, 744 ff., 749, 719 f. [V. 19]; tr. [in part] NPNF 2 ser. XII. 2. 150 f., 169).

CHAPTER 12

FT397 Cf. IV. 11. 1, note 2; IV. 11. 5-6. The power of the keys has reference to discipline and excommunication, a department of jurisdiction.

FT398 “*Clericos.*” Cf. IV. 4. 9: “I would have preferred them to be given a more proper name.”

FT399 Cf. section 22, below.

FT400 Note the metaphors here: “sinews” (cf. IV. 20. 14), “bridle,” “father’s rod.” By discipline the church is bound together, the individual is restrained, and where necessary, “chastised in mercy.” Cf. K. Barth, *The Doctrine of the Word of God*, tr. Thomson, p. 78.

FT401 The sequence of the acts of discipline is Scriptural, and the church acts through the session of elders (*consessus Seniorum*). Cf. IV. 11. 6; p. 1217, note 10.

FT402 cf. section 6, below.

FT403 “*Delicta*,” “*scelera*,” and “*flagitia*,” respectively.

FT404 Calvin’s anxiety to prevent the profanation of the Lord’s Supper by the participation of unfit persons is basic to his emphasis on discipline. Cf. Niesel, *The Theology of Calvin*, pp. 197 ff. This is explicitly stated in the articles presented to the Geneva Council, January 13, 2537, where this sentence follows an earnest warning against such profanation: “For this reason, our Savior set up in his church the correction and discipline of excommunication” (CR 10. 1:7-9; LCC 22. 50). Cf. Calvin’s *Letter to Somerset*, October 22, 1548: “The duty of bishops and curates is to keep watch over that [discipline] to the end that the Supper of our Lord may not be polluted by people of scandalous lives” (CR 13. 76; tr. Calvin, *Letters* II. 197).

FT405 Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew* lxxxii. 6 (MPG 58. 742; tr. NPNF 10. 496).

FT406 Augustine, *Sermons* ccxciv. 3. 3 (MPL 38. 1337); clxi. 3. 3 (MPL 38. 879; tr. LF *Sermons* II. 801 f.). Cf. Smits II. 49.

FT407 Chrysostom, *Commentary on 1 Corinthians* 5:5, homily 15. 2 (MPG 61. 123).

FT408 Beginning of section 3, above.

FT409 Cyprian, *Letters* lvii; 16. 2; 17. 2; 14. 4 (CSEL 3. ff. 650 ff., 518, 522, 512; tr. ANF [nos. liii, 9, 11, 5, respectively] V. 337 f., 290, 292, 283). In the last of these passages Cyprian says, “From the commencement

of my episcopate I made up my mind to do nothing without your advice and without the consent of the people.”

FT410 Cf. IV. 11. 3-4.

FT411 IV. 11. 6.

FT412 Council of Ancyra (314) canons 9, 16, 20, 23-25 (Mansi II. 518-522; tr., with notes, NPNF 2 ser. XIV. 66 f., 70, 73-75). In many instances very protracted or lifetime penances are prescribed in the *Libri poenitentiales*; see, for example, McNeill and Gamer, *Medieval Handbooks of Penance*, pp. 280, 291, 302, 304, 339, 358.

FT413 Tertullian, *On Modesty* 20 (CCL II. 1324 f.; tr. ANCL XVIII. 114 f.). Tertullian writes here as a Montanist, and argues from Hebrews 6:4-6 against reconciliation of grave offenders.

FT414 Cyprian, *Letters* 59. 16 (CSEL 3. 2. 686; tr. ANF V. 345).

FT415 Chrysostom, homily *De non anathematizandis vivis atque defunctis* (MPG 48. 943 ff.).

FT416 Augustine, *Letters* 61. 2; cxxviii. 2; clxxxv. 6. 23; clxxxv, 10. 44 (MPL 33. 229, 489, 803, 812; CSEL 34. 2. 223; 44. 31; 57. 21; tr. FG 12. 302 f. [note 7]; 30. 164, 182 f.).

FT417 Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* II. 1. 3; III. 1. 1; III. 2. 15; III. 1 2 (MPL 43. 51, 82, 94, 83); Cyprian, *Letters* 59. 16 (CSEL 3. 2. 686; tr. ANF [liv. 16] V. 345).

FT418 Gr. IV. 1. 13.

FT419 Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* III. 3. 17-19; III. 11 1, 13 (MPL 43. 93-97, 82-83); cf. Cyprian, *Letters* lix (CSEL 3. 2. 686; tr. ANF V. 397-402).

FT420 Augustine, *op. cit.*, III. 2. 14 (MPL 43. 93).

FT421 Augustine, *Letters* 22. 1. 4. 5 (MPL 33. 92; tr. FC 12.54 f.).

FT422 Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* III. 2. 15, 16 (MPL 43. 94 f.).

FT423 This virtually describes the position of Zwingli, and it also finds expression in Luther; cf. *Werke* WA *Tischreden* II, no. 1299; tr. LCC XVIII. 88; Zwingli, *Commentary on True and False Religion* (1525) (CR Zwingli III. 891 f.); *Liberty Respecting Food in Lent* (CR Zwingli

I. 8-136; tr. S. M. Jackson, *Latin Works of Huldreich Zwingli* I. 71-112). Bucer approves fasting “with repentance and prayer” (*Ein summarcher Begriff der Christlichen Lehre*, 1548 [*Resume sommaire de la doctrine*, ed. F. Wendel], pp. 70 ff.).

FT424 Section 15, above.

FT425 In this section the authorization of penitent public fasting in times of calamity is explicit. Cf. Comm. Psalm 35:14; Comm. 1 Corinthians 7:5. Calvin finds authorization in the Old Testament but rejects literal imitation of its mode of penitence.

FT426 The passage quoted was one of those relied on for support of the Lenten fast (Cabrol, *Dictionnaire*, art. “Cardme”).

FT427 Augustine, *On the Morals of the Manichees* II. 13. 27-28 (MPL 32. 1356 f.; tr. NPNF IV. 76); *Against Faustus the Manichee* 30. 5 (MPL 42. 493 f.; tr. NPNF IV. 330).

FT428 I.e., Christ’s forty-day fast. Cf. Augustine, *Sermons* ccv, ccvi, ccvii, ccviii, ccix, ccx, ccxi (MPL 38. 1039-1058); Augustine, *Letters* IV. 15. 28 (MPL 33. 217 f.; tr. FC 12. 283 ff.); Jerome, *Commentary on Isaiah* 16 (on Isaiah 58:3) (MPL 24. 564); *Against Jovinian* II. 17 (MPL 23. 311; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 401 f.). Cf. Cadier, *Institution* IV. 233, note 4.

FT429 “[κακοξηλία].”

FT430 Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 5. 92, in Cassiodorus, *Tripartite History* IX. 38 (MPL 69. 1155; tr. NPNF 9 ser. II. 131).

FT431 Augustine, *Letters* 54. 9. 9. 4. 5 (MPL 33. 900 ff.; tr. FC 19. 953 ff.).

FT432 Jerome, *Against Jovinian* II. 5-17 (MPL 93. 990 ff.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 391-402); *Letters* 52. 12 (CSEL 54. 435; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 95). Cf. IV. 13. 9.

FT433 *Apostolic Canons* xlii-xliv, 25, 26, 36 (text and translation in Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 94 f., 86 f., 90 f.).

FT434 Second Council of Toledo (527) canon 5; Third Council of Toledo (589) canon 18 (Mansi VIII. 787; IX. 997).

FT435 Cf. IV. 7. 8, note 19.

FT436 Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* VIII. 8. 8 (LCL edition II. 442 ff.).

- FT437 Gr. IV. 4. 10, note 27; IV. 9. 14; IV. 13. 3, 8.
- FT438 cf. Comm. 1 Timothy 4:3 (LCC XXIII. 345), a virtual repetition of this passage (1543); Clichtove, *Antilutherus* I. 21, fo. 43a-46a.
- FT439 Gratian, *Decretum* I. 26 (MPL 187. 149 ff.; Friedberg I. 95 ff.).
- FT440 Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage* 18. 21 (MPL 40. 387; tr. NPNF III. 408). RSV, 1 Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:6: “married only once.”
- FT441 *Letter of Pope Siricius to Himerius* 1. 7 (MPL 13. 1138 ff.; tr. Ayer, *Source Book*, pp. 415 f.).
- FT442 “[ἀντίτυποι].” Cf. II. 11. 3.
- FT443 Calvin’s wife was living when this was written (1543).
- FT444 Tertullian, *Exhortation to Chastity* 7 (CCL Tertullianus II. 1024 ff.; tr. ANF IV. 54).
- FT445 Paphnutius, a celebrated ascetic bishop, opposed the requirement of celibacy when it was proposed at the Council of Nicaea (325), declaring that marriage is honorable, that lawful cohabitation is chastity, and that the proposed rule would be injurious. His advice prevailed: Socrates, *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 11; Sozomen, *Ecclesiastical History* 1. 23; Cassiodorus, *Historia Tripartita* II. 24 (MPL 69. 933; tr. NPNF 2 ser. II. 18, 256).
- FT446 For numerous references to the medieval documents, see OS V. 236 f. Calvin is also aware of the vigorous defense of sacerdotal celibacy by such writers as Pighius, De Castro, and Latomus. Cf. IV. 4. 10, note 27, and the passages in Cabrol, Lea, Leclercq, and Coulton there cited.
- FT447 Jerome, *Against Jovinian* I (MPL 23. 221-296; tr. NPNF 2 ser. VI. 346-386). In Book I, *passim*, Jerome assails the opinion that a virgin is no better in God’s sight than a wife; but he disclaims the views of Marcion, the Manichees, and Tatian.
- FT448 Pseudo-Chrysostom, *Homily on the Finding of the Cross*, included in Erasmus’ edition of Chrysostom (Basel, 1530) II. 130, but omitted by later editors.

CHAPTER 13

FT449 III. 8. 4.

FT450 III. 8. 5.

FT451 [ἐθελοθησκειάς].” Cf. “*voluntarii omnes cultus*” in the next sentence, and Second Helvetic Confession XVI. 5 (Schaff, *Creeds* III. 269; tr. p. 866).

FT452 Council of Orange (529) canon 11 (Mansi VIII. 714), based on Augustine, *City of God* XVII. 4. 7 (MPL 41. 530; tr. NPNF II. 342).

FT453 “*Sacrifici.*”

FT454 Cf. Bernard, *De conversione, ad clericos* 20. 36 (in course of a chapter deploring clerical incontinence and vice): “abstaining from the remedy of marriage, they afterward abandon themselves to every iniquity [*in omne deinceps flagitium effluentes*]” (MPL 182. 854 f.; cf. Beveridge, *Institutes* II. 475, note 2.)

FT455 “*Oeconomia.*”

FT456 “*Syngraphae.*”

FT457 Cf. II. 6. 1, 3; II. 10 1; II. 11. 4; III. 4. 32; III. 17. 6; III. 21. 5-7.

FT458 Cf. section 4, above.

FT459 Erasmus in his satirical vein anticipated the Reformers in criticizing religious vows: see “The Religious Pilgrimage” in his *Colloquies*. More personally in his famous letters to Lambert Grunnius (1515) (Erasmus, *Epistolae* 447), he remarks, “I will not here dispute about monastic vows . . . since such a kind of obligation (I almost said slavery) is found in neither the New nor the Old Testament” (tr. J. J. Mangan, *Life, Character, and Influence of Desiderius Erasmus* I. 23). The letter is replete with protests against inducing boys to take vows, and is at the same time an appeal for his release from obedience to the monastery of Steyn, which he had much earlier been permitted to leave (1492). Luther assailed monastic vows in his *Method of Confessing* (1520) (*Werke* WA VI. 167 f.; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* I. 98-101), his *Topics [Themata] on Vows* (1520 (*Werke* WA VIII. 313-366), and his *On Monastic Vows* (152x) (*Werke* WA VIII. 564-669). Cf. Zwingli, *Commentary On True and False Religion* 22, “Vows” (CR Zwingli III.

260-267; tr. *Works*, ed. S. M. Jackson, III. 260-267). In defense of vows, cf. Clichtove, *Antilutherus* 0545), fo. 133a-215b; *Compendium veritatum ad fidem pertinentium* (Paris, 1529), chapter 10, fo. 98a-52b.

FT460 The passages referred to are: Gregory of Nazianzus, *Fourth Oration Against Julian* lxxi (MPG 35. 594); Pseudo-Basil, *Monastic Constitutions* 25, 30 (MPG 31. 988 f., 994); Chrysostom, *Against Opponents of Monastic Life* II. 2 (MPG 47. 339 f.).

FT461 “*Malus choraules bonus est symphoniacus.*” Erasmus, *Adagia* IV. 9. 38 [L. 2. 1153].

FT462 Augustine, *Letters* 48. 2; 60. 1 (MPL 33. 188, 228; tr. FC 12. 232, 301).

FT462A Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church* 31. 67; 33. 70-73 (MPL 32. 1328-1341; tr. NPNF IV. 59 f.). As frequently, Calvin here uses the method of a summary. Cf. Smits I. 243 ff.

FT463 Augustine, *On the Work of Monks* 23. 27 (MPL 40. 569; tr. NPNF III. 517).

FT464 Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church* 33. 70-73 (MPL 32. 1339-1341; tr. NPNF IV. 59 f.).

FT465 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* II IIae. clxxxiv. 3; clxxxvi. 1. During the controversy in Paris over the admission of the Friars to the teaching office, Aquinas defended this position in his *Contra impugnantes Dei cultum et religionem* (*Opuscula omnia* IV. 1-195; tr. J. Procter, *Apology for the Religious Orders*), chapter 1; and in his *De perfectione vitae spiritualis* (*Opuscula* IV. 196-204; tr. J. Procter, *The Religious State*), esp. chapters 19, 20.

FT466 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* I IIae. cviii. 4; II IIae. clxxxiv. 3; cvi; Chrysostom, *On Compunction of Heart* I. 4 (MPG 47. 399 f.); *Against the Opponents of the Monastic Life* III. 14 (MPG 47. 372); Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* I. 30, 32 (MPL 34. 31; tr. NPNF II. 531).

FT467 II. 8. 56 f.

FT468 Calvin repudiates the double standard involved in the separation of the ascetic-contemplative from the active life. Theoretically at least, many of the mystics held the same position. See, for example, *Meister*

Eckhart: A Modern Translation, by R. B. Blakney, pp. 127, 238; LCC XIII. 207.

FT469 Calvin here affirms an exegetical principle to which he was generally faithful. The irresponsible citation of Scripture phrases, in neglect of their context and original import, is alien to his method.

FT470 Cf. Ambrose, *Concerning Widows* 12. 73: “‘Thou shalt not kill’ is a precept; ‘sell what thou hast’ is a counsel” (MPL 16. 256; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 10. 403); Jerome, *Commentary on Matthew* III, on Matthew 19:21 (MPL 26. 137).

FT471 Augustine, *On the Morals of the Catholic Church* 33. 73 (MPL 32. 1341; tr. NPNF IV. 60).

FT472 The charge of sectarianism against the religious orders was an old one: Wycliffe gives it more emphasis than Calvin. For numerous references, see H. B. Workman, *John Wyclif* II. 93; LCC XIV. 32 f., 44, 60.

FT473 Augustine, *On the Work of Monks* 28. 36 (MPL 40. 575 f.; tr. NPNF III. 517); *Letters* lxxviii. 9 (MPL 33. 272; tr. FC 12. 384).

FT474 This “proverb” has not been located. The passage in Athenaeus, *The Deipnosophists* XIV. 625, referred to in OS V. 253, describing the Milesians as haughty and austere, may have suggested the saying, but it contains no similar language.

FT475 “[κακοζήλιαν].” One of the very few instances in which Calvin disapproves of an opinion of Augustine.

FT476 Cf. IV. 10. 17; IV. 13. 1.

FT477 Cf. III. 15. ; IV. 13. 2.

FT478 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* I. 21, fo. 44b; *Propugnaculum ecclesiae adversus Lutheranos* II. 8 ff., fo. 75 ff.

FT479 Cyprian, *Letters* 4. 2 (CSEL 3. 2. 474; tr. ANF [letter 61. 2] V. 357).

FT480 This sentence, and the latter part of this section, illustrate Calvin’s practical admission of celibacy as a condition required by certain types of Christian vocation. Cf. IV. 4. 10; IV. 5. 10; IV. 12. 23.

FT481 cf. IV. 13. 8, note 11; Luther’s letter to three nuns, August, 1524 (Werke WA Briefe III. 326-328; tr. LCC XVIII. 270 ff.), reflecting his

treatise *On Monastic Vows* (*Werke* WA VIII. 564-669). Cf. section 8, note 11.

FT482 The vows of poverty and obedience. These are treated at some length by Luther in *On Monastic Vows* (*Werke* WA VIII. 641-647).

FT483 Section 2, above.

FT484 Section 1, above.

FT485 Clichtove, *Antilutherus* (1524) I. 21, fo. 39b. In *On Monastic Vows*, Luther had called on those under vows to assert evangelical liberty (*Werke* WA VIII. 668).

FT486 Section 17, above.

CHAPTER 14

FT487 Chapters 14 to 17 form a series in exposition of the Scriptural sacraments. Chapters 18 and 19 specifically controvert the doctrines of the Mass and of the five additional rites also called sacraments in the Roman Church. The extensive literature dealing with Calvin's treatment of the sacraments includes: J. Beckmann, *Vom Sacrament bei Calvin*; W.F. Danbaar, *De Sacramentsleer van Calvijn*; R.s. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, esp. chs. 6, 8-18; A. Lecerf, *Etudes Calvinistes*, pp. 33-43 ("l'election et le sacrement"); D. M. Baille, *The Theology of the Sacraments*. See Pannier's note, *Institution* 3. 199, note a on p. 317.

FT488 Calvin's phrases are taken from Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus* 26. 50 (MPL 40. 344; tr. ACW 2:82). Cf. *Letters* 105. 3:12 (MPL 33.401; tr. FC 18:205); *Questions on the Heptateuch* III. 84 (MPL 34:712). The language here (1536 edition) is virtually repeated in *Instruction in Faith* (1537) (OS 1:411; tr. Fuhrmann, p. 68). See also Fuhrmann's note 223 on p. 93, explaining Calvin's use of terms for "sign," "mark," "seal," "token" (Latin, *tessera*, French, *mereau*). Fuhrmann notes that all these words have sometimes been erroneously translated "symbol," a word not often used by Calvin in relation to sacraments. Cf. 4. 16:4, note 7; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, p.177; Pannier, *loc. cit.*, note b; OS 5:306, note e. Cf. 4. 15:1, note 3; 4. 17:10, note 29.

- FT489 Augustine, *Letters* 138. 1:7 (MPL 33. 527; tr. FC 20:40).
- FT490 The notation here in the 1559 edition, “*Homil. 60 ad populum*,” has reference to a text not in modern editions but printed in the Basel, 1530, edition of Chrysostom’s works, 4:581.
- FT491 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 80:3 (MPL 35. 1840; tr. NPNF 7:344). Cf. Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, pp. 135 f. In the quotation of 1 Peter 3:21 here, *carnis*, “flesh,” is used as in Vg., correspond-mg to the Greek *σάρξ*. In 4. 16:21, Calvin has *corpus*, “body.”
- FT492 “*σφραγίδα*” The opponents here are Anabaptists.
- FT493 See letter of Leo Jud to Calvin (1536 or 1537) (Herminjard, *Correspondance* VIII. 990; CR 11:359).
- FT494 Augustine, *John’s Gospel*, *loc. cit.*: “*tanquam visibile verbum*”; *Against Faustus* 19:16 (MPL 42:357; tr. NPNF 4:244). Cf. J. C. McLelland, *The Visible Words of God: An Exposition of the Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr*, pp. 129, 138; Cadier, *La Doctrine Calviniste de la Sainte Cene*, pp. 52 f.
- FT495 “*εἰκινῶς*”; in editions of 1536, 1545, “*εἰκότως*.”
- FT496 Sec. 3, above.
- FT497 “*αὐθεντικὸν*.”
- FT498 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 80:3 (MPL 35. 1840; tr. NPNF 7. 344).
- FT499 Zwingli, *Commentary on True and False Religion* (CR Zwingli III. 761; tr. S. M. Jackson, *Latin Works of Zwingli* III. 184).
- FT500 Cicero, *Of Old Age* 8:26 (LCL edition, pp. 34 ff.). Cicero points to Solon, who “grew old learning something daily,” and says that he himself has learned Greek in old age.
- FT501 The above sentences on the Christian’s progress are based on Bucer, *Enarrationes in Evangelia* (1530), pp. 413, 420, 455, 419. Cf. sec. 11, below. On the word “confess,” cf. 3. 4:9, note 19. The remainder of sec. 8 has been supposed by K. Barth to be directed against Caspar Schwenckfeld (Pannier, *Institution* 3. 205, note *b*, p. 319).
- FT502 Cf. 1. 7:4.
- FT503 3. 2:3-5, and secs. 7 and 8, above.

FT504 “*Interior ille magister*”; cf. 3. 1:4: “*Christus ipse interior magister*”; 1. 7:4, 5; 1. 8:13; sec. 17, below. The sacraments, like the word of Scripture, are not made efficacious without the activity of the Holy Spirit.

FT505 “*Tesseractam.*” Cf. note 2, above.

FT506 “*Illo sacramento fidem suam obstringunt Imperatori.*”

FT507 Criticizing the view of Zwingli in *Comm. on True and False Religion*, 15 (CR Zwingli III. 758) and *On Baptism* (CR Zwingli IV. 218). Calvin, writing privately to Andre Zebedee, May 19, 1559, had described Zwingli’s doctrine of the Lord’s Supper as “wrong and pernicious.” In a letter to Bullinger, April 20, 1555, he complains that Zebedee has “perfidiously” divulged this, and avows that he never called Zwingli’s doctrine “false in a general sense” (CR XV. 573; tr. *Calvin’s Letters*, ed. Bonnet, 3. 170; 4. 402).

FT508 Cf. sec. 2, above.

FT509 Based on VG.

FT510 Augustine, *Letters* 98:10 (MPL 33. 364; tr. FC 18. 138); G. Biel, *Epythoma pariter et collectorium circa quatuor sententiarura libros* 4. dist. 1. qu. 3. art. 1; Council of Trent, session 7 (1547), canon 6 (Schaff, *Creeds* 2:120).

FT511 Cf. sec. 16, below.

FT512 Augustine, *Questions on the Heptateuch* 3:84 (MPL 34. 715).

FT513 Augustine, *On Baptism* 5. 24:34 (MPL 43:193; tr. NPNF 4. 475).

FT514 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 26:11, 12, 15 (MPL 35. 1611-1614; tr. NPNF 7. 171 ff.); *De catechizandis rudibus* 26:50 (MPL 40:344; tr. ACW 2:82).

FT515 Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 77. 2 (in substance) (MPL 36. 983 f.; tr. NPNF [Psalm 78:2] 8:367).

FT516 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 26:11-12 (MPL 35, 1611; tr. NPNF VII. 171).

FT517 Augustine, *op. cit.*, 26:15 (MPL 35. 1614; tr. NPNF 7:172 f.).

FT518 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 1:5 (MPL 192:840).

FT519 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 27:6 (MPL 35. 1618; tr. LF 9. 419).

- FT520 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 26:11, 12, 15 (MPL 35. 1611-1614; tr. NPNF 7. 171 ff.); *On Christian Doctrine* 3. 9:13 (MPL 34. 71; tr. NPNF 2:560).
- FT521 6. 13:6; seas. 5-7, above; sec. 18, below: reference to stamped metal.
- FT522 "*Ceu vasculis ac plaustris.*" VG (Cadier): "*Comme s'ils en etaient des recipients ou vehicules.*"
- FT523 I.e., by Zwingli and Bucer; cf. secs. 5-8, above.
- FT524 *Questions on the Heptateuch* 3:84 (MPL 34:712).
- FT525 Cf. Comm. Genesis 9:16. The passage is of interest for Calvin's outlook on science. The reference is to Pliny, *Natural History* 2. 60:150 (LCL Pliny I. 286 f.), where a nonmiraculous explanation of the rainbow is given. Cf. Seneca, *Natural Questions* I. 3 (tr. J. Clarke, *Physical Science in the Time of Nero*, pp. 16-22). Calvin characteristically accepts what seems to be scientific fact, but sees such knowledge as trivial by comparison with our realization of God above nature. See also the remarks of D. Baillie, *The Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 45.
- FT526 Augustine, *Against Faustus the Manichaeon* 19:11 (MPL 42. 355; tr. NPNF 4. 243).
- FT527 Calvin may have had in mind here the assertion of Justin Martyr that the demons deceived the ancient pagans by inventing imitations of the prophetic revelations pointing to Christ. *Apology* 1. 60-64 (MPG 6. 411-428; tr. LCC 1. 281-285).
- FT528 Sec. 1, above.
- FT529 Chrysostom, *Opera*, ed. Erasmus (Basel, 1530), 2. 82, in a work omitted by later editors.
- FT530 Cf. 4. 3:16.
- FT531 4. 19.
- FT532 Sec. 5, above.
- FT533 "*Christum ostendant.*" Cf. 1. 9:3, note 3; 4. 10:14, note 28; sec. 26, below: "*Christi exhibitio.*"
- FT534 Cf. 4. 16:3, 4.
- FT534A Cf. 2. 1:2.

- FT535 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 15:8; 120:2 (MPL 35. 1513, 1953; tr. NPNF 7. 101, 434); *Psalms*, Psalm 40:10; 126:7; 138:2 (MPL 36:461; 37. 1672, 1785; tr. LF *Psalms* 2. 174; 5:24, 192); *Sermons* 5:3 (MPL 38:55).
- FT536 Cf. Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 1:1 (MPL 192. 839); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 62:6; 1:2ae. ci. 2.
- FT537 Aquinas, 1:2ae. ci. 2.
- FT538 Sec. 22, above.
- FT539 *Ibid.*
- FT540 4. 16:3-5.
- FT541 Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 73 Pref. 2 (MPL 36. 931; tr. LF [Psalm 74] *harms* 3:493); *Questions on the Heptateuch* 4. 33 (MPL 34. 732); *Letters* 138:2. 8 (MPL 33. 528; tr. FC 20:41). Note the play on words, representing the Latin “*praenuntiasse...annuntiare.*”
- FT542 Augustine, *Against Faustus* 19:24 (MPL 42. 356; tr. NPNF 4:244).
- FT543 Augustine, *Against the Writings of Petilianus* 2. 37:87 (MPL 43. 289).
- FT544 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 26:12; 45:9 (MPL 35. 1612, 1723; tr. NPNF 7:171 f., 252).
- FT545 Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 77-2 (MPL 36. 983; tr. LF [Psalm 78:2] *Psalms* 4:43 f.; NPNF 8:367).
- FT546 Cf. 1. 9:3, note 3; 4. 10:14, note 28; sec. 20, note 47, above.
- FT547 Augustine, *Against Faustus* 19:13 (MPL 42. 355; tr. NPNF 4:244); *On Christian Doctrine* 3. 9:13 (MPL 34. 71; tr. NPNF 2. 560); *Letters* 54:1 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 12. 252). Augustine uses superlatives (“*paucissimis,*” etc.) while Calvin's adjectives take the comparative form.
- FT548 Bonaventura, *Commentary On the Sentences* 4. dist. 1 part 1. art. unicus. qu. 5 (*Opera omnia* 4:25); Biel, *Epythoma pariter et collectorium circa quatuor sententiarum libros* 4. dist. 1 qu. 3; Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. Suppl. 71:3, 6; Aquinas *On the Sentences* 4. dist. 2 qu. 1. art. 4; Deferrari, *Lexicon of Thomas Aquinas*, s.vv. “*Opus operantis*” and “*Opus operatum*”; Council of Trent, session 7, canon 6 (Schaff, *Creeds* 2:120).

CHAPTER 15

FT549 Cf. R. S. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, ch. 14, pp. 175-183, on the different meanings seen by Calvin in the sacrament of Baptism; O. Cullmann, *Baptism in the New Testament*, tr. by J. K. S. Reid; K. Barth, *The Teaching of the Church Regarding Baptism*; G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal of the Spirit*; H. T. Kerr, *The Christian Sacraments*; D. M. Baillie, *The Theology of the Sacraments*, pp. 37-124; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, ch. 7; W. D. Maxwell, *John Knox's Genevan Service Book*, pp. 105-120.

FT550 4. 14:1.

FT551 Apparently an allusion to Zwingli's interpretation of *sacramentum* (based on the classical use of the word) as "nothing else than an initiatory ceremony or a pledging." *True and False Religion*, 15 (CR Zwingli 3. 758; tr. *Latin Works of Zwingli*, ed. S. M. Jackson 3. 180 f.). In his *Declaration Concerning Original Sin* (CR Zwingli 5. 392), he calls it a token (*tessera publica*). According to Calvin, such a view misses the point. Cf. 4. 14:13, note 21; 4. 16:4.

FT552 Tertullian, *On Baptism* 3-5 (CCL Tertullianus I. 278-282; tr. ANF 3. 670 ff.); Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 3. 5 (MPG 33-431 ff.; tr. LCC 4:92 f.; NPNF 2 ser. 7:15). Cf. MacGregor's comments on Tertullian and Calvin, *op. cit.*, pp. 142 f.

FT553 The postponement of baptism as a prudential measure lest postbaptismal sin should destroy its benefits was encouraged by an austere doctrine of penance such as that of Tertullian (*On Repentance* 7:12; CCL Tertullianus 1. 332; tr. ANF 3. 662), and was so widespread in the fourth century that both Gregory of Nazianzus (*On Holy Baptism*, oratio 40:11; MPG 36. 371 ff.) and Gregory of Nyssa (*Against Those Who Postpone Baptism*; MPG 46. 415-432) earnestly condemned it. As late as the Council of Florence this abuse was combated in the bull *Exultate Deo* of Pope Eugenius 4 (1439), ch. 10 (Mansi 31. 1054; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 235).

FT554 Cf. 4. 19:17.

FT555 3. 4.

FT556 4. 19:14-17.

FT557 The mortification of sin in baptism is not only an imitation of Christ's dying but a participation in it. Cadier remarks on the "realism" of this concept (*Institution* 4. 298, note 1). But Melanchthon had used similar language: *Loci communes* (1521), *de baptismo* (ed. Engelland, *Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl* 2. 1:146 f.; tr. Hill, p. 245 f.).

FT558 Sec. 2, above.

FT559 Chrysostom, *Homilies on Matthew*, hom. 10:1 (on Matthew 3:1-21) (MPG 57:183. 185; tr. LF XVI. 132 f.). Cf. Council of Trent, seventh session, Of *Baptism*, canon 1 (Schaff, *Creeds* 2:122). Calvin's freedom to differ from the fathers where they do not represent "the certainty of Scripture" appears in these sentences and in secs. 8, 18, below.

FT560 Augustine, *On Baptism, Against the Donatists* 5. 10:12 (MPL 43. 183; tr. NPNF 4. 468).

FT561 Sec. 18, below.

FT562 *Against the Writings of Petilianus the Donatist* 3. 49:59; 1. 6 f. (MPL 43. 379, 249); *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* 2. 11:23 (MPL 43. 67), citing "He it is that baptizes," John 1:33.

FT563 Cf. 2. 11:1-3; Melanchthon, *Loci communes* (1521) (ed. Engelland, *Melanchthons Werke in Auswahl* 2. 1:145; tr. Hill, p. 245).

FT564 2. 1:8.

FT565 Sec. 1, above.

FT566 2. 1:8; 3. 3. 10-13.

FT567 Cf. 3. 6:5, note 9; 3. 9:4.

FT568 Cf. 2. 2:27; 3. 3. 11; 3. 11:11; Comm. Kom. 7:7-25. Calvin has no doubt that in Romans 7:24 and like passages Paul is speaking of himself in his regenerate condition. This is the cardinal point at which Arminius departed from Calvin. At the conclusion of an argument on the question, Arminius states that the man described in this passage is unregenerate: "This man was not placed under grace" but under the law. (*Works of Arminius*, tr. J. Nichols, 2. 326.)

FT569 I.e., this passage (Romans 7:7-13) is preceded by Romans 2:12-24 on the use of the law.

FT570 Augustine, *Sermons* 151:5: “*Ergo semper pugnandum est*”: “Therefore, we must always be fighting; for that concupiscence with which we have been born cannot cease while we live: it can be made less daily, but not ended” (MPL 38. 814 ff.; the above translation differs from that in LF *Sermons* 2. 713).

FT571 Luther, *Ein Sermon von dem Sakrament der Tauffe 1* (*Werke* WA 2:727).

FT572 Cf. the similarly positive statement regarding the Lord’s Supper, 4. 17:3.

FT573 Sec. 7, above.

FT574 The Donatists, as described by Augustine, *Psalms*, Psalm 10:5 (MPL 36. 134; tr. [Psalm 11] LF *Psalms* 1. 96); *Letters* 89:5 (MPL 33. 311; tr. FC 18. 38). The Anabaptists (Calvin here, 1536, uses the form *Catabaptistae*: cf. Pannier, *Institution* 3. 236, note b, p. 323) similarly rejected baptism administered by “wicked” ministers. This view was repeatedly assailed by Zwingli, e.g., in his treatise *On Baptism* (CR Zwingli 4. 278 f.), and by Luther, e.g., *Against the Heavenly Prophets* (*Werke* WA 18:165 ff.) and *Letter Concerning Rebaptism* (1528) (*Werke* WA 26:161; tr. *Luther’s Works*, American Edition, 50. 250 f.).

FT575 Sec. 16, above.

FT576 “κακόζηλον.”

FT577 Cf. Comm. Acts 19: 1-7.

FT578 Zwingli thinks of the second baptism of Acts 29:5 as “the baptism of teaching,” *Commentary on True and False Religion* (CR Zwingli 3. 770 f.; tr. *Latin Works by Zwingli*, ed. S. M. Jackson 1. 192). See also *On Baptism* (LCC 24:134).

FT579 Note the implication for Calvin’s method of exegesis.

FT580 Martin V, bull *Inter cunctas* (1418), condemning propositions attributed to Wycliffe and Hus (Mansi 27. 1212; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., pp. 229 f.); Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 4:70, 53, 61 f. (Friedberg 1. 1385, 1382 f.; MPL 187. 1821, 1818).

- FT581 Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 4:68 (Friedberg 1. 1384; MPL 187. 1821):
“Quare de saliva nares et aures tanguntur,” from Rabanus Maurus,
Institutio clericorum 1. 27, based on Mark 7:34.
- FT582 Calvin’s service of baptism, corresponding in simplicity to the
 above, description, is found in his *La Forme des prieres et chants
 ecclesiastiques* (1539, 1542) (CR 6. 185-192; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* 2. 113-
 118).
- FT583 Early deviation from the practice of immersion is seen in the Didache
 7, where if running water was not available, the prescription was:
“Pour water on the head three times.” See LCC 1:174.
- FT584 Tertullian, *On Baptism* 17 (CCL Tertullianus 1. 291; tr. ANF 3. 677);
 Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 4:21 (MPL 187. 1800; Friedberg 1. 1384). On
 clinical baptism in the early period, see also G. W. H. Lampe, *The Seal
 of the Spirit*, pp. 178, 242.
- FT585 Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* 2. 13:29 (MPL 43:71)
- FT586 The following words are from the 1545 edition.
- FT587 Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 4:20 (Friedberg 1. 1367; MPL 187. 1800), from
 the *Statuta ecclesiae antiqua*, canons 99, 100 (Mansi 3. 959).
- FT588 There is a popular belief, wholly unfounded, that Calvin taught the
 doctrine he here condemns: that infants who die unbaptized are
 necessarily damned. He reiterates his rejection of this error in sec. 22,
 below; cf. also 4. 16:6, 7, 17, 19, 26, 31. Calvin does not teach with the
 Augsburg Confession, art. ix, that “baptism is necessary to salvation.”
- FT589 Tertullian, *On Baptism* 17 (CCL Tertullianus 1. 291; tr. ANF 3. 679).
- FT590 Epiphanius (315-413), *Panarion sive arcula adversus haereses* 42:4;
 79:3 (GCS 31. 100; 37. 477; MPG 41. 699 f.; 42. 745 f.); Eugenius 4,
 bull *Exultate Deo* (1439) (Mansi 31. 1055; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p.
 235); J. Westphal, *Loci praecipui, de vi, usu, et dignitate baptismi*
 (Strasbourg, 1556, p. 242).
- FT591 This argument had been used by Calvin’s Lutheran opponent, J.
 Westphal, *op. cit.*, p. 238.
- FT592 Referring to the statement just above that it is his “heralds of the
 gospel” who are “ministers of baptism.” If women baptize, these two
 functions are “put asunder.”

FT593 Cf. sec. 20, above, notes 36 and 39.

FT594 “Afterward...solemn sign.” From 1545 edition.

CHAPTER 16

FT595 This chapter, devoted to the refutation of the Anabaptist rejection of pedo-baptism, is called an “appendix” to the preceding exposition of baptism, and the need for adding it is associated by Calvin with the current agitation on this issue. With the exception of sec. 31, added in 1559, all but a few sentences of the chapter appeared first in the 1539 edition. Recent studies of the sources and literature of the Anabaptist movement are reviewed by G. H. Williams, “Studies in the Radical Reformation (1517-1618),” *Church History* 27 (1958), 46-69. For the present interest, see esp. pp. 52 ff., 60 f. Anabaptist doctrines are illustrated in the texts presented in LCC XXV; this volume has also a bibliography of English titles by Professor Williams, pp. 285-294. Cf. the titles given in 4. 15:1, note 1, and especially, against infant baptism, J. Warns, *Baptism: Studies in the Origin of Christian Baptism*.

FT596 Calvin has in mind article 1 of the Anabaptist confession framed at Schleithem (1527), recited in Latin, and controverted by Zwingli in his treatise *In Catabaptistarum strophas elenchus* (*Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, 3. 388; tr. *Refutation of the Tricks of the Baptists* [*Selected Works of Zwingli*], ed. S. M. Jackson, p. 178). For an English translation of this confession from the original German, see J. C. Wenger, “The Schleithem Confession of Faith,” *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 19 (1945), 243-253. See also in the work edited by G. F. Hershberger, *The Recovery of the Anabaptist Vision*, chapters by F. Blanke, “The Anabaptists and the Reformation” (pp. 57-68), and J. S. Oyer, “The Reformers Oppose the Anabaptist Theology” (pp. 202-218).

FT597 “*Symbolum*,” rarely used by Calvin with reference to a sacrament, but here replacing *tessera*, which is used in the 1539 to 1554 editions (OS V. 306, note e).

FT598 Cf. Zwingli, *Refutation of the Tricks of the Baptists*: “Circumcision among the ancients (so far as it was sacramental) was the same as

baptism with us” (*Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, 3. 366; tr. *Selected Works*, p. 139). Cf. sec. 4, below, last sentence; sec. 10; Augustine, *City of God* 16. 27 (MPL 41. 307; tr. NPNF 2. 321); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 70:1. 3. The argument for infant baptism is closely associated with the covenant of promise, the sacrament of which in the Old Testament was circumcision. The relation of circumcision to baptism in the thought of the New Testament church is carefully examined by O. Cullmann, *Baptism in the New Testament*, ch. 4. Pannier cites a statement of Francis Lambert in *Somme Chrestienne* (1529), placing baptism in clear succession to circumcision (Pannier, *Institution* 3. 321).

FT599 “Anagoge.” On anagogy in Biblical exegesis, see *The Interpreter’s Bible* 1. 21. Calvin regards circumcision anagogically as the anticipation of baptism.

FT600 “*Ad proportionem fidei.*” Cf. 4. 13:3.

FT601 “*Tessera.*” Cf. 4. 14:1, note 2, and sec. 2, note 3, above.

FT602 Argument similarly answered by Zwingli (CR Zwingli 4. 330).

FT603 Cf. Zwingli to Francis Lambert, Dec. 16, 1524 (CR Zwingli 8. 271). Zwingli notes that Christ baptized nobody (John 4:2).

FT604 “*βρέφη καὶ παῖδιά,*” newly born and young children.

FT605 The words are, respectively, *venire* and *accedere*.

FT606 CR Zwingli 4. 300; 8. 272.

FT607 Cf. sec. 1, above, note 2.

FT608 Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 2. 22:4, as often interpreted (MPG 7. 784 and note 87; tr. ANF 1. 391; cf. note 9); Origen, *Commentary on Romans* 5:9 (MPG 14. 1047); and Cyprian, *Letters* 64:6 (CSEL 3. 2:721), are among the early witnesses to the view.

FT609 Calvin has numerous suggestions of the effect of baptism upon the religious consciousness of the child as in course of time he is made aware of its significance. Cf. sec. 17, below.

FT610 “*Eximia consolatione.*” Cadier, *Institution* 4. 323, note 1, refers at this point to the Heidelberg Catechism, Question 1: “What is thy only comfort...?”

FT611 Cf. 2. 8:21, note 31, and sec. 15, below.

FT612 Cf. sec. 6, above.

FT613 Cf. 2. 10:1; 2. 11:3.

FT614 “*Fumos suos...vendant.*” Cf. 4. 7:11, note 27.

FT615 Cf. 2. 10, 11; Comm. Genesis 48:1-4.

FT616 The position of Melchior Holmann. Cf. *Bibliotheca Reformatoria Neerlandica*, ed. S. Cramer, 5. 294.

FT617 A reference to the quotation of Ephesians 2:12 in sec. 3, above.

FT618 Cf. sec. 9, above, note 17.

FT619 *Acta des Gesprachs zwischen predicanten uund Teuffbruederen*, fo. 132.

FT620 “ἀλληγορεῖν.”

FT621 Augustine, *Letters* 47:14 (MPL 33. 680; tr. FC 20. 330); Augustine, *Against Faustus the Manichee* 16:29 (MPL 42. 335; tr. NPNF 4. 231 f.).

FT622 Cf. the interpretation of Psalm 8:2 in 1. 16:3.

FT623 Cf. Zwingli’s similar reply to this Anabaptist argument (*Acta des Gesprachs*, fo. 137) in his *Refutation of the Baptist Tricks* (*Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, 3. 424; tr. *Selected Works of Zwingli*, ed. S. M. Jackson, p. 236).

FT624 The argument in secs. 17-23 is a response to Balthasar Hubmaier’s treatise *On the Christian Baptism of Believers* (CR Zwingli IV. 594, 611-615, 624, note 9). The concept of rebirth as habitually employed by Anabaptist writers differed widely from Calvin’s doctrine of regeneration (1. 15:4; 3. 3; 4. 15:6 f.; Comm. John 3:3-7). Cf. LCC 25, index, s. vv. “Rebirth,” “Reborn.”

FT625 Hubmaier, *op. cit.* (CR Zwingli 4. 612, note 2).

FT626 Hubmaier, *op. cit.* (CR Zwingli 4. 594, note 19).

FT627 Hubmaier, *op. cit.* (CR Zwingli 4. 610, 612).

FT628 Hubmaier, *op. cit.* (CR Zwingli 4. 612).

FT629 Hofmann, as cited in sec. 12, above, note 22.

FT630 Hubmaier, *op. cit.* (CR Zwingli 4. 611).

FT631 Cf. 4. 16:1.

FT632 Hubmaier, *loc. cit.*

FT633 *Ibid.*

FT634 *The Schleithem Confession*, art. 1 (Zwingli, *Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, 3. 388; tr. J. C. Wenget, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 19 [1945], 248; tr. Jackson, *Select Works of Zwingli*, p. 178); Hubmaier, *op. cit.*, pp. 614f.

FT635 On this exegetical rule, cf. 4. 15:18, note 31.

FT636 “*Quod natione erat ἀλλόφυλος.*”

FT637 The so-called Halfway Covenant, adopted in Massachusetts in 1662, by which the children of the unregenerate were admitted to baptism, was a departure from Calvin’s teaching here.

FT638 Hubmaier, *op. cit.*, in CK Zwingli 4. 594, note 19.

FT639 Calvin refers at this point in the 1539 *Institutio* to “false interpretations” of John 3:5, where, he says, “the Lord Jesus Christ makes no mention of baptism” (CR. 1. 986; OS V. 330, note d); cf. Pannier, *Institution* III. 274. On the abrupt and forbidding phrase, “Spirit, who is water,” above, cf. Comm. John 3:5, where he discards Chrysostom’s view relating the words to baptism and thinks of water as a metaphor for “Spirit,” suggestive of the Holy Spirit’s work of purification.

FT640 Cf. 4. 15:20, note 36. Calvin, like Zwingli, attributes this view to the Anabaptists, but numerous contrary statements can be found in their writings. Cf. CR Zwingli 4. 624, note 9, and Conrad Grebel, Letter to Muntzer, in LCC 25. 81. Servetus, however, holds that infants as well as others who do not believe in Christ are under condemnation: *Restitution of Christianity*, p. 534, quoted in sec. 31, below. Calvin raises the issue in attacking the Sorbonne theologians, who held baptism necessary for salvation: *Against the Articles of the Theologians of Paris*, art. 10 (CR VII. 7 f.). The Council of Trent, session 7, on baptism, canon 5, anathematizes those who deny that baptism is necessary to salvation (Schaff, *Creeds* 2. 123).

FT641 Cf. secs. 18, 19, above.

FT642 Conrad Grebel so Argues in his *Protestation und Schutzschrift* (1534); cf. H. S. Bender, *Conrad Grebel*, pp. 129, 783 ff. Cf. sec. 29, below.

FT643 Cf. citation of John 3:5, beginning of sec. 25, above.

FT644 Cf. sec. 27, above.

FT645 VG 1541 here inserts a passage in interpretation of Acts 19:1-7; Pannier, *Institution* 3. 279 f.; OS V. 334. This accords with the treatment of the same passage in 4. 15:18.

FT646 Servetus' *On the Errors of the Trinity* appeared in 1531 when the author was twenty years old. (See R. H. Bainton, *Hunted Heretic*, p. 217.) In his *Restitution of Christianity* (1553), he advocates withholding baptism until the age of thirty (pp. 372, 412 f.).

FT647 Cf. Zwingli, *Refutation of the Baptist Tricks* (*Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, 3. 432; tr. *Selected Works*, ed. S. M. Jackson, p. 173).

FT648 Cyprian, *On the Lapsed* 9, 25 (CSEL 3. 1:243, 255; tr. AGW 25. 20, 32 f.); Augustine, *On the Merits and Remission of Sins* 1. 20:27 (MPL 44. 124; tr. NPNF 5. 25); *Letters* 217. 5:16 (MPL 33. 984 f.; tr. FG 32. 87).

FT649 VG does not use this rhetorical question but reads: "*Ce ne seroit pas humainement fait a nous de donner aux petits enfants du poison au lieu de nourriture.*" In editions 1541-1551 VG has: "*Ce n'est pas raison que presentations aux enfants leur jugement et leur condamnation en leur administrant.*"

FT650 For "symbols" in the above sentence VG has "*signes.*" Through this long sec. 31, written in 1559, Calvin is attacking opinions expressed by Servetus in the *Christianismi restitutio* (1553), pp. 564-568. Detailed references are in OS V. 336-340. Calvin habitually links Servetus with the Anabaptists. Not less than they, he repudiated infant baptism, while in other matters he differed widely from most of them. Bainton gives some additional passages broadly applicable here: *Hunted Heretic*, pp. 137-142.

FT651 The idea of perfection is characteristically associated with that of future progress rather than of present attainment: cf. 3. 17:25.

FT652 "*Tesseract adoptionis.*" Children are adopted as members, and given, in baptism, a token of their membership in the church, although they

are as yet unqualified for admission to the Lord's Supper. Cf. sec. 32, below, last sentence.

FT653 "*Paralogismum*." See Liddell and Scott, *Greek Lexicon*, 8th ed., 1135 a.

FT654 Hermes Trismegistus (thrice greatest Hermes) was the name given by the Greeks to Thoth, the Egyptian god of letters and wisdom. The forty-two Hermetic books (mentioned by Clement of Alexandria) were ascribed to him. These writings perished, but some Neoplatonic imitations of them were circulated in the Middle Ages. The reference here is to the mention by Servetus, *Restitutio*, p. 567. Servetus did not live to see the printed medieval fragment of this literature, *On the Power and Wisdom of God*, that was published in Paris in 1554. See articles on Hermes Trismegistus in Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, and in *Encyclopaedia Britannica*.

FT655 The sibyls were prophesying women at Cumae and elsewhere in ancient Italy and Greece, much consulted for their predictions and advice. Books based on their prophecies were circulated in Rome and Italy at the beginning of the Christian era.

CHAPTER 17

FT656 Most sections of this chapter are composed of materials that originated in the various earlier editions of the *Institutes*, skillfully woven into a continuous argument. In structure and order, the chapter is wholly independent of the *Short Treatise on the Holy Supper of the Lord* (French, 1541, in OS 1. 503-530; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* 2. 163-198; Latin, 1546), but in actual teaching is in accord with that work. The intervening controversy (1556-1563) with Joachim Westphal and Tilemann Heshus (Heshusius) called forth much detailed argument, which is in part reflected here in secs. 30-34. Cf. Smits 1. 87-95. Among many studies of Calvin's doctrine of the Lord's Supper the following may be called to the reader's attention here: A. Barclay, *The Protestant Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, pp. 107-293; J. Beckmann, *Vom Sacrament bei Calvin*; J. Cadier, *La Doctrine Calviniste de la Sainte Cene*; H. Grass, *Die Abendmahlslehre bei Luther und Calvin*

(*Beitrage zur Forderung Christlicher Theologie* 2 ser. 47; 2d edition); A.M. Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, pp. 178-190; A. J. Macdonald (ed.), *The Evangelical Doctrine of Holy Communion*, ch. 5; G. MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, ch. 10; J. D. Benoit, *Calvin, directeur d'ames*, pp. 204-211; W. Niesel, *Calvins Lehre vom Abendmahl*. Pannier has an extended footnote on the background of the similar chapter (12) in VG 1541: *Institution* 4. 7, note *a*, on pp. 299 ff. For general approach, see W. Kohler, *Zwingli und Luther: Ihr Streit uber das Abendmahl*, 2 vols.; R. Will, *Le Culte, etude d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses*, 3 vols.; D. Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Eucharist*, 2 vols. (extracts from Calvin, 2. 50-56). Significant twentieth-century liturgical developments in the Reformed churches are interpreted by J. D. Benoit in his conference lecture *Liturgical Renewal: Studies in Catholic and Protestant Developments on the Continent*, pp. 29-66.

FT657 Resuming the thought of 4. 16:9, 32.

FT658 The reference is to the strife within the Reformation over this Sacrament during more than three decades before 1559.

FT659 “*Eius comrnunicatione refecti*”; VG: “*repus de sa substance*,” i.e., “*nourris de sa force vivante*” (Cadier’s note). But cf. the phrases used in 1536, not in later editions, quoted in sec. 8, note 24, below. “*Communicatio*” is often used by Calvin in preference to *communio*. On the corresponding French forms Cadier notes that *communiquer* and *communication* have the advantage over *communier* and *communion* in that they call attention to the spiritual reality in conjunction with the act and ceremony: *Institution* 4. 349, note 4; cf. Cadier, *La Doctrine Calviniste de la Sainte Cene*, pp. 16 f.; J. C. McLelland, *The Visible Words of God: An Exposition of the Sacramental Theology of Peter Martyr Vermigli*, ch. 6: “The Sacrament of Communion.”

FT660 “*Mysteriurn hoc arcanæ Christi cum piis unionis natura incomprehensibile est*.” The “mystery” is not treated by Calvin as an intellectual puzzle. It is indeed inexplicable, but the emphasis is on the effectual transformation of the believer, through union with Christ. Cf. Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, pp. 218 ff.;

Barclay, *The Protestant Doctrine of the Lord's Supper*, pp. 112, 203, 264.

FT661 “*Arrhis ac tesseris*”: cf. 4. 14:1, note 2.

FT662 “*Mystica haec benedictio*.”

FT663 “*Mirifica commutatio*.” The description of the soul's transformation that follows is reminiscent of Luther's description of the effects of faith, *Treatise on Christian Liberty* (1520) (*Werke* WA 7. 54 f.; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 318 ff.); cf. Luther, *Sermon on the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and on the Brotherhoods* (*Werke* WA 2. 743 ff.; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 11-14).

FT664 Cf. *Instruction in Faith* 29 (OS 1. 413; tr. Fuhrmann, p. 70).

FT665 Luther, *Little Catechism* (1529) (*Werke* WA 30. 316; tr. J. Lenker, *Luther's Catechetical Writings*, p. 31); *Sermon on Confession and the Eucharist* (*Werke* WA 15. 494 f.).

FT666 Middle of sec. 1, above.

FT667 “*In symbolum...datur*.” In 1536 and 1539 Calvin used *signum* here. Cf. 4. 16:2, note 3.

FT668 Luther, *Sermon on Confession and the Eucharist* (*Werke* WA 15. 495 f.). Cf. D. Stone, *op. cit.*, 1. 389, quoting Biel in a similar passage (*Sacrae canonis missae expositio*, lect. 85 AB).

FT669 Cf. De Castro, *Adversus haereses* 4 (1543 ed., fo. 90 H, 91 D). Calvin, as Cadier notes, holds that the passage in question, on “the bread of life” (John 6:35-48), is to be interpreted with reference “not to the institution of the Lord's Supper alone, but in the perspective of the whole work of Christ, and of his Person” (Cadier, *Institution* 4. 351, note 5).

FT670 Cf. J. C. McLelland, *The Visible Words of God*, p. 145.

FT671 Alluding respectively to Zwingli and the Lutheran theologians.

FT672 “*Credendo manducari*”; VG: “*en croyant nous mangeons*.” Cf. McLelland, *op. cit.*, p. 146, stressing the agreement of Calvin and Peter Martyr, and his Appendix C, pp. 379 f. The preceding sentences evidently have reference to Zwingli and the letter of Cornelius Hendrix Hoen (Honius), which Zwingli received and edited (1525) (CR Zwingli 4. 512-518); cf. Zwingli's letter to M. Alberus, November 16, 1524;

Comm. on True and False Religion (1525), 18; (CR Zwingli 3. 339, 818). These passages interpret John 6:52-57.

FT673 Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine* 3. 16:24 (MPL 34. 74 f.; tr. NPNF 2. 566); *John's Gospel* 31:9; 40:2 (MPL 35. 1640, 1686; tr. NPNF 7. 191, 225); *Sermons* 131, 1; 57:7 (MPL 38. 729, 389; tr. LF *Sermons* 2. 586 f., 84 f.).

FT674 Chrysostom, *Opera* (Basel, 1530) 4. 581.

FT675 Book 4. 13, 14 Cf. also Comm. Harmony of the Evangelists, Matthew 26:21-30; Mark 14:18-26; Luke 22:15-20.

FT676 This opinion was espoused by Carlstadt; Barth and Niesel, however, think it unlikely that Calvin learned it from him, but suppose rather that it is directed against the reproaches of Lutherans (OS 5. 348, note 6). They also cite the explicit affirmations of the “Confession of Faith Concerning the Eucharist” put forth by the Synod of Bern (1537) (CR 9. 711 f.; OS 1. 435 f.), and of the *Short Treatise on the Holy Supper* (1541) (OS 1. 508; CR 5. 438 f.; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* 2. 170 f.).

FT677 Cf. sec. 17, note 58, below, and the characterization of the Lutheran doctrine of ubiquity, sec. 29 (“*ubique locorum...absque forma*”) and sec. 30. In his *Short Treatise on the Holy Supper* I, Calvin criticizes the doctrine of the ubiquity of Christ’s body as implying “nothing but a phantasm” (OS 1. 521; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* II. 187).

FT678 “*Infantiae mede modulo.*” Cf. the note of mystery and mystical elevation in 4. 14:6; 4. 16:2. Calvin bows humbly before the mystery of the Eucharist; where he halts, he challenges others to rise higher (*multo altius assurgere*) if they are able. In his answer to Westphal he refers to the “mystery surpassing human search [*mysterium humanae curiositati impervestigabile*] that Christ in heaven feeds us with his flesh on earth” (CR 9. 81; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* 2. 291). Cf. Wallace, *Calvin's Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, p. 221; MacGregor, *Corpus Christi*, pp. 87, 193 ff.

FT679 Sections 8-10 expound principles stated with great compression in a passage in the 1536 edition (OS 1. 142), in which Calvin explains how Christ’s body is “shown” in the Eucharist — “not the very substance of his body or the true and natural body of Christ...but all the benefits

which Christ in his body provided for us.” Cf. Pannier, *Institution* 4. 21, note a, pp. 304 f.

FT680 Cyril of Alexandria, *Exposition of John’s Gospel* 2. 8 (MPG 73. 381 f.).

FT681 “*Arcanum*.”

FT682 The above sentences express Calvin’s sense of the mystery of the sacramental participation in Christ’s body through the activity of the Holy Spirit, despite distance (*locorum distantia*) and separation (*locis disiuncta*) — a thing incredible until we realize the transcendent hidden power (*arcana virtus*) of the Holy Spirit. Cf. sec. 7, note 23, above; 4. 17:11. For his habitual assertion of the mysterious power (*virtus*) operating in the sacraments, Calvin’s doctrine has been called “virtualism.”

FT683 “*Accumbunt*”; the word does not always imply the ancient Roman recumbent posture at a feast. Calvin’s contemporaries, such as John Brenz, used the same word in discussing the Eucharist (as quoted by W. Elert, *Morphologie des Luthertums* 1. 266). Cf. sec. 35, note 20, below.

FT684 “*Rei nomen signo deferatur*.” In the subsequent sentences we find *symbolum* instead of *signum*, as also in sec. 11, but VG has “*signe*” in each instance, adding once *exterieure* and again *visible*.

FT685 Cf. Hoen’s letter in CR Zwingli 4. 513; sec. 5, note 17, above; Augustine, *Sermons* 272 (MPL 38. 1247); Bucer, *Metaphrases et enarrationes in epistolam ad Romanos* (1536), p. 152: “*regna, quibus aeterna vita tum significando exhibetur, tum exhibendo significatur*”; A. Lang, *Der Evangelienkommentar Martin Butzers und die Grundzuge seiner Theologie*, pp. 259-265. Barth and Niesel have indicated, with the aid of Herminjard, *Correspondance* 6. 130-136, that in this section and in some later passages Calvin has introduced fragments originally written for his Commentary on Romans but omitted from it on Melancthon’s advice (OS 5. 352, note k; 354, note h [sec. 11]; 357-358, notes a-h [sec. 13]; 365, notes c-g; 366, note a [sec. 19]; 390, note 1 [sec. 32]).

FT686 Zwingli, *Friendly Exegesis, That Is, Exposition of the Eucharist, to Martin Luther* (1527) (CR Zwingli V. 588 f.).

FT687 The document *Ego Berengarius* was that writer's act of repudiation of his previous teaching, exacted from him at Rome in 1059; the formulation is by Cardinal Humbert. Its language is extreme: "the true body and blood of Our Lord...sensibly and not only sacramentally but in truth handled and broken by the hands of the priests and crushed by the teeth of believers" (Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th edition, p. 144). For another translation, and full discussion, see A. J. Macdonald, *Berengar and the Reform of Sacramental Doctrine*, p. 130. "Never," says Y. Brilioth, "has it [the real presence] been formulated more crudely" (*Eucharistic Faith and Practice: Evangelical and Catholic*, p. 86). Cf. Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 2:49 (MPL 187. 1750 f.; Friedberg 1. 1328 f.).

FT688 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 12:4, 5 (MPL 192. 865), does not approve the language of the *Ego Berengarius* on the breaking of the true body by the priest.

FT689 Cf. sec. 7, note 22, above; sec. 30, below.

FT690 *Sermon on the Holy Spirit* in Chrysostom's *Opera* (Basel, 1530) V. 379.

FT691 Bucer, *Metaphrases...in epistolam ad Romanos* (1530), fo. 338; Lang, *op. cit.*, p. 444: "*Sic Christum suo spiritu salvificio, iam intra nos habitare.*"

FT692 "More modestly," that is, than the *Ego Berengarius* statement.

FT693 Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 76. 5. 1.

FT694 "*Habitudinis*," apparently in the sense in which the word is used by Aquinas. Cf. L. Schultz, *Thomas-Lexikon*; Deferrari, *Lexicon*, s.v. "*Habitudo*."

FT695 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 10:2 (MPL 192. 860).

FT696 The basic declaration on transubstantiation is that of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) canon 1 (Mansi 22. 982; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 179; tr. Bettenson, *Documents of the Christian Church*, p. 210).

FT697 So Ockham, *The Sacrament of the Altar*, ch. 5: "*Quod substantia panis non remanet post consecrationem*" (The *De sacramento altaris* of William Ockham, ed. and tr. T. B. Birch, pp. 182-187); *On the Sentences* 4. qu. 6 C, D; Biel, *Collectorium on the Sentences* 4. 11:1,

departing from Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 75:3 (tr. Bettenson, *op. cit.*, pp. 211 f.).

FT698 Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 3. 19: “*Panem corpus sui appellans ut et huic iam eum intellegas corporis sui figuram pani dedisse.*” For numerous further citations, see OS 5. 357 f.; Smits 2. 53.

FT699 Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 22:2; 23:7 (MPG 33. 1097 f., 1113 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 7. 151 f., 154); Ambrose, *On the Christian Faith* 4. 10:124 (MPL 16. 641; tr. NPNF [sec. 125] 2 ser. 10. 278); John of Damascus, *On the Orthodox Faith* 4. 13 (MPG 94. 1144 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 9. 81-84).

FT700 Cf. the reference to Gregory the Great’s times in 4. 4:13.

FT701 Above, this section, note 42.

FT702 “*Syllabarum aucupiis*,” repeated sec. 23, below. Cicero stigmatizes a pettifogging lawyer as “*cantor formularum, auceps syllabarum*”: *De oratore* 1:55 (LCL edition, p. 170). Cf. “*Verborum religio*,” “*verborum reverentia*,” “*literae exactoribus*,” sec. 20, below, conveying Calvin’s contempt for narrow literalism.

FT703 Sec. 4, above.

FT704 Cf. sec. 15, above, note 40; sec. 16, below.

FT705 Cf. sec. 14, above, note 45.

FT706 “καταχρηστικῶς.”

FT707 Cf. Augustine’s exposition of related passages in *On the Trinity* 3. 10:20 (MPL 42. 880; tr. NPNF 3. 64).

FT708 Cf. *Lectures on Jeremiah*, Jeremiah 11:19 (CR 38:123 f.).

FT709 As taught by Lutherans, not explicitly by Luther, though Luther had taught the ubiquity of Christ’s postresurrection body. Cf. ses. 30, below; J. Kostlin, *The Theology of Luther*, tr. C.E. Hay, II. 77 ff.; W. Eler, *Morphologie des Luthertums* 1. 267 f.; H. Grass, *Die Abendmahlslehre bei Luther und Calvin* p. 266

FT710 Cf. sec. 10, above.

FT711 Secs. 20-34, below; ubiquity in sec. 29.

FT712 Ockham, *Centiloquium* 25, 28.

- FT713 Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 3. 8 (Christ's body called a phantasm) (CSEL 47. 388 ff.; tr. ANF 3. 327 f.); H. Grass, *op. cit.*, *loc. cit.*
- FT714 Cf. sec. 29, below.
- FT715 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 76. 1, 2.
- FT716 Cf. sec. 11, above, note 30.
- FT717 Cf. Hunter, *The Teaching of Calvin*, pp. 178-186; Grass, *op. cit.*, pp. 195-209.
- FT718 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 78:5.
- FT719 "Verborum religio." Cf. sec. 14, note 47, above.
- FT720 Bonaventura, *On the Sentences* 4. 8 part 2. art. 1. qu. 1 (*Opera omnia* 4. 191).
- FT721 The full phrase is not Luther's but was used by Willibald Pirckheimer; cf. Kohler, *Zwingli und Luther* 1. 236; OS 5. 368.
- FT722 Calvin has in mind through secs. 20-34 the controversial writings of Joachim Westphal, of Hamburg, his most active Lutheran critic. See the list of Westphal's tracts against Calvin in OS 5. 11 and in Smits 1:95. His *Iusta defensio adversus insignia mendacia Joannis a Lasco* (Strasbourg, 1557) also deals with the same issue. Those of his persuasion are dubbed here *literales*, men of the letter rather than of the spirit; cf. sec. 14, note 47, above; *Last Admonition to Westphal*: "Utinam tam literati essent, quam literales appetunt" (CR 9. 198; tr. Calvin, *Tracts* 2. 422). The reference here is to Westphal's *Farrago confusaneorum et inter se dissidentium opinionum de coena domini, ex sacramentariis libris digesta* (1552) E 4b; also his *Iusta defensio* 1 2b: "Dixit esse suum corpus panem quem dedit...jussit ergo edere non solum panem sed suum corpus." Cf. Luther, *Babylonish Captivity of the Church*, Preface (*Werke* WA 6. 511; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 193).
- FT723 Westphal, *De coena domini confessio* (1558) B 8a; *Apologia confessionis*, pp. 30, 31.
- FT724 Sec. 7, above.
- FT725 Cf. Comm. Psalm 84:8.
- FT726 Westphal, *Apologia confessionis*, p. 58.

FT727 Augustine, *Letters* 98:9; 169:2. 9 (MPL 33. 364, 746; tr. FC 18. 137; 30. 18); *Against Adimantus* 12:3 (MPL 42. 144); *Psalms*, Psalm 3:1 (MPL 36. 73; tr. NPNF 8:5).

FT728 “*HOC EST.*” The position assailed in these sentences accords with numerous utterances of Luther. Cf. *Vom Anbeten des Sacraments des heiligen Leichnams Christi* (1523) (*Werke* WA 9. 343-437) and the passages cited by E. M. Plass, *What Luther Says*, nos. 2487-2490. The *Confessio et apologia* issued by the pastors and other ministers of the Church of Magdeburg, 1550, uses the words: “*suum verum corpus sub pane edendum, sanguinem bibendum sub vino,*” C 4b.

FT729 “*Verbi substantivi.*” Translation based on a note from S. W. Huston and comments by G. MacCracken. Cf. M. A. Pei and F. Gaynor, *A Dictionary of Linguistics*, “substantive verb.”

FT730 “*κοινωνίαν.*”

FT731 Text has *Pesach*, for Hebrew פסח.

FT732 “*Vetant...ut Uterati appareant, vel tantillum a litera discedere.*” In this punning language, Calvin emphasizes the position taken in secs. 14 and 20, above. Cf. sec. 20, note 68. In the next sentence he illustrates his own freedom from literalism.

FT733 Epiphanius attacking the Anthropomorphites, or Audianites, who took literally Genesis 1:26 and other Scripture phrases here cited by Calvin: *Panarion sive arcula adversus octoginta haereses* 70:2. 4 (GCS 37. 234; MPG 42. 341); cf. Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 4. 10 (ed. T. Gaisford, p. 316 f.; GCS 19. 228; tr. NPNF [sec. 9] 2 ser. 2. 114). Cf. 1. 13:1, note 4. It is noteworthy that Calvin sees in such literalism a menacing barbarism destructive of faith.

FT734 Westphal, *De coena domini confessio* B 6b-8a; *Apologia confessionis*, pp. 26, 29-31, 38-43, 58. Cf. also Luther, *Vom Abendmahl Christi Bekenntnis* (*Werke* WA 26. 298 f.; tr. Plass, *What Luther Says*, no. 2492).

FT735 Cf. sec. 14, note 47, above.

FT736 Westphal, *Collectanea sententiarum...Augustini...de coena domini* (1555) F 2ab, F 5b.

FT737 “*Res toro caeli et terrae spatio dissitas ac remotas, in tanta locorum distantia...uniri.*” Cf. sec. 28, below: “*locorum...distantia procul dissitos.*” Calvin’s intense feeling of the mystery of the presence of Christ’s body is enhanced by the consideration of the vast distance between earth and heaven. Cf. sec. 10, note 27, above. For another emphasis, cf. 3. 20:40.

FT738 Cf. Comm. Psalm 139:12.

FT739 Augustine, *Letters* 187:3. 10 (MPL 33. 835 f.; tr. FC 30. 228 f.).

FT740 Westphal, *Apologia confessionis*, p. 210.

FT741 Cf. sec. 23, above, note 78.

FT742 Cf. sec. 17, above, note 58, and Augustine, *Against Faustus the Manichee* 24:1; 7 (MPL 42. 473, 115; tr. NPNF 4. 317, 174).

FT743 Cf. Westphal, *Apologia confessionis*, pp. 8, 191 ff.

FT744 Westphal, *op. cit.*, pp. 271 ff.

FT745 Westphal, *op. cit.*, pp. 273 f.

FT746 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 1:13 (MPL 35. 1763; tr. NPNF VII. 282).

FT747 Translation influenced by VG: “*Moyennant que nous croyons qu’il est au ciel, c’est assez.*” Augustine holds unequivocally that “an earthly body was taken up into heaven”; but it is “vain curiosity” to ask where. Augustine, *Faith and the Creed* 6:13 (MPL 40. 188; tr. LCC 6. 360).

FT748 Westphal, *Fides Cyrilli de praesentia corporis* (1555); *Collectanea sententiarum...Augustini* (1555); *De coena domini confessio* (1558) C 4b ff., are cited for this opinion in OS 5. 380. (For more detailed references to Westphal’s tracts than these notes afford, see OS 5. 369-395.)

FT749 Referring to Westphal’s collection of Augustine passages on the Eucharist, *Collectanea sententiarum...Augustini* (1555), and citations of Augustine elsewhere in Westphal’s writings.

FT750 In his *Clear Explanation of Sound Doctrine Concerning the True Participation of the Flesh and Blood of Christ in the Lord’s Supper* (*Dilucida explicatio*, etc., 1561), written in reply to Tilemann Heshus, Calvin refers with warm approval to works by Oecolampadius,

Bullinger, and Peter Martyr (“who left nothing more to be done”), containing citations of the fathers on this topic. (CR 9. 490; Calvin, *Tracts* 2. 535; LCC 22. 292.)

FT751 “*Totum esse nostrum.*” Cf. Introduction, pp. 62 ff., above; Smits 1. 271. The numerous passages cited from Augustine in this section are listed by Smits 2. 54 and less completely in OS 5. 381-384. They include: *City of God* 22. 7 (MPL 41. 759; tr. NPNF 2. 484); *Psalms*, Psalm 26. 2:11; 46. 7; 33. 1:10; 2:2 (MPL 36. 205, 528, 306, 308; tr. LF *Psalms* 1. 176; 2 [Psalm 47]. 280 f.; 1 [Psalm 34]. 250); *Johns Gospel* 13:11; 1:12, 13; 92:1; 102:6; 106:2; 107:4; tr. NPNF 7. 90, 282, 362, 391, 399, 403; *Confessions* 9. 13:36 (MPL 32. 778; tr. LCC 7. 200); *Letters* 44:5, 10; 98:9; 54:6, 8; 187:6, 18, 3, 10, 13, 41 (MPL 33. 178, 364, 203, 838, 835 f., 848; tr. FC 12. 215, 257 f.; 28. 287; 30. 234 f., 228 f., 254 f.); *On the Trinity* 3. 4:10; 3. 10:19, 20 (MPL 42. 873, 880; tr. NPNF 3. 59, 63 f.). Most of the passages are those cited by Westphal in his *Collectanea*, B 3a-G 3b (and previously by Oecolampadius, Bullinger, and Peter Martyr). Cf. Westphal, *Apologia confessionis*, pp. 228 f., 237, 250-255.

FT752 Servetus, *Christianismi restitutio*, 17th epistle, p. 620; CR 8. 681 f.; cf. 2. 14:8.

FT753 Tertullian, *Against Marcion* 4. 40: “*Hoc est corpus meum, id est, figura corporis mei. Figura autem non fuisse nisi veritatis esset corpus.*” The whole chapter is relevant. (CSEL 47. 559; CCL Tertullianus 1. 656; tr. ANF 3. 418.)

FT754 Tertullian, *On the Resurrection of the Flesh* (CCL has in title “*mortuorum*,” “of the dead,” instead of “*carnis*”; cf. CCL Tertullianus 2. 921, note 1) 51:2-3 (CSEL 47. 105; CCL Tertullianus 2. 994; tr. ANF 3. 584).

FT755 Bullinger, writing to Calvin, May 16, 1557, informs him of the contents of Jacob Andreae’s book, *A Short and Simple Account of the Lord’s Supper* (German), then newly published, in which Paul’s vision is cited (fo. 41a) against the location of Christ’s body in heaven (CR 16. 484 f.).

FT756 The views criticized in sec. 29 are mainly Westphal’s and are in passages already cited from his *Collectanea* and *Apologia confessionis*.

FT757 Luther frequently utilizes the concept of ubiquity to explain the presence of Christ's body in the Eucharist. Cf. sec. 16, above, note 54; Luther, *Against the Heavenly Prophets* (Werke WA 18. 206, 211); *Vom Abendmahl Christi Bekenntnis* (Werke WA 26. 318, 414 f., 428); Plass, *What Luther Says*, no. 2498.

FT758 Cf. 2. 14:4, note 11.

FT759 Cf. 2. 14:5.

FT760 “*Idiomatum κοινωνίαν*.” Cf. 2. 14:1, note 4. Calvin does not condemn the doctrine as found in the fathers.

FT761 Cf. 2. 13:4, *ad finem*.

FT762 Lombard, *Sentences* 3. 22:3 (MPL 192. 804).

FT763 Cf. Introduction, p. 65 above; sec. 7, note 23, above. Luther, says H. Boehmer, “felt the inward need not only to *think* the personal communion with his Lord and Master but actually to experience it through communion. Zwingli did not understand this need at all. Calvin, as Luther realized at once, not only understood it but felt it himself”: *Luther in the Light of Modern Research* (tr. E. S. G. Potter), p. 241.

FT764 Augustine, *City of God* 16. 37 (MPL 41. 516; tr. NPNF 3. 32).

FT765 Westphal, arguing, with a citation of Cyril of Alexandria, that we become one with Christ by eating his flesh, *Apologia confessionis*, p. 142.

FT766 “*Olim*,” referring to the medieval controversies from the age of Berengar (ca. 1059) to the Fourth Lateran Council (1215), which affirmed transubstantiation (canon 1). Cf. sec. 12, note 32; sec. 14, note 41, above.

FT767 “*Prora et puppis*.” Cicero uses this as “a proverb of the Greeks.” *Letters to His Friends* 16. 24:1 (LCL edition, 3. 374 f., note f). The expression occurs also in 3. 4:20 and in 4. 18:18.

FT768 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 8:4; 4. 9:2 (MPL 192. 857 f.). On *manducatio impiorum*, see Grass, *op. cit.*, p. 233; McNeill, *Unitive Protestantism*, pp. 156 f.; Westphal, *Recta fides de coena domini* (1553) G 4b f.

FT769 Cf. Augustine, *John's Gospel* 6:15; 62:1; 53:10 (MPL 35. 1432, 1801, 1778; tr. NPNF 7. 44, 312 f., 244); *On Baptism* 5. 8:9 (MPL 43.

181; tr. NPNF 4. 466 f.); *Psalms*, Psalm 142. 15 (MPL 37. 1854; tr. LF *Psalms* [Psalm 143] 6. 292).

FT770 The latter half of sec. 33 is mainly directed against Westphal's *Recta fides de coena domini* G 1a-H 3a.

FT771 The passages from Augustine utilized above in this section are: *John's Gospel* 26:11, 12, 15, 18; 59:1; 62:1; 27:3, 11 (MPL 35. 1611, 1612, 1614, 1796, 1801, 1616, 1621; tr. NPNF 7. 171 ff., 307 f., 312 f., 174, 177 f.); *City of God* 21. 25 (MPL 41. 742; tr. NPNF 2. 473); *Psalms* Psalm 98:9 (MPL 37. 1265; tr. LF *Psalms* [Psalm 99] 4. 454); *On Baptism* 5. 8:9 (MPL 43. 181; tr. NPNF 4. 466 f.); *Sermons* 112. 5.5 (MPL 38. 645; tr. LF *Sermons* 1. 462); *Against Faustus* 13:16 (MPL 42. 291; tr. NPNF 4. 205); *On the Merits and Remission of Sins* 1. 21:30; 2. 27:44 (MPL 44. 125 f., 177; tr. NPNF 5. 26, 62).

FT772 Cf. Pope Urban IV, in his bull *Transitus* (1264), instituting the Feast of Corpus Christi (Mansi 23. 1077; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 203); Council of Trent, thirteenth session (1551), ch. 5 (Schaff, *Creeds* 2. 131).

FT773 Aquinas teaches that in the Sacrament when the bread is eaten, "by a real concomitance" the whole body (including blood, bones, nerves, etc.) is in it: *Summa Theol.* 3. 76:1, 2.

FT774 "*Discumbentes*." Cf. sec. 10, note 28, above.

FT775 Cf. Council of Nicaea (325) canon 20 (Mansi 2. 678; text and translation in Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 132 f.).

FT776 "*Sursum corda*." Cyprian, *On the Lord's Prayer* 31 (CSEL 3. 1:289; tr. ANF 5. 455); quoted in Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 1:70 (MPL 187. 1729; Friedberg 1. 1313); Augustine, *Gift of Perseverance* 13:33 (MPL 45. 1013; tr. NPNF 5. 538); *Sermons* 227 (MPL 38. 1100); *Psalms*, Psalm 132. 13 (MPL 37. 1736; tr. NPNF [Psalm 133] 8. 619 f.; LF *Psalms* 6. 121).

FT777 De Castro, *Against Heresies* 1, art. "*adoratio*" (1543 ed., fo. 26 B, C).

FT778 Sections 1-3, above.

FT779 Pannier, in *Institution* 4. 299, 307 (notes on 4. 7, 38), calls attention to similar statements in Farel, *Sommaire* 19, and Calvin, *Instruction in Faith* (1537).

FT780 The Didache (Teaching of the Twelve Apostles) 9. 4 employs this simile, based on I Corinthians 10:17, in a Eucharistic prayer (LCL Apostolic Fathers 1. 322 f.). Cf. Augustine, *Sermons* 272: “*Intelligite et gaudete; unitas, veritas, pietas, charitas, unus panis...unum corpus multi*” (MPL 38. 1247); Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 8:4 (MPL 192. 857); Oecolampadius, Antisyngramma in his *Apologetica* (1526), A 1a. Luther has an allusion to this in his *Sermon on the Sacrament of the Body of Christ* (1519) (*Werke* WA 2. 748; tr. Plass, *What Luther Says*, no. 2524); *Ein schone Predict*, etc.: *A Beautiful Sermon on the Reception of the Holy Sacrament* (*Werke*, Erlangen edition, 11. 186 ff.; tr. J. N. Lenker, *Precious and Sacred Writings of Martin Luther* 11. 231-233). Calvin shared Luther’s deep feeling of the fellowship of Christians in the Lord’s Supper. Cf. 4. 18:16, note 31.

FT781 Augustine, *John’s Gospel* 26:13 (MPL 35. 1613; tr. NPNF 7. 172).

FT782 Cf. Luther, *Sermon for Maundy Thursday* (1524) (*Werke* WA 15. 497 f.); *On Christian Liberty* (*Werke* WA 7. 58; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 326); Calvin, *Instruction in Faith* (OS 1. 413); tr. Fuhrmann, p. 71.

FT783 Sec. 4, above.

FT784 Innocent III, in defining terms for the restoration of heretics (Waldensians) in 1209, lays down the principle of “intention” in ordination: *Regestae* 7. 196 (MPL 215. 1511). See citations in *Catholic Encyclopedia* and in *Dictionnaire de Theologie Catholique*, articles on “Intention.”

FT785 Council of Nicaea (325) canon 13 (Mansi 2. 674; Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 128 f.). Gregory I says that Benedict received the sacraments when at the point of death: *Life of St. Benedict* 37, in *Dialogues* 2 (MPL 66. 202; tr. P. W., *Dialogues of St. Gregory* (1518), ed. E. C. Gardner, p. 99).

FT786 “*Confessionem laudis.*” Cf. 3. 4:9, note 19.

FT787 Cf. 1. 1:2; 1. 5:3, note 11.

- FT788 This characterization of Scholastic teaching reflects Alexander of Hales (d. 1245), *Summa theologiae* 4. 46 memb. 3. art. 2 f. Luther had complained of such negative counseling, e.g., in his *Sermon for Palm Sunday* (1524): “Christ does not give us poison, as our teachers tell us” (*Werke* WA 15. 496).
- FT789 Cf. 3. 4:1.
- FT790 Cf. Luther, *op. cit.*, p. 502 f. (tr. in part, Plass, *What Luther Says*, no. 2523).
- FT791 Alexander I, bishop of Rome 107-116. Cf. Platyna, *Lives of the Popes*, tr. W. Benham, 1. 21 f.
- FT792 Augustine, *Unfinished Treatise Against Julian* 2. 120, 181; 4. 77 (MPL 45. 1192 f., 1220, 1383); *Against the Writings of Petilianus* 2. 23. 53 (MPL 43. 277); *On Marriage and Concupiscence* 2. 18:33; 2. 29:50 f. (MPL 44. 455, 465, 467; tr. NPNF 5. 296, 303); *On the Creed* 1:1, 2 (MPL 40. 628; tr. NPNF 3. 269 f.); *On the Grace of Christ and on Original Sin* 2. 40:45 (MPL 44. 408; tr. NPNF 5. 253 f.).
- FT793 Cf. secs. 44, 46, below. Calvin was among the earliest to urge Communion as frequently as this; in general practice the Mass was frequently celebrated, but few received the elements. Communion received monthly was regarded as “frequent” in the Scholastic era, and the preachers tended to discourage people from frequent participation. In Roman Catholicism it was the Jansenists who began the reverse trend, notably Antoine Arnauld, author of *De la frequente communion*, 1643. See esp. C. Baumgartner *et al.*, *Dictionnaire de Spiritualite* 2, art. “*Communion frequente*” 3 and 4, PP. 1260-1288.
- FT794 Cf. the Genevan regulation, *Ecclesiastical Ordinances* (1541) (CR 10. 1:7-9; tr. LCC 22:58-72).
- FT795 The requirement of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) canon 21 (Mansi 22. 1010; tr. H. J. Schroeder, *Disciplinary Decrees of the General Councils*, pp. 259 f.).
- FT796 Attributed to Pope Anacletus, but not in decretals ascribed to Calixtus I, in the *Pseudo-Isidorian Decretals*. Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 1:59 (MPL 187. 1726; Friedberg 1. 1311; ed. Hinschius, *Pseudo-Isidoriana*, p. 70).

- FT797 For texts of these decrees, see *Apostolic Canons* 9 (Fulton, *Index canonum*, pp. 82 f.); Council of Antioch (341) canon 2 (Mansi 2. 1310; Fulton, *op. cit.*, pp. 233 f.; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 14. 108 f.); Council of Toledo (400) canon 13 (Mansi 3. 1000); Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 2:20 (MPL 187. 1759; Friedberg 1. 1320).
- FT798 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 26:15 (MPL 35. 1614; tr. NPNF 7. 173); *Epistles* 54:2. 2 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 22. 253); Chrysostom, *Commentary on Ephesians*, ch. 1. hom. 3:5 (MPG 62. 29 f.; tr. NPNF 13. 63 f.).
- FT799 Zephyrinus was pope 198-217. Cf. Platyna, *Lives of the Popes*, tr. W. Benham, 1. 37.
- FT800 Cf. sec. 44, note 41, above.
- FT801 “*In utramque aurem securi dormiant*,” literally, “sleep on both ears.” Expression used by Terence, *Heauton Timorumenos* 2. 3. 101 (LCL Terence 1. 150 f.); Plautus, *Pseudolus* 1. 1:223 (LCL Plautus 4. 160 f.).
- FT802 Cf. sec. 45, above, note 44 (hom. 3:4).
- FT803 Cf. Luther, *Receiving Both Kinds in the Sacrament* (*Werke* WA 12. 11-41; tr. A. R. Wentz, *Luther's Works*, American Edition, 36. 237-267).
- FT804 Council of Constance, thirteenth session (1415) (Mansi 27. 727); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 80:12; 3. 76:1, 2; cf. sec. 35, note 19, above.
- FT805 VG expands the phrase to read: “*en l'ordre de Sacrificateurs qu'ils nomment ordre de Prestre*.” Cf. De Castro, *Against Heresies* 4 (1543 ed., fo. 98A-100A); Eck, *Enchiridion*, ch. 10.
- FT806 4. 19:28.
- FT807 On the “histories” and “books” referred to, see note 54 and OS 5. 415, note a.
- FT808 Tertullian, *On the Resurrection* 8 (CCL Tertullian 2. 93; tr. ANF 3. 551), Theodoret, *Ecclesiastical History* 5:18 (ed. T. Gaisford, p. 434; GCS 19. 309; MPG 82. 1231 f.; tr. NPNF [ch. 17] 2 ser. 3. 143); Jerome, *Commentary on Zephaniah* 3:1-7; *Commentary on Malachi* 3:15 (MPL 25. 1375, 1560; Chrysostom, *Homilies on 2 Corinthians*, hom. 18:3 (MPG 61. 527; tr. NPNF 12. 366); Augustine, *Sermons*

31:1:2 (MPL 38. 193); *Sermons* 131. 1. 1 (MPL 38. 729; tr. LF *Sermons* 2. 586); Augustine, *Letters* 217 5, 16 (8) (MPL 33. 984 f.; tr. FC 32. 87); 54:2. 2 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 12. 253); 36:10, 24 (MPL 33. 147; tr. FC 12. 159).

FT809 Gregory I, *Homilies on the Gospels* 2. 22:7 (MPL 76. 1178); Gregory I, *Dialogues* 4. 58 (MPL 77. 425; tr. P. W., ed. E. C. Gardner, p. 256).

FT810 Cf. Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 2:12, quoting Gelasius 1 to Bishops Majoricus and John: “*Aut integra sacramenta percipiant, aut ab integres arceantur*” (MPL 187. 1756; Friedberg 1. 1387); Cyprian, *On the Lapsed* 25 (CSEL 3. 1:255; tr. ACW 25. 3).

CHAPTER 18

FT811 Such as Aquinas and Lombard.

FT812 These views prevailed among the sixteenth-century Sorbonne theologians, such as Clichtove. Cf. his *Propugnaculum* (1526) 1. 11, fo. 24 f.; *Antilutherus* 2. 15, fo. 955b; and De Castro, *Against Heresies* 10, art. “*missa*” (1545 ed., fo. 133 ff.).

FT813 The language of the rite, as seen in the prayers of the Roman Missal.

FT814 Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), fo. 56a. Cf. Augustine, *City of God* 16. 22: “For then first appeared the sacrifice which is now offered to God by Christians” (MPL 41. 500; tr. NPNF 2. 323).

FT815 Cf. *Apology of Socrates* 30: “For I am now at the time when most men prophesy, the time just before death” (LCL Plato I. 136 f.).

FT816 Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), fo. 55b, 57a.

FT817 Eck, *op. cit.*, fo. 53b-54a; De Castro, *Against Heresies* 10 (1543, fo. 133 F).

FT818 Sec. 16, below.

FT819 “*ἀνάμνητον*.” Cf. De Castro, *Against Heresies* 10 (1543 ed., fo. 134 B, C); Gregory of Nazianzus, *To Amphilochius* (MPG 37. 279-282).

FT820 Eck, *Enchiridion* (1533), fo. 55b-57a.

FT821 “*Ad coronidem.*” The reference is to the mark placed at the end of a book or play. Cf. Liddell and Scott, *Greek-English Lexicon*, s.v. “*κορονίς*.”

FT822 Cf. Farel, *Sommaire* (1525) 19 (*de la messe*): “The Mass would give us to understand the great difference between the priest and the people” (Pannier, *Institution* 4. 57, note a, p. 309). Calvin is speaking of the practice of private masses, which had become prevalent early in the Middle Ages; see W. D. Maxwell, *Outline of Christian Worship*, pp. 67 f.; F. Heiler, *The Spirit of Worship*, p. 71. Cf. Luther, *De abroganda missa privata* (1521) (*Werke* WA 8. 411-476); *Disputatio contra missam privatam* (1536) (*Werke* WA 39. 134-173). The presence of communicants is a prime requirement for the Lord’s Supper, which, to Calvin, is essentially a corporate act. Cf. D. M. Baillie, *The Theology of the Sacraments*, pp. 122 ff.; R. S. Wallace, *Calvin’s Doctrine of the Word and Sacrament*, pp. 242 if. Calvin’s statement here was written in 1536: Edmund Geste (Gheast) in 1548 wrote his *Treatise Againste the Prevee Mass*, in...*Furtherance of the Mooste HoIye Communion*. This interesting tract was republished by H. G. Dugdale as Appendix 1 of *The Life and Character of Edmund Geste...the Principal Compiler of the Liturgy of the Church of England* (London, 1849). See esp. pp. 134-140. The Council of Trent, session 22 (1562), ch. 6, approves and commends “those masses in which the priest alone commumcates sacramentally” (Schaff, *Creeds* 2. 182).

FT823 Cf. *Enciclopedia Cattolica*, art. “*Messa*”; Du Cange, *Glossarium*, s.v. “*Missa*” 3, 4; A. Sourer, *Glossary of Later Latin*, s.v. “*Missa*.” Probably the word came into use from the words of dismissal of the worshipers at the close of any service: “*Missa est*,” i.e., “The assembly is dismissed.” The plural may first have arisen from the distinction made in Augustine’s time between the mass of the catechumens and the mass of the faithful, which followed the dismissal of the catechumens.

FT824 4:17.

FT825 Augustine, *Against Faustus* 20:18 (MPL 42. 382 f.; tr. NPNF 4. 260 f.).

FT826 Fulgentius, *De fide* 19:60 (MPL 65. 699). Fulgentius (d. 533) was bishop of Ruspe in North Africa. Cf. Smits I. 188.

- FT827 Augustine, *Against the Adversaries of the Law and the Prophets* 1. 18:37; 20:39 (MPL 42. 624, 626); *Against Faustus* 20:21 (MPL 42. 385; tr. NPNF 4. 261 f.); *Psalms*, Psalm 3:1 (MPL 36. 73; tr. NPNF 8. 4 f.); *Letters* 140. 18. 46 (MPL 33. 557; tr. FC 20. 96); *Against Adimantus* 12 (MPL 42. 144); *On the Trinity* 4. 14:19 (MPL 42. 901; tr. NPNF 3. 79).
- FT828 Chrysostom, *Homilies on Hebrews*, hom. 17:3 (MPG 63. 131 f.); Augustine, *Against the Letter of Parmenianus* 2. 8 (MPL 43. 59 f.).
- FT829 Cyril of Jerusalem, *Catechetical Lectures* 23:10 (MPG 33. 1117; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 7. 155, with explanatory note 5); Chrysostom, *On the Priesthood* 3. 4 (MPG 48. 642; tr. NPNF 9. 46); *Homilies on Romans*, hom. 8:8 (MPG 60. 465; tr. NPNF 11. 394); *Homilies on Hebrews*, hom. 17:3 (MPG 63. 131; tr. in part NPNF 14. 447); Gregory 1, *Dialogues* 4. 58 (MPL 77. 425; tr. P. W., ed. E. C. Gardner, p. 256).
- FT830 “*Praepostera illa anagoge.*” Calvin is charging that certain of the fathers have injuriously applied an anagogic interpretation where it is not required, but nevertheless carefully balances this criticism with warm general approval. Cf. Prefatory Address to the King, 4, and sec. 13, below.
- FT831 Note the significance of this for Reformed church worship. Cf. Maxwell, *Outline of Christian Worship*, pp. 91, 97, note 2, 149; D. M. Baillie, *Theology of the Sacraments*, p. 121.
- FT832 Cf. Calvin, *Sermons on Deuteronomy* 141: “But we know that sacrifices ought to be offered to God out of a free will; and all that he asks of us he calls sacrifice.” (CR 28:209.)
- FT833 Cf. sec. 11, note 20, above; 2. 11:2-5.
- FT834 Cf. Cadier, *Institution* 4. 411, notes 7, 8.
- FT835 “*λατρευτικὸν ἐτ σεβαστικὸν.*”
- FT836 “*εὐχθαριστικὸν.*”
- FT837 “... according to the French reckoning...” Addition of 1545.
- FT838 “*Nummulis aereis.*”
- FT839 The balance of sec. 15 is an addition of 1545.
- FT840 Plato, *Republic* II. 8:365 E, 366 A (LCL Plato, *Republic* I. 138 f.)

FT841 Cf. sec. 12, note 21, above; Cadier, *Institution* 4. 412, note 7.

FT842 “εὐχαριστικὸν.”

FT843 Cf. Baillie, *op. cit.*, 120, 123; 4. 17:38.

FT844 Sec. 4, above.

FT845 RSV has “spiritual worship,” agreeing with Calvin’s comment here.

FT846 Cf. 1. 13:2; 1. 16:4, note 11; 2. 9:1.

FT847 Cf. Baillie, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

FT848 The implication is that the captivity of the Lord’s Supper in the Mass is comparable to the rape of Helen: the defenders of the Mass are the Trojans.

FT849 “*Turpes nundinas.*” The charge was common, but Pannier associates with this Antoine Marcourt’s *Livre des Marchands* (1535?), a bold satire on the Roman Curia, which develops this theme. There appeared an English translation, *The Boke of Marchantes* (film copy in New York Public Library). Cf. Doumergue, *Calvin* 1. 502, note 1; Pannier, *Institution* 4. 58, note c on p. 309.

FT850 4. 16:1.

FT851 4. 15:19.

FT852 See Pannier’s note on Farel’s *Sommaire (Sommaire declaration)* and Calvin’s 1536 edition, *Institution* 4. 73, note a on p. 311. The text of the present chapter has only a few sentences not in that of 1536, ch. 5 Luther treats the five nonscriptural sacraments, in the order, penance, confirmation, marriage, orders, and extreme unction, in *Babylonish Captivity* (*Werke* WA 6. 543, 571; tr. *Works of Martin Luther* 2. 245-290). He here, unlike Calvin, gives to penance a secondary status among the sacraments.

FT853 After much uncertainty among his predecessors, Lombard set the number and order of the seven sacraments, *Sentences* 4. 2:1 (MPL 192. 841). Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 65:1.

FT854 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 1:1, 2 (MPL 192. 839 f.); (School of) Hugh of St. Victor, *Summa Sententiarum* 4. 1; *On the Sacraments* 1. 9:3 (MPL 176. 117, 320); Bonaventura, *On the Sentences* 4. dist. 1. part 1. art.

unicus. qu. 3 (*Opera omnia* 4. 17); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 62:1, 3, 4; 3. 66:1.

FT855 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 60:7.

FT856 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 80:3 (MPL 35. 1840; tr. NPNF 7. 349).

FT857 Augustine, *Letters* 54:1 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 12. 252); *On Christian Doctrine* 3. 9:13 (MPL 34. 71; tr. NPNF 2. 560).

FT858 Calvin is mistaken in this construction of ancient church practice. See articles on confirmation in *Catholic Encyclopedia*, *Dictionnaire de theologie Catholique*, Schaff-Herzog *Encyclopedia*, where citations are given of early references to practices preceding and leading to the medieval sacramental rite of confirmation. See also L. Duchesne, *Christian Worship*; tr. M. L. McClure, p. 314 ff.

FT859 “*In honorem sacerdotii.*” On “*sacerdos*” as “bishop,” cf. Du Cange, *Glossarium*, s.v. “*Sacerdos.*”

FT860 Leo I, *Letters* 166:2; 159:7; 167, inquisitio 18 (MPL 54. 1194, 1138, 1209; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 12. 1:108; 103, note 2; 112). Those uncertain of their baptism are not to be baptized but to be received by imposition of hands; Jerome, *Against the Luciferians* 8, 9 (MPL 23. 163 f.). The Luciferians were a small sect founded in Sardinia by Lucifer of Cagliari (d. 371), a supporter of Athanasius, who became embittered by efforts to reconcile ex-Arians to the church.

FT861 Hugh of St. Victor, *On the Sacraments* 2. 7:4 (MPL 176. 461); Gratian, *Decretum* 3. dist. 5:1-9 (MPL 187. 1855-1858; Friedberg I. 1413-1415); Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 7 (MPL 192. 855 f.); Innocent 3, *Regestae* 7. 3, 196 (MPL 215. 285, 1511); Eugenius 4, bull *Exultate Deo* (1439) 9 (Mansi 31. 1055; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., pp. 235 ff.; tr. J. H. Robinson, *Readings in European History* 1. 350).

FT862 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 80:3 (MPL 35. 1840; tr. NPNF 7. 344). Augustine adds here: “*etiam ipsum tanquam visibile verbum.*” Cf. 4. 14:6, note 8.

FT863 Innocent 3, in Decretals of Gregory 9, 1. tit. 15, “*De sacra unctione*” (Friedberg 2. 133), citing Acts 8:14 f.; Eugenius 4, bull *Exultate Deo* 9: “*secundum apostolum*” (Mansi 31. 1055; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 236). Chrysostom treats this passage without reference to

confirmation: *Homilies on Acts*, hom. 18:3 (MPG 60. 144; tr. NPNF 11. 114 f.).

FT864 “κακοζήλίαν.”

FT865 Cf. Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 7:1 (MPL 192. 855).

FT866 Eugenius 4, in *Exultate Deo*, *loc. cit.*, uses the form “*confirmo to chrismate salutis*.” L. Duchesne, however, quotes a form used by Pope Hilary (461-468): *Ipse te linit chrismate salutis in vitam eternam* (*Christian Worship*, p. 314).

FT867 Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 5:2, 3; 3. 4:154 (from the synod of Milevis [416] canon 3) (MPL 187. 1857, 1855; Friedberg 1. 1413, 1412).

FT868 Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 5:1, 6 (MPL 187. 1855, 1857 f.; Friedberg 1. 1413 f.).

FT869 Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 5:3, *loc. cit.*

FT870 A reference to the Oracle at Delphi, where the seat of the prophetess was supported by a high, upright, gilded tripod of wood.

FT871 Essentially quoted from Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 7:2 (MPL 192. 855); Augustine, *Letters* 185. 9. 37 (MPL 33. 809; tr. FC 30. 176 f.); *John’s Gospel* 4:11 (MPL 35. 1416; tr. LF *St. Augustine on John’s Gospel* 1. 56); *Psalms* 10:5 (MPL 36. 134; tr. LF *Psalms* 1. 96).

FT872 Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 95:1 (MPL 187. 447; Friedberg 1:33). From Gregory I, *Letters* 4. 26 (MGH *Epistolae* 1. 261; tr. NPNF 2 ser. 12. 2:153).

FT873 Gratian, *Decretum* 3. 5:5 (MPL 187. 1857; Friedberg 1. 1414).

FT874 4. 18:20.

FT875 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 7:2 (MPL 192. 855).

FT876 “*Moderatores*.”

FT877 Cf. De Castro, *Against Heresies* 4, art. “*confirmatio*” (1543 ed., fo. 71 E, F). The argument in this section rests upon Augustine’s statements in *On Christian Doctrine* 3. 9:13 (MPL 34. 71; tr. NPNF 2. 560); *Letters* 54:1 (MPL 33. 200; tr. FC 12. 252); *On Baptism* 3. 16:21; 5. 23:33 (MPL 43. 149, 193; tr. NPNF 4. 443, 475).

FT878 Farel, *Sommaire* 39; Calvin, *Instruction in Faith and Catechism of the Church of Geneva* (*La maniere d’interroguer les enfans* [ca. 1553])

(CR 6. 147-160; tr. LCC 22. 91-139), illustrate this discipline. Note the degree of attainment expected at the age of ten.

FT879 For Scholastic treatments of penance, see Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 14-20 (MPL 192. 868-899); Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 33:3 (MPL 187. 1519-1644; Friedberg 1. 1159-1247); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 84-89 and Suppl. questions 1-33.

FT880 3. 3-5.

FT881 E.g., *Letters* 57:1, 3 (CSEL 3. 2:650, 652; tr. ANF 5. 337).

FT882 Council of Carthage (390) canon 4 (Mansi 3. 693; tr. Hefele, *History of the Councils*, Engl. ed., 2. 390); Council of Orange (441) canon 3 (Mansi 6. 437; tr. Hefele, *op. cit.*, 3. 160); Council of Carthage (397) canon 32 (Mansi 3. 885).

FT883 Cyprian, *Letters* 16:2 (CSEL 3:2:518; tr. ANF 5. 290).

FT884 Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 26:6. 3, Gratian's note (MPL 187. 1556; Friedberg 1. 1037).

FT885 "*Nodum enim in scirpo quaerunt.*" Plautus, *Menaechmi* 2. 1:247 (LCL Plautus 2. 390); Terence, *Andria* 5. 4. 38. 941 (LCL Terence 1. 101 f.).

FT886 "*Exteriorem esse sacramentum duntaxat, interiorem rem et sacramentum.*"

FT887 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 22:3 (MPL 192. 899). Lombard is citing opinions of others.

FT888 Based on Augustine, *On Diverse Questions* 43 (MPL 40. 28).

FT889 Augustine, *Sermons* 272 (MPL 38. 1247).

FT890 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 9:1 (MPL 192. 858).

FT891 4. 17:41.

FT892 Augustine, *On Baptism* 5. 24:34 (MPL 43. 193; tr. NPNF 4. 475); *Questions on the Heptateuch* 3. 84 (MPL 34. 712 f.); *On the Merits and Remission of Sins* 1. 21:30; 2. 27:44 (MPL 44. 125 f., 177; tr. NPNF 5. 26, 32). Cf. 4. 14:15, note 27.

FT893 A favorite metaphor of Calvin. Cf. 2. 2:21; Comm. John 3:19-21. Cyprian asks, "Who is so foolish [*vanus*] as to prefer custom to truth

or, when he sees the light, not to forsake the darkness?" *Letters* 75, 19 (CSEL 3. 2:822; tr. NPNF [no. 74] 5. 395).

FT894 Jerome, *Letters* 84. 6: "*Secunda post naufragium tabula est, culpam simpliciter confiteri*" (MPL 22. 748; CSEL 55. 128); cf. Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 14:1 (MPL 192. 868); Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 33:3-72 (MPL 187. 1548; Friedberg 1. 1179); Cicero's reference to "a plank from a shipwreck," *On Duties* 3. 23:89 (LCL edition, pp. 364 f.).

FT895 Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 15:1. 3 (MPL 187. 971 f.; Friedberg 1. 746). Fulgentius, *De fide ad Petrum* 30:73 (MPL 40. 775).

FT896 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 23:2 (MPL 192. 899); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. Suppl. 29-33; Eugenius 4, bull *Exultate Deo* (1439) 14 (citing James 5:14-15) (Mansi 31. 1058 f.; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 237; tr. Robinson, *Readings* 1. 353); cf. Innocent I, *Letters* 25:8 (MPL 20. 559).

FT897 Sec. 6, above.

FT898 Eugenius 4, *op. cit.*

FT899 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 23:1 (MPL 192. 899).

FT900 "*Sacrificulum.*"

FT901 "*Sacerdotes.*" Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* III. Suppl. 31:3.

FT902 "*Ferculum,*" repository on which idol was borne in a procession.

FT903 Aquinas, *op. cit.*, 29:6; cf. Innocent I, *Letters*, *loc. cit.*; *Pontificale Romanum*, ed. by the Archbishop of Mechlin, 1934, pp. 752, 767, 769.

FT904 Sigebert of Gembloux (d. 1112), *Chronographia* (MGH *Scriptores* 6. 305); Innocent I, *Letters* 25:8 (MPL 20. 560).

FT905 Lombard lists doorkeepers, readers, exorcists, acolytes, subdeacons, deacons, presbyters, and "the fourfold order of bishops": *Sentences* 4. 24:3-12, *De ordinibus ecclesiasticis* (MPL 192. 900-905). See also Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* III. Suppl. 34-40; Eugenius 4, bull *Exultate Deo* (Mansi 31. 1058; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 237; tr. Robinson, *Readings* 1. 352 f.).

FT906 Lombard, *Sentences*, *loc. cit.*

- FT907 Cf. 4. 6:10, note 20. Calvin here cites the variant opinions of Hugh of St. Victor, who, in *De sacramentis* 2. 3:5 (MPL 176. 423), describes seven clerical orders, and the authors whom William of Paris (alias William of Auvergne, d. ca. 1248) mentions as having listed nine. William himself holds to the usual seven: *De septem sacramentis, Operum summa* (Paris, 1516) 2. 60.
- FT908 Isidore of Seville (d. 636), *Etymologies* 7. 12 (MPL 82. 290), quoted in Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 21:1 (MPL 187. 116; Friedberg 1. 67); Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:1 (MPL 192. 900); Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 23:18 f. (MPL 187. 136; Friedberg 1. 84 f.).
- FT909 “*Ceroferarium*”: Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:3-9 (MPL 192. 900-904).
- FT910 De Castro, *Against Heresies* 1. 13 (1543 ed., fo. 21 ff.).
- FT911 Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 21:1 (MPL 187. 116; Friedberg 1. 90).
- FT912 4 4:9
- FT913 Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 12:1-7 (MPL 187. 884; Friedberg 1. 678); Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:2 (MPL 192.901).
- FT914 Cf. Langland, *Piers Plowman*, “The Vision of Holy Church”: “There are no harder, hungrier men than men of Holy Church.”
- FT915 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:2 (MPL 192. 901). Lombard cites also Ezekiel 5:2, “Son of man...take thee a barber’s razor,” and the rules for Nazirites in Numbers 6:5, 18.
- FT916 Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 23:21 (MPL 187. 137; Friedberg 1. 85).
- FT917 Augustine, *On the Work of Monks* 31:39-33:41 (MPL 40. 578. 582; tr. NPNF 3. 522-524); *Retractations* 2. 21. (MPL 32. 639). Tonsure of monks preceded that of the secular clergy, which was first commanded by the Council of Toledo held in 633, canon 41 (Mansi 10:630). The shape of the tonsure was debated at the Synod of Whitby (664) between the Celtic and the Roman clergy. Colman, for the Irish monks, defended their frontal tonsure, while Wilfred argued for the Roman coronal or circular form, usually held to symbolize Christ’s crown of thorns.
- FT918 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:3-9 (MPL 192. 901-904); 4. 1:2 (MPL 190. 839).

- FT919 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:9 (MPL 192. 904); Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 25. 1 (MPL 187. 143; Friedberg 1. 90).
- FT920 Secs. 29-31, below.
- FT921 4. 18:14.
- FT922 Calvin frequently affirms the priesthood of all Christians, stressing the offering of ourselves unreservedly to God. Cf. 4. 18:16, 17; Comm. 1 Thessalonians 4:3; and numerous passages cited in R. S. Wallace, *Calvin on the Christian Life*, Part 1, ch. 4.
- FT923 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:9 (MPL 192. 904); Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 21, Gratian's note preceding part 1 (MPL 187. 116; Friedberg 1. 67).
- FT924 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:10: "*character spiritualis*" (MPL 192. 904); Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 3. 63:6, Suppl. 25:2; Eugenius 4, bull *Exultate Deo* (Mansi 31. 1054; Mirbt, *Quellen*, 4th ed., p. 237; tr. Robinson, *Readings* 1. 353 f.). Notable phrases in this section of the bull are: "*Accipe potestatem offerendi sacrificium*" ("Receive power to offer the sacrifice"), and "*Ergestus augmentum gratiae*" ("the benefit, increase of grace").
- FT925 Augustine, *John's Gospel* 80:3 (MPL 35. 1840; tr. NPNF 7. 344 f.).
- FT926 In controversy with Gabriel Saconay in 1561, Calvin declared that he had "always abhorred the flavor of oil" (CR 9. 448). Cf. McNeill, *The History and Character of Calvinism*, pp. 136 f., with reference to the question of Calvin's own ordination. The symbolism of the anointing in ordinations is expounded by William Durandus in *The Symbolism of the Churches* (ca. 1295) (tr. J. M. Neale, 1842), pp. 171-175.
- FT927 Cf. 4. 3:9; 4. 4:5.
- FT928 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:8 (MPL 192. 903); Eugenius 4, bull *Exultate Deo* (Mansi 31. 1058; Mirbt, *Quellen*, p. 237; tr. Robinson, *Readings* 1. 353 f.); Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 21:1; 1 23:11; 1 25:1, 3 (MPL 187. 116, 134, 143; Friedberg 1. 67, 83, 90).
- FT929 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 24:7 (MPL 192. 902 f.).
- FT930 Sec. 32, above. Cf. 4. 5:15-17.
- FT931 In Lombard, in the bull *Exultate Deo*, and in other medieval enumerations of the sacraments, marriage is the seventh and last. Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 26-42 (MPL 192.908-932); *Exultate Deo*, sec.

16 (Mansi 31. 1058; Mirbt, *Quellen*, p. 237; tr. Robinson, *Readings* 1. 354). The Vg. version of Eph. 5:32, “*Sacramentum hoc magnum est*,” is utilized in these documents as evidence for the sacrament of marriage. Gr. secs. 35, 36, below.

FT932 I.e., Gregory 7, pope 1073-1085, whose contemporary, Peter Damiani (*Sermons* 69; MPL 144. 902), held this view. The sacrament of marriage is also recognized by the canonist, Ivo of Chartres (d. 1116): Ivo, *Decretum* 8. 9 (MPL 161. 568).

FT933 Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 26:6 (MPL 192. 909 f.). Gr. note 79, above.

FT934 Horace, *Satires* 2. 3:83 (LCL edition, pp. 160 f.).

FT935 Cf. Cadier, *Institution* 4. 443, note 5.

FT936 Cf. sec. 34, note 79, above; Cadier, *Institution* 4. 444, note 1.

FT937 Cf. sec. 34, note 79, above. Note that Calvin cogently argues the point on philological grounds.

FT938 Quintilian, *Institutes of Oratory* 4. 2:91: “*Mendacem memorem esse oportet*” (LCL edition, 2. 100). Calvin’s statement that Vg. has “*sacramentum*” for “*μυστήριον*” is true of Ephesians 1:9, Ephesians 5:32, and 1 Timothy 3:16; but in 1 Timothy 3:9, it has “*mysterium*.”

FT939 Gratian, *Decretum* 1. 28:9; 1. 82:3; 2. 27:2. 17; 2. 32:2. 4 (MPL 187. 155, 597 f., 1397, 1413 f.; Friedberg 1. 101, 291 f., 1066, 1120 f.); Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 26:6 (MPL 192. 909 f.); Augustine, *On the Good of Marriage* 6:5-6 (MPL 40. 377; tr. NPNF 3. 401 f.).

FT940 Lombard holds such marriages invalid for boys under fourteen and girls under twelve, but if they come together after the beginning of puberty, they are not to be separated (*Sentences* 4. 36:4; MPL 192. 931). On the prohibition of marriage within the seventh degree, see *Sentences* 4. 40 (MPL 192. 937 ff.); Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 35:2 and 3. 16, 17, 19 (MPL 187. 1671 f.; Friedberg 1. 1267 f.).

FT941 These regulations appear in Lombard, *Sentences* 4. 41:1-2; 4. 31:2; 4. 34:5; 4. 42 (MPL 192.938 f., 918 f., 928, 940-942); Gratian, *Decretum* 2. 35; 2. 30:3 f.; 2. 33:4, 10 (MPL 187. 1163 ff., 1519 ff., 1647 f.; Friedberg 1. 1261 ff., 1100 ff., 1249).

CHAPTER 20

^{FT942} Cf. Introduction 14, p. 65, above; 4. 1:1, note 2. Some studies of Calvin's olitical thought are: J. Bohatec, *Calvins Lehre you Staat und Kirche*; M.E. Cheneviere, *La Pensge politique de Calvin*; E. Doumergue, *Calvin* 5. 381-512; H. Baron, *Calvins Staatsanschauung und das confessionelle Zeitalter*; R. W. Carlyle and A. J. Carlyle, *A History of Medieval Political Theory in the West* 4. 263-270; R. N. C. Hunt, "Calvin's Theory of the State," *Church Quarterly Review* 8 (1929), 56-71; F. J. c. Hearnshaw (editor), *The Social and Political Ideas of Some Great Thinkers of the Renaissance and Reformation*, ch. 8, by W. R. Mathews; P. Mesnard, *L'Essor de la philosophie politique au sixieme siecle en France*, pp. 269-295; A. Kuyper, *Calvinism*, lecture 3, pp. 98-142; W. S. Hudson, "Democratic Freedom and Religious Faith in the Reformed Tradition," *Church History* 15 (1946), 177-194; J. T. McNeill, "The Democratic Element in Calvin's Thought," *Church History* 18 (1949), 153-171; *John Calvin on God and Political Duty*, pp. 6-25; W. Mueller, *Church and State in Luther and Calvin*. For other titles, see the bibliographical article, McNeill, "Thirty Years of Calvin Study," *Church History* 17 (1948), esp. pp. 235-240. R. S. Wallace has closely examined Calvin's view of the Christian's social and political relationships in *Calvin's Doctrine of the Christian Life*. See esp. Part 3, chs. 3 and 5.

^{FT943} 3. 19:15: "*duplex in homine regimen*." Chapter 20 is linked with the one on "Christian Freedom" (3:19), which, in substance, formed the first part of ch. vi in the 1536 edition (OS 1. 223-280) and was followed in the same long chapter by a section on ecclesiastical power and one bearing the title of the present chapter and essentially of the same content. Subsequent revisions widely separated these parts of the original ch. 6, but 4:10 is in a real sense a continuation of 3:19.

^{FT944} 4:3-11.

^{FT945} These sentences (1559) evidently refer to the Anabaptists on the one hand, and on the other to Machiavelli, whose Italian *Il Principe* was only in 1553 translated into Latin. (OS 5. 474.) Calvin may also have in mind the emperor-cult of antiquity.

FT946 3. 19:16; 4. 10:3-6.

FT947 Cf. 2. 10:10-19.

FT948 The religious detachment from politics of the Anabaptists is here strongly condemned. Cf. sec. 1, note 4, above. The sixth of the seven Anabaptist articles of Schleithem (1527) states that the magistrate's office is "*carnal*" and that the sword of the magistrate is to be rejected by Christians, and is "outside the perfection of Christ." Reference in 3. 3:21, note 42; 4. 1:28, note 35. Peter Ridemann taught that "no Christian is a ruler and no ruler is a Christian" (tr. *The Portable Renaissance Reader*, ed. J. B. Ross and M. M. McLaughlin, p. 665). Cf. LCC 25. 289.

FT949 Sec. 8, below.

FT950 "*Suum cuique*," to each his own, a phrase of ancient writers to express the objective of legal justice, and in Roman law especially with reference to property. Cf. 3. 7:3, note 6; Romans 13:7.

FT951 Cf. 2:7-10; Comm. Romans 13:1-10.

FT952 4. 8:10.

FT953 Cf. Cicero, *Laws* 3. 1:2 (LCL edition, pp. 460 f.).

FT954 Note the similar statement in *Instruction in Faith* (1537) 33 (OS 1. 416 f.; tr. Fuhrmann, pp. 76 f.). See also Fuhrmann's note 249, citing in this connection Farel's *Sommaire* (1525) and Fr. Lambert's *Somme chrestienne* (1529), which contain similar teaching in brief form. (*Instruction in Faith*, p. 96.)

FT955 "*κυβερνήσεις*," in the New Testament found only in 1 Corinthians 12:28. Cf. Comm. on this passage, and Pannier, *Institution* 4. 202, note e on p. 340.

FT956 VG: "*Ceux qui voudroyent que les hommes vesquissent pesle mesle comme rats en paille*": "those who would have men live pell-mell, like rats in straw." CF. 4. 20:9: "*Sacra historia inter vitia anarchias ponit.*"

FT957 Cf. Zwingli, *True and False Religion*, 27 (CR Zwingli 3. 875).

FT958 Sec. 4, above.

FT959 Again referring to article vi of the Schleithem Confession, 1527. Cf. sec. 2, note 7, above; 4. 1:28, note 35; Calvin, *Instruction contre la secte des Anabaptistes* (1544) (CR 7. 89); tr. “A Short Instruction for to arme all good Christian People Against the Pestiferous Errors of the Common Sect of the Anabaptists (London, 1549) D 4a ff.

FT960 “*Vel aristocratiam vel temperatum ex ipsa et politia statum.*” Cf. the description of the Israelite form of government below: “*aristocratiam politiae vicinam*”; Plato’s summary of forms of government, *The Statesman* 291 D (LCL Plato 3. 124 f.); Zwingli, *Exposition of the Faith* (Zwingli, *Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess 4. 59; tr. LCC 24. 366 f.); Bohatec, *Calvins Lehre von Staat und Kirche*, pp. 116-164; Cheneviere, *La Pensee politique de Calvin*, pp. 181-229.

FT961 “*Ut tutius sit ac magis tolerabile plures tenere gubernacula.*” Cf. 4. 3:15, note 13; 4. 4:10-11. In government, Calvin sees safety in numbers and expects thereby to obtain the advantages of co-operation, mutual admonition, and the restraint of individual self-assertion. In Geneva, he induced the Little Council to hold meetings, monthly or quarterly, as might seem best, for the simple purpose of mutual criticism, under pledge of secrecy. Cadier regards this passage as advocating oligarchy rather than democracy (*Institution* 4. 455, note 7); but the word *plures* throws the emphasis, not on the fewness of the ruling body, but on the fact that numbers share the responsibility. Cf. McNeill, *Calvin on God and Political Duty*, Introduction, pp. 22 f.; Bohatec, *Calvins Lehre von Staat und Kirche*, pp. 153-157.

FT962 Calvin is primarily concerned for secure and ordered liberty as opposed to both tyranny and anarchy. “Nothing is more desirable than liberty,” he writes of Joseph in Egypt (Comm. Genesis 39:2). In the Homilies on 1 Samuel, he twice calls liberty “*an inestimable good*” (CR 29:544; 30:185), and again in Comm. Jeremiah 38:25-26. He elsewhere speaks of it as “more than the half of life” (CR 24:628). Paul, he says, is careful not to diminish liberty (Comm. 1 Corinthians 10:29). God desired the Jews to have more liberty than their neighbors who were ruled by kings, and so gave them liberty to choose judges (CR 27:410 f.).

FT963 “*Decuriones*,” ordinarily, members of the senatorial order in Roman towns. See *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, art. “*Decurio*”; *The Theodosian*

Code, 12:1: *De decurionibus* (tr. C. Pharr, pp. 342-370. Varieties of governors and governments are by God's appointment: the Christian obeys. Calvin will not encourage popular resistance; but cf. sec. 31, below.

FT964 Calvin has in mind not Machiavelli but Cicero, as in *Laws* 2. 2:7-9 (LCL edition, pp. 388-415).

FT965 This bears a resemblance to Thomas More's *Utopia* 2:9, "Of the Religions of Utopia" (see Ralph Robinson's translation [1556], ed. 1. C. Collins, pp. 125 f.). The Basel edition of 1518 may have been used by Calvin (2:140 ff.). Note here Calvin's concern for the preservation of "piety," and cf. sec. 32, below.

FT966 Cf. J. Stobaeus, *Sententiae ex thesauro Graecorum delectae* (ca. 400-410) 41, *De republica* (ed. Zurich, 1548, pp. 247 ff.; *editio princeps*, 1536). Cf. Pauly-Wissowa, *Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft*, art. "Ioannes Stobaios,"

FT967 Pseudo(?)-Cicero, *Letters to Brutus* 1. 15:5 (*M. Tullii Ciceronis opera*, ed. J. C. Orellius, p. 766).

FT968 Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia* (*Memorable Deeds and Sayings*) 3. 7:9 (Venice, 1487), p. 74a (tr. R. L'Estrange, 1678, p. 138). A characterization of the tribunal of the praetor L. Cassius.

FT969 Seneca, *On Clemency* 1. 3:3 (LCL Seneca, *Moral Essays* 1. 365 ff.); cf. Calvin, *Comm. Seneca On Clemency* 1. 3. (CR 5:41). See 1. 3:3, note 8; 2. 2:13, note 56; 4. 6:8, note 26; and sec. 24, note 48, below, for other references in this edition to Seneca's *De clementia*, on which Calvin as a young scholar wrote a notable commentary. On the place of this commentary in Calvin's spiritual development, see A.M. Hugo, *Calvin en Seneca*.

FT970 Dio Cassius, *Nerva*, Epitome of Book 68:3 (LCL *Roman History* 8. 360 f.).

FT971 Secs. 11 and 12 are directed against Anabaptist pacifism, and offer a concise rationale of the resort to war by rulers under necessity to defend their subjects from violence, whether it arises from sedition or invasion. The fourth and sixth of the articles of Schleithelm had denied this; cf. 4. 1:28, note 35. (*Mennonite Quarterly Review* 19 (1945) 251 f.) See also Balthasar Hubmaier, *On the Sword* (1527) (tr. H. C.

Vedder, *Balthasar Hiibmeier*, pp. 279-310). The whole treatment of the Christian attitude to magistrates and to law and litigation (sections 4-23) reflects Calvin's apprehension of anarchy from the Anabaptist rejection of the state.

FT972 Augustine, *Letters* 138 2:15; 130 6:13 (MPL 33. 531 f., 499; tr. FC 20. 47f.; FC 18. 386); *Sermons* 13:7. 3-13. 8:4 (MPL 38. 110 f.).

FT973 Cicero, *On Duties* 1. 23:79; 1. 11:35 (LCL edition, pp. 80 f., 36 f.).

FT974 "*Ipsum pene esse populi sanguinem.*" VG omits "almost." Cf. A. Bieler, *La Pensée économique et sociale de Calvin*, p. 385. In this section Calvin has epitomized a Christian philosophy of taxation, indicating the mutual obligations of rulers and people.

FT975 Cf. 4. 12:1: "*Disciplina pro nervis est.*" On secs. 14-16, cf. 2. 7:16.

FT976 Cicero, *Laws* 2:4 and 5:1; 3:2 (LCL edition, pp. 378 ff., 460 f.). Cf. *De republica* 3:22.

FT977 Cf. sec. 16, below. Calvin wholly rejects the notion of a theocracy based on the judicial laws of the Old Testament.

FT978 Aquinas, *Summa Theol.* 1 IIae. 99:4; Melancthon, *Loci communes* (1521), ed. Engelland, p. 46.

FT979 Cf. 2. 8:1, note 5; Pannier, *Institution* 4. 218, note d (p. 343). Calvin's recognition of natural law is well expressed in Comm. Romans 1:21-27 and ch. 2:14-15. The subject has been treated by J. Bohatec in *Calvin und das Recht*, pp. 3-32, and in his *Calvins Lehre von Staat und Kirche*, pp. 20-35. Cf. G. Gloede, *Theologia naturalis bei Calvin*, pp. 178 ff.; M. E. Cheneviere, *La Pensée politique de Calvin*, pp. 46 ff., 66 ff.; McNeill, "Natural Law in the Thought of Luther," *Church History* 10 (1941), 212-215; "Natural Law in the Teaching of the Reformers," *Journal of Religion* 26 (1946), 179-182; *John Calvin on God and Political Duty*, Introduction, p. 15.

FT980 Cf. sec. 14, note 36, above. The present section emphasizes the point that positive law rightly relies on natural law and equity, and requires penalties adapted to nations and conditions, without dependence on Old Testament legislation.

- FT981 In this and following sections, Calvin's familiarity with legal procedures reflects his early legal training. Cf. Cadier, *Institution* 4. 467.
- FT982 Cf. the Schleithem Confession, art. 6, found in Zwingli, *Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess, 3. 402-404; tr. S. M. Jackson, *Selected Works*, pp. 296 ff.; tr. W. C. Wenget, *Mennonite Quarterly Review* 19:245.
- FT983 Cf. the Schleithem Confession, art. 4, Zwingli, *Opera*, ed. Schuler and Schulthess 3:395; tr. Jackson, *Selected Works of Zwingli*, pp. 188 f.
- FT984 Augustine, *Letters* 138:2 12-13 (MPL 33:530; tr. FC 20:44 f.).
- FT985 Sec. 18, above.
- FT986 Cf. Cicero, *Laws* III. 2:5 (LCL edition, pp. 461 f.).
- FT987 The phrase in parentheses following is an addition of 1545.
- FT988 Calvin's rendering here of 1 Peter 2:13-14 differs considerably from VG, and in less degree from his own Latin text in the Commentary on I Peter. Cf. Geneva Bible and KJV.
- FT989 Xenophon, *Cyropaedia* 8. 2:10 (LCL edition, 2. 336 f.).
- FT990 Homer, *Odyssey* 2:234: Odysseus is "gentle as a father to his people" (LCL *Odyssey* 1. 52 f.); Seneca uses the expression *pater patriae* in *De clementia* 1. 14:2 (LCL edition, pp. 398 f.); Calvin, *Comm. Seneca De clementia* 1. 14 (CR 5:106).
- FT991 Homer, *Iliad* 2:243: Agamemnon is "a shepherd of his people" (LCL *Iliad* 1:68 f.); Cicero, *Pro Sestio* 30:65 (LCL edition, pp. 122 f.). Quintilian, in *Institutes of Oratory* 8. 6:17, 18 (LCL Quintilian 3. 310 f.), cautions against this trite metaphor in pleading a case.
- FT992 Zwingli, *Auslegen und Gründe der Schlussreden* (1523), art. 42 (CR Zwingli 2. 342 ff.). Cf. H. Strohl, "Le Droit a la resistance d'après les conceptions protestantes," *Revue d'histoire et de philosophie religieuses* 10 (1930), 126-144.
- FT993 Cf. Catullus 22:21: "*Sed non videmus manticae quod in tergo est*" (LCL Catullus, p. 26); cf. Horace, *Satires* 2. 3:298 f. (LCL edition, pp. 178 f.), reflecting Aesop's fable of the two wallets, the one in view containing the faults of others, the one unseen, our own.

FT994 To this point Calvin has recommended to those under bad rulers only patience and prayer. The previous sentences evidently reflect conditions in France at the time of writing (1535). The hope of relief, from divine intervention and human agency, will now find vigorous expression.

FT995 “*Audiant principes, et terreantur*” — a startling and powerful phrase: but it does not threaten revolution. It is God that princes are to fear.

FT996 This packed sentence, which was to prove powerfully influential, deserves close attention. See especially Doumergue, *Calvin* 5. 500-502, and cf. Doumergue’s numerous citations from Calvin’s letters and commentaries, *ibid.*, pp. 487-494, 499. It is of interest that Zwingli, in his treatise *Der Hirt (The Pastor)* (1524), states that as the Spartans had their ephors, the Romans their tribunes, and the German towns their guild masters, with authority to check the higher rulers, so God has provided pastors to stand on guard for the people (CR Zwingli 3:36). This passage may have been known to Calvin, though indirectly, since it was in German. From his reiterated warnings against resistance to tyrants by “private persons,” Calvin turns here with startling abruptness to approve, and solemnly urge, action by a constituted magistracy to protect the liberties of the people. As historical examples of such “*populares magistratus*,” he cites, with some justification, the ephors of Sparta, the tribunes of Rome, and the demarchs of Athens, who were all elected to office by annual popular vote. Cf. Comm. Micah 5:5: “*Hic demure maxime optabilis status populi creari omnibus suffragiis pastores.*” Kingship by hereditary right does not seem to be in accordance with liberty; a well-ordered government is one derived from the general vote, “*coremunibus omniurn suffragiis*” (CR 43:374). “Perhaps,” he says here, there is a parallel in the three estates of modern nations. The “perhaps” is natural for his own France where, when he wrote this, the estates had not met for thirty years, and had still not met when he repeated it in 1559. He must have been aware that nearly all other national governments, from Spain to Norway, had representative bodies or parliaments more or less effectively and regularly functioning, capable of acting to restrain monarchical absolutism or tyranny. Calvin seems to be summoning them to assume the duty of caring for the people’s

interests, and preserving to the people the “inestimable boon” of liberty. Cf. CR 29:544; 30:185; McNeill, “The Democratic Element in Calvin’s Thought,” *Church History* 18 (1949), pp. 162-166, and the studies there cited. The demand for a meeting of the estates of France became characteristic of Huguenot political writings such as the *Franco-Gallia* of Calvin’s friend, Francis Hotman (1573; tr. Lord Molesworth, 2d ed., 1721); the *Defense Against Tyrants* (1579), by “Junius Brutus” — probably a joint work of Hubert Languet and Philip du Plessis-Mornay (English edition, ed. H. Laski); and Pierre Jurieu’s *Sighs of Enslaved France Aspiring Toward Liberty* (1689-1690). The influence of this passage can also be traced in John Ponet’s radical *Shorte Treatise of Politick Power* (1556; see W. S. Hudson’s edition) in George Buchanan’s *De jure regni apud Scottos* (1579) (tr. C. F. Arrowood, *The Powers of the Crown in Scotland*) and in the *Lex Rex* of Samuel Rutherford (1644). Cf. P. Mesnard, *L’Esort de la philosophic politique au sixieme sietcle en France*, pp. 330-336, 347-359. The weighty treatise of Johannes Althusius, *Politica methodice digesta* (1603), develops the main political conceptions of Calvin: see especially the Harvard lectures of P.S. Gerbrandy, *National and International Stability: Althusius, Grotius, Van Vollenhoven*. The position of John Knox is well illustrated in his *History of the Reformation in Scotland* in the account of his debate with Lethington, 1564, in which Knox cited the Magdeburg Confession (“Apology of Marburg”) issued in resistance to Charles 5, 1550, while his fellow minister John Craig presented a document in which the Dominicans of Bologna defended their resistance to the pope, 1554 (see W. C. Dickenson’s edition, 2:127-134). The Magdeburg (Lutheran) statement affirms the duty of armed resistance to a ruler who violates the law of God. The Dominican thesis, which Craig had heard successfully defended at the University of Bologna, in more feudal terms declares that “all rulers, whether supreme or inferior, ought to be reformed or deposed” when they violate their sworn promises to their subjects. Knox, in using the Magdeburg document, was in effect reaffirming an uncompromising doctrine of resistance that had been expressed in his pamphlet *On the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (1558). Elizabeth I came to the throne when this fiery pamphlet was newly published, and it was a cause of her alienation from Geneva. Calvin’s

embarrassment over this incident is shown in his letter to Cecil (winter, 1559) in which he disapproves the pamphlet and disclaims any prior knowledge of it (*Zurich Letters*, 2 ser., pp. 34 ff.). Cf. Doumergue, *Calvin* 5. 486-512; H. Strohl, “Le Droit a la resistance,” pp. 131 ff. In general, Calvin carefully guards against any endorsement of popular revolutionary action, but in some instances his language is less guarded. See, for example, his Comm. Daniel (1560), lecture 30, on Daniel 6:22, where he says: “For earthly princes lay aside their power when they rise up against God, and are unworthy to be reckoned among the number of mankind. We ought, rather, utterly to defy them [*conspuere in ipsorum capita*, lit., “to spit on their heads”] than to obey them” (CR 41:25).

FT997 Cf. 2. 8:38.

FT998 This sentence begins an addition of 1559, ending with “tremble as suppliants,” below. Here, referring to Daniel 6:22 (cf. sec. 31, note 54), Calvin does not anticipate the strong phrase of the commentary. Yet he firmly requires a courageous disobedience to the “impious edicts” of ungodly rulers. It is his final emphatic admonition that obedience to the political powers, which he has repeatedly enjoined, must not deflect the Christian from “piety” or compromise his obedience to the King of Kings.