

An Argument in Defense of all the Articles of dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull

Translation C.M. Jacobs

To all good Christians who may read this book or hear it read, grace and peace from God. Amen.

Blessed be God and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 2 Corinthians 1:3 Who has illumined so many hearts in these days, and awakened even in the laity a Christian mind, so that throughout the world men are beginning to distinguish rightly between the pretended, hypocritical Church — that is, the clergy — and the true and good Church, hidden hitherto, and covered over for so long time with sacred vestments, outward acts and works, and the like external shows and man-made laws, that we have even been taught at last that we are to get our salvation by payments of money, rather than by faith. His divine goodness cannot and will not any longer allow these abominations and errors to rage in His Church; so we see, and so we may well hope and pray. Amen. Amen.

It is not the smallest of the signs of this His divine goodness, that He has lately made some of these tyrants of the Church so blind, and sent upon them such a perverse spirit (Isaiah 19:14) that (to their own great shame and to their great and irretrievable downfall) they have issued a bull in which they have forgotten the very thing by which they have hitherto deceived and befooled the world, namely, a fair outward appearance. For they have condemned such evident truth that wood and stone well nigh cry out against them, and no bull was ever received with such scorn, contempt and derision. (Philippians 1:6) May God, Who hath begun this good work, perfect it according to His mercy and give us grace to know this His grace, to thank Him for it, and to pray earnestly for a blessed outcome of it all, so that poor souls may no longer be so sadly led astray by their deceit and trickery. Amen. Amen.

Wherefore I, Doctor Martin Luther by name, have undertaken, with joyful heart, to prove by Scripture all the articles, for the further instruction and the exposure of the false and pretended Church, so that everyone may be able to protect himself against the blind feints that these tricksters are wont to make. Perhaps even they will some time come to themselves and consent to exchange their hypocrisy for truth, their trickery for serious earnest, their pretensions for proofs. But first I must defend myself against some of the charges they bring against me.

In the first place, I pass by entirely the charge that I am caustic and impatient. I shall not excuse myself for that, for I have not been caustic or impatient in the books that have treated of Christian doctrine, but only in controversies and foolish disputings about the papacy, the indulgences and such like fool's-work, and they have forced me into them. These subjects have neither deserved nor permitted so much discussion, let alone kindly and peaceful words.

They accuse me of setting myself up all alone to be everybody's teacher. I answer, I have not set myself up, but have preferred at all times to creep into a corner.

It is they who have drawn me out by wile and force, that they might win glory and honor at my expense. Now that the game is going against them, they think me guilty of vainglory. And even if it

were true that I had set myself up all alone, that would be no excuse for their conduct. Who knows but that God has called me and raised me up? They ought to fear lest they despise God in me.

Do we not read in the Old Testament that God commonly raised up only one prophet at a time? Moses was alone in the Exodus, Elijah was alone in King Ahab's day, Elisha, after him, was alone, Isaiah was alone in Jerusalem, Hosea alone in Israel, Jeremiah alone in Judaea, Ezekiel alone in Babylon, and so forth. Even though they had many disciples, called "children of the prophets," God never allowed more than one man alone to preach and rebuke the people.

Moreover, God never once made prophets out of the high-priests or others of lofty station; but usually He raised up lowly and despised persons, even at last the shepherd Amos. King David was an exception, but even he came up from lowly rank. Therefore the saints have always had to preach against those in high places — kings, princes, priests, doctors — to rebuke them, to risk their own lives, and sometimes to lose them. In those days, too, the great men gave the holy prophets no other answer than to say, "We are the authorities and men must obey us, not the lowly and despised prophets"; as Jeremiah writes. Jeremiah 18:18 So they do even now. Everything is wrong that does not please the pope, the bishops and the doctors; we must listen to them, no matter what they say.

Under the New Testament, too, have not the true bishops and teachers been rare enough? St Ambrose was alone in his day, after him St Jerome, and then St Augustine. Besides, God chose not many high and great bishops for this work. St Augustine was bishop in a single little city of small reputation, but he accomplished so much more than all the Roman popes, with all their fellow-bishops, that they cannot hold a candle to him.

Then too it is a fact that all the heresies have been started, or at least have been encouraged, by bishops and doctors. Why then shall we trust them now, when they no longer serve the Church and have become temporal lords, if they were so dangerous before, when they were better, more learned, holier and more diligent? We insist on being blind.

I say not that I am a prophet, but I do say that the more they despise me and esteem themselves, the more reason they have to fear that I may be a prophet. Ecclesiastes 19:14 God is wonderful in His works and judgments and giveth no heed to rank, numbers, greatness, knowledge or power; as saith Psalm 138:6 If I am not a prophet, yet for my own self I am certain that the Word of God is with me and not with them, for I have the Scriptures on my side, and they have only their own doctrine. This gives me courage, so that the more they despise and persecute me, the less I fear them. There were many asses in the world in the days of Balaam, but God spake by none of them save only by Balaam's ass. Numbers 22:28 Cf. Luke 4:25. He saith in Psalm 14:6 to these same great ones, "Ye have shamed the doctrine of the poor preacher, because he trusteth in God," as if to say, "Because he is not great and high and mighty, his doctrine must needs be false in your eyes."

They say also that I propose new doctrines, and it is not to be supposed that everyone else has been so long time in error. That too the ancient prophets had to hear. If antiquity were sufficient proof, the Jews would have had the strongest kind of case against Christ on that ground, for His doctrine was different from any they had heard for a thousand years. The Gentiles, too, would have done fight to hold the apostles in contempt, because their ancestors for more than three thousand years held a very different belief. There have been murderers, adulterers and thieves since the beginning of the world, and will be to the end; does that make these things right? I preach nothing new, but I say that all things Christian have gone to wrack and ruin among those who ought to have held them fast, to wit, the bishops and the doctors; yet I have no doubt that the truth has remained even until now in

some hearts, though it were only the hearts of children in their cradles. In Old Testament times the spiritual understanding of the Law remained among some of the common people, though it was lost by the high-priests and the doctors, who ought to have kept it. Thus Jeremiah says that he has found less understanding and justice among the great men than among the laity and common folk.

Jeremiah 5:4 So it is even now: poor peasants and children understand Christ better than pope, bishops, and doctors. Everything is topsy-turvy.

If they will not have it otherwise, well and good; let them make me out a heathen! But what would their answer be, or how should we present our case, if the Turk were to ask us to prove our faith? He cares nothing how long we have believed thus and so, nor how many and how great the people are that have believed this way or that. We should have to be silent about all these things, and point him to the Holy Scriptures as our proof. It would be absurd and laughable if we were to say, "Lo so many priests, bishops, kings, princes, lands, and peoples have believed this and that ever so long."

Let them now treat me the same way. Let us see where is our foundation and our precedent. Let us examine it, if only to strengthen and edify ourselves. Shall we have so great a foundation and not know it? Shall we keep it hidden, when it is the will of Christ that it shall be common property and known of all men, as He says in Matthew 5, "No man lighteth a candle and putteth it under a bushel, but on the candle-stick, that it may give light to all those that are in the house"? Matthew 5:15 Christ allowed His hands, His feet, His side to be touched, John 20:27 that His disciples might be sure that it was He, Himself; why, then, should we not touch and prove the Scriptures, which are in truth the spiritual body of Christ, in order to be certain whether it is they in which we believe or not? For all other writings are perilous. They may be "spirits of the air," f26 which have not flesh and bone, as Christ has. Luke 24:30 This is my answer to those also who accuse me of rejecting all the teachers of the Church. I do not reject them; but because everyone knows that they have erred at times, as men will, I am willing to put confidence in them only so far as they give me proofs for their opinions out of the Scriptures, which never yet have erred. This St Paul commands me in 1 Thessalonians, the last chapter, where he says, "First prove and confirm all doctrines; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thessalonians 5:21 St Augustine writes to St Jerome to the same effect: "I have learned to do only those books that are called the Holy Scriptures the honor of believing firmly that none of their writers has erred; all others I so read as not to hold what they say to be the truth, unless they prove it to me by the Holy Scriptures or by clear reason."

The Scriptures Clear The Holy Scriptures must needs be clearer, easier of interpretation and more certain than any other scriptures, for all teachers prove their statements by them, as by dearer and more stable writings, and wish their own writings to be established and explained by them. But no one can ever prove a dark saying by one that is still darker; therefore, necessity compels us to run to the Bible with all the writings of the doctors, and thence to get our verdict and judgment upon them; for Scripture alone is the true over-lord and master of all writings and doctrines on earth. If not, what are the Scriptures good for? Let us reject them and be satisfied with the books of men and human teachers.

That many of the great hate me and persecute me on this account, frightens me not at all; indeed, it comforts and strengthens me, since it is dearly the case in all the Scriptures that the persecutors and haters have usually been wrong and the persecuted have usually been right. The lie has always had the majority, the truth the minority on its side. Nay, if it were only a few insignificant men who were attacking me, I should know that what I wrote and taught was not yet of God. St Paul raised much

disturbance with his doctrine, as we read in Acts; but that did not prove the falsity of his doctrine. Acts 19:28 ff. Truth has always caused an uproar; false teachers have always said, "Peace, peace," as Isaiah and Jeremiah tell us. Jeremiah 6:14; Jeremiah 8:11 Therefore, the pope and his great following notwithstanding, I will joyfully come to the rescue and defense of the articles condemned in the bull, as God gives me grace. I trust, by God's grace, to uphold them against the wrong that is done them; against force I have nothing else to oppose than one poor body; that I commend to God and His truth, which is still holy, though it has been condemned by the pope. Amen.

THE FIRST ARTICLE

It is heresy to hold that the sacraments give grace to all who do not oppose an obstacle.

To understand this article it should be noted that my opponents have taught that the holy sacraments give grace to everyone, even though he be not repentant for sin and have no intention to do good; it is enough that he do not “oppose an obstacle,” that is, that he be without a wanton intention to commit sin. Against this doctrine I have set, and continue to set, this article, and say that it is unchristian, misleading and heretical; for beside the removal of the obstacle, that is, the evil intention, the reception of the sacraments not only requires genuine repentance for sin, but the worthy reception of the sacraments also requires that there be a firm faith within the heart.

This is proved by Christ in Matthew 9:2, when He heals the paralytic man. He first said to him, “Believe, my son, and thy sins are forgiven thee.” If faith had not been necessary for the forgiveness of his sins, why should Christ have demanded it? Again, we read that Christ did no signs, nor ever helped any one, unless it was believed that He could and would do it, as St John also writes, “In His own country He could do no signs because of their unbelief.” Matthew 13:58 Again, when in Mark 11:24 He teaches His disciples to pray, He says, “When ye pray, believe that ye shall receive, and ye shall surely have it.”

But what is it to receive the sacraments except to have a desire for divine grace? And what is the desire for divine grace except a true and heartfelt prayer? How, then, can it be anything else than unchristian to teach that the sacraments and God’s grace are to be received without such a desire, without faith, nay, without repentance for sin, without any intention to do good? Is it not pitiful to hear such teachings in the Church? But because this article stands at the head of the list, and all the others depend upon it, we must establish it and explain it still further, if that will do any good.

St James says, “If any man lack wisdom let him seek and ask it of God, Who giveth to every man abundantly, and it shall be given him. But let him ask with a firm faith, and not doubt. For if he doubteth he is like a wave or billow of the sea, which is driven hither and thither by the wind. Let not that man think that he will receive anything of God. Such a man is unstable in all his ways, because he has a divided heart.” James 1:5 ff.

Does not that say clearly enough that the man who prays and does not firmly believe that he will receive his request, cannot receive anything from God? How much less can he receive anything who does not pray, does not believe, does not repent, has no intention to do good, but only removes the obstacle of an evil purpose, as they teach! God keep all His Christians against such an unchristian error, taught by this deceitful bull and masters of the same sort! Its like was never heard since the beginning of the world.

Again, St Paul says, in Romans 14:28, “Everything that is not done in faith, is sin.” How, then, can the sacraments give grace to unbelievers, who in all their works and ways do nothing else than sin, so long as they do not believe? Nay, how can they “remove the obstacle,” if they remain in that unbelief, because of which all that they do is sin, as St Paul here says? Yet they teach that faith is not necessary for the reception of the sacraments and of grace, and condemn these clear passages of Scripture when they condemn me.

In the same sense St Paul, in Romans 1:17 and Hebrews 10:38, quotes the saying of the prophet Habakkuk 2:4 as one of the chief things in all Christian doctrine, when he says, *Justus ex fide sua vivat*, “A righteous man shall live by his faith.” He does not say, “A righteous man shall live by the

sacraments,” but “by his faith,” for it is not the sacraments, but faith in the sacraments, that gives life and righteousness. Many men receive the sacraments and get from them neither life nor righteousness; but he that believeth is good and liveth.

That is also the meaning of Christ’s saying, in the last chapter of Mark, “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.” Mark 16:16 He puts the faith before the baptism, for where there is no faith the baptism does no good; as He Himself afterwards says, “He that believeth not shall be lost,” even though he is baptised, for it is not the baptism, but faith in the baptism, that saves. Therefore, we read in Acts 8:36 that St. Philip would not baptise the eunuch, without first asking him whether he believed. And thus we still see it done every day. Wherever in the whole world baptism is administered, the question is first put to the child, or to the sponsors in his stead, whether he believes, and on their faith and confession, the sacrament of baptism is given him. Why, then, does this heretical, blasphemous bull presume to teach against all Scripture, against the whole world, against the faith and practice of all Christians, that one need not believe, nor repent, nor intend to do good? It is so plainly unchristian, that if it were not for the bull no one would believe that anybody held such a senseless doctrine. I hope they will be heartily ashamed of this bull. They would not like to have the laity read it in German.

Furthermore, St Paul says in Romans 10:10, that for a man to become righteous, it is necessary that he believe from the heart. He does not say it is necessary that he receive the sacraments, for a man can become righteous by faith without bodily reception of the sacraments, so long as he does not despise them; but without faith no sacrament is of any use, nay, it is altogether deadly and pernicious. For this reason he writes in Romans 4:3, that Abraham believed, or trusted, God, and it was counted to him for righteousness, or goodness; as Moses also had written in Genesis 15:6 This was written in order that we might know that nothing makes us good and righteous except faith, without which no one can have any dealings with God, no one receive His grace.

All this is also proved by the reason and experience of all men, for when we are dealing with words and promises, there must be faith, even between men here on earth. No business and no community could long exist if no one was willing to take another’s word or signature on faith. Now, as we plainly see, God deals with us in no other way than by His holy Word and the sacraments, which are like signs or seals of His Word.

The very first thing necessary, then, is faith in these words and signs; for when God speaks and gives signs man must firmly and whole-heartedly believe that what He says and signifies is true, so that we do not consider Him a liar or a trickster, but hold Him to be faithful and true. This faith pleases God above all things, and does Him the highest honor, because it believes Him to be true, and a righteous God. Therefore He, in turn, counts this faith to us as righteousness good and sufficient unto salvation.

Therefore, since every sacrament contains a divine word and promise, in which God offers and promises us His grace, it is assuredly not enough to “put away the obstacle,” as they call it, but there must be in the heart an unwavering, unshaken faith, which receives the promise and sign, and doubts not that what God there promises and signifies is so. Then that grace which the sign, or sacrament, promises and indicates is certainly given to faith. If faith is not present, then the “putting away of the obstacle” is labor lost; and not only so, but God is utterly blasphemed and dishonored, as though He were a liar and foolish jester. In such case the sacraments not only give no grace to those

who “put away the obstacle,” but they bestow disgrace, wrath and misfortune, so that it is better, if faith is not present, to stay far away from the words and signs, or sacraments, of God.

Thus the sacrament of baptism is a divine sign or seal, given by virtue of the promise and word of Christ in the last chapter of Mark, “He that believeth and is baptised shall be saved.” Mark 16:16 Therefore, he that is baptised must hold this word to be true, and must believe that he will certainly be saved if he is baptised, as the word says and the sign signifies; but if he does not believe, then this word and sign of God are in vain, and God is despised in the sacrament. For unbelief makes Him out a fool and a liar. So grievous, unchristian, horrible, terrible a sin is unbelief, or mistrust, in the sacraments. To such wickedness this blasphemous, damnable bull would drive us. It makes faith a heresy, and blasphemy a Christian truth.

God keep us from the abomination standing in the holy place! Matthew 24:15 So also the divine sign, or sacrament, of penance is given in virtue of Christ’s word in Matthew 16:19, “Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven, etc.” Therefore, he that goes to confession and does penance must see to it, before all else, that he hold this word to be the truth and firmly believe that he is “loosed” before God in heaven when he is absolved on earth. If he does not believe this, then God must seem to him a liar, and by this unbelief, or doubt, he denies Him. Of what help, then, is his “putting away of the obstacle,” his laying aside of evil intention, if he keeps the greatest obstacle, the worst intention, that is, unbelief, doubt, and the denying of God?

It is the same with the sacrament of the altar. Because it is given in virtue of Christ’s words in Matthew 26:26 “Take and eat, this is My body which is given for you,” therefore he that goes to the sacrament must firmly believe that what the words of Christ say is really true that His body is given for him, and His blood shed for him. If he does not believe this, or believes that it is given not for him but for others, again Christ is a liar and His word and sign come to naught. O the countless, abominable sins that are committed these days by this unbelief and abuse of the sacraments, because faith like this is nowhere taught! And now it is condemned by this bull! We are taught only to “put away the obstacle,” to repent and confess.

If they preach about faith, the preaching goes no farther than to say that Christ is truly present and that bread is not present, but only the form of bread; but what Christ is doing there, or why He is there, of that we hear no one preaching or teaching rightly.

From all this I think it is clear that for the sacrament faith is necessary — faith which does not doubt that it receives everything the words declare and the sacrament signifies. Their talk about the “putting away of the obstacle” is profitless; nay, it is heretical to say that with the mere “putting away of the obstacle,” without faith, grace is given by the sacraments. This saying, taken from the teaching of St Augustine, holds true, “Not the sacrament, but the faith of the sacrament makes righteous and saves;” and again, the same St Augustine, in his commentary on John, says of baptism, “The word comes to the element, and there is a sacrament,” and again, “The water touches the body, but purifies the soul, not because of the work, or of the pouring, but because of faith.”

Against these strong arguments in behalf of this Christian article my opponents have not a tittle of Scripture or a spark of reason for their opinion about the “putting away of obstacles,” but the whole thing is a naked, baseless human fabrication, a dream. I would gladly hear their refutation. Is it not a pity, even if it were not heresy, that they dare to teach doctrines of their own devising in the Church, where nothing should be taught except God’s Word?

They have one lone argument with which they support their opinion. It is as follows: "If the sacraments of the New Testament do not give grace to those who 'put away the obstacle,' even though they have not faith, then there would be no difference between them and the sacraments of the Old Testament; for the Old Testament sacraments had the power to give grace to those who believed, and the New Testament sacraments must be more powerful and better than the Old; therefore they must give grace to those also who do not yet believe, to whom the Old Testament sacraments did not give grace." This is a broad subject and much could be said about it.

To put it briefly, their whole argument rests on a false and erroneous idea, for there is no difference between the sacraments of the Old and New Testaments. Neither the one nor the other confers the grace of God, but, as has been said, it is nothing else than faith in God's word and signs which gave grace then and gives it now. Therefore, the ancients obtained grace through the very same faith as we. Thus St Peter says in Acts 15:11, "We trust that we shall be saved through faith, like all our fathers"; and St.

Paul in 2 Corinthians 4:13, "We have the same spirit of faith, which they had"; and in 1 Corinthians 10:3, "Our fathers ate the same spiritual meat and drank the same spiritual drink that we eat and drink," that is to say, they believed, as we do.

It is indeed true that the types of the Old Testament gave no grace, but the types are not sacraments, as they think. For in the types there is no word or promise of God, as there must be if there is to be a sacrament, but they were merely figures or signs, such as we have now. Bodily adornments and trappings are a mere figure or sign in which there is no word or promise from God that he who has it shall have this or that gift. They contain no such promise as we see in baptism, that he shall be saved who believes and is baptised. Whatever like promises of God, in which men believed, were given in the Old Testament, they were in all respects equal to our sacraments, except that they had many of them and many kinds of them, while we have few of them, and all of one kind, and they are the common property of all men in the whole world.

On the other hand, the types and signs we have, which are not sacraments and are not accompanied by a word of God, are like the Old Testament types. So, for instance, a bishop's dress is just as much a type as was the dress of Aaron; neither bestows any grace. Therefore they ought not to confuse the sacraments and the types, and mistake the one for the other; then they would not have fallen into the error of making a distinction between the sacraments of the Old and of the New Testaments, when they cannot make a distinction between the Old and the New Testament faith.

If this article is thoroughly grasped and understood, all the rest will easily be understood, and the whole bull will be put to open shame; for this is by far the most important article, because it has to do with faith.

THE SECOND ARTICLE

He who denies that after baptism sin remains in every child, tramples upon Christ and St Paul.

St Paul says in Romans 7:7, "I had not known that evil lust and desire was sin, except God's commandment had said, 'Thou shalt not have evil desire.'"

Now the Apostle was not only a baptised man, but was also a saint, when he wrote this about his own evil desire and that of all the saints.

Whence did this evil desire come to him after baptism? It was nothing else than a remnant.

Again, in Galatians 5:17, he writes to baptised men and saints as follows: "The flesh desires and lusts against the spirit and the spirit lusts against the flesh; these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the thing that ye would." What can or will anyone say in reply to this clear passage? It says plainly that they have within them flesh and spirit, two contradictory desires, or lusts, so deep-rooted that although they would wish to be without fleshly desire, it is impossible. Whence comes this evil lust in men who are baptised and saints? Without doubt from the fleshly birth, in which this inherited sin of evil desire is born with them; and it continues even unto death, and offers battle and resistance to our spirit as long as we live.

So too in Romans 7:18 f., "I find in me, that is, in my flesh, no good thing; for the evil that I would not, that I do, but the good that I would, I do not." What does St Paul mean by that except that although, according to the spirit, he would like to do good — that is, to be without evil desires and inclinations — nevertheless the flesh is so evil and full of lusts, that he does it not, and cannot be without these lusts, and therefore he does the evil of his flesh, which according to his spirit he does not wish to do? That is to say, he has evil desires, though he fights against them that they may not get the better of him and be fulfilled in works, as he also teaches others to do, in Romans 6:12, "Let not sin reign in your mortal body, so that ye follow its lusts or desires," as if to say, "Sin and evil lust are in your body; but see to it that ye subdue them, and consent not to them, nor follow after them."

This conflict of our flesh and spirit, with their contradictory desires, God lays upon all whom He causes to be baptised and called, as it is prophesied in Genesis 3:15, when He says to the serpent, "I will make enmity between thee and a woman, and between thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her foot."

That is to say, "Spirit and flesh strive against one another, but the spirit shall overcome, though with trouble and labor, and shall put down the disobedient flesh," as Paul says in Galatians 5:24, "All who are Christians, or belong to Christ, crucify the flesh, with its lusts and vices"; and St Peter, "Beloved brethren, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war continually against the soul." 1 Peter 2:11 It is evident from this that sin remains in the baptised and the saints so long as they have flesh and blood and live on earth, and that the condemnation of this article in this bull is most unchristian. But to prove it still farther, St Paul says in Romans 7:22, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see another, contradictory law, in my members, which would take me captive in the law, or power, of sin, and which wars against the law of my spirit." Here St Paul confesses that he finds a good law and will in his spirit, and also an evil law and will in his members. How then can it be denied that sin remains in a saint after he is baptised? If it is not sin that wars against the good spirit and the law of God, then I should like to be told what sin is. Whence comes this strife of the evil against the good within us, if not from the fleshly birth of Adam, which remains after the entrance of the good spirit in

baptism and repentance, until, by resistance and the grace of God and the growth of the good spirit, it is overcome, and at last is slain by death and driven out.

Moreover, St Paul says still more and speaks even more plainly in the same passage, "I myself, after the spirit, serve the commandment of God, but after the flesh I serve the law of sin." Romans 7:25 Does not that make it clear enough that one and the same man finds in himself two things?

With the spirit he wills the good and serves the law of God and is righteous, he also takes pleasure and delight in it; but with the rebellious flesh he wills the evil, and takes pleasure and delight in serving it.

Therefore, since flesh and spirit are one man, both kinds of nature, work, love and desire are reckoned to him, contradictory though they are.

Because of the spirit the man is righteous; because of the flesh he has sin; as St Paul says in Romans 6. The spirit is alive in the sight of God because of its righteousness, but the flesh is dead before Him because of its sin. For because the noblest, best and highest part of man — the spirit — remains by faith righteous and just, God counts not the sin which remains in the lesser part — the flesh — to man's condemnation. Surely I, and everyone else, have a right to be amazed that this article is not held to be the most certain, the best-known, the most evident truth; still more, that anyone should condemn it.

And what do we read in the lives of all the saints? What is it that they confess and prove with all their works, prayers, fastings, labors and manifold exercises, except that by these things they are striving against their own flesh, to chastise it, make it subject to the spirit and quench its evil lusts and desires? So St Paul writes to the Colossians 3:5, "Slay your members which are on the earth, unchastity, uncleanness, evil desire, covetousness"; and again in Romans 8:13, "If ye through the spirit do slay the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live before God; but if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," and to the Philippians, "I chastise my body and compel it to service, that I may not preach to others and myself be cast away." 1 Corinthians 9:27 And so I might go on. Who of the saints does not sigh, groan, lament and cry out about his own flesh and his evil desires?

How often does St Jerome lament that evil desire rages in his flesh, not only after baptism, but even when he has fasted, watched and labored unto weariness, and is most a saint! St Cyprian, in a sermon on the deadly pestilence, comforts himself by thinking of his sins, and says: "Ceaselessly, and with care and sorrow, we must fight against carnal desires, against the allurements of the world. The spirit of man is compassed about and besieged by the assaults of the devil and can hardly meet, hardly withstand them all. If avarice is overthrown, lust rises; if lust is put down, ambition takes its place; if ambition is despised, then anger grows bitter, pride puffs itself up, drunkenness assails, hatred breaks the bonds of concord, envy destroys friendship. You must curse, though God has forbidden it; you must swear, though it is wrong. So many persecutions must the spirit of man endure, so many perils must the heart expect; and shall we still be glad to abide here long among the devil's swords? We should far rather long and pray that sudden death may help us haste to Christ."

Since, therefore, the lives and confessions of these and all the other saints prove the saying of St Paul in Romans 7:22, "I delight in the law of God after my spirit, yet find in my members a contrary law of sin," so that no one can deny that sin is still present in all the baptised and holy men on earth, and that they must fight against it; then what does this miserable bull mean by condemning all that? Are the Scriptures and all the saints to be liars? Let anyone try it for himself, and find out! Let him fast,

watch, labor, even unto death, and be as holy as ever he can! Then let him say whether he will not still find in himself evil desires and inclinations toward unchastity, wrath, hatred, pride or the like. For it is not unchastity alone, but all evil lusts and desires which the flesh can serve, that are comprised in the “desires of the flesh,” as Paul tells us in Galatians 5:18 ff.

I go so far as to say that by condemning this article, the bull accuses God of lying, and blasphemes Him; for thus saith John the Apostle in 1 John 1:18, “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us; but if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness; if we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.” Is it not clear enough from this passage that we are still to be cleansed and still have sin?

In like manner St Paul says to the Hebrews, “Let us lay aside every weight and the dinging sin.” Hebrews 12:1 Here the Apostle includes himself, and confesses that there is in him not only sin, but “clinging sin,” that is, the wilful, evil lust, that does not cease so long as we live, but always besets us, and wars against the spirit, putting upon it a burden and a weight, both of which the apostle commands us to lay aside.

Again, in John 15:3, Christ said to His disciples, “Ye are clean through the word that I have spoken unto you,” but says afterwards, in the 15th chapter, “I am a vine, ye are My branches, and My Father a husbandman; the branch that beareth fruit, He will purify it that it bear more fruit.” John 15:5 Here we see that the branches that are fruitful — that is, righteous and holy — are still impure, and are to be further purified. So David, in Psalm 51:10, though he was already righteous and pure, said, “O Lord, create in me a clean heart, and make a new, right spirit within me,” and says again, in Psalm 19:12, “O Lord, who can know all his sins? Make me pure from my hidden, secret sins.”

Let us understand this aright! It is not possible for a man thus to pray against sin and about sin, or to have such a desire as this, unless he is already righteous. It is only the new spirit and the first-imparted grace that works against the sin which remains. It would fain be righteous through and through, but cannot because of the contradiction of the flesh. Those who have not begun to be righteous do not strive nor lament nor pray against their fleshly sin; nay, they feel no contradiction, but go on following the will of the flesh, as St Paul says of them in Ephesians 4:19, “They have got so far that they are without feeling, and therefore they give themselves unto impurity and greediness, etc.”

Here the parables of the Gospel aid the argument. First that of the Samaritan, who laid the half-dead man on his beast, poured wine and oil into his wounds and bade the host take care of him. He did not entirely cure him at once; so we too are not entirely cured by baptism or repentance, but a beginning is made in us and a bandage of the first grace is bound upon us, that our recovery may proceed from day to day until we are entirely cured. Luke 10:34 f. Therefore St James says, in James 1:18, “God hath borne us by His Word, out of pure, gracious will, without our merit, that we may be a beginning of His work, or His creatures”; as if to say, “We are a work that God has begun but not yet completed so long as we live here on earth in the faith of His Word; but after death we shall be perfect, a divine work without sin or fault.”

The second parable is in Matthew 13:33 It is that of the leaven which the woman mixes in three measures of meal until it is leavened through and through. The new leaven is the faith and grace of the Spirit, Who does not leaven the whole lump through at once, but gently and slowly makes us altogether like Himself, new bread of God. This life, therefore, is not righteousness but growth in

righteousness, not health but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise; we are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it; the process is not yet finished, but it is going on; this is not the end, but it is the road; all does not yet gleam with glory, but all is being purified. 2 Corinthians 3:18 To bring the matter to a conclusion! The Lord's Prayer alone is enough to prove that all of us are still in sin, for all the saints must pray, "Hallowed be Thy Name, Thy will be done, Thy kingdom come," etc., Matthew 6:9 f. whereby they actually confess that they do not yet sufficiently hallow God's name; and yet they could not offer this prayer if the spirit had not already begun to hallow this name. So also they confess that they do not yet do the will of God, and yet they could not pray thus unless they had already begun to do His will; for those who have not made a beginning care nothing about the name and will of God, do not pray about them and have no interest in them. Nor can it be said that in these petitions the saints pray over their past sins only, and not over the sin that remains and is present, for there is a special petition in the Lord's Prayer about past sins; it is, "Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors." These other petitions, however, plainly refer to the sin that remains and is present, because they pray for future honoring of God's name, for future obedience to the divine will, for future possession of the divine kingdom. They are the prayers of men who are as yet partly in the kingdom of the devil, partly disobedient, and partly guilty of dishonoring the name of God.

I know full well what they are wont to say to all this. They say that this evil which remains after baptism is not sin, and they invent a new name for it, saying that it is penalty, and not guilt, that it is a defect or a weakness, f42 rather than sin. I answer, They say all that out of their own arbitrary will, without warrant of Scripture. Nay, it is contrary to Scripture, for St Paul does not say, "I find in me a defect," but expressly, "I serve after the flesh the law of sin," Romans 7:25 and again, "The sin that dwelleth in me doeth the evil"; and St John says not, "If we say that we have no defect," but "If we say that we have no sin." 1 John 1:10 It is not to be endured that human audacity should wrest God's Word and call "defect" what God bids us call "sin." Otherwise the whole Scriptures might be weakened by saying that wherever the word "sin" occurs, it means "defect," and that nothing is sin any more, but merely a defect or a weakness. Who would then prevent someone from saying that adultery, murder and theft were only defects and weaknesses, but not sin? To be sure, they are defects and weaknesses, but they are sinful defects and weaknesses, which must be cured by grace. Wrath, evil lust and inclination to all sorts of evil are defects, but are they not also sins? Are they not against God's commandments, Who hath said, "Thou shalt not have evil desires," Matthew 5:22 "Thou shalt not be angry"? What will they call sin, if not that which is against God's commandments? Indeed, St Paul brought God's commandments into the very text in which he speaks of the sin of those who are baptised, saying, "I had not known that evil desire was sin, if the commandment had not said, Thou shalt not have evil desire;" Romans 7:7 as if to say, "this desire, which remains in me and in all who are baptised, is not simply a defect, but is the sin that is contrary to this command of God and is forbidden by it.

These wiles and evasions for the distorting of the Scriptures St Paul, in Ephesians 4:14, calls in Greek *kybia* and *panurgia*, that is, "sleight of hand," "jugglers' tricks," "gamesters' tricks," because they toss the words of God to and fro, as the gamesters throw their dice; and because, like the jugglers who give things new noses and change the whole appearance of them, they take from the Scriptures their single, simple, constant sense, and blind our eyes, so that we waver to and fro, hold fast to no sure interpretation, and are like men whom they have bewitched or tricked, while they play with us as gamblers with their dice. It is thus that they deal with this clear text, and with the little word "sin."

They say it does not mean sin, but defect or weakness, and they play their jugglers' tricks on us until we do not see what is plainly before our eyes, just as he writes to the Galatians, "O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you and tricked you, that ye hear not the truth?" Galatians 3:1 If we allowed them the right to distort God's words in this fashion, they might say at last that a tree was a stone, and a horse a cow. Sad to say, they have already done this, and still are doing it, as regards the words "faith," "love," "hope," "righteousness," "good works," "sin," "law," "grace of God," and many others. I will maintain on my oath, and prove it too, that the men who in the last four hundred years have written on the Sentences have never yet understood these words, but in their ignorance have played with them and juggled with them until the meaning of all the Scriptures has been lost, and in its place we have been taught nothing but fables and fairy-tales, Let no man's presumptuous inventions lead anyone astray. When God expressly calls anything sin, we ought to take His word, and believe that it is truly sin. God does not lie, as a man does, Numbers 23:19 neither does he play and juggle with words, as do men, but His words are faithfulness and truth. <19B986> Psalm 119:86; <19B107> Psalm 111:7 What tricks would they not have played with the Scriptures if the apostle had quoted from the First Table of Moses one of the great commandments against idolatry, which even the noblest spirits do not sufficiently understand, when they insist on juggling with this lower commandment f46 against evil desires? Everyone perceives that evil desires are against God's commandment, and yet they are not willing that sin shall be sin. Without doubt St Paul cited this lesser commandment in order that he might stop every mouth, and conquer us and convince us by our own perception, so that no one could say anything to the contrary. But it has all been in vain; they continue to resist plain truth and their own experience.

They say it would be an insult to baptism if one were to say that sin remained, because we believe that in baptism all sins are forgiven, and man is born again, pure and new; but if all sins are forgiven, then that which remains is not sin. This is the way human reason works when without divine illumination it interferes with God's words and works and tries to estimate and measure them according to its own ability.

What answer should I make to this argument except the answer that St Augustine gave to his Pelagians, who tried to spit him also on their spears of straw? "Certain sins," he says, "such as actual sins, pass away as works, but remain as guilt, for a murder is quickly done and over with, but the guilt remains until the murderer repents. On the other hand, this original sin, which is born in the flesh, passes away in baptism as guilt, but remains as a work; for although it is forgiven, nevertheless it lives and works and raves and assails us until the body dies, and only then is it destroyed."

I would not believe St Augustine if St Paul did not support him, saying in Romans 8:1, "Those who believe in Christ have nothing damnable in them, because they do not obey the flesh." He says not "They have nothing sinful in them," but "nothing damnable," for he has previously said that in the members and the flesh there is sin which wars against the spirit; but because the spirit fights against it and does not obey it, it does no harm, and God judges a man not according to the sin which assails him in the flesh, but according to the spirit which wars against the sin, and is thereby like the will of God, which hates and fights against sin. Romans 7:14 ff.

It is one thing, then, to say that sins are forgiven, and another thing to say that there is no sin present. After baptism and repentance all sins are forgiven, but sin is still present until death, although because of the forgiveness it does not prevent salvation, provided we strive against it and do not obey it. Therefore they ought not to deny that sin remains after baptism, as though we

needed no more grace to drive out sin; they ought rather to deny that not all sins are forgiven. Then they and I would be right heartily at one in our denial.

For this is the rich grace of the New Testament and the surpassing mercy of the heavenly Father, that through baptism and repentance we begin to become righteous and pure, and whatever of sin is still to be driven out He does not hold against us, because of the beginning we have made in righteousness and because of our continual striving against and driving out of sin. He will not lay this sin to our account, though He might justly do so, until we become perfectly pure. Therefore He has given us a Bishop, even Christ, Who is without sin, and Who is to be our representative until we too become, like Him, all pure. Meanwhile the righteousness of Christ must be the mantle which hides our shame from the eyes of God; His perfect righteousness must be our shield and defense, so that for His sake the sin that remains in those who believe in Him may not be reckoned against them, as St Paul so excellently puts it in Romans 3:24 ff.

We will, therefore, conclude the discussion of this article — almost the best and most necessary of them all — with the beautiful saying of St Augustine, “Sin is forgiven in baptism; not that it is no longer present, but it is not imputed.” Here we see plainly that sin remains, but it is not imputed; and that for the two reasons mentioned above, — first, Because we believe in Christ, Who through faith becomes our representative and covers our sin with His innocence; second, Because we strive unceasingly against sin, to destroy it. Where these two reasons are not present sin is imputed, is not forgiven, and condemns us eternally. This is the joy, the comfort, the blessedness and salvation of the New Testament. Herein we learn the benefit Christ has for us and why we need Him. Out of this root spring joy and delight in Christ, praise and thanksgiving to Him and to the Father of all mercy. This makes free, glad, brave Christians, whose love causes them to fight against sin, and who take pleasure in repentance. But those who would hide our sin from us and make it out to be only a weakness, lull us into false security, make us slothful and grudging, take Christ from us by stealth, and allow us to go on without fear and without being careful to destroy our sin. Thus they harden us in such abominable presumption that neither Christ nor God is sweet and dear to us. God keep us from this presumption, and help out of it all who are in this state! Amen.

THE THIRD ARTICLE

The hinder of original sin, even without actual sin, hinders the soul from entrance into the kingdom of heaven.

The sin remaining after baptism, of which we spoke in the preceding article, is called “tinder” because, as everyone observes in his own case, it is easily inflamed and moved to evil love, lust and works, as tinder easily takes fire. Now hitherto I have never held this article except as an opinion and belief, not as a settled and certain truth that ought to be taught. It was not necessary, therefore, to condemn it. But since my opponents bring forward nothing to the contrary except the single word “We do not like it,” and I care not what they like or do not like, and since, moreover, I have given the matter more thought meanwhile, I now assert it as a settled and true doctrine, confess it, and will maintain it, defying them to overthrow it with Scripture or with reason. My proof follows.

St Peter says, in the last chapter of 2 Peter (2 Peter 3:13), that at the last day God will create a new heaven and a new earth, in which no sin shall dwell, as in this world, but only righteousness. Because, then, it has been proved in the preceding article that the “tinder” is sin, it is evident to any reasoning man that no one will enter heaven unless this sin has first been laid aside. Certainly they will not take sin with them into heaven. But although this truth is so evident that there is no need to prove it — since no one is so foolish as to hold that a man can enter heaven with his sins — nevertheless, because this bull is so mad, and they are so foolish or so shameless as to say such a thing and formally assert it, I will cite another passage.

St Paul says, in Ephesians 5:26, “Christ purifieth His Church through the baptism of water and the Gospel, that He may lead home a bride, the glorious Church, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” I think St Paul here teaches plainly that no sin can go with us to heaven, if no spot nor wrinkle nor any blemish shall enter.

Even though the aforesaid “tinder” were, as they mistakenly think, not sin, but only a disease or weakness, yet everyone, I think, knows nevertheless that this weakness also prevents entrance into heaven. For every disease and weakness, all spots, all wrinkles and all such things must first be laid aside, as St Paul says, if we are to enter into heaven, so that the type in Exodus 13:18 may be fulfilled, where the children of Israel went out of Egypt not only strong and well, but also “harnessed.” Of this David sings in <19A537> Psalm 105:37, “There was not one among them who was sick or feeble.” How much the rather must all weakness be put away when we journey into the true promised land of heaven, out of the true Egypt of this world!

But perhaps in this bull the pope and his people are jesting, speaking of the heaven that is prepared in the abyss of hell, with Lucifer and his angels, for him and all his followers, who blaspheme and persecute the truth of God.

Into this heaven will enter not only the “tinder,” but the fire of all sin and every woe. I cannot think what other kind of heaven he may have, where sin and disease do not bar the entrance. Entrance to our heaven, where God dwells, is prevented by the very smallest sin and weakness, and all who are to enter must “shine pure as the sun,” Matthew 13:43 as the Scripture says. Or perhaps the pope and his papists wish to build themselves a heaven of their own, like those the jugglers make on carnival day out of linen cloth.

Is it not disgusting that we have to read such foolish and childish things in papal bulls? And yet they command that these things shall be regarded as serious, Christian articles of faith!

THE FOURTH ARTICLE

A Dying man's imperfect love for God brings with it, beyond doubt, great fear, and this of itself might be a purgatory and prevent entrance into heaven.

It has been said, and been proved, that nothing which has a weakness can enter heaven; everything must be in its own measure perfect, sinless, and without weakness. Doubtless the saints will not all be equal in heaven, yet each of them will be in his own measure sufficiently pure and perfect.

Because, then, imperfect love is a weakness and is sinful in proportion to the greatness of the weakness, I believe it is evident that imperfect love is an obstade to entrance into heaven.

For the assertion that imperfect love is accompanied by fear, I will let St John be responsible. He says, in 1 John 4:18, "Where fear is, love is not perfect, for perfect love driveth out fear." As for the man who does not believe this saying, I do not ask him to believe me; but since this bull condemns it, I should be sorry if it did not also condemn my artide, which is founded on this saying of St John.

That this great fear can well be a purgatory, I have held as an opinion, not knowing how to prove or to disprove it; we shall learn by our own experience. Besides, our ignorance makes no difference. Nevertheless, I think the Scriptures show that the pains of hell — which all of them make to be the same as purgatory — are fear, terror, horror, the desire for flight, and despair; as Psalm 2:5 says, "He will speak to them in His wrath, and in His displeasure will He terrify them," and Psalm 6:2, "All my bones are terrified, and my soul is sore terrified," and Proverbs 28:1, "The sinner fleeth and no man pursueth," and also Deuteronomy 28:65, "God will give thee a fearful, despairing heart." Besides this, we see daily how great a punishment this horrible terror is. To some it causes sudden death, others go mad because of it, and become in a single moment like different beings. We must admit that there is no penalty like a genuine, awful fright. Therefore it is written of the righteous man, in Psalm 91:5, "He shall not be afraid of the evil tidings," <19B207> Psalm 112:7; at which all sinners are terrified. This fear and terror results from nothing else than a bad conscience, which is weak in faith and love.

Therefore I think this artide sufficiently probable, though if anyone does not wish to believe it, he may leave the question open; the bull and all its masters know nothing about it.

THE FIFTH ARTICLE

There is no foundation in Scripture, nor in the holy doctors of ancient times, for the doctrine that penance has three parts, — contrition, confession and satisfaction.

It is to be noted here that I have never denied that God at times punishes sin, as we read of Moses and Aaron and David and many others; but I have said that the satisfaction which the pope pretends to remit by means of indulgences is nothing, and rests on no word of Scripture, but has grown out of the laws of men. This I will prove.

First, By their own words; for they say, correctly, that contrition might possibly be so great that satisfaction would be unnecessary. But if satisfaction were founded on the Scriptures it would be necessary and would have to be rendered, regardless of the greatness of the contrition or the pureness of the confession. For what is commanded in the Scriptures cannot be remitted because of anything else, since Christ says, “Not a jot or tittle shall pass away; it must all be fulfilled.” Matthew 5:18 Therefore it is clear from their own words that they are biting their own tongues and condemning their own doctrine.

Second, Christ absolved the adulteress without satisfaction, John 8:11 and forgave the sins of the paralytic also without satisfaction. Matthew 9:2 This Christ would not have done if satisfaction were founded on Scripture, for He says He is not come to destroy the law, but to fulfill it. Matthew 5:17 But when the example of Christ is against any doctrine, that doctrine is unquestionably neither clear nor founded on Scripture. It does not help their case to cite to the contrary such an illustration of satisfaction as some find in the instance of Mary Magdalen, who washed Christ’s feet with tears; for I might reply, This was not satisfaction, since many works are done and can be done which are not satisfaction. But no remission of satisfaction can be interpreted otherwise than as a remission of satisfaction; hence, if satisfaction is remitted, it is proof that satisfaction is not commanded in the Scriptures; but the mere fact that a work is done is no proof that a satisfaction, or work, is commanded.

Again, if God inflicts a penalty for sin, whether it is satisfaction or not, no one can remit it; as He says in Psalm 89:32, “I will visit their sin with rods and with stripes,” that is, with penalties inflicted by the hands of men.

These words also must be fulfilled to the letter and the tittle, and the pope cannot remit the penalty for sin, because he cannot abolish the Scriptures and God’s Word. True, a man may anticipate God’s punishment, and lay a penalty, or cause one to be laid, upon himself, in order that God withhold the rod, as St Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:31, “If we punished ourselves, we should not be punished by God.” In the same way contrition may be so great that God requires no further penalty.

In this manner the holy fathers in ancient times established the canons of repentance for sin. These were called “satisfactions” because they anticipated God’s punishments, and we punished ourselves; for sin must be punished either by ourselves or by others who act in God’s stead.

Therefore I have said, and still say, that the pope’s indulgences are nothing but lies and deceit; for if God demands that sin be punished — and this is the truth and the teaching of Scripture — then the pope cannot remit it, and overthrow the Scriptures. Thus he deceives the people. But if there is no penalty — as is the case when contrition is great enough or when we inflict the penalty upon ourselves — then he remits nothing; and again he deceives the people.

For these reasons I have said that the three parts of penance are not based on Scripture; not that I reject contrition, confession and penalty, but I hold the indulgences to be of no effect, because they make a false pretense of remitting the third part of penance, namely, the satisfaction, and I have clearly shown that the satisfaction which is remitted, or alleged to be remitted, by the indulgences is nowhere mentioned in Scripture. In so saying I have not denied that there is such a thing as penalty, or satisfaction, for sin. I say that there is such a thing, but that it cannot be remitted. That which is remitted has been devised by men without the authority of Scripture. Therefore I hate the word "satisfaction," and wish it had never come into existence. The Scriptures call it "penalty" and "chastisement" for sin. No one can make satisfaction to God for daily sins, but he can be punished for all his sins, either graciously in this life, or wrathfully to all eternity.

This article, therefore, stands. Penance has not three parts, as the pope and his followers lyingly declare, saying that the third part is in the pope's power and that he can remit it by means of indulgences. But according to God's Holy Scriptures repentance has three parts, the third of which is sometimes in abeyance because of great contrition or of self-punishment; but no sin ever goes unpunished, as St Augustine says, *Nullum malum impunitum* (No evil goes unpunished), and the proverb has it, "When man does not punish, God does." Therefore the pope has as little power to remit the penalty of sin as he has to remit contrition or confession; for penance is a sacrament and is not his property, nor can he change it in any part.

THE SIXTH ARTICLE

The contrition that is produced by the discovery, contemplation and detestation of sin — as when a sinner with bitterness of heart considers his life, and ponders the greatness, the number and the foulness of his sins, his loss of eternal life and his gain of eternal damnation — this contrition makes a man a hypocrite and a greater sinner.

“Everything that is not of faith is sin,” says St Paul in Romans 14:23 So, too, all my opponents say that true contrition for sin must be the fruit of love, otherwise it is not true contrition. That is the very doctrine I have taught in this article, and yet they condemn their own doctrine because I also teach it. Even though one contemplates his own sin, and all the harm that sin has done, without faith and love it does not help him with God.

Even the devil and all the damned have this sort of contrition, which we Germans call “the contrition of Judas” or “gallows-contrition.”

It is this way. Because they are without grace and have not the spirit of God, it is impossible for them to love righteousness; and even though, compelled by the commandment of the Church or by the fear of death, they are forced to think upon their sins, nevertheless their hearts are in such a state that if there were no hell, or if they could do it without fear and shame, they would prefer to have nothing to do with contrition, confession and satisfaction. It is not possible for them to change their hearts by the power of their own nature without the grace of God; for of himself man can do nothing good, but only evil, as I shall prove in Article xxvi; even though he may go through the motions of doing good, it is lies and deceit and hypocrisy.

For this reason I have taught that everyone ought first to search his own heart and see whether he hates his sin thoroughly and of his own free will and accord. If he finds that he does not, then let him hold his contrition in contempt, and first fall on his knees and pray to his Lord, and have prayers offered in his behalf, that his contrition may be real and true, as the Church prays, *Et cor poenitentis tribue*; then let him meditate upon his sins. A contrite heart is a rare thing and a great grace, and is not attained by thinking of sin and hell, but only by receiving the in-poured Holy Spirit.

Otherwise Judas would have had the very best contrition, for he thought of his sin with great sorrow. On the other hand, a forced and feigned contrition is a common thing, as experience shows, for many confessions are made in Lent and yet there is little improvement in men’s lives.

Of these false teachers of hypocritical and false contrition St Paul prophesied in 1 Timothy 4:1, “There shall come teachers who cleave to seducing spirits, and with hypocrisy and a good appearance shall they teach lies, and shall have scars branded on their conscience.” Is it not “teaching lies” when men are taught to consider that contrition good which only appears to be good, but is without faith, love, desire and willingness, — which are given only by the grace of God? They “brand a scar on their consciences.” Such a scar is not born with them, nor does it grow, but is stamped upon them from without; in like manner their troubles of conscience are not the fruit of grace, but have been forced upon them and produced in them by falsely invented notions, and they pretend to a contrition which is not real.

A false conscience and contrition of this kind make a man not only a hypocrite, but a greater sinner, as St Jerome says, *Simulata sanctitas est duplex iniquitas* (Pretended righteousness is double wickedness); “double” because, in the first place, there is no real, true righteousness present, but rather a heart that does not will and love to be righteous; and because, in the second place, this real

wickedness is covered over with forced notions and pretended contrition, and gives itself out as true contrition and righteousness, whereby it seeks to lie to God and deceive Him. It is against this false contrition, which the pope and his liars teach in all their books to be the true contrition, that I have set this article and do now set it and hold it.

It also happens that while meditating upon their sins, these false penitents feel again — though deep in their hearts perhaps — the flames and sparks of desire for the repetition of past sins, or wicked inclinations toward former hatred and envy, and thus in their very contrition they acquire a real desire to commit sins which they would perhaps have forgotten if they had not meditated upon them. So utterly unprofitable is everything that does not spring from the gracious working of God, that St Paul says (in Romans 5:12 ff.; Galatians 3:21 f.; 1 Corinthians 15:56) that sins only increase when they are recognised and thought about without the grace of God. But these branded leaders of the blind still strive to deceive us, to represent these things that cause us to stumble and increase our sin as true contrition, and to persuade us that they are such.

It is true, indeed, that by the imposition of penalties and by this sort of compulsory repentance, hardened sinners are prevented for a time from committing their evil deeds before the eyes of men, but that does not make their hearts righteous in the sight of God. They refrain from their wickedness only so long as they are obliged to respect and fear men. But the aim of my doctrine has been to diminish the number of these hypocrites and “seared consciences” — which the pope and his followers daily increase by means of their devil’s doctrine — and to make true and salutary contrition more common, so that we may not anger Almighty God more by our false doctrines and “contritions” than we have already done by our sins. To these men He will apply the words of Matthew 21:21, “The harlots and knaves will enter the kingdom before you”; so much more is He embittered by false and pretended penitents and by this compulsory righteousness than by open sins and sinners.

To prove this still more clearly. Under the first article I have proved conclusively that even the saints, who live in God’s grace, must work and labor hard to love righteousness and strive against their fleshly lusts and sins. If these men, then, cannot sufficiently hate their sin, what are they to do who are not in grace and wage no warfare against sin? What is the carnal man to do against sin, in the absence of the Spirit or of grace, when he contends for sin and against God even when the Spirit is present? Can anything be more foolish than to say that nature must of its own accord hate and avoid, or repent of sin, without God’s grace and before it receives God’s grace, seeing that it loves, seeks and desires sin, and strives and rages against grace even after grace has laid hold of it! And this is the lament of all the saints. To say that nature shall do of its own accord what the grace of God, with ceaseless striving, is not able to bring it to do, is the same thing as to say that a great tree, which all my power cannot bend, will bend itself if I let it alone, or to say that a stream of water, which I cannot restrain with any dam or weir, will stop of its own accord, if I but let it go.

So pope and papists teach us that grace is insufficient to suppress sin, but without grace it suppresses and checks itself. Away with such preachers!

Therefore, to teach that repentance is to be reached by merely meditating upon sin and its consequences, is lying, stinking, seducing hypocrisy. We ought, first of all, to look into the wounds of Christ, and see in them His love toward us and our ingratitude toward Him, and thus, with heartfelt affection to Christ and detestation of self, to meditate upon our sin. That is a true contrition and a fruitful repentance. For contrition must precede meditation upon sin. Such meditation must flow out of contrition and be its work, not vice versa. There must be contrition before there can be any

meditation upon sin, just as there must be love and desire before there can be any good works or any meditation upon them. Meditation is a fruit of contrition; contrition is the tree. In our country fruit grows on trees and out of trees, and meditation upon sin grows out of contrition; but in the holy land of pope and papists trees may grow on the fruits, contrition out of sins; the people walk on their ears, no doubt, and do everything upside down.

THE SEVENTH ARTICLE

True is the proverb, and better than all the doctrines of contrition that hitherto have been taught, — “To sin no more is the highest repentance, and “A new life is the best repentance, that is to say, to turn from evil ways is best.

If to sin no more is not the highest repentance, as it is everywhere said to be, and with truth, then what, pray, is the highest repentance? Speak, holy father pope; we are listening. O thou wolf of Christendom, is it not true that to sin no more is not only true contrition for sin, but involves a change in the whole life? Why, then, is it not the highest and the best repentance?

Where contrition is, by God’s grace, truly present, there the whole man is at the same time changed into another man, with a different heart, disposition, mind and life. That is what I mean by “sinning no more” and “a new life.”

Since, then, the pope denies that to sin no more is the highest repentance, let us see what he wishes to call the highest repentance. He surely will not say that to sin evermore is the best repentance, though, to be sure, this is the way that he and his do repent. The first letter of “never” is too much for them, and out of “never sinning” they make “ever sinning.” Then he must certainly say that “Judas-repentance” or “gallows-repentance” is the best repentance, for that is brought about entirely by the power of nature without divine grace; it is utterly false, does not create a new life, and does not even cease from sinning because of any earnest and heart-felt intention; and it has been shown above that without grace there is no good in man, since even those who are living in grace have sin and evil struggling within them.

The dear pope, however, is moved by that word of Christ, “Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 16:19 He thinks, maybe, that if to sin no more were the highest repentance, then a man could be righteous at home and would not need to run to Rome or send there. That would do away entirely with the Roman curio-shop where they sell and barter keys, letters, seals, sin, grace, God, hell and everything else. Therefore he must bind the best repentance to Rome, to his own purse and strongbox.

We will prove this article of ours, however, with passages of Scripture. St Paul says, in Galatians 6:15, that among Christians neither circumcision nor uncircumcision counts for anything, but only “a new creature.” Dear pope, condemn this apostle too, for he says that nothing except “a new creature” counts for anything in Christendom. Now “Judas-contrition,” which is without grace, is surely not “a new creature”; it is not even the beginning of “a new creature,” but is hypocrisy; therefore it certainly counts for nothing. How, then, can it be the best repentance?

To be sure, the “new creature” and the entrance of grace begin with a great trial and terrifying of the conscience, or with some other great suffering and misfortune, which Revelation 3:20 calls “God’s knocking” or “visitation,” and it hurts so bitterly that a man is like to die, and thinks he must perish; but at the same time grace and strength are poured into him, so that he does not despair. Thus there begins “a new creature” and a purpose to do good. This is the true and good contrition. So we read of the conversion of St Paul, that when he was surrounded by a light from heaven, and terrified, he received grace at the same time, and said, “Lord, what shall I do?” Acts 9:3 ff. Thus in storms of adversity God pours His grace into us, as it is written in Isaiah 41:3, “God pursues them and turns peacefully toward them,” and the prophet, Nahum i, “God is a Lord Whose ways are all thunder and lightning and storm, and His foot-steps are like thick dust-clouds”; Nahum 1:3 as if to say, “Those

upon whom God wills to bestow grace, He assails by bringing upon them all misfortune, inward and outward, until a man thinks that he must perish because of the great storm and trial.”

Those who do not endure these works and ways of God, repel His grace; they cannot greet God when he meets them thus, nor understand His greeting or return it. For His greeting is terrible at the beginning, but comforting in the end. So the angel Gabriel frightens Mary with his salutation, but comforts her again most sweetly. Luke 1:28 f. Therefore the repentance that is occupied with thoughts of peace is hypocrisy. There must be a great earnestness about it and a deep hurt if the old man is to be put off. When lightning strikes a tree or a man, it does two things at once, — it rends the tree and swiftly slays the man, but it also turns the face of the dead man and the broken branches of the tree to itself, toward heaven.

So the grace of God terrifies and pursues and drives a man, but turns him at the same time to itself. About this work of contrition and of grace my dear pope knows less than does a log on the ground; and yet he wants to give decisions about it and pass judgments upon it.

In olden days there were heretics called Donatists, who taught that no one could truly receive baptism or the sacrament unless the priest or bishop who administered it was holy. St Augustine vanquished them, and proved that the sacraments belong not to man but to God alone, Who administers them through good and bad servants. Now that this heresy has been suppressed, the pope’s heresy steps in its place, and teaches that, although he who administers the sacraments need not be righteous, he must be high and mighty. What those heretics ascribed to human holiness, that the pope ascribes to human might and greatness, and will not have the sacraments administered save by himself alone, or by his authority, even though God give another man the faith of the Gospel, the Spirit of God and all holiness.

The sacraments, which in olden times could not be bound to holiness, are now bound to authority, and hung upon red hats and golden crowns and bishops’ mitres, like the scallop-shells on the hats and cloaks of the pilgrims to St James.

Not satisfied with this, he goes on to ascribe such authority to his keys f74 that if one comes along who has neither faith nor contrition, and hardly has even that half-gallows-repentance which they call attrition he can, by the power of the keys, turn that half-gallows-repentance into good, genuine, salutary contrition, if only the man himself does not oppose an obstacle. Of this we spoke under the first article. Thus the pope can now create grace and contrition within us, even though we are unbelievers, heathen and Jews, and have no contrition at all; and the sacraments must now depend not merely on the holiness of the priests, as the Donatists said, but on the authority and rank of men, and so faith is destroyed and forgotten. Lo, now, in order that the pope may not lose this heretical and invented authority, whereby he can manufacture the best sort of repentance at will, he must deny that to sin no more is the best repentance.

Beware of Antichrist, the pope; and be sure that the sacraments depend neither on sanctity, nor on rank, nor on authority, nor on riches, nor on hats, nor on gloves, nor on pope, nor on bishops, nor on priests, nor on monks, but only on your own faith. No matter whether he who gives you absolution is holy or unholy, high or low, poor or rich, pope or priest; only believe that through him God is absolving you, and you are absolved. If the sacraments do not depend on holiness, how much less shall they depend on rank, authority, greatness, honor and riches? For holiness is the greatest thing in all the world. That is the meaning of the words of Christ when He says, “Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.” Matthew 16:19 In these words Christ does not confer any

lordship, but incites every Christian heart to faith, so that when he is absolved by the priest, he may be sure that he is absolved by God. The power of the keys extends only as far as your faith extends; not as far as the pope and his followers choose. To be sure, we must endure their mad and arbitrary assumption, authority and lordship, only you must hold fast the true faith, and believe that no one can give you either less or more than the measure of your faith, and that it is a lie to say that by the power of the keys the pope and his followers can create contrition within you apart from your faith.

THE EIGHTH ARTICLE

Do not undertake to confess all your daily sins, nor even all your mortal sins, for no one can know all his mortal sins, and in ancient times only the public, remembered, mortal sins were confessed.

They all teach that it is not necessary to confess venial sins, but because I say it, it must be heresy. I believe if I said there is a God and professed all the articles of faith, it would all needs be heresy, merely because I affirm it; so good and honest are the pope and his followers toward me.

That not all mortal sins can be either confessed or known is, moreover, the clear teaching of Scripture in Psalm 19:12, "Lord, who can know all his sins? Cleanse Thou me from secret sins." Here the prophet teaches us that we cannot confess our secret sins, for God alone knows them, and we are to obtain remission by prayer. <19E302> Psalm 143:2 testifies that these sins are mortal sins, "Lord enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." If the dear saints, God's servants, whom we regard as sinless, have such sins that they cannot be justified in God's sight, what doest thou, wretched pope, that thou wilt justify before God even those who have neither faith nor true contrition and who bring to penance only their damned "gallows-contrition"? Sins because of which the saints cannot be justified in God's sight must surely be mortal, for anything that prevents justification is mortal sin, and vice versa.

Therefore I have taught the people, — and everyone ought so to teach — that they shall fear God, and after they have used all diligence in confession, say to Him with David, "Behold, dear Lord, I have confessed this sin and that; but Thy judgments are secret and terrible; if Thou wilt enter into judgment with me I shall never stand before Thee no matter what I do; who knoweth all his sins? Therefore I flee from Thy judgment to Thy grace and pray that Thou wilt cleanse me from all my unknown sins." In this way the people can learn to comfort themselves with God's grace, and not with their own contrition, confession and satisfaction, as Antichrist and his disciples teach them to do.

As regards the statement that in ancient times only public sins were confessed, I leave the proof to the histories and to the Epistles of St Paul. I have spoken only of mortal sins that are known to the man himself, though they may be secret so far as others' knowledge is concerned. Beside these sins, I say, there are still others which no one knows but God. Therefore we ought to leave the people in peace and not drive them to search for all their sins, since it is impossible to discover them; and we ought to allow them to confess the sins that occur to them at the time or that they are conscious of, so that they may pay more heed to their faith in God's grace than to the completeness of their confession.

THE NINTH ARTICLE

When we undertake to make a full and complete confession of all our sins, we do nothing else than show that we are not willing to leave the forgiveness of them to God's mercy.

This article is already proved by the one preceding and by the second, for if it is true, as David says in Psalm 19:12, that no one knows all his sins, we are obliged to leave the unknown sins to the mercy of God, and thus to rely not on our own confession or contrition, but on His grace, and ask in humble, fearful prayer that He will cleanse us from them, as has been said.

Moreover, if we have proved under the first and second articles that all the saints lament the sin in their flesh, from which they cannot free themselves, then we must admit that this remainder of sin must be commended to God's grace, for if He were to judge it strictly — as He will do in the case of those who despise His grace we should all be found guilty of death. That the pope condemns this article is no wonder, for they teach us to rely in all respects upon our own works and his authority, and not at all upon God's mercy. Thus fear of God and hope in Him are destroyed in Christian hearts.

But St Augustine says, in the Confessions, ix, "Woe to the life of man, however good it be, if it is judged without mercy." If St Augustine wishes even a good life to be commended to mercy, and cannot endure God's judgment upon it, should we not then be willing to leave some hidden sins to His Grace? O it is disgusting that such evident truth should be condemned by the pope! Pope and papists are an antichristian lot!

THE TENTH ARTICLE

No one's sins are forgiven unless he believes that they are forgiven when the priest absolves him. Nay, the sin remains unless he believes that it is forgiven. For the forgiveness of sin, or infusion of grace, is not enough, but one must believe that sin is forgiven.

From the condemnation of this article it follows, in the first place, that the article of the Creed is false and heretical in which all Christians say, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, one holy Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins"; for this article of mine teaches nothing else than that we ought to believe in the forgiveness of sins, as the article of the Creed says. I thank thee, most holy father pope, that thou now teachest what the world never knew before, that the article of the Creed concerning the forgiveness of sins is heretical. But if this one part of the Creed is heretical, then all its parts are certainly heretical. Thus the most holy father pope here condemns the whole Creed so roundly that I am only afraid no one will believe that such a thing is actually contained in the bull. But it is indeed there, and therefore they are ashamed that the bull is now translated into German, and their antichristian, heretical raving comes to light.

It follows, in the second place, that a sinner ought to say to the priest who absolves him, "You lie; my sins are not forgiven, as you say, for the holy father pope has lately issued a bull in which he condemns all those who believe that their sins are forgiven and that the absolution is true. On the contrary, he who goes to confession is rather to think, 'I shall confess, but I shall hold the absolution for mere lies, heresy and error, and call all priests liars, heretics and seducers, if they absolve anybody'; the pope in his bull has bid me do this."

It follows, in the third place, that Christ himself is a liar and a heretic when He says to Peter in Matthew 16:19, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." For this tender bull forbids anyone, on pain of ban and stake, to believe that what the priest looses is loosed; that is, no one is to believe that his sins are forgiven him, as my article says. If anyone doubts that such abominable things are in the bull, let him read it and observe what it condemns. I should myself have believed that the heavens would fall before such things emanated from the pope. I think the pope is nearing his end.

This article, however, is so evidently true that the ears of all Christians are terrified and appalled at the pope's condemnation of it. For it is the commonest custom everywhere in the Church for Christians to encourage one another to believe and trust in the mercy of God, which forgives their sins. To be sure, the Evil Spirit, in the hour of death, is wont to suggest to men the very thing the pope teaches in this bull, viz., that they ought not to believe their sins forgiven. He suggests it, not as something right and proper to do, but because he is the enemy of grace and faith and truth; but the pope is worse than all devils because he teaches this as right and as good doctrine; he sits in God's place and condemns the Creed. This no devil has ever done. Thine end is at hand, O thou son of perdition, Antichrist! Cease, pope; it is too plain and too much.

We shall prove this article, however. In Matthew 9:2, when Christ heals the paralytic, He says first, "My son, trust and believe, and thy sins are forgiven thee." Here you see plainly that his sins are not forgiven until he believes that they are forgiven. He also absolves Mary Magdalen because of her faith, for His words are, "Go in peace; thy faith hath helped thee." Luke 7:50 You see the faith, which helped her and blotted out her sin, was there first, so that Christ Himself does not ascribe the forgiveness of her sins to His own absolution, nor to His keys, nor to His authority, but to her faith.

Yet the pope pretends that sins are forgiven because of his authority, not because of man's faith. It is plain to be seen what kind of spirit bids him say that.

Everyone knows that the priest's absolution is a verdict — not his own, but God's — which demands faith, by virtue of Christ's word, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

Matthew 16:19 The priest says, "I absolve thee"; that is to say, "I loose thee," or "Thy sins are forgiven thee." How does it agree with the absolution if the sinner is not to believe this divine verdict?

Now burn and condemn books, pope. So shall God cast thee down and give thee up to madness, that thou mayest receive the reward thou hast merited, because thou strivest always against divine truth. Let him doubt who will that the pope, who spreads more than enough of these errors throughout the world and receives in return for it the wealth of the nations, is the true, chief, final Antichrist. Thank God, I know him.

THE ELEVENTH ARTICLE

Thou shalt in no wise trust that thou art absolved because of thy contrition, but because of the word of Christ, when He says to Peter, "Whatsoever thou shalt loose, shall be loosed." Matthew 16:19

I say that if thou art absolved by the priest, thou shalt firmly believe that thou art absolved, however it may be with thy contrition.

This article is sufficiently proved in those that immediately precede; for who would confess or repent, if he did not believe that his sins would be forgiven him? What would a priest say if I were to come to him and say, "Sir, I have committed such and such sins and am sorry, but I do not believe that I am absolved by you." He would certainly think me crazy. But this bull teaches that this is what we are to do, and condemns the kind of faith that my article teaches.

Suppose it were true that our sins are forgiven because of our contrition, as the bull teaches, and not because of God's word alone, as my article teaches; then a man could boast before God that he had attained grace and forgiveness by his own contrition and merit, and not solely by the mercy of God. This is abominable and terrible, and an utter denial of grace. For God's mercy and grace are bestowed freely upon the undeserving, as Paul says in Romans 5:15, "We are endowed with grace and justified freely and altogether out of mercy," Romans 3:24; and Psalm 25:11 says, "Lord, be gracious to my sins for Thy name's sake"; it does not say, "for my sake," or "for my name's sake," or "for my merit's sake."

Moreover, if it has been proved above that the dear saints still have sin and that sin strives against grace and grace against sin, then it is clear enough that grace is given not only to those who have not merited it, but even to those who have merited evil, and are enemies of grace. How then shall our contrition be so meritorious that God forgives sins for its sake, and not rather for His sake? Who says through the prophet Isaiah, "I will turn my displeasure from thee for My name's sake, and will do all things for Mine own sake, that I may not be blasphemed; and Mine honor will I give to none other"? Isaiah 48:9,10 Now if our sins were forgiven because of our contrition, the honor would be ours and not God's; He would also be blasphemed, as though sins were forgiven for something else than for His name's sake.

So King Manasseh prayed that God would forgive his sins for the sake of His loving kindness and His promise, regardless of his own merit or contrition. Why make a long story of it? If anyone's sins are forgiven because of his contrition, as this accursed bull lyingly and blasphemously declares, then let him do away with the prayer that we all say, "Lord, be gracious to me, a poor, unworthy sinner," and let him only say, "Lord, forgive me, who am a worthy and well-deserving and sufficiently holy man, my sins, and rebuke the centurion in the Gospel who said, 'Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof.'" Matthew 8:8 If the pope and his saints are so worthy that God must forgive their sins because of their contrition, I would advise him to put on his triple crown and saddle his steed with gold and pearls, ride with all his pomp into God's presence, and defy Him with his own great worthiness. If God will not forgive his sins, let him put Him under the ban and chase Him out of heaven. How far wilt thou go, thou devilish pride? It is easy to see why you have yourself called the "most holy" in all the world. Only go on. It will reach its end, this blasphemy of yours, this raging against God.

Therefore I still say, and I warn everyone to give God the honor, and not trust that his sins are forgiven because of his own contrition — for no contrition is in God's sight sufficient — but only because of the mercy of God, whose will it is that He be honored, praised and loved as One who is gracious to us unworthy and undeserving men. Beware of this bull and of those who teach the like doctrine.

THE TWELFTH ARTICLE

If it were possible that anyone could confess without contrition, or if a priest were to absolve anyone thoughtlessly or in jest, nevertheless, if such a one believe that he is absolved, he is assuredly absolved.

In all the Gospel Christ made everything depend on faith when He said, "All things are possible to him that believeth," Mark 9:23 and again, "As thou believest, so be it done unto thee." Matthew 8:13 Therefore it is true that although the priest may be in jest, nevertheless, if I receive his absolution in earnest, and believe it, the result is not according to what he does, but according to what I believe. I said this in order to show how great and necessary a part of repentance faith is. Everything depends on it.

And although faith is not possible without contrition, as I said above when I showed that the inpouring of faith and grace is accompanied by a great disturbance of conscience, yet if it were possible faith alone would be sufficient; for God has not conditioned the offer of His grace on contrition or on any work, but only on faith, saying, "He that believeth shall be saved." Mark 16:16.

And why should not a thoughtless absolution be valid, when St Paul says in Philipians 1:15 f. that the Word of God is valid and helps those who believe, even when it is preached by His enemies and persecutors? Besides, all of them confess that the sacraments are efficacious though administered by wicked and unbelieving priests, nay, even if the priest hates the penitent.

Surely sin and unbelief are worse than jesting and thoughtlessness. To go still farther. They must confess that he who heartily desires the sacrament receives its benefit, even though the priest arbitrarily withhold it, so completely does everything depend on the faith of the penitent. According to his faith he receives, whether the priest give or withhold the sacrament, whether he be in jest or in earnest. However the sacrament comes, whatever it promises, it is God's sacrament and can be received by faith.

But God's friend at Rome, the pope, would like to destroy this faith and seduce us into trusting his authority more than we trust God's sacrament, as though by his mere authority, without our faith, he could forgive sins.

God keep all Christian hearts against this Antichrist and apostle of Satan!

THE THIRTEENTH ARTICLE

In the sacrament of penance and in the remission of guilt the pope or bishop does no more than the humblest priest; nay, if a priest is not to be had, any Christian does just as much, even though it be a woman or a child.

This article hits the sore spot.

There was good reason, therefore, to guard against it and condemn it! For if this article were allowed to stand it would knock the keys out of the Roman idol's coat-of-arms. But condemnation will not help him any; he will not really confute it, and I shall prove it, as here follows.

It has been abundantly proved above that it is not the work of the priest but the faith of the penitent which effects the forgiveness of sins. If the pope and all the priests together were to speak the absolution over a sinner, it would not be valid, nor would it help him at all unless the sinner believed it; for the word stands fast, "He that believeth not is lost," Mark 16:16 and there is no help for it. Nay, how could the absolution of the pope and all the priests be of any avail without faith? If even Christ and God Himself were to speak the absolution, it would be of no avail without faith. Is it not true that God daily preaches and works wonders for men, and yet they help nobody except those who believe on Him? If, then, forgiveness depends entirely upon faith and not on the office or authority of the priest; and if the pope can do as little toward the bestowal of faith as the humblest priest, the priest as little as a woman or a child, I should like the pope to teach me what he does in this matter more than a simple priest.

Out with your wisdom, my dear pope! I will tell you what you do more than a simple priest. You hang up great banners with keys on them, and sell bulls, ring bells, cheat lands and peoples out of their money, goods, bodies and souls, and lead them with you into the abyss of hell. This is what you do more than other priests and Christians.

It has been said above that the Donatists, whom St Augustine overcame and who wished to bind all the sacraments to the sanctity of the priests and not to the faith of the penitents, were nevertheless more tolerable than the pope and his bishops, who wish to bind the sacraments to rank and authority. For if a holy priest does no more in the sacraments than a sinful priest, how can a great high-priest do any more than a lowly and insignificant priest, since holiness is far more important than authority?

Therefore it is clear that the pope has just the same title to the sole possession of the keys that Lucifer, when he was in heaven, had to the throne of God. For the keys are given for nothing else than the sacrament of penance, which is the common property of all Christians. No one has a greater or smaller part in it, save in proportion as his faith in it is greater or smaller.

I ask further, most holy father pope, whether you also have a sacrament of baptism differing from that which all priests and Christians have, and whether, by virtue of your exalted rank, you do more when you baptise than does a chaplain, a layman, a woman or a child? Speak up! Have you lost your voice? If you have a different baptism, then St Paul condemns you in Ephesians 4:5, when he says, "One faith, one baptism, one Lord," etc. But if the sacrament of baptism is the same among all Christians, so that in case of necessity a layman, a woman or a child may administer it — which happens every day — why should not the sacrament of the keys, i.e., penance or absolution, also be common property? Is not that too, as well as baptism, a sacrament? And is your mass, too, any different from that of all other priests? Can you give more of the body of Christ than can our

chaplain? Why, then, do you make the sacrament of the keys an exception and wish to do more in this sacrament than all the rest of the Church? You are seeking to establish your own arbitrary authority over the churches, and out of the sacrament of the keys, which is the equal and common property of all, you make for yourself an unequal, uncommon authority and tyranny. If all the sacraments have the same effect in the hands of every man who can administer them, then you cannot reserve to yourself this one sacrament of the keys, and make for yourself a sacrament of your own, different from that which the whole Church has in common.

Therefore let all Christians beware of the pope's anti-christian poison. If all baptisms and all masses are equally valid, wherever and by whomever they are administered, then the absolution also is equally valid wherever and by whomever it is administered. For everything depends on the faith of him who receives it, not on the holiness, learning, rank or authority of him who administers it. We cannot divide baptism and give the pope and the bishops a part in it different from that which all Christians have; neither can we divide the mass and the keys so that the pope may have a mass and a sacrament of the keys different from those which the whole Church has.

But if he has a different sacrament, or more of a sacrament, then St Paul excludes him from the Church, for he says in Ephesians 4:5, "One faith, one baptism, one Lord."

To be sure, the pope and the bishops reserve to themselves certain cases and certain sins; but that is a matter of custom and human law and has been introduced by authority. Even so, however, they do more than others, not in the remission of guilt, but only in the remission of the penalty or punishment.

The remission of guilt belongs properly to the keys and the sacrament of penance, and it requires faith; the remission of the penalty does not require faith, but is perceived by the sinner; it can take place without faith and does not properly belong to the sacrament of the keys. My article, however, speaks of the remission of guilt, and this, like baptism and the mass, is the common possession of all men and cannot be made captive to any rank or authority, as the pope and his followers lyingly pretend.

THE FOURTEENTH ARTICLE

No one ought to say to the priest that he is contrite, nor ought the priest to demand that he do so.

That, too, you must hold to be error, holy father pope; but now you must admit it to be true, for I prove it as follows.

Whether our contrition is genuine or not is a question to be decided not by our own opinion, but by the judgment of God, and, therefore, no one can say without presumption that he is truly contrite; for St Paul says in Corinthians 10:18, "Not he who praiseth himself is approved, but he whom God praiseth," and in 1 Corinthians 4:4, "I am not conscious of anything, but I am not thereby justified; I judge not mine own self, but God the Lord is He Who judgeth me," and David says in Psalm 19:12, "Lord, who knoweth all his sins?"

Now, if a man were required to say he was truly contrite, he would be driven to presumption and to the impossible task of knowing all his sins.

Nay, since all the saints still have sin and evil within them, it is impossible for anyone to have such contrition as will be sufficient in God's judgment, but they all say with David, "Lord enter not into judgment with Thy servant, for in Thy sight will no man living be found justified." <19E302> Psalm 143:2 If no one will be found justified, how will anyone be found contrite, since contrition is the beginning of justification? Why then, O pope, teach Christians to be proud and presumptuous, so that they come under God's judgment?

Christians ought to be so instructed that every penitent may know that before God no contrition is worthy and sufficient, and may say, "Behold, dear Lord, I know that I will not be found truly contrite before Thy judgment, and that there is still much evil lust in me which hinders true contrition, yet, because Thou hast promised grace, I flee from Thy judgment, and because my contrition is nothing in Thy sight, I put my reliance and my hope upon Thy promise in this sacrament." If the priest inquires about his contrition, he ought to say, "Sir, in my own eyes I am contrite, but in God's sight it is but a poor contrition, with which I am not able to stand in His presence; yet I hope in His grace, which you are now, at His command, to promise me." Thus the people ought always to be urged to faith, for at death contrition will become all too great and faith all too small. God's promise in the sacrament is sure, our contrition is never sure; therefore He would have us build not on our unsure contrition, but on His sure promise, so that we may be able to stand fast in every time of trouble.

THE FIFTEENTH ARTICLE

They are greatly in error who go to the sacrament relying on the fact that they have confessed, or that they are not conscious of any mortal sin, and have said their prayers. All these eat and drink judgment to themselves. But if they believe and trust that in the sacrament they receive grace, this faith alone makes them pure and worthy.

This article I have taught for the sake of those people of timid conscience, who prepare themselves for the sacrament with so much anxiety and torment, and yet have no peace and do not know how they stand with God; for it is not possible for a heart to be at peace unless it trust in God, and not in its own works and diligence and prayers. St Paul says in Romans 5:1, "By faith we have peace with God." If peace, then, comes only by faith, it cannot come by works, prayers or anything else. Experience also teaches that even though a man works himself to death, his heart has no peace until he begins to yield himself to God's grace, rely upon it and trust in it.

St Peter also, in Acts 15:9, teaches that God cleanses the heart only by faith. Surely, then, the sacrament must be preceded by faith, without which no prayers cleanse; and so this article teaches. Besides, it has been sufficiently shown above that all works done without faith are death and sin, as St Paul teaches in Romans 14:23, "Everything that is not of faith is sin." How, therefore, can confession, prayers, and all sorts of preparations be without sin if they are without faith? Therefore faith alone must surely be the cleansing and worthy preparation.

Not that I condemn these prayers and preparations! But no one ought to rely on them, and a man must have something more than these preparations, viz., faith. In the sacrament God promises and offers His grace, as was said in speaking of the first article; therefore prayers and works are not enough, but this divine promise must be believed, lest by our unbelief we make Him a liar. If you go to the sacrament with many preparations, but without this confidence in His promise, what else are you doing but saying to God, "In the promise of this sacrament Thou liest, and wilt not give me grace"? O, O, O thou wicked bull! What dost thou teach!

What dost thou condemn!

They have driven us away from this faith, and from this way of using the sacrament by means of the word of St Paul, "Let a man examine himself, and then let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup." 1 Corinthians 11:28 They have applied this saying to the searching of the conscience for sin, although it refers rather to faith and confidence, since no man can discover all his mortal sins, as has been proved above from Psalm 19:12, "Lord, who knoweth his sins?" Moreover, it is not enough to be conscious of no mortal sin, since St Paul says in 1 Corinthians 4:4, "I am not conscious of anything, yet I am not thereby justified." Why then are we driven to such impossible, useless, vain works, and why is nothing said about faith, for which a man ought most of all to prove or examine himself? As was said under the previous article, they are always trying to drive us away from faith, into works; I would that we were driven away from works, into faith. Works will follow faith, but faith never follows works.

THE SIXTEENTH ARTICLE

It were well that the Church, in a General Council, should decree that, in the sacrament, both kinds be given to the laity; and the Bohemians, who receive both kinds, are not heretics or schismatics.

This article St Paul easily wins from the pope, but he will not be put under the ban by his holiness, and cares nothing for the bull. Nay, he puts the pope, with his bulls and all his followers, under the ban, for he says in Galatians 1:8, "He who preaches otherwise than as ye have been taught in the Gospel, though he were an angel from heaven, let him be banned and accursed." Listen, pope; that means you.

According to the Gospels of Matthew, Mark and Luke, Christ at the Last Supper instituted both kinds and gave both kinds to all, and said to all, "This do, as oft as ye do it, in remembrance of Me." Matthew 26:26 f.; Mark 14:22 ff.; Luke 22:19 f. Now the pope teaches us differently, and gives only one kind, a half-sacrament; therefore he is assuredly under the curse and ban of St Paul. If thou, pope, and all who are thine, will crack this nut, and canst prove that thou art not banned and accursed before God, I will recant everything that I have written in all my life and say thou art a pope. Otherwise, take it not amiss if I call thee Antichrist, whom St Paul bans and curses as one who changes his Lord's ordinance, and resists and overthrows His Gospel. Thou canst not say anything nor adduce anything to the contrary; that thou knowest. Why then set thy capricious will against so clear a text of the Gospel? Better bid us deny even the Lord's Prayer!

They say Christ gave both kinds to the apostles only, that is, the priests, and commanded them to give one or both kinds to the laity. I ask, where is this command written? I think it must be in the dark.

It is a wanton lie, an invented gloss.

When Christ gave the cup, He added the word all, and said, "Drink ye all of it." He did not say this when He gave the bread, doubtless because He wished to anticipate this outrageous Roman heresy, foreseeing that they would one day rob His Christians of the cup. It would be more in accordance with the Gospel if they withheld the bread, for He does not say, "Eat ye all," but "Drink ye all of it." O how they would shout and rave if the word all had been spoken with the bread and not with the cup. No one could hold them down. Yet when they are so plainly caught with a clear text, they deny that they are caught or bound by it.

Again, in the hymn *Verbum supernum*, the Church sings how He gave His disciples flesh and blood under the two kinds, that so He might feed the whole man, who is two-fold in nature. If the Church is right in singing thus, then they ought surely to give both kinds to all Christians, since not the priests only, but the laity also are men and two-fold in nature, and the hymn speaks of this food as a whole food for the whole of man.

But we will adduce still stronger reasons. St Paul says in 1 Corinthians 10:17, "We are one bread and one body, even as we all partake of one bread and one cup." I ask whether the laity also are not Christians and members of the Christian body, of whom St Paul here says, "We are all one body"? I hope they will have to say Yes to that. Why, then, will the pope cut them off and allow only the priests to be Christians? For he will not allow them all to partake of the one bread and the one cup, though St Paul here says that all those who belong to the body are to partake of the one bread and one cup, if they can and if they are not prevented; but of that more below.

Afterwards, in 1 Corinthians 11:23 ff. he says, not to the priests but to all the Christians of that city, "I have received of the Lord that which I also have taught you" (he does not say, "that which I also have taught your priests alone"). "The Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed, took bread, thanked God, brake it and said, Take and eat, this is My body which is given for you; this do in remembrance of Me. In like manner the cup, when He had supped, and said, This is the cup, a new testament in my blood; this do, as oft as ye drink, in remembrance of Me." Here you see what the apostle received of the Lord and gave to the Corinthians, namely, both kinds, as he says in such clear and express words that I wonder the schismatic Roman Christians, those half-sacramenters, do not blush at them.

He says further, "As oft as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye show the Lord's death till He come." 1 Corinthians 11:20 He does not say, "As often as ye priests alone eat and drink," but speaks to all of them. Nor does he say they are to do all this till the pope come and ordain it otherwise, but until the Lord Himself come at the last day.

Again, "Whoso eateth this bread and drinketh this cup unworthily is guilty of the body and blood of the Lord." 1 Corinthians 11:27 He does not say, "Whatever priest," but in general, "whoever among you all." Nor does he say that such a one is guilty of the body only, but also of the blood of Christ. He always puts the two things together, eating and drinking, bread and cup.

Again, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of this bread and drink of this cup." He does not say, "Let the priest alone examine himself," but every man in Corinth who is a Christian, for, of course, he does not write this Epistle to the heathen. Nor does he say, "Let a man eat only of the bread, and drink not the cup," as the pope teaches, robbing us of our own sacrament.

Yet again, "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh judgment to himself, as one who doth not consider the Lord's body." Corinthians 11:28 That, too, is said to all, and the drinking is connected with the eating, though the pope separates it from the eating and makes little of it.

Finally, "For this cause many among you are sick, and weak, and die, because ye eat and drink unworthily." 1 Corinthians 11:29 I hardly think this punishment and plague came upon the priests alone, for he says, "Many among you are sick"; otherwise he would have said, "Many of your priests are sick." What can this Roman perverter bring forward against these strong sayings of St Paul?

Moreover, he has against him the long-continued practice of the whole Church in all the world, the practice that still continues among the Greeks, f113 whom even Rome itself dare not call heretics or schismatics because of it.

Why, then, should I suffer the Bohemians, or anyone else, to be called heretics, because they receive both kinds, according to Christ's teaching and St Paul's, and according to the practice of all the world except the pope. Besides, it was decided at the Council of Basel that they do right.

Why, then, does this bull condemn its own council?

Therefore I have recanted this article, and now recant it again, as one that I have put too mildly and gently. I now say that on this point the Greeks and Bohemians are not heretics or schismatics, but the most Christian people and the best followers of the Gospel on earth. I beseech them by these presents, through Christ our Lord, by all means to remain constant in this their opinion, and not to let themselves be led astray by the perverted and outrageous laws of the Roman tyrant and Antichrist, who in sheer wantonness takes away from Christians the one kind, the haft of the sacrament, when

Christ Himself and all the apostles give it to them, and the Church in all the world has long time used it.

He commands the priests to receive both kinds, and gives his reason, — it is not seemly to receive the one kind only, since both kinds are one whole and complete sacrament, which is not to be divided. On the other hand, he forbids the laity to take one of the two kinds, and again gives his reason, — one kind is a whole and complete sacrament. Thus he tosses God's words and sacraments about like any juggler. The sacrament is whole and not whole when and where he pleases. He is free to contradict himself, to lie both ways, and to deceive. Thus the priests have a different sacrament from the laity, just as he claims to have different keys and a different sacrament of penance from that which the whole Church has.

In the second place, I say that the pope and all who knowingly abet him in this matter are heretics, schismatics, under the ban and accursed, because they teach differently from what is in the Gospel, and follow their own will, against the common usage of the whole Church. For heretics and schismatics are men who transgress the doctrine of their fathers, separate themselves from the common usage and practice of the whole Church, and causelessly, out of sheer wantonness, devise new usages and practices against the holy Gospel. That is what the Antichrist in Rome does in this and in many other things; and yet he lifts his shameless, scandalous mouth to heaven and slanders the Greek Church, saying that it is a schismatic sect, when he is himself the chief cause and sole author of all schisms and parties. This is plain as day, and all history proves it.

From this condemnation I wish to except the poor multitude and make excuse for them. It is not their fault that they receive only the one kind.

The pope and his followers have the sole guilt, and it is they only whom I have in mind. The case is just like that of baptism. If anyone craved baptism and the pope wantonly forbade it to him and deprived him of it, his faith and desire would be accepted by God as though he were actually baptised, since the hindrance is not his fault.

But the pope who withheld baptism from him would be a heretic and no Christian. We must even endure it that the pope and his followers do not preach, though that is a still higher obligation. Nevertheless, we must not join them in wrongdoing on this account, but only endure the wrong they do us.

Therefore, although it is the pope's duty to give us both kinds, if he does not do it, and thus robs us, we can endure his authority and the wrong it does us, and yet remain, in the sight of God, good Christians, and still receive the fruit of the whole sacrament by means of our faith and desire.

What should we do if he, or the Turk, took both kinds from us? What do prisoners and sick people and young children do now? None of them can receive either kind, yet all of them can retain the fruits of the sacrament. So in ancient days many holy fathers lived for years in the wilderness and never went to the sacrament.

But I speak only of those who desire both kinds, and I say that they should be given both kinds, and not refused them, for the pope is not the lord of the sacrament, but its servant, and in duty bound to give it to anyone who may desire it, as is the case with baptism, penance, and the other sacraments. Christ also compels no one to take the sacrament, for He does not say, "Ye shall do it," but "When ye do it, remember Me." Luke 22:19 He has not commanded us to do it, but to remember Him when we do it. The doing of it He left to our freedom. The pope seizes on this freedom and takes possession of

it; he compels us to go to the sacrament once a year, which Christ does not do. Thus, with his whole nature, in his commands and his prohibitions, he is the direct opposite of Christ, as befits a true Antichrist.

I say this not to incite anyone to commit any outrage against the pope's tyranny (for we ought to endure tyranny and wrong, and it does us no harm), but only in order that everyone may have a correct understanding of this matter, and see how Christ and the pope compare, and how things ought and how they ought not to be done in the Church, so that no one may involve himself in the pope's error and destruction by justifying his acts, calling his wrong right and praising it, as do his own knaves. When anyone does us bodily harm we ought to endure it patiently and confess our guilt to God, but we are not bound to say that he is right and to praise him as though he had done well. In the same way, although the pope withdraws the Gospel and the sacraments and takes them from us, we are to endure it, and confess our sins to God Who has set the pope over us as a plague. We have deserved, indeed, that Antichrist rule over us, but we ought not to praise him and justify him, as though he were doing well, and call him sanctissimus into the bargain. On the contrary, we ought to give public testimony to his devilish, heretical tyranny, and rebuke it as Christ rebuked the wrongdoing of the Jews, though He endured the wrong at their hands.

In conclusion, I will change this article and say, It were well if not only a general council, but every bishop in his own diocese were to decree anew that both kinds, the whole sacrament, be given to the laity, and thus were to follow the Gospel, no thanks to the pope. For it is the duty of a bishop to set himself against the wolf in behalf of the sheep of Christ, whom Christ has committed to him, and to administer the Gospel at any cost, because he occupies the place of Christ.

But if that cannot be, I advise every Christian layman to remember that his Lord, Christ, has instituted both kinds in the sacrament, and therefore heartily to crave both kinds and to believe, and thus receive the holy sacrament half with the body, half with the spirit, since these perilous times of Antichrist permit nothing more. Let him also lament to God that because of our sins we are robbed of what is ours and of the sacrament, which Christ has given us and Antichrist has taken from us. For if anyone despise the two kinds, at least in his desires, such a man is no Christian. Let no one be moved by their idle talk when they say that the whole sacrament is received in the bread.

Christ well knew that it was all received in one kind, nay, in faith alone, without the sacrament, yet it was not without reason that He instituted both kinds.

THE SEVENTEENTH ARTICLE

The treasures of the Church, out of which the pope grants indulgences, are not the merits of Christ and of the saints.

The pope and his hypocrites, in order to make the indulgences precious in the people's sight and gather to themselves the treasures of the world, devise this doctrine, and teach, to the great dishonor of Christ, that Christ's merits are the indulgence-treasure. But if asked what ground they have for this in Scripture, they puff themselves up and boast of their authority, and reply, "Is it not enough that we say so?" Against them I set up this article, and can base it on Scripture.

Christ Himself says in John 6:51 that He is the living bread from heaven, and that he who eateth thereof liveth forever; and Isaiah 53:4 says that He hath borne our sins; nor is there any Christian so simple as not to know that Christ's merits and sufferings take away our sins and save us, but all believe that He died for our sins. From this it is clear that Christ's sufferings and merits are a living treasure and give everlasting life to all who have part in them. Now they themselves must confess that the indulgence does not give life, but is a dead thing, by which no one is made better, let alone made to live. It does not take away sin, but the penalty of sin.

Now no one but the pope and those who flatter him is so foolish as to hold that the taking away, or remission, of the penalty makes anyone better; though the imposing of a penalty may make a man better, as we learn from reason, experience, Scripture and truth.

Therefore indulgences and the merits of Christ agree together as do life and death, day and night, Christ and Belial, the pope and a Christian. They have the right name, too; for indulgence means "leaving off" or "remitting"; they "remit" everything good and "admit" all misfortune; they leave sin unpunished, nay, they take away the penalty of sin, though God imposes and demands it. So far as possible, they let sins go free and do not prevent them, nay, they protect them and foster them, for they remit the penalty and permit money to be given and taken instead. For this reason St Paul, writing to the Thessalonians, calls the pope a man of sin and child of perdition, because he permits sin and encourages it, and thereby leads all the world with him to the devil by means of his lying, deceitful indulgences. 2 Thessalonians 2:3 Smitten on the head with this truth, and having no answer, they devise the dream that the merits of Christ can be applied in two ways. The one way is that just spoken of, i.e., they give life; the other way is that they render satisfaction for our sins. I answer, Yes; but they are also used in many other ways, — often to get money, to obtain high rank and honor, to secure luxury and ease, to seduce the world into war and bloodshed and all misery. Is there anything that is used more shamefully at Rome and in the whole Roman Church than Christ's name and merits? The pope, with all his knaves, would long ago have been a beggar if he had not had Christ to sell and to use as a cover for all his wiles. The name of Christ must now cover up all the ruin that the rule of Antichrist works in the whole world, as He Himself has prophesied in Matthew 24:5, "Many shall come in My name, and shall seduce many." It is thus that the indulgences come and the jugglers who sell them, in the name of Christ and of His merits, and seduce the whole world, so that even the elect are scarcely safe from them. Matthew 24:24

THE EIGHTEENTH ARTICLE

Indulgences are a pious fraud practiced upon Christians; they are remissions of good works, and belong to the things that are allowed but not expedient.

Some of those who recognized the worthlessness of indulgences, but did not venture to oppose the doctor of sins at Rome, have had a proverb which said that the indulgences are “a pious fraud,” that is to say, although they were really of no use, and deceived the people, nevertheless they were a cause for the contribution of money, which was thought a good work; thus they served a good and divine purpose, though they were a fraud. At that time I agreed with these men and said the same thing, for then I knew no better.

But now that the holy father pope bids me recant, and condemns this article, I will be obedient and say, I confess my error; the article is not true.

I now say, The indulgences are not a pious fraud, but a hellish, devilish, anti-Christian fraud, theft and robbery whereby the Roman Nimrod and teacher of sin sells the whole world sin and hell, and sucks out and entices away everybody’s money as the price of these unspeakable injuries. If this recantation is not enough, I will improve on it another time.

I prove it as follows: God says in Psalm 89:32, “I will visit their sin with rods, and punish their iniquity with the stripes of men,” and St Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:38, “If we punish ourselves, God will not punish us; but when He punisheth us, He chasteneth us, that we may not be condemned with this world.” Here you see that sin must be punished, either by God, by man, or by our own selves, if we are not to be condemned with this world. Yet the pope would blind our eyes to these clear texts, and by means of his indulgences cause all sin to go unpunished, so that we may be condemned with this world, as St Paul here says. This abomination he wishes to cover with Christ’s merits, and then sell it, and Christ’s merits must serve him while he flies in the face of this dear word of God. O pope, O pope! Pray stop somewhere!

THE NINETEENTH ARTICLE

Indulgences do not avail for the remission of the punishment or penalty which divine justice demands for actual sins.

THE TWENTIETH ARTICLE

They are deceived who believe that indulgences are salutary, and profitable to the soul. f128

THE TWENTY-FIRST ARTICLE

Indulgences are necessary only for those who are guilty of public mortal sins, and are really granted only to the slothful and the weaklings.

THE TWENTY-SECOND ARTICLE

There are six kinds of men for whom indulgences are neither necessary nor useful, — the dead, the sick, those who are legitimately prevented from getting them, those who are without mortal sins, those whose mortal sins are not public, and those who do better works.

In honor of the holy and highly learned bull, I recant everything that I have taught about indulgences and I am most heartily sorry for every good thing that I have ever said about them. Do not be disturbed, good people, when the pope here pretends that indulgences are profitable to men's souls and save them. That is a doctrine that has never been heard before; even the pope himself has never heard of it. The old dragon out of the abyss of hell is speaking in this bull. Let us hold fast to the truth that the indulgences are not what the pope pretends they are, for no sin can go unpunished, as has been said. If an angel from heaven says otherwise, we are not to believe him. If my books have deserved to be burned, it is assuredly because on the question of indulgences I have played into their hands. I have yielded too much to the pope and his followers. I myself condemn such doctrine to the flames.

THE TWENTY-THIRD ARTICLE

Excommunication is only an external penalty, and does not deprive men of the common prayers of the Church.

Behold how the pope strives to be God. In the preceding articles he has assumed authority to save souls by means of indulgences, and in this article he assumes authority to damn souls by means of the ban. Neither of these things can be done by any creature, but only by the high divine Majesty. St Paul prophesied of him, "He will sit and rule in the Church of God, and give it out that he is God; he will oppose and exalt himself against everything that is God."

This article I have defended sufficiently in the Treatise on the Ban, and will only say briefly that Christianity consists in faith, which neither pope nor devil can give or take away. While faith remains, nothing can harm us — not death, nor hell, nor even the sin that we have committed — as St Paul says in Romans 8:28, "All things work for good to believers, or Christians." Therefore the ban can be nothing more than an external penalty, that is, a separation from the congregation, from the Church and the sacraments. Even the pope says in his law, taking care for once to teach us something good, that the ban is medicine, not destruction; therefore it can do us no inner harm, but only help us and make us better.

THE TWENTY-FOURTH ARTICLE

Christians should be taught to love the ban rather than fear it.

This is condemned because the pope wishes to remain God and to have everyone fear him more than the high and true Majesty. But this article is already proved by what has been said. Since the ban is a penalty for sin and a medicine for the soul, he who has deserved it ought willingly and gladly to bear it, though, to be sure, he ought to fear the sin by which he might deserve the ban; just as a child ought to fear to do wrong, but, if it does wrong, ought to suffer the penalty gladly and kiss the rod. If it is God's will that we gladly suffer death and love all suffering, how much the more ought we to love and gladly to receive this gentle and motherly rod. The pope and his Church are an exception. It is right for them to be afraid of their own blindness, as it is written, "The unchristian sinners are afraid, and no man pursueth them."

THE TWENTY-FIFTH ARTICLE

The Roman bishop, St Peter's successor, is not by Christ's appointment vicar of Christ over all the churches of the world.

This, too, is one of the chief doctrines which abolish the holy Gospel and set up a graven image in Christ's place in the Church. Against it I have set this article, and still maintain it, and I prove it as follows.

First, Since everything that is done in the Church is prophesied in clear, plain passages of Scripture, it is surely a wonder that nothing is plainly said in the whole Bible about the papacy, seeing they wish the papacy to be considered the greatest, most necessary, most characteristic thing in the Church. It is a suspicious circumstance and makes a bad impression that so many matters of smaller importance are based upon so many strong and clear passages of Scripture, while for this one doctrine no one has been able, down to the present day, to point to a single clear passage. It is clearly stated in the Gospel that St Peter is a fisherman and an apostle, but they hold this to be a matter of small importance compared with the papacy, though there is not a single letter to say that St Peter is over all the churches in the world.

I wish it understood, however, that I do not hold to this article because I wish to reject the pope. Let him have as much authority as he will, it makes no difference to me; I can grant him that. But there are two things I can neither endure nor keep silent about: first, that they torture and force and insult the holy Word of God in order to establish this authority, and second, that they revile and slander and curse the Greeks, and all who are not under the pope, as though they were not Christians. As if Christianity were bound to the pope and to Rome, when St Paul and Christ have bound it only to faith and to God's Word, of which no one knows less or has less than the pope and his followers. And yet, though without faith and God's Word, he wishes to be not only a Christian, but the Christians' god, and to condemn all those who do not worship him, no matter how perfect their faith and their Gospel.

Moreover, if the pope were reasonable, he would prefer to have less trouble, and would not load all the business of the world on his own shoulders. It is surely impossible that the whole world can be bound to one place, and transact all its business there.

But let us see how they torture and insult the holy words of God to establish their falsely alleged authority. Christ says to St Peter in Matthew 16:18, "Thou art Peter — that is, a rock — and on this rock I will build My Church, and to thee will I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

Here they interpret the rock to mean St Peter, and pretend that it is the papal authority on which Christ builds His Church, and that all churches ought, therefore, to be subject to the pope's authority. In the teaching of these masters the Church built on the rock means the Church that is subject to the pope. This interpretation of His words Christ has been compelled to suffer these many years.

To bring their lies and rascality clearly to light, and to make them blush for shame, we will examine Christ's words. If to build the Church upon the rock is nothing else than to be subject to the pope, as they say, it follows that the Church can be built and exist without faith, without the Gospel, and without any sacraments (for what is built is built, and needs no more building). The authority of the pope is one thing, and faith, sacraments and Gospel are quite another thing; if, therefore, the Church is built on the pope's authority, it is evident that for the building of it the pope's authority and

obedience thereto are sufficient, and faith is not necessary, nor anything else; especially since the pope and his followers live, as a rule, without faith, Gospel or sacraments, nay, they despise them, like heathen, and yet his authority remains rock, building and Church, as they say. A fine explanation of Christ's words! If the papists have the power to make out of Christ's words anything they please, who will prevent someone else from saying that the rock and the building of the Church are an ass and a cow, or whatever else may come into his head?

Again, in this same passage, Christ speaks of this rock and of His Church, and says "the gates of hell shall have no power against it." Here Christ says plainly that against His rock, building and Church, the devils shall have no power. If, then, the rock is papal authority and the building is obedience to the same, how does it happen that the building of obedience has fallen and the gates of hell have prevailed against it? For all Christendom has fallen away from the pope the Greeks, for example, the Bohemians, Africa and the whole Orient; nay, they never were built upon this rock. If, therefore, Christ, Who cannot lie, promises that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His building, and yet no one can deny that the Orient has fallen away, it follows that Christ speaks truly and the pope lies, and the building is not obedience to his authority, but something else, which the gates of hell have not been able to break down.

Nor can it be said that these people are no longer Christians because they do not obey the pope and are not built on him, since the pope himself and all his followers wish to be considered Christians, though they do not obey God in a single tittle, and live, for the most part, without faith. Hitherto they have been successful, with their lies, in maintaining that those who do not agree with them on this point are heretics and they themselves good Christians, though they do not agree with God and Christ on any point.

Thus they make apes and fools of all the world, and define the terms "Christian" and "heretic" to suit themselves.

But we pass that by and take up the true meaning of these words. That the gates of hell prevail nothing against this building must mean that the devil has no power over it; and this takes place when the building stands in firm faith and without sin, for where faith is absent or sin is present, there the devil rules and prevails against the building. Thus St Peter teaches us that we are to strive in a strong faith against the devil, who attacks the faith with all his might. It follows, then, that this rock is Christ Himself, for so St Paul calls Him in 1 Corinthians 10:4, and the building is the believing Church, in which there is no sin, and to build is nothing else than to become a believer and grow in holiness, as St Peter also teaches in Peter 2:5, that we are to be built, a spiritual building, on Christ the rock.

Because, therefore, the pope and his authority, and those, too, who obey him, live in sin and in horrible abuses, and are the subjects of the devil, as everyone sees, it must needs be a lying device that the rock and the building, which Christ puts beyond reach of the gates of hell, mean the papal authority and government, which the devil has brought into subjection to himself. Otherwise it would be impossible for the papal authority to do any evil, for Christ does not lie. But before our very eyes papal authority becomes devil's authority, and does and has often done evil.

Hither, then, ye papists, one and all! Crack this nut! This Scripture passage has gotten ahead of you; the citadel has been taken, the pope has fallen; he lies prostrate; he has no ground to stand on. For this saying of Christ has been the only ground on which the papacy has relied and built itself up these many years; and now its lies and falsehoods have been plainly shown.

If we have gained nothing else from the pope in this controversy, we have at least set this passage of Scripture free. Nay, this wins the battle and cuts off the head of the papacy, for this passage is stronger against him than for him. He who tells a single lie is assuredly not of God, and is to be suspected in everything. Because, then, the pope has lied about this fundamental doctrine and the passage of Scripture on which it is based, and has perverted God's Word and deceived the world with his false government, what St Paul says of him is certainly true, that the entrance of Antichrist shall be by the power of the evil spirit, who enters only by means of lies and false interpretations of Scripture. There you lie, then, dear pope!

If you can get out of this predicament honestly, and make truth out of lies, I will admit that you have been made pope by God. All this is John Hus's work, not Luther's; as it is written, *Condemnat justus mortuus impios vivos.* f139 It does not help the case to refer to some of the holy fathers who called St Peter the rock and foundation of the Church. First, because Christ's words take precedence of the words of all the saints; they have erred often, Christ never erred. Secondly, because no saint has ever yet said that the pope is this rock. They have called St Peter the rock, not because of his authority, but because of his faith, and if the pope will follow him in faith, we will call him too a rock, provided only the "rock" continue to be faith and do not become authority. But if he do not believe, he shall not be called a rock.

They allege yet another proof-text. It is in the last chapter of John, where Christ says three times to Peter, "Peter, lovest thou Me?" and Peter answers three times, "Yea, Lord, I love Thee"; then said Christ, also three times, "Feed my sheep." They would use this passage to set the pope over all Christians; but there is no clear passage with which to prove so great a claim, and this one is very dark. It is not to be supposed, as has been said, that God would have instituted so great a thing as they make the papacy to be, without a single clear passage of Scripture. Moreover, this passage too overthrows the papacy, as you may easily observe. f141 For Christ here three times demands love from Peter before He commends the sheep to him; by which He clearly shows that the feeding of the sheep does not belong to him who has not love. Now since the pope and the papacy are without love, "feeding" cannot mean papacy; therefore it is a lie and a perverted gloss that the word "feeding" means the loveless government and authority of the papacy. If we are willing to allow Christ's words to be thus torn to pieces and distorted, I might as well say that the government of the Turk meant feeding the sheep. But if the words are to keep their true meaning, then there must be love, or there is no shepherd.

Who can get around that?

The evil spirit has taught them, besides, that "to feed" means to preside.

How will they prove it? Must we simply take their word for it and be satisfied when they puff themselves up and stick out their lips, and say, "We have so interpreted it; be silent and do not contradict"? Now I go a step farther and say, This word "to feed" is so spiritual in its meaning that even if the pope were as holy as St Peter, and taught and kept his canon law most diligently, he would not be a shepherd. "To feed" means to give the doctrine whereby the soul lives, namely, the faith and the Gospel. If the pope were to attend to this, he would have to live in constant expectation of death, and stake his soul for the sheep. So St Augustine has correctly interpreted the passage, "To feed means in this place, to give one's life for the sheep and for the Gospel; therefore Christ Himself interprets the passage immediately afterwards, and shows Peter the sufferings that he must endure in feeding the sheep, and that would be impossible for him without love." f142 Therefore it is most

disgusting that this noble, spiritual, strong and precious word of Christ is so shamefully tortured, and applied to the idle, gorgeous, luxurious authority of the papacy. The best application that they make of it refers it to the pope's laws, but by them the sheep are poisoned rather than fed. We accept, therefore, as Christ's meaning that which St Augustine also holds, namely, that in Peter all preachers are taught that they are not to preach unless they love Christ and are ready to give their lives for the sheep.

If "to feed" means to be pope, then the Church must be without a pope as often as a pope does not love and does not preach; and that is true, for where the Gospel is not preached, there is no Church, and this papacy is as useful to the Church as the fifth wheel to a wagon, nay, it is altogether harmful; but of this I will say more another time. Again, if to love and to feed meant papacy, there would have to be as many popes as there were men who loved and fed the sheep; it could not be otherwise. And this is the truth too; for whoever loves and feeds is a pope. Thus in every way the words of God, which the pope applies to himself, go against him. It does not help his case to say that the pope does not himself feed the sheep, but does the feeding through others. Why, then, is he not also pope through others? If to feed means to be pope, then he can just as well be pope through others as he can feed through others. If the one is impossible, so is the other. He must do his own feeding or he cannot himself be pope. The word "to feed" cannot be so milked and driven. f143 Now I will prove that St Peter was under the other apostles and not over them. In Acts 8:14 we read that the apostles and elders sent St Peter and St John to Samaria to confirm the Christians there. If, then, St Peter was a messenger, subject to the others, why does his successor, nay, his persecutor, the pope, claim to be subject to no one? If St Peter had been the superior by divine right, he should have sat in his chair, as the pope now does, and done the commanding and the sending, and not let himself be sent; he should rather have suffered ten deaths than allowed himself to be humiliated, contrary to God's ordinance. This the popes now do; they drown the whole world in blood before they will give up their supremacy.

They have not yet got rid of the difficulty; it smites them on the head and makes them reel; they know not what to answer, but they are not silent; they make great talk about the Arians and how the Holy Ghost is not less than the Father, even though the Father has sent Him. But they do not see that this argument fits the case about as well as the papacy fits the Church. The Holy Ghost is not sent in His own person, like St Peter, but, with the Father and the Son, He sends Himself; that is, He reveals Himself in the dove, in the clouds, in believing hearts, as the Wise Man says, and Augustine explains. Therefore the pope's sectaries must here confess that the pope is not sovereign, but equal with or beneath the others, if his government is to be godly and not devilish. It is against God and His holy Word that he exalts his wanton authority over all, when he ought to do no more than merely to allow us to exalt him.

The Scriptures clearly decide that St Peter never made or sent or gave commands to an apostle. Even with the aid of all the apostles he could not make St Matthias an apostle; but they got him from heaven, whereby Christ proves incontestably that all the apostles, made by Him alone, are equal, and ought also to make all bishops equal, and unite them not under one authority and sovereignty, as the pope's sectaries would deceive us into thinking, but in the unity of faith, baptism, love and the Spirit, so that they would be one people, as St Paul teaches in Ephesians 4:4 O what an ado they would make if they could find that St Peter sent out an apostle, as we find that he was himself sent out! Nevertheless, they say our argument is not valid, and their fable is right. Herewith I think that I have

brought sufficient proof to show that the papacy not only hangs in the air, without any foundation in Scripture, but also rages against the Scriptures.

THE TWENTY-SIXTH ARTICLE

The word of Christ to Peter, “Whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven,” extends no further than to the things which Peter bound .

How gladly the pope would be a god, so as to turn Christ’s words around and decree, “Whatsoever I bind and loose in heaven, thou shalt loose and bind on earth,” and thus be able to bind what God looses and loose what God binds! Thus our God would be driven out, and could do nothing save what the pope willed. This is what happened in the days of John Hus. The pope commanded the angels in heaven to lead to heaven the souls of the pilgrims who died on the way to Rome. Against this abominable outrage and worse than devilish presumption John Hus protested, and though he lost his life by it, he gained so much at least, that the pope has had to harp on another string, and for very shame has been compelled till now to refrain from this sacrilege. But the rogue still peeps from behind the mask, and because he had flown too high, and could not keep heaven and hell under his authority, he wishes to seize upon purgatory, and although he must confess that he cannot cast anyone into purgatory or bind him there, he wishes to loose those that are bound there and bring them out. If asked on what grounds he can do this, he says, “I am pope.”

But enough of this! The words of Christ expressly declare that his authority is on the earth, not over it or under it; and the binding and the loosing are correlative. For the words are, “What thou bindest on earth,” “what thou loosest on earth.” The binding is as long and as broad as the loosing, and the latter reaches no farther than the former. Therefore we abide by the words of Christ and despise the papal sacrilege.

Moreover, all priests use these words of Christ when they absolve, and no absolution is granted except by virtue of this same word and promise of Christ. If, then, these words have one single meaning, why does the pope undertake to do by virtue of them more than the humblest priest? If the words have one single meaning, then they also have one single virtue, and if that virtue allows the pope to reach into purgatory, it allows every priest to do the same. Lo, thus the pope tricks and seduces the whole world; he takes out of the divine Word what he will, though it belongs equally to everybody, and pretends to drink malmsey out of the same cask from which others can scarcely get water. God’s simple, single Word, with its one single virtue, is gold for him, but he will not let others pass it as copper. Cease, pope; the game has gone far enough.

It is another perilous treatment of this passage when the keys are used for the remission of penalties. Christ did not give these words in order that St Peter might have authority to do anything, but they are given to our faith, which is to hold fast to them in order that our sins may be forgiven. St Peter is only a servant in this matter; he can hold these words up to us, but what he can do with them depends on our faith; he may remit penalty and guilt a thousand times over, and yet accomplish nothing unless I believe in it. Faith makes the keys effective and powerful, unbelief makes them ineffective and powerless. Without faith there is in them none of the authority which the pope assumes, deceiving both himself and us. If God Himself cannot give heaven to him who does not believe, how should the pope by means of the keys give it to him who does not believe? But the remission of penalty does not properly belong to the keys, for that is a public transaction, and there is no room in it for faith, which believes only invisible things, namely, the forgiveness of sins in the sight of God.

There have been some who have used this passage to make the Roman bishop a pope, because Christ says, “Whatsoever thou shalt bind shall be bound.” But since all priests absolve by virtue of

these same words, they cannot be the property of St Peter and the pope, but must belong to all in common, so that either all priests are popes, who absolve by virtue of these words, or else no one can absolve except the pope, if these words imply the papacy. The pope can no more make the absolution common property than he can make the papacy common property, for it is one and the same word, and "binding" and "papacy" are one and the same thing, as they say.

Lo, thus they distort the holy words of God! What is common property is said to belong to the pope; what is given to our faith is used to confirm his authority and tyranny.

THE TWENTY-SEVENTH ARTICLE

It is certain that neither the pope nor the church has the power to establish articles of faith or commandments regarding morals or good works.

There is nothing I should be gladder to hear than what are these articles of faith and commandments of good morals and good works which the pope or the Church can set up, so that we might send the Holy Ghost and Christ to school and give them a sound thrashing because they have been so forgetful and negligent, and have not correctly and sufficiently taught us Christian faith and good works. Ye learned disciples of the pope, open the mouth of your wisdom and tell us what they are, will ye? Well, then, I shall tell you.

Christ foretold them in Matthew 24:15, "When ye shall see the abomination spoken of by Daniel, standing in the holy place, he that readeth let him understand," "there shall arise Christs and false prophets, and shall deceive many, and do such signs as to lead into error even the elect, if that were possible"; and St Paul, in 1 Timothy 4:1, "The Spirit saith plainly that in the last days many of you shall depart from the faith, holding to erring spirits and devilish doctrines, and teaching lies, and having a scar in their conscience, forbidding marriage and commanding to abstain from food which God hath given for believers to enjoy."

Behold! Shall not the pope have power to set up doctrines and articles of faith, when this prophecy of him is so dear that even the spirits that inspire him are expressly mentioned?

Moreover, in Colossians 2:8, St Paul teaches us how we are to hear such doctrines, and says, "Beware, lest any man deceive you through vain philosophy and the deceitful appearance of human doctrine, and temporal commandments, which do not teach of Christ." Here we see that we are to listen only to Christ and flee from the commandments of men, which appear, indeed, as though they would make us righteous, but are only deceit and destruction of faith. Christ says, also, in Matthew 23:10, "Call no man master upon earth only one is your master, even Christ"; and St James commands, "Ye shall not be many masters, beloved brethren."

Even St Peter is not silent, and says in 2 Peter 2:1, "There shall come false teachers among you, who teach according to their own whim"; and there are countless other passages of the same sort.

Hence it has come to pass that recently they made a masterly decree at Rome, establishing the holy article that the soul of man is immortal, forgetting that in our common Creed we all say, "I believe in the life everlasting." Again, it was also decreed, with the help of Aristotle, the great light of nature, that the soul is the essential form of the body; and many more of these articles, which are perfectly becoming to the papal Church, enabling it to hold fast to human dreams and doctrines of devils, because it treads under foot and destroys Christ's doctrine and the faith.

But let us look at the source from which they derive the authority to make articles of faith and laws. "Not everything that is necessary," say they, "is written in the Bible; therefore Christ has committed this authority to the Church, as St John says in the last chapter of his Gospel, 'Many other signs did Christ which are not written in this book, and if everything were to be written, I believe the world would not contain the books that would be written.'" Here let us mark the high wisdom of the papal sectaries. John does not speak of all the signs of Christ, but of the many which he has not written. Moreover, he says these "are not written in this book," meaning his own book. He does not deny, nay, he confesses that they may have been written in the other books. But our teachers apply his words to the whole Bible, and now the Gospel of St John must mean the whole Bible.

That, however, is not the worst. John says, Christ's signs are not all written, and our masters apply that to our deeds and their law, saying that not all these things are written. What think you? I opine that the pope's sectaries can interpret Scripture. Only listen to these masters of all Christians at Rome. Many of Christ's signs are not written in John's book, that is to say, The Bible does not tell us sufficiently what we ought to know and do. The Holy Ghost must tell the pope to give us more laws and doctrines. Lo, now you know why the Holy Ghost is given to the pope and to Christians.

St Paul and all the Scriptures teach that the Holy Ghost is given in order to fulfill the law, to decrease its burdens, to release us from it, and make us free, as he says in 2 Corinthians 3:6, "The letter of the law killeth, but the spirit giveth life," and in Romans 8:2, "The spirit of life hath freed me from the law, which brought me only sin and death." But the master of all Christians at Rome, with his sectaries, has another Holy Ghost, who increases the laws and binds them upon the people, taking them captive with man-made laws. Forgive me, my God, that I here name the name of Thy Holy Spirit! I know not what to think or what to say against this unspeakable abomination of the Antichrist at Rome, who treats Thy Word not only foolishly, but jestingly, as though it were a carnival-joke. O God, where are those who earnestly pray to Thee, and turn away Thine inconceivable wrath?

THE TWENTY-EIGHTH ARTICLE

If the pope, and the greater part of the Church with him, were to hold a certain opinion, and even though he were not in error, it would nevertheless not be sin or heresy to hold a different opinion, especially in things not necessary to salvation, until it had been either rejected or approved by a General Council .

Why will they not allow me this article, since it speaks only of things not necessary to salvation? In regard to the Conception of our Lady they have allowed that it is not heresy nor error when some hold that she was conceived in sin, though Council, pope and the majority hold a different view, because this article is not necessary to salvation. How comes it, then, that we poor Christians must believe whatever the pope and his papists think, even when it is not necessary to salvation? Has the papal authority the power to make unnecessary things necessary articles of faith, and can it make heretics in things which are not necessary?

Therefore I must myself retract this article and condemn it to the flames. I have said in this article, very foolishly, that we need not believe the pope in regard to unnecessary things. I ought to have said, if the pope and his papists in a Council were so wanton and arbitrary as to waste time and money on unnecessary things, when it is the business of a council to deal only with the great and necessary matters, we ought not only not to obey them, but to consider them insane or malicious. When men make childish and unnecessary things out of the serious and necessary affairs of the suffering Church, what else are they doing except mocking poor and needy Christendom? It is just such foolishness and frivolity that they have, alas! committed in all these recent councils, when they dealt with indulgences and papacy, with sees and sovereignties, but with none of those things that were matters of necessity.

Yet the bull does right in giving the papists the unnecessary things to deal with and to believe, in their councils; for these mockers of the Church ought to be given over by the wrath of God to such a perverse mind that they do not take the necessary things to heart and are concerned only with unnecessary things; they deserve no better fate.

THE TWENTY-NINTH ARTICLE

It has now become our right to destroy the power of the councils and to contradict their acts, also to sit in judgment on their laws, and to confess boldly whatever we think is true, regardless whether it is condemned or approved by any council.

This article my papists call malignant and spiteful, as though I wished to teach that any man might arbitrarily and without reason resist the councils, a thought that was never either in my mind or on my pen; but I have said that when anything was decreed in a council contrary to Scripture, we ought to believe the Scriptures rather than the council. The Scriptures are our law and our reliance, whereby we can resist even an angel from heaven, as St Paul commands in Galatians 1, let alone a pope and a council!

And why do they condemn me for this article? Why do they not condemn those who have set up this article and whom I have cited as my authorities, such as St. Paul, in Galatians 1:8, where he says, "If anyone teacheth you otherwise than ye have heard, even though it were an angel from heaven, let him be banned and accursed"? Harken, ye papists! Paul curses an angel from heaven if he teaches differently from the Scriptures, and I am not to have the power to despise a man if he teaches differently! Why do ye not also condemn that chapter of Panormitanus, *Significasti, de Electione*, which I have cited, in which he says that we are to believe a layman, if he presents plain Scripture or clear reason, rather than a pope or a council; and this opinion is shared by almost all the jurists, especially the ablest and most learned among them.

What other conclusion can be drawn from this article of the bull, except that human doctrine is above God's Word and the pope above God, and whatever abominations go along with this opinion? Lucifer was not guilty of so great sacrilege in heaven, for he did no more than presume to be equal with God. God help us! Has it come to this in the Church, — that we must hear that God and His Word are to give place to the pope and his law? It is time to suffer a hundred deaths instead!

THE THIRTIETH ARTICLE

Certain articles of John Hus, condemned at Constance, are most Christian, most true and altogether evangelical, and these the entire Church could not condemn .

In truth, I have greatly erred on this point, and have already retracted f160 and condemned this article, in so far as I have said, "Certain articles of John Hus, etc." Therefore I now say, Not only certain articles, but all the articles of John Hus condemned at Constance are altogether Christian; and I confess that the pope and his followers act in this matter like a very Antichrist, condemning the holy Gospel along with John Hus, and setting in its place the doctrine of the dragon from hell. This statement I offer to defend, if need be, by the help of God, and I will prove and maintain it.

St. John even did too little, and only began to set forth the Gospel; I have done five times as much, and yet I fear that I have done too little.

John Hus does not deny that the pope is sovereign in all the world; he only says that a wicked pope is not a member of the holy Church, though he is to be endured as a tyrant by all the members of the holy Church; he must either be holy or become holy. But I say that if St Peter himself sat in Rome today, I would still deny that he was pope and over all other bishops by divine right. The papacy is a human invention of which God knows nothing. All churches are equal, and their unity consists not in this one sovereignty, but as St Paul says, in Ephesians 4:4, in one faith, one baptism, one Lord, even Christ, and these things are all the common and equal property of all the parishes in the world.

Of the decretals, too, I say not that they are apocryphal, that is, things it is not necessary to hold, as John Widif says, but that they are unchristian, Christ-resisting things, written by inspiration of the evil spirit; therefore I also burned them with joyful heart.

THE THIRTY-FIRST ARTICLE

A righteous man sins in all his good works .

This article vexes the great work-saints, who place their reliance not on God's mercy, but on their own righteousness, that is, on the sand; therefore it will happen to them as to the house built on the sand, in Matthew 7:26. But a righteous Christian ought to learn and know that all his good works are impotent and insufficient in the sight of God; with all the dear saints he ought to despair of his own works, and rely on the sole mercy of God with all confidence and firm trust. Therefore we desire to give this article a firm foundation, and see what the dear saints have to say about it. Isaiah 64:6 says, "We are all of us unclean, and all our righteousness is as a filthy stinking rag." Observe that the prophet excepts nobody, but says, "we are all of us unclean," and yet he was a holy prophet. Again, if our righteousness is unclean and a stench in God's nostrils, what will unrighteousness be? Moreover, he says "all righteousness," none excepted, So, then, if there is such a thing as a good work without sin, this prophet lies, which God forbid! Is not this passage of Isaiah dear enough? Why then do they condemn my article, which says nothing else than Isaiah says?

Yet we are glad to be condemned in the company of the holy prophet.

Again, Solomon says in Ecclesiastics 7, "There is no man on earth so righteous that he doeth a good work, and sinneth not." I think this passage is clear enough, and it corresponds with my article almost word for word.

And now that Solomon is here condemned, let us see how his father David must also be condemned, for he says, in Psalm 143:2, "Lord, enter not into judgment with me Thy servant, for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." Who is God's servant except the man who does good works?

How, then, does it happen that he may not endure God's judgment? Surely God's judgment is not unjust, If a work, then, were altogether good and without sin, it would not flee God's just judgment; thus the fault must, of necessity, be in the work, which is not pure; therefore no man living is justified in God's sight, but all men need His mercy, even in their good works. Here you papists ought to prove your learning not only by framing bulls, but by answering such passages of Scripture.

I have already proved, under the first two articles, that all the saints struggle against their sinful flesh, and thus continue to be sinners so long as they live in the flesh, which warreth against the spirit; therefore, at one and the same time, they serve God according to the spirit, and sin according to the flesh. If, then, a righteous man is at the same time justified by reason of the spirit, and sinful by reason of the flesh, the work must certainly be as the person, the fruit as the tree. In proportion as the spirit has part in the work, it is good; in proportion as the flesh has part in it, it is evil; for Christ says, "A good tree bears good fruit, an evil tree bears evil fruit." God always measures the work by the person, as is written in Genesis 4:4, "God had respect to Abel and his offering, but to Cain and his offering He had not respect." First come Abel and Cain, afterwards their offerings.

Here too, then, because the person is not altogether pure, the work can never be altogether pure. If the master of the work is not altogether good, the work can never be altogether good. Every work must be like its master, as all reason and experience teach.

But, if they say, as they are wont, "Yes, but this impurity is not sin, but an imperfection, or weakness, or defect," I answer, It is indeed a defect and a weakness, but if that is not sin, then I am willing to say that murder and adultery are not sins, but defects and weaknesses. Who has given you papists

authority thus to twist God's Word, and to call the impurity of a good work weakness and not sin? Where is there a single letter of Scripture on your side? Must we believe your evil dreams without Scripture, when ye will not believe our clear Scriptures? Does not everyone know that there is no hindrance in the sight of God except the hindrance of sin? As saith Isaiah 59:2, "Your sins have separated you from your God." If, then, David says that even God's servants cannot endure His judgment and no man living is justified in His sight, then this weakness must assuredly be sin, and he who will not allow that any living man is justified, assuredly includes these too who walk in good works, unless, indeed, they are not men and are not living.

Again, Augustine says in his Confessions, "Woe to every human life, though it were the most praiseworthy, if it were to be judged without mercy." Behold how the great heretic, St Augustine, speaks against this holy bull, so boldly and sacrilegiously that he attributes sin not only to a good life, but condemns even the very best life — which abounds in good works, beyond all doubt — if judged without mercy, as though it were nothing but mortal sin. O St Augustine, dost thou not fear the most holy father pope? St Gregory too speaks of that holy man Job thus, "The holy man Job saw that all our good works are nothing but sin, if God judges them; therefore, he says, 'If anyone will contend with God, he cannot answer Him one of a thousand.'" Who says this? Thou, Gregory?

Dost thou dare to say that all our good works are nothing but sin? Thou art under the pope's ban, and a heretic far worse than Luther. He only says that there is sin in all good works; thou makest them out to be nothing but sin. I see plainly that thou hast no will to be canonized by the most holy father pope, whom thou contradicts and makest a heretic and Antichrist in this his holy bull.

The same St Gregory says further, on the same chapter, "We have now said many times that all human righteousness will be found to be unrighteousness, if strictly judged. Therefore Job says, 'Though I had done something righteous, I will not answer God, to contend with Him, but make supplication to Him as my Judge.'" Now God's judgment is not false or unjust, but true and just. If it finds unrighteousness in our righteousness, that unrighteousness cannot be imaginary, but must really be there, and be not merely a defect or weakness, but a damnable sin, which prevents salvation, unless mercy intervenes, and out of sheer grace accepts and rewards the works.

If these passages do not help my article, then may God help it! I would far rather be condemned with Isaiah, David, Solomon, Paul, Augustine and Gregory, than praised with the pope and all the bishops and papists, even though all the world were only pope, bishops and papists. O blessed is he that should die for these things! Amen.

THE THIRTY-SECOND ARTICLE

The very best good work is a venial sin.

This article follows evidently out of the preceding, for David does not say “In Thy sight shall no man living be worthily rewarded,” but “In Thy sight shall no man living be justified.” Now to be “not justified” is nothing else than to be damned. And Augustine says not “Woe to some good lives,” but “Woe to the most praiseworthy life, if it is judged without grace”; this “woe,” too, means nothing else than damnation. St Gregory does not say “All human righteousness is imperfect,” but “All human righteousness will be judged to be unrighteousness”; and again, he does not say “All good works are sinful,” but “All good works are really sin.” Therefore I must retract this article too, and say, — The very best good work is a venial sin according to God’s merciful judgment, and a mortal sin according to His strict judgment. Behold how the most holy father drives me to such strange contradictions by this bull, in which he feeds the sheep of Christ by teaching them not to recognize their sin, themselves, nor God’s judgment, and not to sigh for God’s mercy, but to run at God with their horns proudly in the air, and gallop into the abyss of hell. Woe to thee, Antichrist!

THE THIRTY-THIRD ARTICLE

The burning of heretics is contrary to the will of the Holy Spirit .

This I prove, first of all, by history, for from the beginning until now the Church has never yet burned a heretic, and never will, though in ancient times there were so many heretics, of so many kinds. I prove it, in the second place, out of their own words, for if a pope or a bishop is a heretic, they only depose him and do not burn him, as their own law teaches, which they claim has come from the Holy Spirit. In the third place, they have no Scripture by which to prove that the burning of heretics is the will of the Holy Spirit.

But if they say that John Hus and Jerome of Prague were burned at Constance, I reply that I was speaking of heretics. John Hus and Jerome of Prague, good Christians, were burned by heretics and apostates and un-Christians, — the papists, — for the sake of the holy Gospel, as I said above. After this example the pope and his heresy-hunters have burned other good Christians in other places, according to the prophecy concerning Antichrist, that he will cast Christians into the oven. On this wise Pope Alexander VI caused the burning of that good man of Florence, Jerome Savonarola, the Dominican, and his brethren. That is the way the holy Church of the papists doeth God service. It were pity if they did any better. Isaiah 2:4 and Isaiah 11:6 describe the Christian Church as without bloodshed, and say, “They shall change their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles or scythes, and shall not slay nor hurt in my holy mountain,” that is, in Christendom; and in Luke 9:54, when the disciples wished to call down fire from heaven upon the city that would not give Him shelter, Christ rebuked them and said, “Know ye not of what spirit ye are the children? The Son of man is not come to slay the people, but to save them.” The papists ought to reply to these passages of Scripture; but instead they boast of their authority and would force us to admit that their thoughts and deeds are right, even when they are contrary to the Scriptures, and be satisfied with that.

Thus, too, it is strictly forbidden in the canon law that the clergy shall carry arms and weapons, and yet no one pours out more Christian blood than the most holy father, the pope, who now feeds the sheep of Christ with iron, and guns, and fire, and is worse than the Turk. He embroils kings and princes, lands and cities, but that does not make him a heretic or a murderer, or a tyrant, but he is Christ’s vicar, and he grants indulgences and sends out legates and cardinals in the interest of the war against the Turk. His papists excuse their graven image and idol, saying that the pope does not go to war nor burn anybody, but sits in his holy chair at Rome and prays — complains, perhaps — and only commands the temporal power to fight and burn. That is just what the Jews did. They gave Christ over to Pilate and the Gentiles to crucify, but they themselves, like great saints, would not enter Pilate’s house; yet St Stephen, in Acts 7:52, called them murderers of Christ, and died for it. Thus, because I have called the pope the greatest murderer the world has borne since its foundation, who murders both body and soul, I am a heretic, God be praised! in the eyes of his holiness and his papists.

The last Babylon is now like the first, and what the mother lacked the daughter has made up. The first Babel too defended its faith with fire only, and burned Christ’s ancestors, as Genesis 11:1 shows; this Babylon of Rome burns Christ’s children, for the evil spirit knows full well that if the pope were to defend himself in books he could not abide for an instant, and would be judged the very dregs of all heresy, and Antichrist. To protect himself against what others write he has resorted to fire and outrageous tyranny, and now the one Babylon is as holy as the other.

They taunt me, asking why I am timid and do not come to Rome. As if Christ ran of His own accord to Annas, Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod, and begged them to kill Him. I thought it enough to stand my ground and not flee, and to wait for them where I am till they fetched me, as they did Christ, and led me whither they would. But they say I ought to have run after them, and urged them to kill me; they put everything so cleverly! Why are they not so bold as to refute my writings or to come to me and conquer me with their lofty wisdom? Ah well, let the blind be blind!

THE THIRTY-FOURTH ARTICLE

To make war against the Turks is nothing else than to strive against God, Who is punishing our sins by means of the Turks .

How shamefully the pope has this long time baited us with the war against the Turks, gotten our money, destroyed so many Christians and made so much mischief! When will we learn that the pope is the devil's most dangerous cat's-paw? Was it not the pope that set good King Ladislas f185 of Hungary and Poland, with so many thousand Christians, upon the Turks, and was he not terribly beaten at Varna because he obeyed the pope, and at his bidding broke the treaty he had made with the Turk? For to teach concerning perjury, that the pope has power to break an oath, is no heresy.

How can a man become a heretic if he can do anything he pleases? Again, what misery has recently come to Hungary through this same Turkish war, begun with a papal indulgence! And yet we must continue to be blind so far as the pope is concerned!

Now I set up this article not meaning to say that we are not to make war against the Turk, as that holy heresy-hunter, the pope, here charges me, but to say that we should first make ourselves better and cause God to be gracious to us; not plunge in, relying on the pope's indulgence, with which he has deceived Christians heretofore and still deceives them. The histories of the Old Testament, especially Joshua 7:1 and Judges 20:12, and many more passages, show us what it is to fight against an angry God and against an enemy whom we have deserved. The pope does nothing more, with his crusading indulgences and his promises of heaven, than lead Christians' lives into death, and their souls in a great crowd to hell, as befits the true Antichrist. God is not concerned about crosses and indulgences and wars. He will have our lives to be good; and from goodness the pope and his followers flee more than from anything else; and yet he would devour the Turk. That is why our war against the Turk is so successful, and where he formerly had one mile he now has a hundred miles of land; but we do not see it, so completely have we been taken captive by the Roman leader of the blind.

THE THIRTY-FIFTH ARTICLE

Because of the secret vice of pride no one is certain that he does not continually commit mortal sin.

This article is clear enough from the thirty-first and thirty-second. For David says, "Lord, enter not into judgment with Thy servant; in Thy sight shall no man living be justified"; and St Gregory at the end of his *Moralia*, "How can we ever be saved, when our evil works are pure evil, and our good works never pure good?" Again, Job 9:21 says, "Though I were righteous, even this my soul doth not know," and again, "I am afraid in all my works, for I know Thou sparest no sinner." Commenting on this, St Gregory says, "What I have done openly, I see; but what I have suffered secretly, I know not." That is to say, No one can sufficiently know his secret pride, as this same teacher says many times, and by it all works are made unclean, and cannot endure God's just judgment, as David also says, in Psalm 19:12, "Lord cleanse me from my secret sins; who can understand them all?"

Therefore I must retract this article too, and now say, No one ought to doubt that all our good works are mortal sins, if they are judged according to God's severe judgment, and not accepted as good out of pure grace, so that the saying of St Paul in Romans 3:19 may stand, "The Scripture concludeth us all under sin, so that all the world may be guilty before God, and know that no one can be justified by good works, but that God hath mercy upon all, and justifieth them solely out of grace." That is the true Christian doctrine, which teaches a man to fear and trust God; therefore he can love and praise God, because he despairs of himself and relies for everything good upon the grace of God. This love and praise and fear of God, and this faith the pope and his papists think to destroy throughout the world; nay, he has done and is daily doing it, as says Micah 2:9, "Ye have taken away My praise from them forever."

THE THIRTY-SIXTH ARTICLE

Since the fall of Adam, or after actual sin, free will exists only in name, and when it does what it can, it commits mortal sin .

This article ought to be clear enough from those that precede because St Paul says, in Romans 14:23, "Everything that is not of faith is sin."

What has become of freedom, then, if it cannot of its own power do anything else than sin? Again, St Augustine says in his work *On the Spirit and the Letter*, chapter 4, "The free will, without God's grace, has no power except to sin." What say you now, pope? Is it freedom to be without power except for evil? You might as well call a lame man straight, though he can only limp, and never walk straight. That is just as if I were to call the pope most holy, though St Paul calls him *homo peccati et filius perditionis*, and Christ, *abominatio*, the head of all sin and destruction. The papists have so perverted all words, produced a new language, and confused everything, like the builders of Babel, that white must be called black and black white, to the unspeakable injury of the Church.

Paul says, in 2 Timothy 2:25, "Instruct those that oppose the truth; peradventure God will give them repentance, that they acknowledge the truth, and return from the snares of the devil, by whom they are taken captive at his will." Where is the free will here when the captive is of the devil, not indeed unable to do anything, but able to do only what the devil wills? Is that freedom, to be captive at the devil's will, so that there is no help unless God grant repentance and improvement? So also says John viii, When the Jews said they were free, Christ said, "Verily I say unto you, all they who sin are servants or possessions of sin; if the son make you free, ye shall be free indeed." So St Augustine changes the term "free will," in his work *Against Julian*, book 2, and calls it *servum arbitrium*, "a will in bondage."

Again, Moses says in Genesis 6:3 and Genesis 8:21, "Everything that the heart of man thinks and desires is only evil at all times." Harken to that, dear papists; Moses opens his mouth against you, what will you say in reply? If there is a good thought or will in men at any time, then we must accuse Moses of lying, for he calls all the times, all the thoughts, all the desires of the human heart evil. What kind of freedom is it that is inclined only to evil?

To bring the matter to an end; it has been said more than once above that the righteous and holy men who live in God's strong grace, war against their own flesh, with great pains and peril, and the flesh, with all its nature, fights against grace. Is it not, then, a blind and grievous error when one dares to teach that the will is by nature free and can, without grace, turn to the spirit, seek grace and desire it, although it flees from grace, nay, rages against it, when grace is present. Whose reason is not shocked to think that although spirit and flesh are the two greatest of enemies, yet the flesh is said to desire and seek its enemy, the spirit, when every man feels in himself how all his powers fight against grace to drive it out and destroy it?

It is the same as saying, No one can bind a wild and ravenous beast with bands, but when it is free, it binds itself and goes of its own accord into bonds!

Such teachings, therefore, are invented only to insult and overthrow the grace of God, to strengthen sin and increase the kingdom of the devil. The Scriptures say of man, in Genesis 6:3, that he is altogether flesh, and the flesh is most directly opposed to the spirit, according to Galatians 5:17 And yet they so mingle them that the free will, which is mere flesh, is said to seek the spirit. The folly and blindness of the pope and his followers could be tolerated, to be sure, in other matters, but in this

chief article of faith it is a pity that they are so senseless, for by it they entirely destroy everything that we have from God through Christ, so that St Peter rightly prophesied of them, in 2 Peter 2:1, "There shall be false teachers among you, who shall deny the Lord that bought them." Who is the Lord but Christ, Who hath bought us with His own precious blood? Who denies Him more than those who ascribe too little to His grace and too much to the free will? For because they will not allow that to be sin and evil which is truly sin and evil, neither will they allow that to be grace which is grace and by which sin is to be driven out; just as he who will not admit that he is sick will not allow medicine to be medicine for him.

Even though they were right, it would still be safer if they left all good to grace alone and allowed all our doings to be sin. There is no danger in confessing before God that a good work is sin, and therefore seeking His grace, which I cannot seek too much; but there is cruel danger in confessing a thought to be good if it is not good. Because, then, they seek the dangerous path, follow it and defend it so stubbornly, and leave the safe path, nay, persecute those that walk in it, it is easy to observe that their doctrine is not of God, but altogether suspicious.

Therefore I wish that the word "free will" had never been invented. It is not in the Scriptures, and it were better to call it "self-will," which profiteth not. Or, if anyone wishes to retain it, he ought to apply it to the newcreated man, so as to understand by it the man who is without sin. He is assuredly free, as was Adam in Paradise, and it is of him that the Scriptures speak when they touch upon our freedom; but they who lie in sins are unfree and prisoners of the devil; yet because they can become free through grace, you can call them men of free will, just as you might call a man rich, although he is a beggar, because he can become rich. But it is neither right nor good thus to juggle with words in matters of such great seriousness; for a simple man is easily deceived by it, and teachers of this kind are called sophists, of whom Ecclesiastics 34 says, "I have observed many things from many words, and have found the uses of words strange and wierd; sometimes I have been in deadly peril of soul because of these things, but the grace of God has delivered me." We ought, therefore, to avoid the sophists, and speak, especially concerning the lofty things of God, simply, clearly and plainly, as do the Scriptures. This error about the free will is a peculiar teaching of Antichrist; therefore it is no wonder that it is spread so far throughout the world, for Antichrist is to seduce the whole world, as it is written of him, and but few Christians shall stand before him. Woe to him!

THE THIRTY-SEVENTH ARTICLE

That there is a purgatory cannot be proved by those Scriptures which are approved and trustworthy.

I have never yet denied that there is a purgatory, and I still hold that there is, as I have many times written and confessed, though I have no way of proving it incontrovertibly, either by Scripture or reason. I find in the Scriptures, indeed, that Christ, Abraham, Jacob, Moses, Job, David, Hezekiah and some others tasted hell in this life. This I think to be purgatory, and it is not incredible that some of the dead suffer in like manner. Tauler has much to say about it, and, in a word, I have decided for myself that there is a purgatory, but cannot force any others to the same decision.

There is only one thing that I have attacked, namely, the way in which they apply to purgatory passages of Scripture so inapplicable that it becomes ridiculous. So they apply Psalm 66:12, "We went through fire and water," though the whole Psalm sings of the sufferings of the saints, which no one places in purgatory. Again, St Paul, in 1 Corinthians 3:13, says of the fire of the last day that it will prove the good works, and by it some shall be saved because they keep the faith, though their work may suffer loss. Of this fire also they make purgatory, according to their custom of twisting the Scriptures and making of them what they will.

Thus, too, they have drawn in by the hair that passage in Matthew 12:32, in which Christ says, "Whoso speaketh blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world nor in the world to come." Christ means by this that it shall never be forgiven him, as Mark 3:29 explains His meaning, saying, "He that sinneth against the Holy Ghost by blasphemy hath no forgiveness forever, but is guilty of an eternal sin."

To be sure, even St Gregory interprets the word in Matthew 12 to mean that some sins will be forgiven in the world to come, but St Mark does not allow that interpretation to stand, and he counts for more than all the doctors.

I have said all this so that we may know that no one is bound to believe more than what is based on Scripture, and those who do not believe in purgatory are not to be called heretics, if in other respects they hold the entire Scriptures, as the Greek Church does. The Gospel compels me to believe that St Peter and St James are saints, but it is not necessary to believe that St Peter is buried at Rome and St James at Compostella and their bodies are still there, for that the Scriptures do not tell us. Again, there is no sin in holding that none of the saints whom the pope canonizes are saints, and the saints take no offense at that, for there are many saints in heaven of whom we do not know that they exist at all, still less that they are saints; and they take no offense at that, and do not think us heretics because of it. The pope and his sectaries play this game only that he may set up many wild articles of faith, beside which the true articles of the Scriptures are silenced and suppressed.

But their use of the passage in 2 Maccabees 12, about how Judas Maccabaeus sent money to Jerusalem to buy prayers for those who fell in battle, proves nothing, for that book is not among the books of Holy Scripture, and, as St Jerome says, it is not found in the Hebrew tongue, in which all the books of the Old Testament are found. In other respects too this book has little authority, for it contradicts the first book of Maccabees in its description of King Antiochus, and contains many more fables which destroy its credibility. And even though the book were authoritative, it would yet be necessary in the case of so important an article that at least one passage out of one of the chief books should come to its help, that every word might be established in the mouth of two or three

witnesses. It is a suspicious circumstance that on this subject alone there should be found in the whole Bible no more than one passage, and that in the least important, most despised book, if it is so great a matter, and so much depends upon it that the papacy and the whole priesthood are all but built upon it, and derive all their wealth and honor from it. Without doubt the majority of the priests would starve if there were no purgatory.

They ought not to offer to faith such weak and fallible grounds.

THE THIRTY-EIGHTH ARTICLE

Souls in purgatory are not sure of their own salvation, at least not all of them; nor is it proved by Scripture or reason that they acquire no more merit and do not grow in love toward God.

THE THIRTY-NINTH ARTICLE

Souls in purgatory sin continually, because they seek for rest and flee from penalty.

THE FORTIETH ARTICLE

Souls released from purgatory by the prayers of the living have less reward than if they themselves made satisfaction.

These three articles I have discussed only in an academic way, and have often confessed that they were merely opinions of mine, but that I give no definite proof for them. What I think about them can be read in my Resolutions. The papists and bullists condemn me for them, and advance no other argument except their own arbitrary opinion, formed without Scripture or reason, and they do not reply to my Scriptures and reason. But I do not allow this to worry me and I despise their mere condemnation as much as they despise my grounds and reasons. The pope and his bullists know less of these things than a log on the ground.

My advice is that no one allow the pope to set up new articles, but be willing to remain in ignorance, with St Augustine, about what the souls in purgatory are doing and what their condition is. It is enough for us to know that they are in great and intolerable pain, and crave our help. But if you wish to discuss the question, then leave room for surmise and opinion, as I do; do not make an article of faith out of your own idea, as does that abomination at Rome, so that your faith do not, perchance, become a dream. Hold to the Scriptures and the Word of God. There is the truth; there you will be safe; there is trust-worthiness and faith, entire, pure, sufficient and constant.

THE LAST ARTICLE

The prelates of the Church and the secular princes would do no wrong if they blotted out all the beggars' sacks.

In this article, nay, in the whole bull, John Eck was the pope's Holy Ghost, and he is as loth to lie as he is slow to speak. This Holy Ghost is just like him; they are two knaves of a kind. I have not spoken of prelates and princes, except that I wish there were no begging orders. This I still say, and many pious people with me. Amen. [Who will send the pope and his bullists to school and teach them to speak Latin before they write bulls? Are the beggars' sacks letters or paintings that they can be "blotted out," as the pope here lisps and stammers? Even if the pope continues to rule, I think he will never learn to speak his own language, so far is he going in forgetfulness of all knowledge and honor. I have not said that the two kinds of princes should "blot out" or destroy the beggars' sacks. But I have said I wished there were no begging orders, and this I know the pope, bishops, and priests wish from the bottom of their heart; yet they condemn my words, though they hold them even more than I do. But I see that John Eck has here been the pope's Holy Ghost, and he is as sorry to lie as he is slow to talk. The whole bull too is his, as he confesses, though his confession is not necessary. Father and child are so much alike that neither can deny the other. I must have liars and knaves for opponents; I am not worthy in the sight of God that a pious and honorable man should discuss these matters with me in a Christian way. That is my greatest complaint.

I still say that it is sin and shame to have beggary in the Church, and much more abominable that priests, who have to do with preaching and the sacraments, should beg and begging orders be instituted by the pope as a Christian estate. Among the Jews in the Old Testament beggary was not allowed, and yet we Christians, who ought to be full of love for our neighbor, consider beggary a great honor. We ought to be ashamed in the sight of God and man that a Christian man goes publicly begging among us. We ought to anticipate men's wants and help the poor, so that there would be no need for begging. But this too is one of Antichrist's tricks. He institutes begging orders; otherwise he would have too few apostles, be too weak for the bishops and priests, and would not be able to raise his throne above heaven and earth.