

**The Apology to the Augsburg Confession: Article IV: Of Justification.
Article III: Of Love and the Fulfilling of the Law.**

Reply to the Arguments of the Adversaries.

62] Now, when the grounds of this case have been understood, namely, **the distinction between the Law and the promises, or the Gospel,** it will be easy to resolve the objections of the adversaries. For they cite passages concerning the Law and works, and omit passages concerning the promises. 63] But a reply can once for all be made to all opinions concerning the Law, namely,

that **the Law cannot be observed without Christ,** and
that **if civil works are wrought without Christ, they do not please God.** [God is not pleased with the person.]

Wherefore, **when works are commended, it is necessary to add that faith is required,** that they are commended on account of faith, that they are the fruits and testimonies of faith. [This our doctrine is, indeed, plain; it need not fear the light, and may be held against the Holy Scriptures. We have also clearly and correctly presented it here, if any will receive instruction and not knowingly deny the truth. For rightly to understand the benefit of Christ and the great treasure of the Gospel (which Paul extols so greatly), we must separate, on the one hand, the promise of God and the grace that is offered, and, on the other hand, the Law, as far as the heavens are from the earth. In shaky matters many explanations are needed, but in a good matter one or two thoroughgoing explanations dissolve all objections which men think they can raise.]

64] **Ambiguous and dangerous cases produce many and various solutions.** For the judgment of the ancient poet is true:

“An unjust cause, being in itself sick, requires skillfully applied remedies.”

But in just and sure cases one or two explanations derived from the sources correct all things that seem to offend. This occurs also in this case of ours. **For the rule which I have just recited, explains all the passages that are cited concerning the Law 65] and works** [namely, that without Christ the Law cannot be truly observed, and although external works may be performed, still the person doing them does not please God outside of Christ]. For we acknowledge that Scripture teaches in some places the Law, and in other places the Gospel, or the gratuitous promise of the remission of sins for Christ’s sake. But our adversaries absolutely abolish the free promise when they deny that faith justifies, and teach that for the sake of love and of our works we receive remission of sins and 66] reconciliation. **If the remission of sins depends upon the condition of our works, it is altogether uncertain.** [For we can never be certain whether we do enough works, or whether our works are sufficiently holy and pure. Thus, too, the forgiveness of sins is made uncertain, and the promise of God perishes, as Paul says, Rom. 4, 14: *The promise is made of none effect,* and everything is rendered uncertain.] Therefore the promise will be abolished. 67] Hence we refer godly minds to the consideration of the promises, and we teach concerning the free remission of sins and concerning reconciliation, which occurs through faith in Christ. **Afterwards we add also the doctrine of the Law.** [Not that by the Law we merit the remission of sins, or that for the sake of the Law we are accepted with God, but because God requires good works.] And it is necessary to divide these things aright, as Paul says, 2 Tim. 2, 15. We must see what Scripture ascribes to the Law and what to the promises. **For it praises works in such a way as not to remove the free promise** [as to place the promise of God and the true treasure, Christ, a thousand leagues above it].

68] For good works are to be done on account of God's command, likewise for the exercise of faith [as Paul says, Eph. 2, 10: *We are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works*], **and on account of confession and giving of thanks.** For these reasons good works ought necessarily to be done, which, although they are done in the flesh not as yet entirely renewed, that retards the movements of the Holy Ghost, and imparts some of its uncleanness, yet, on account of Christ, are holy, divine works, sacrifices, and acts pertaining to the government of Christ, who thus displays His kingdom before this world. **For in these He sanctifies hearts and represses the devil, and, in order to retain the Gospel among men, openly opposes to the kingdom of the devil the confession of saints, and, in our weakness, declares His power.** **69]** The dangers, labors, and sermons of the Apostle Paul, of Athanasius, Augustine, and the like, who taught the churches, are holy works, are true sacrifices acceptable to God, are contests of Christ **70]** through which He repressed the devil, and drove him from those who believed. David's labors, in waging wars and in his home government, are holy works, are true sacrifices, are contests of God, defending the people who had the Word of God against **71]** the devil, in order that the knowledge of God might not be entirely extinguished on earth. **We think thus also concerning every good work in the humblest callings and in private affairs. Through these works Christ celebrates His victory over the devil,** just as the distribution of alms by the Corinthians, 1 Cor. 16, 1, was a holy work, and a sacrifice and contest of Christ against the devil, who labors that nothing may be done **72]** for the praise of God. **To disparage such works, the confession of doctrine, affliction, works of love, mortifications of the flesh, would be indeed to disparage the outward government of Christ's kingdom among men.**

Good Works are to be done
 1. on account of God's command for the exercise of faith
 2. on account of confession (of doctrine §72) and giving of thanks

God uses these works...

Vocation

The outward government of Christ's kingdom

73] Here also we add something concerning **rewards and merits.** **We teach that rewards have been offered and promised to the works of believers. We teach that good works are meritorious, not for the remission of sins, for grace or justification (for these we obtain only by faith), but for other rewards, bodily and spiritual, in this life and after this life,** because Paul **74]** says, 1 Cor. 3, 8: *Every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labor.* There will, therefore be different rewards according to different labors. But the remission of sins is alike and equal to all, just as Christ is one, and is offered freely to all who believe that for Christ's sake their sins are remitted. Therefore the remission of sins and justification are received only by faith, and not on account of any works, as is evident in the terrors of conscience, because none of our works can be opposed to God's wrath, as Paul clearly says, Rom. 5, 1: *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom also we have access by faith,* etc. **75]** But **because faith makes sons of God, it also makes coheirs with Christ.** Therefore, because by our works we do not merit justification, through which we are made sons of God, and coheirs with Christ, we do not by our works merit eternal life; for faith obtains this, because faith justifies us and has a reconciled God. **But eternal life is due the justified, according to the passage Rom. 8, 30: Whom He justified, them He also glorified.** **76]** Paul, Eph. 6, 2, commends to us the commandment concerning honoring parents, by mention of the

Rewards and Merits

reward which is added to that commandment, where he does not mean that obedience to parents justifies 77] us before God, but that, when it occurs in those who have been justified, it merits other great rewards. **Yet God exercises His saints variously, and often defers the rewards of the righteousness of works** in order that they may learn not to trust in their own righteousness, and may learn to seek the will of God rather than the rewards; as appears in Job, in Christ, and other saints. And of this, many psalms teach us, **which console us against the happiness of the wicked**, as Ps. 37, 1: *Neither be thou envious*. And Christ says, Matt. 5, 10: *Blessed are they 78] which are persecuted for righteousness' sake; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven*. **By these 79] praises of good works, believers are undoubtedly moved to do good works**. Meanwhile, the doctrine of repentance is also proclaimed against the godless, whose works are wicked; and the wrath of God is displayed, 80] which He has threatened all who do not repent. **We therefore praise and require good works, and show many reasons why they ought to be done.**

Thus of works Paul also teaches when he says, Rom. 4, 9 sq., that Abraham received circumcision, not in order that by this work he might be justified; for by faith he had already attained it that he was accounted righteous. **But circumcision was added in order that he might have in his body a written sign,**

1. admonished by which he might exercise faith,
2. and by which also he might confess his faith before others,

3. and, by his testimony, might invite others to believe. 81] *By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice*, Heb. 11, 4. Because, therefore, he was just by faith, the sacrifice which he made was pleasing to God; not that by this work he merited the remission of sins and grace, but that

1. he exercised his faith
2. and showed it to others,
3. in order to invite them to believe.

The Roman Church thinks...

82] Although in this way **good works ought to follow faith**, men who cannot believe and be sure that for Christ's sake they are freely forgiven, and that freely for Christ's sake they have a reconciled God, **employ works far otherwise**. When they see the works of saints, they judge in a human manner that saints have merited the remission of sins and grace through these works. Accordingly, **they imitate them, and think that through similar works they merit the remission of sins and grace; they think that through these works they appease the wrath of God, and attain that for the sake of these works they are accounted righteous. 83]** This godless opinion concerning works we condemn.

In the **first** place, because it **obscures the glory of Christ** when men offer to God these works as a price and propitiation. This honor, due to Christ alone, is ascribed to our works.

Secondly, they nevertheless **do not find, in these works, peace of conscience**, but in true terrors, heaping up works upon works, they at length despair because they find no work sufficiently pure [sufficiently important and precious to propitiate God, to obtain with certainty eternal life, in a word, to tranquilize and pacify the conscience]. The Law always accuses, and produces wrath.

Thirdly, such persons **never attain the knowledge of God** [nor of His will]; for, as in anger they flee from God, who judges and afflicts them, they never believe that they are heard. 84] But faith manifests the presence of God, since it is certain that God freely forgives and hears us.

85] Moreover, **this godless opinion** concerning works always has existed in the world [sticks to the world quite tightly]. The heathen had sacrifices, derived from the fathers. They imitated their works. Their faith they did not retain, but thought that the works were a propitiation and price on account of which God would be reconciled to them. **86]** The people in the Law [the Israelites] imitated sacrifices with the opinion that by means of these works they would appease God, so to say, *ex opere operato*. We see here how earnestly the prophets rebuke the people: Ps. 50, 8: *I will not reprove thee for thy sacrifices*, and Jer. 7, 22: *I spake not unto your fathers concerning burnt offerings*. **Such passages condemn not works, which God certainly had commanded as outward exercises in this government, but they condemn the godless opinion according to which they thought that by these works they appeased the wrath of God, and 87] thus cast away faith.** And because no works pacify the conscience, new works, in addition to God's commands, were from time to time devised [the hypocrites nevertheless used to invent one work after another, one sacrifice after another, by a blind guess and in reckless wantonness, and all this without the word and command of God, with wicked conscience as we have seen in the Papacy]. The people of Israel had seen the prophets sacrificing on high places [and in groves]. Besides, the examples of the saints very greatly move the minds of those, hoping by similar works to obtain grace just as these saints obtained it. [But the saints believed.] Wherefore the people began, with remarkable zeal, to imitate this work, in order that by such a work [they might appease the wrath of God] they might merit remission of sins, grace, and righteousness. But the prophets had been sacrificing on high places, not that by these works they might merit the remission of sins and grace, but because on these places they taught, and, accordingly, presented there a testimony of their faith. **88]** The people had heard that Abraham had sacrificed his son. Wherefore they also, in order to appease God by a most cruel and difficult work, put to death their sons. But Abraham did not sacrifice his son with the opinion that this work was a price and propitiatory work for the sake of which he was accounted righteous.

89] Thus in the Church the Lord's Supper was instituted that by remembrance of the promises of Christ, of which we are admonished in this sign,

- 1. faith might be strengthened in us,**
- 2. and we might publicly confess our faith,**
- 3. and proclaim the benefits of Christ, as Paul says, 1 Cor. 11, 26: *As often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do show the Lord's death*, etc. But our adversaries contend that the mass is a work that justifies us *ex opere operato*, and removes the guilt and liability to punishment in those for whom it is celebrated; for thus writes Gabriel.**

Lord's Supper

90] Anthony, Bernard, Dominicus, Franciscus, and other holy Fathers selected **a certain kind of life either for the sake of study [of more readily reading the Holy Scriptures] or other useful exercises.** In the mean time they believed that by faith they were accounted righteous for Christ's sake, and that God was gracious to them, not on account of those exercises of their own. **But the multitude since then has imitated not the faith of the Fathers, but their example without faith, in order that by such works they might merit the remission of sins, grace, and righteousness;** they did not believe that they received these freely on account of Christ as Propitiator. [Thus the human mind always exalts works too highly, and puts them in the wrong place. And this error the Gospel reproveth, which teaches that men are accounted righteous not for the sake of the Law, but for the sake of Christ alone. Christ, however, is apprehended by faith

Monasteries or Vocation

alone; wherefore we are accounted righteous by faith alone for Christ's sake.] Thus the world judges of all works **91]** that they are a propitiation by which God is appeased; that they are a price because of which we are accounted righteous. It does not believe that Christ is Propitiator; it does not believe that by faith we freely attain that we are accounted righteous for Christ's sake. And, nevertheless, since works cannot pacify the conscience, others are continually chosen, new rites are performed, new vows made, and new orders of monks formed beyond the command of God, in order that **92]** some great work may be sought which may be set against the wrath and judgment of God. Contrary to Scripture, the adversaries uphold these godless opinions concerning works. But to ascribe to our works these things, namely, that they are a propitiation, that they merit the remission of sins and grace, that for the sake of these and not by faith, for the sake of Christ as Propitiator we are accounted righteous before God, what else is this than to deny Christ the honor of Mediator and **93]** Propitiator? Although, therefore, **we, believe and teach that good works must necessarily be done** (*for the inchoate fulfilling of the Law ought to follow faith*), **nevertheless we give to Christ His own honor.** We believe and teach that by faith, for Christ's sake, we are accounted righteous before God, that we are not accounted righteous because of works without Christ as Mediator, that by works we do not merit the remission of sins, grace, and righteousness, that we cannot set our works against the wrath and justice of God, **that works cannot overcome the terrors of sin, but that the terrors of sin are overcome by faith alone, 94]** **that only Christ the Mediator is to be presented by faith against the wrath and judgment of God.** If anyone think differently, he does not give Christ due honor, who has been set forth that He might be a Propitiator, that through Him **95]** we might have access to the Father. We are speaking now of the righteousness through which we treat with **96]** God, not with men, but by which we apprehend grace and peace of conscience. Conscience however, cannot be pacified before God, unless by faith alone, which is certain that God for Christ's sake is reconciled to us, according to Rom. 5, 1: *Being justified by faith, we have peace*, because justification is only a matter freely promised for Christ's sake, and therefore is always received before God by faith alone.

The terrors of sins

97] Now, then, we will reply to **those passages which the adversaries cite**, in order to prove that we are justified by love and works. From 1 Cor. 13, 2 they cite: *Though I have all faith, etc., and have not charity, I am nothing.* And here they triumph greatly. Paul testifies to...

Opponents quoted texts:

Tr 97 [Tappert 218] 1 Cor. 13:2

Tr 110 [Tappert 231] Col. 3:14

Tr 117 [Tappert 238] 1 Pet. 4:8

Tr 123 [Tappert 244] James 2:24

Tr 131 [Tappert 252] Romans 2:13

Tr 133 [Tappert 254] Lk 6:37, Is 58:7,9, Dan. 4:27, Matt. 5:3

135] Moreover, in the preaching of the Law these two things ought always to be understood namely:

First, that the Law cannot be observed unless we have been regenerated by faith in Christ, just as Christ says, John 15, 5: *Without Me ye can do nothing.*

Secondly, and though some external works can certainly be done, this general judgment: *Without faith*

it is impossible to please God, which interprets the whole Law, must be retained; and the Gospel must be retained, that through Christ we have access to the Father, 136] Heb. 10, 19; Rom. 5, 2. For it is evident that we are not justified by the Law. Otherwise, why would there be need of Christ or the Gospel, if the preaching of the Law alone would be sufficient? Thus in the preaching of repentance, the preaching of the Law, or the Word convicting of sin, is not sufficient, because the Law works wrath, and only accuses, only terrifies consciences, because consciences never are at rest, unless they hear the voice of God in which the remission of sins is clearly promised. **Accordingly, the Gospel must be added,** that for Christ's sake sins are remitted, and that we obtain remission of sins by faith in Christ. If the adversaries exclude the Gospel of Christ from the preaching of repentance, they are judged aright to be blasphemers against Christ.

In the Preaching of the Law

1. The Law is observed by the regenerated.
2. Without faith can't please God
3. The Gospel must be added.

Tr 137 [Tappert 258] Isa. 1:16-18

Tr 140 [Tappert 261] Dan. 4:24...

151] Therefore the doctrine of repentance, because it not only commands new works, but also promises the remission of sins, necessarily requires faith. For the remission of sins is not received unless by faith. Therefore, in those passages that refer to

repentance, we should always understand that not only works, but also faith is required, as in Matt. 6, 14: *For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you.* Here a work is required, and the promise of the remission of sins is added, which does not occur on account of the work, but through faith, on account of Christ.... **154] And yet Christ often**

connects the promise of the remission of sins to good works, not because He means that good works are a propitiation, for they follow reconciliation;

but for two reasons. One is, because good fruits must necessarily follow. Therefore He reminds us that, if good fruits do not follow, the repentance is hypocritical and feigned. **The other reason is, because**

we have need of external signs of so great a promise, because 155] a conscience full of fear has need of manifold consolation. As, therefore, Baptism and the Lord's Supper are signs that continually admonish, cheer, and encourage desponding minds to believe the more firmly that their sins are forgiven, so the same promise is written and portrayed in good works, in order that these works may admonish us to believe the more firmly. And those who produce no good works do not excite themselves to believe, but despise these promises. The godly on the other hand, embrace them, and rejoice that they have the signs and testimonies of so great a promise. Accordingly, they exercise themselves in these signs and testimonies. Just as, therefore, the

Repentance (in the wide sense) require faith.

The Promise of remission connected to good works for 2 reasons

1. Good fruits must necessarily follow faith
2. We have need of an external sign

Lord's Supper does not justify us *ex opere operato*, without faith, so alms do not justify us without faith, *ex opere operato*.

Tr 156 [Tappert 279] Tobit 4:11
Tr 160 [Tappert 281] Luke 11:41..

165] Thus far we have reviewed the principal passages which the adversaries cite against us, in order to show that faith does not justify, and that we merit, by our works, remission of sins and grace. But we hope that we have shown clearly enough to godly consciences that these passages are not opposed to our doctrine; that the adversaries wickedly distort the Scriptures to their opinions; that the most of the passages which they cite have been garbled; that, while omitting the clearest passages concerning faith, they only select from the Scriptures passages concerning works, and even these they distort; that everywhere they add certain human opinions to that which the words of Scripture say; that they teach the Law in such a manner as to suppress the Gospel concerning Christ. **166] For the entire doctrine of the adversaries is,**

1. in part, derived from human reason,

2. and is, in part, a doctrine of the Law, not of the Gospel.

For they teach two modes of justification, of which the one has been derived from reason and the other from the Law, not from the Gospel, or the promise concerning Christ....

187] ... Although on account of certain captious persons we must say technically: **Faith is truly righteousness, because it is**

Obedience to the Gospel

obedience to the Gospel. For it is evident that obedience to the

command of a superior is truly a species of distributive justice. And **this obedience to the**

Gospel is reckoned for righteousness, so that, only on account of this, because by this we apprehend Christ as Propitiator, good works, or obedience to the Law, are pleasing. For we do

not satisfy the Law, but for Christ's sake this is forgiven us, as Paul says, Rom. 8, 1: *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.* This faith gives God the

honor, gives God **188]** that which is His own, in this, that, by receiving the promises, it obeys Him. Just as Paul also says, Rom. 4, 20: *He staggered not at the promise of God through*

unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God. **189] Thus the worship and divine**

service of the Gospel is to receive from God gifts; on the contrary, the worship of the Law

is to offer and present our gifts to God. We can, however, offer nothing to God unless we have

first been reconciled and born again. This passage, too, brings the greatest consolation, as the

chief worship of the Gospel is to wish to receive remission of sins, grace, and righteousness. Of this worship Christ says, John 6, 40: *This is the will of Him that sent Me, that every one which*

seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life. And the Father says, Matt. 17, 5:

This is My beloved Son, **190]** *in whom I am well pleased, hear ye Him.* **The adversaries speak**

of obedience to the Law; they do not speak of obedience to the Gospel; and yet we cannot

obey the Law, unless, through the Gospel, we have been born again, since we cannot love

God, unless the remission of sins has been received....

227] But here again the adversaries will cry out that there is no need of good works if they do not merit eternal life. These calumnies we have refuted above. **Of course, it is necessary to do good works. We say**

Why do Good Works if they don't justify?

that, eternal life has been promised to the justified. But those who walk according to the flesh retain neither faith nor righteousness. We are for this very end justified, that, being righteous, we may begin to do good works and to obey God's Law. 228] We are regenerated and receive the Holy Ghost for the very end **that the new life may produce new 229] works, new dispositions, the fear and love of God, hatred of concupiscence, etc.** This faith of which we speak **arises in repentance**, and ought to be, established and grow in the midst of good works, temptations, and dangers, **so that we may continually be the more firmly persuaded that God for Christ's sake cares for us, forgives us, hears us. This is not learned without many and great struggles.** How often is conscience aroused, how often does it incite even to despair when it brings to view sins, either old or new, or the impurity of our nature! This handwriting is not blotted out without a great **230]** struggle, in which experience testifies what a difficult matter faith is. And while we are cheered in the midst of the terrors and receive consolation, other spiritual movements at the same time grow, the knowledge of God, fear of God, hope, love of God; and we are *regenerated*, as Paul says, Col. 3, 10 and 2 Cor. 3, 18, *in the knowledge of God*, and, *beholding the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, i.e.,* we receive the true knowledge of God, **231]** so that we truly fear Him, truly trust that we are cared for, and that we are heard by Him. This regeneration is, as it were, the beginning of eternal life, as Paul says, Rom. 8, 10: *If Christ be in you, 232]* *the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.* And 2 Cor. 5, 2. 3: *We are clothed upon, if so be that, being clothed, we shall not be found naked.* **From these statements the candid reader can judge that we certainly require good works, since we teach that this faith arises in repentance, and in repentance ought continually to increase; and in these matters we place Christian and spiritual perfection, if repentance and faith grow together in repentance....**

Repentance and Faith Grow Together

241] We are not agitating an idle logomachy concerning the term *reward* (but this great, exalted, most important matter, namely, where Christian hearts are to find true and certain consolation; again, whether our works can give consciences rest and peace; again, whether we are to believe that our works are worthy of eternal life, or whether that is given us for Christ's sake. ... If the adversaries will concede that we are accounted righteous by faith because of Christ, and that good works please God because of faith, we will not afterwards contend much concerning the term *reward*. **We confess that eternal life is a reward, because it is something due on account of the promise, not on account of our merits. For the justification has been promised, which we have above shown to be properly a gift of God; and to this gift has been added the promise of eternal life, according to Rom. 8, 30: *Whom He justified, them 242]* *He also glorified.* ...**

265] ...Accordingly, we conclude that we are justified before God, are reconciled to God and regenerated by faith, which in repentance apprehends the promise of grace, and truly quickens the terrified mind, and is convinced that for Christ's sake God is reconciled and propitious to us. And *through* this faith, 1 Peter 1, 5 says, *we are kept unto salvation, ready to be revealed.* 266] **The knowledge of this faith is necessary to Christians, and brings the most abundant consolation in all afflictions, and displays to us the office of Christ,** because those who deny that men are justified by faith, and deny that Christ is Mediator and Propitiator, deny the promise of grace and the Gospel. They teach only the doctrine either of reason or of the Law concerning justification.

267] We have shown **the origin of this case**, so far as can here be done, and have explained **the objections of the adversaries.** Good men, indeed, will easily judge these things, if they will think, as often as a passage concerning love or works is cited, that the Law cannot be observed without Christ and that we cannot be justified from the Law, but from 268] the Gospel, that is, from the promise of the grace promised in Christ. And we hope that this discussion, although brief, will be profitable to good men for strengthening faith, and teaching and comforting conscience. For we know that those things which we have said are in harmony with the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures, with the holy Fathers, Ambrose, Augustine, and very many others, and with the whole Church of Christ, which certainly confesses that Christ is Propitiator and Justifier.

269] **Nor are we immediately to judge that the Roman Church agrees with everything that the Pope, or cardinals, or bishops, or some of the theologians, or monks approve.** For it is manifest that to most of the pontiffs their own authority is of greater concern than the Gospel of Christ. And it has been ascertained that most of them are openly Epicureans. It is evident that theologians have mingled with Christian doctrine **more of philosophy 270] than was sufficient.** **Nor ought their influence to appear so great that it will never be lawful to dissent from their disputations,** because at the same time many manifest errors are found among them, such as, **that we are able from purely natural powers to love God above all things.** This dogma, although it is manifestly false, has produced many other errors. 271] **For the Scriptures, the holy Fathers, and the judgments of all the godly everywhere make reply.** Therefore, even though Popes, or some theologians, and monks in the Church have taught us to seek remission of sins, grace, and righteousness through our own works, and to invent new forms of worship, which have obscured the office of Christ, and have made out of Christ not a Propitiator and Justifier, but only a Legislator, 272] nevertheless **the knowledge of Christ has always remained with some godly persons.**

The Roman Church --philosophy --natural powers --human traditions --doctrines of works
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Scripture, moreover, has predicted that the righteousness of faith would be obscured in this way by human traditions and the doctrine of works. Just as Paul often complains (cf. Gal. 4, 9; 5, 7; Col. 2, 8, 16 sq.; 1 Tim. 4, 2 sq., etc.) that there were even at that time those who, instead of the righteousness of faith, taught that men were reconciled to God and justified by their own works and own acts of worship, and not by faith for Christ's sake; because men 273] judge by nature that God ought to be appeased by works. Nor does reason see a righteousness other than the righteousness of the Law, understood in a civil sense. Accordingly, there have always existed in the world some who have taught this carnal righteousness alone to the exclusion of the righteousness of faith; and such teachers will also always exist. 274] The same happened among the people of Israel. The greater part of the people thought that they merited

remission of sins by their works; they accumulated sacrifices and acts of worship. On the contrary, the prophets, in condemnation of this opinion, taught the righteousness of faith. And the occurrences among the people of Israel are illustrations of those things which **275]** were to occur in the Church.

Therefore, let the multitude of the adversaries, who condemn our doctrine, not disturb godly minds. For their spirit can easily be judged, because in some articles they have condemned truth that is so clear and manifest that their godlessness appears openly. **276] For the bull of Leo X** condemned a very necessary article, which all Christians should hold and believe, namely, **that we ought to trust that we have been absolved not because of our contrition, but because of Christ's word**, Matt. 16, 19: **277]**

The papal bull, *Exsurge Domine*, promulgated on 15 June 1520 by Pope Leo X, opposed the Scriptural teachings of Martin Luther.

Whatsoever thou shalt bind, etc. And now, in this assembly, **the authors of the Confutation** have in clear words condemned this, namely, **that we have said that faith is a part of repentance, by which we obtain remission of sins, and overcome the terrors of sin, and conscience is rendered pacified**. Who, however, does not see that this article, that by faith we obtain the remission of sins, is most true, most certain, and especially necessary to all Christians? Who to all posterity, hearing that such a doctrine has been condemned, will judge that the authors of this condemnation had any knowledge of Christ?

278] And concerning their spirit, a conjecture, can be made from the unheard-of cruelty, which it is evident that they have hitherto exercised towards most good men. And in this assembly we have heard that a reverend father, when opinions concerning our Confession were expressed, said in the senate of the Empire that no plan seemed to him better than to make a reply written in blood to the Confession which we had presented written in ink. What more cruel would Phalaris say? Therefore some princes also have judged this expression unworthy to be spoken in such a meeting. Wherefore, **279]** although the adversaries claim for themselves the name of the Church, nevertheless **we know that the Church of Christ is with those who teach the Gospel of Christ**, not with those who defend wicked, opinions contrary to the Gospel, as the Lord says, John 10, 27: *My sheep hear My voice*. And Augustine says: *The question is, Where is the Church? What, therefore, are we to do? Are we to seek it in our own words or in the words of its Head, our Lord Jesus Christ? I think that we ought to seek it in the words, of Him who is Truth, and who knows His own body best*. Hence the judgments of our adversaries will not disturb us, since they defend human opinions contrary to the Gospel, contrary to the authority of the holy Fathers, who have written in the Church, and contrary to the testimonies of godly minds.

Next Article is on the Church