

Threats against the Old Adam

FC EP VI. 4

On account of this old Adam, which still inheres in the understanding, the will, and all the powers of man, it is needful that the Law of the Lord always shine before them

A., in order that they **may not from human devotion institute wanton and self-elected cults** [that they may frame nothing in a matter of religion from the desire of private devotion, and may not choose divine services not instituted by God's Word];

B. likewise, **that the old Adam also may not employ his own will, but may be subdued against his will**, not only by the admonition and threatening of the Law, **but also by punishments and blows**, so that he may follow and surrender himself captive to the Spirit, 1 Cor. 9, 27; Rom. 6, 12, Gal. 6, 14; Ps. 119, 1ff ; Heb. 13, 21 (Heb. 12, 1).

5] 4. Now, as regards the distinction between **the works of the Law** and **the fruits of the Spirit**, we believe, teach, and confess that the works which are done according to the Law are and are called **works of the Law** as long as they are only **extorted from man by urging the punishment and threatening of God's wrath.**

Works of the Law Fruits of the Spirit
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6] 5. **Fruits of the Spirit**, however, are **the works which the Spirit of God who dwells in believers works through the regenerate, and which are done by believers so far as they are regenerate [spontaneously and freely], as though they knew of no command, threat, or reward**; for in this manner the children of God live in the Law and walk according to the Law of God, which [mode of living] St. Paul in his epistles calls the Law of Christ and the Law of the mind, Rom. 7, 25; 8, 7; Rom. 8, 2; Gal. 6, 2.

7] 6. Thus the Law is and remains both to the penitent and impenitent, both to regenerate and unregenerate men, **one [and the same] Law, namely, the immutable will of God**; and the difference, **so far as concerns obedience, is alone in man**, inasmuch as one who is not yet regenerate does for the Law out of constraint and unwillingly what it requires of him (**as also the regenerate do according to the flesh**); but the believer, so far as he is regenerate, does without constraint and with a willing spirit that which no threatenings [however severe] of the Law could ever extort from him.

One and the same Law But the obedience of man varies
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9] Therefore, because of these lusts of the flesh the truly believing, elect, and regenerate children of God need in this life not only the daily instruction and admonition, warning, and threatening of the Law, **but also frequently punishments, that they may be roused [the old man is driven out of them]** and follow the Spirit of God, as it is written Ps. 119, 71: *It is good for me that I have been afflicted, that I might learn Thy statutes.* And again, 1 Cor. 9, 27: *I keep under my body and bring it into subjection, lest that, by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway.* And again, Heb. 12, 8: *But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards and not sons;* as Dr. Luther has fully explained this at greater length in the Summer Part of the Church Postil, on the Epistle for the Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity.

19] But as far as the old Adam is concerned, which still clings to them, he must be driven not only with the Law, **but also with punishments; nevertheless he does everything against his will and under coercion,** no less than the godless are driven and held in obedience by the threats of the Law, 1 Cor. 9, 27; Rom. 7, 18. 19.

24] For the old Adam, as an intractable, refractory ass, is still a part of them, which must be coerced to the obedience of Christ, not only by the teaching, admonition, force and threatening of the Law, **but also oftentimes by the club of punishments and troubles, until the body of sin is entirely put off, and man is perfectly renewed in the resurrection,** when he will need neither the preaching of the Law **nor its threatenings and punishments,** as also the Gospel any longer; these belong to this [mortal and] imperfect life. 25] **But as they will behold God face to face, so they will, through the power of the indwelling Spirit of God, do the will of God [the heavenly Father] with unmingled joy, voluntarily, unconstrained, without any hindrance, with entire purity and perfection, and will rejoice in it eternally.**