

Consensus of the Catholic Church against the Tridentines

George Carleton¹

THIRD CONTROVERSY: CONCERNING JUSTIFYING FAITH.....	2
CHAPTER I: The State of the Question Is Set Forth	2
CHAPTER II. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone is Proved from the Scriptures.	5
CHAPTER III: On the Active Obedience of Christ	10
CHAPTER IV. The truth concerning justifying faith alone is proved by testimonies of the Greeks.....	14
CHAPTER V: Contains testimonies of the Latin Fathers.....	17
CHAPTER VI: Here follow testimonies of those whom the Papists call their own, so that the voice of one Church may be recognized everywhere.	25
CHAPTER VII: Objections and adversaries' responses to the testimonies of the Fathers are refuted.	32
CHAPTER VIII: On the Origin of the Error	37
FOURTH CONTROVERSY: CONCERNING INHERENT GRACE	54
CHAPTER I. The State of the Question is Explained.....	55
CHAPTER II: The Grace of God Proved from the Scriptures	57
CHAPTER III: Bellarmine's response is refuted, and grace is confirmed.	65
CHAPTER IV: On the Work Worked	69
CHAPTER V: Bellarmine's Objections Are Examined and Refuted	76
CHAPTER VI: Testimonies of the Greek Fathers are cited.....	84
CHAPTER VIII: On the Origin of the Error	95

¹ <https://books.google.com.pe/books?id=cfdNAAAaAAI&hl=es&pg=PA319#v=onepage&q&f=false>

THIRD CONTROVERSY: CONCERNING JUSTIFYING FAITH

PAPAL THESES

If anyone says that the ungodly are justified by faith alone in such a way that they understand nothing else is required to cooperate in obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is in no way necessary for them to be prepared and disposed by the movement of their own will, let him be anathema.

—Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 9

If anyone says that human beings are justified either by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and charity which is poured forth in their hearts by the Holy Spirit and inheres in them; or even that the grace by which we are justified is only a favor of God, let him be anathema.

—Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 11

CHAPTER I: The State of the Question Is Set Forth

After the treatment of the Sacred Scriptures and the Catholic Church, it follows that we inquire concerning justifying faith, which is the life of the Church.

The question is not whether works are necessary—on this point mutual agreement is acknowledged. But controversy arises concerning the justification of the ungodly in the sight of God—that is, concerning the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

For when we teach that a person is justified before God by faith alone, without works—whether by congruous merit through preparations and dispositions (about which the prior canon speaks) or by condign merit through the mode of a meritorious habit—we declare that the mode of justification consists in the imputation of Christ's righteousness and the non-imputation of our sins.

This righteousness is not inherent in us but is given by God and received by faith alone. For when God justifies the ungodly, He can see no works in the ungodly except ungodly ones.

Therefore, as the Apostle testifies: “God commends His love toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him. For if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by His life.”

For Christ, as the same Apostle teaches, “at the right time died for the ungodly,” when we had no strength. So says the Apostle.

Where then are our preparations and dispositions, so vaunted by the Tridentines? For if we were reconciled to God and justified when we had no strength to merit God—indeed, when we were sinners, ungodly, enemies (all of which are contained in the Apostle’s clear words)—then certainly God’s love alone, grace alone, commends us; that very favor alone to which the Council of Trent pronounces anathema.

We do not deny preparations for justification, but we say that these preparations are not from us but in us from God. And we say that the Tridentine sophists err most greatly in this: that they teach, following the pitfalls of the Scotists, that these preparations arise from a movement of the will or, as Scotus says, from purely natural powers, through which a person can merit what they call “first grace.”

What else is this but what Pelagius taught: that grace is given according to our merits? This opinion was condemned in Pelagius, rejected by Augustine and the universal Church; yet it has at last been revived through the Scotists, promulgated in the Council of Trent, and established as a foundation of Christian faith.

We, with Augustine, teach that even these preparations are from God and out of grace.

Augustine says: “How is it ‘not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy,’ unless because even the will itself is prepared by

God, as it is written?” Otherwise, if it were said “not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy” because it comes from both—that is, from the human will and God’s mercy—as if one were to say: “The human will alone does not suffice if there be not also God’s mercy,” then it would follow: “God’s mercy alone does not suffice if there be not also the human will.”

When Augustine turns this over and treats it in his usual varied manner so that truth may shine forth more clearly from lucid treatment, he concludes thus: “It remains therefore that it should be understood to be said: ‘not of him who wills nor of him who runs, but of God who shows mercy,’ so that everything may be ascribed to God, who both prepares the good will of man by helping and helps it when prepared.”

By these words he clearly proves that all these preparations are from grace, so that everything may be ascribed to God, who both prepares the good will of man by helping and helps it when prepared.

Therefore, the Tridentines—who teach that man is prepared and disposed by a movement of his own will from himself—cannot ascribe everything to God with the Church Fathers; but with Pelagius they ascribe part to God and part to themselves.

Those who deny that for the justification of the ungodly the remission of sins and imputation of Christ’s righteousness suffice thrust works upon us for this reason: they refuse to understand how Christ’s righteousness becomes ours.

Therefore, when we dispute concerning justification by faith alone, our purpose is to set forth the righteousness of God—by which alone the ungodly are justified—not our own righteousness; by imputation, mercifully, so that the perverted and heretical doctrine of Trent may be refuted, which, contrary to the Apostle, establishes our dispositions and preparations as meritorious, and utterly denies the love and favor of God so greatly commended to us in the Scriptures; and so that the blasphemies of Bellarmine may be silenced, who, when he disputes about the formal cause of justification and attempts to confirm inherent righteousness, so insults the

righteousness of Christ that he seems to reject it entirely as useless. For he writes thus: “If inherent righteousness is the formal cause of justification (as the Papists teach), the imputation of Christ’s righteousness is not required, which would otherwise complete a justification that is only begun and imperfect.” These are his words.

It is most true what Nazianzen somewhere says, that no one can speak rightly about the Holy Spirit without the Holy Spirit. Therefore we do not wonder if the Jesuits, as strangers and foreigners to the mysteries of our faith, speak as they do. For no one can rightly dispute about the grace of justification and sanctification unless he has that grace. Therefore, that these blasphemies may be dissipated by the light of truth, we will confirm from the Scriptures and the Fathers the doctrine of imputation and of faith alone.

CHAPTER II. The Doctrine of Justification by Faith Alone is Proved from the Scriptures.

Two kinds of righteousness are set forth in the Scriptures: the righteousness of God, and the righteousness of works.

The first is called the righteousness of God: Romans 1:17, “The righteousness of God is revealed through it (the Gospel) from faith to faith.” So in many places. This same righteousness is also called the righteousness of faith: Romans 4:11, “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith,” and Romans 9:30, “The righteousness which is of faith.” Sometimes these names are connected, and it is called the righteousness of God through faith: “The righteousness of God through faith upon all and over all who believe.”

The other is the righteousness of works, and it is also called the righteousness of the law, because the law requires works. Moses describes the righteousness which is of the law. This same righteousness is also called our own righteousness, about which the Apostle says: “Not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, that is, the righteousness which is of God by faith.” So says the Apostle. And in another place—let the reader judge whether he more accurately describes the Jews or the Papists—“Being ignorant of God’s righteousness,

and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

Thus Holy Scripture so treats this matter that the righteousness of works—which is the same as the righteousness of the law and our own righteousness—is always excluded from our justification. “Justified by faith without works,” “that we might be justified by faith, and not by the works of the law,” “the righteousness of God without the law,” “not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,” “not of works, lest any man should boast,” “not having my own righteousness, which is of the law,” “being ignorant of God’s righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.”

In these passages, when we see that justification is so established in faith that no place is left for our works or our own inherent righteousness; that faith is the gift of God; yet not such a gift as makes us fit to receive God’s righteousness, but that gift which excludes all boasting; that faith excludes all our boasting; therefore works, although they themselves are also the gift of God, are nevertheless rejected in justification because they do not exclude all boasting: “not of yourselves,” “not of works, lest any man should boast.” Likewise, “Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.” What do these mean but that, all works being excluded, we should glory not in ourselves but in the Lord, and for justifying the ungodly, faith alone remains.

Therefore, Holy Scripture teaches no other justification for the ungodly besides that one by which works are excluded. For it is said that the righteousness of God is made ours, and Christ is made unto us righteousness from God. The manner in which this happens is called imputation; the hand by which it is received is faith. Moreover, faith alone is said to receive this justification because there is nothing in man besides faith that can either bear the sight of God or cast away all boasting. For true faith renounces all our boasting, looks to God alone as reconciled to us in Christ, and regards nothing else as necessary for justification.

This truth is so firm, solid, and safe that it even extorts testimony from the mouths of its enemies.

Cardinal Bellarmine, after having attacked it with many words, finally testifies that he is acting in a way that is somewhat against his conscience. For he writes thus: "On account of the uncertainty of our own righteousness and the danger of vainglory, it is safest to place our whole confidence solely in the mercy and kindness of God." These are his words.

Therefore, what the Apostle Paul taught—that it is not from works, so that no one may boast—Bellarmine indeed confesses to be safest, because of the danger of vainglory. Away with such lukewarm opinions! If what the Apostle hands down concerning faith is safest, it will certainly also be most true; for nothing can be safe concerning faith unless it is true. Wretched, therefore, are all the Tridentines, wretched the Jesuits, who are found in their own confession to abandon the safest doctrine of faith according to the Tridentine prescription, so that, having rejected the righteousness of God, they may establish their own righteousness.

What the Papists object are the words of the Apostle James. We respond that James in no way contradicts Paul. Paul teaches that a man is justified not by works but by faith; James [teaches] not by faith alone but by works. Each apostle brings forward the deed of Abraham as an example—is there not therefore a contradiction? Nothing could be less so. For there can be no contradiction unless all terms are taken synonymously. But in this proposition, "a man is justified by faith," there is a double homonymy: one in the verb "to be justified," the other in the word "faith."

For someone is said to be justified before God, as when the ungodly is justified—about which meaning of justification Paul speaks; but not James. For Saint Paul teaches that we are justified by the blood of Christ when we were without strength, when we were sinners, ungodly, and enemies. Therefore, he speaks of the justification of the ungodly before God, when sins are forgiven us on account of Christ—not on account of our merits. For what merit can there be in those who are sinners, ungodly, enemies of God, and thus by themselves without strength to merit God's favor?

But Saint James speaks of the demonstration of righteousness and faith before the Church, for thus he says: "Show me your faith." Therefore, they are not speaking about the same thing. Next, faith is also taken in various ways: for either faith is true, living, justifying—about which Paul deals—or it is historical faith, which even demons have—about which James [speaks]. That James speaks about historical faith is beyond controversy, from these words: "Faith, if it does not have works, is dead," and "the demons believe and shudder."

Therefore, since it is agreed that James speaks about a faith that can be dead, that can be without works, that can be of demons, it is certain that Paul and James did not speak about the same faith, and accordingly did not say things contradictory to each other. Thus the ancients were accustomed to reconcile the writings of the apostles.

But to the Papists it seems a clever game to set the Scriptures against each other and to remove the light so that they themselves may meanwhile escape in the shadows. Even Thomas Aquinas himself disputes concerning these two apostles in nearly this sense. For he writes thus: "James speaks of works following faith, which are said to justify not according to what justification is called infusion, but according to what is called the exercise or demonstration or consummation of righteousness; for a thing is said to be done when it is perfected and made known." These are the words of Aquinas.

We see therefore that in Paul and James, in this proposition "a man is justified by faith," the terms are not taken synonymously; each says what is true, but they are not speaking about the same thing. But we dispute here about justification not as it is the demonstration of righteousness before men, but as, from the doctrine of Saint Paul, it contains the remission of sins and the imputation of Christ's righteousness—which imputation of Christ's righteousness the Jesuits reject as unnecessary.

Concerning the remission of sins or concerning our sins not being imputed to us who believe, the Holy Scriptures are full. The Apostle brings forth from the Psalms that our blessedness—that is, our justification—is in the

remission of sins: "Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered." And because our faith, which receives the remission of sins and reconciliation, cannot at all stand without any merit, therefore the Apostle frequently joins faith and that merit on which faith relies. The merit of believers is the blood of Christ. Therefore, in the Apostle, "to be justified by faith" amounts to the same as "to be justified by the blood of Christ." For whoever believes that he is justified before God by faith alone denies merit; but he who believes himself to be justified through the blood of Christ sets forth the true merit by which God is reconciled, on which faith rests. Therefore, the Apostle most beautifully joins these together: "God set forth Christ as a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness through the remission of previous sins, and, being justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." And again: "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of His grace."

These things are everywhere in the Apostle. Therefore, our faith receives from God the forgiveness of sins and reconciliation. However, God is reconciled not on account of our work or merit, but on account of the merit of Christ. Hence also that other part, as it were, of our justification arises, namely the imputation of the righteousness of Christ. For the Apostle proves from David that the blessedness of man consists in this: that God imputes righteousness apart from works. Moreover, this righteousness which God imputes to believers is the righteousness of Christ. Therefore, the Apostle teaches that Christ was made to us by God righteousness, as well as wisdom, sanctification, and redemption. For thus he writes: "That no flesh should glory in His presence. But of Him you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." Therefore, without Him our wisdom is foolishness, our righteousness is iniquity, our sanctification is impurity. He who believes is made wise through the imputed wisdom of the Son, is justified through the imputed righteousness of the Son, is sanctified through the imputed sanctification of Christ. For thus the truth speaks concerning those who believe in Him: "And for their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth."

CHAPTER III: On the Active Obedience of Christ

But because some are stirring up a new and unheard-of controversy in the Church concerning the active obedience of Christ—which they deny is imputed to us or is necessary for our justification—we will briefly examine this novelty here so that we may proceed more easily afterward.

Therefore, what they contrive concerning the active and passive obedience of Christ—so that they exclude active obedience from justification and retain only what they call passive obedience—in order that they may seem to gouge out the eyes of crows and to perceive more acutely than the Church of Christ has perceived until now: it seems marvelous to us that some dare to bring forth things concerning sacred matters which no one before them has brought forth. What Scripture? Which of the ancient fathers taught these things from the Scriptures?

Certainly, the Apostle teaches not only that the redemption of Christ—that is, His passive obedience—was made ours, but also that the wisdom of Christ, the righteousness of Christ, and the sanctification of Christ—that is, the active obedience—were also made ours by God. And the Apostle uses many words to demonstrate this imputation of obedience.

Then, when the Apostle rejects his own righteousness so that he may be justified by the righteousness of God—“not having,” he says, “my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith”—we ask what this righteousness of God imputed to us is. Will they say it is only the passive righteousness of Christ? Then Christ will be said to be righteous only because He died, not because He lived righteously. Will anyone who teaches thus be endured? Therefore, the righteousness of God given to us is the righteousness of Christ made ours, or Christ was made to us by God righteousness.

Why do they hesitate here at the death of Christ? For the death of Christ is called our redemption; it is not called our righteousness. It is necessary, therefore, that besides our redemption through the death of Christ, they also bring forward something else in Christ which was made to us by God

righteousness and sanctification. And what can they bring forward except the obedience of Christ which these call active?

Furthermore, John teaches thus: “Of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.” Therefore, the grace of Christ is communicable to us. But what grace? Certainly, the grace of our calling comes to us from His fullness. And to open up the riches of His grace and, as it were, the hidden treasures of His Church—who is the generous bestower of all good things—He confers also the grace of justification for the grace of calling; that is, grace for grace. For the grace of justification we also receive from His fullness grace for grace.

Moreover, sanctification, that is, grace through grace. But if we receive from the fullness of Christ our calling, justification, and sanctification, is there anyone who would refer all these to passive obedience alone? Justification and sanctification from his fullness—what is it but what the Apostle taught: that Christ was made for us by God both righteousness and sanctification. Thus, righteousness and sanctification are imputed to us, not only on account of his passive obedience.

Furthermore, those who define justification in such a way as remission of sins that they deny the imputed righteousness of Christ leave the bride of Christ naked without her ornaments and bridal jewels. For the remission of sins indeed removes ugliness, but it does not bestow upon us that beauty and splendor which draws down and reconciles to us the divine favor. Because my sins are forgiven, God no longer has in me what provokes his wrath and hatred, yet neither does he have from that any reason to love me. And what would the remission of my sins profit me unless I also obtain the favor and love of God? Therefore, just as in the blood and death of Christ we have remission of sins, so in the righteousness and sanctification of Christ, the bride has her ornaments and jewels by which both the favor of God and the love of the bridegroom are won.

Concerning these bridal ornaments we read in the Prophet Hosea: “And I will betroth you to me forever; I will betroth you to me in righteousness and

in justice, in steadfast love and in mercy. I will betroth you to me in faithfulness, and you shall know the Lord.”

Therefore, not all the justification of the bride is placed in the remission of sins; for she also has other ornaments and white garments, and it is given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and pure—the fine linen is the righteous deeds of the saints. Who would refer these ornaments and righteous deeds of the saints only to passive obedience?

The Apostle also teaches thus: “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by one man’s obedience many will be made righteous.” Certainly, those who teach that Adam’s active disobedience is imputed to us, but Christ’s obedience is not imputed, strive to defraud the Church of Christ of a great good. Indeed, our own obedience cannot be acceptable to God unless it satisfies the law in some way. Our obedience in ourselves could not satisfy, but our obedience in Christ can satisfy.

Therefore, the Apostle teaches: “For what the law could not do, weak as it was through the flesh, God did: sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, so that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit.” The Apostle, who testifies that by works of the law no flesh is justified before God—and hence that the righteousness of God has been manifested to all who believe—nevertheless here teaches that the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us. How is the righteousness of the law fulfilled in us unless because the active obedience of Christ is ours? Or, to use the words of a most learned interpreter: “When the obedience of Christ is reckoned to us as accepted, satisfaction is made to the law so that we may be accounted righteous.”

But those who introduce this novelty say: “The justification of the law is fulfilled by us—that is, we are justified endowed with that righteousness which the law demands from us. For the law demands from us either perfect obedience or punishment. We have not rendered perfect obedience, but we have paid the penalty in Christ—namely, he paid it for us; therefore we have satisfied the law in Christ.” So say those who wish to exclude the

righteousness and sanctification of Christ from the Church; nor do they understand what loose aims they bring forward.

If anyone understands the sense of the preceding statement, it will be this: “Endowed with that righteousness which the law demands, they only pay that penalty which the law threatens.” But, O good man, this is not to be endowed with the righteousness which the law demands—that you only pay the penalty. For righteousness is obedience to the law, not punishment under the law. Punishment is laid upon the unjust, not upon the just. Punishment, therefore, is an argument of unrighteousness, not of righteousness.

The Apostle teaches that we fulfill the righteousness of the law; you explain those words as meaning we are endowed with the righteousness of the law. To fulfill righteousness and to be endowed with righteousness does not mean to be or to be reckoned unjust; but to pay the penalty of the law means to be reckoned unjust—these do not cohere.

Furthermore, that Christ paid the penalty for us—who can deny it except one who denies Christ? We do not deny the power of Christ’s death; but why do you deny the power of Christ’s righteousness? For just as Christ paid the penalty for us, so also for us he rendered perfect obedience. You say: “The law demands perfect obedience from us; we have not rendered it, but we have paid the penalty in Christ because he paid it for us.” I reply: He also rendered perfect obedience for us.

He has indeed performed it: why do you observe the punishment, but not observe the obedience? I ask you, whoever you are, who teach these things (I spare the name, lest these statements seem to be an insult to a person rather than necessary testimony to the truth) — I ask you, therefore, whether you think Christ performed perfect obedience for Himself? Answer something certain. What Christian can deny that Christ performed perfect obedience? He performed it, therefore. I ask next, for whose good, to what end, for whom did He perform it? For Himself, or for His Church? You will not say that Christ performed something, but not for us? The Church of Christ will not endure such words, if you say that Christ’s obedience was in vain. It is certain that Christ performed perfect obedience; it is equally

certain that the Church did not perform it; therefore the Church would be utterly stripped of such an ornament unless it takes from the fullness of Christ what it could not have of itself. Because, therefore, it was not necessary for Christ to obey for Himself, it follows that we say He performed this for us. For us, believing in Him, for whom He was made righteousness by God, for whom also He sanctified Himself, that we might be sanctified in truth. See how great a good you strip from the Church if you deny that Christ's perfect obedience is ours? But if you grant that it is ours: how can it be ours unless it is imputed to us believers? So that the wisdom of God is made ours, which is imputed to us; the righteousness of God is made ours, which is imputed to us; the sanctification of God our own is made ours, which is imputed to us; so the obedience of God our own is made ours.

Finally, the Fathers have constantly handed down from the Scriptures, as we shall demonstrate hereafter, that Christ made us righteous by His own righteousness, not by ours; and that a righteousness alien to man, who lacked his own, has been assigned to him. How can these things be true unless we say that the obedience of Christ is our righteousness and sanctification, and imputed to us believers?

Let these things suffice to restrain this novelty, which has recently been devised without authority, without reason, which the sacred Scriptures and the Fathers everywhere from the Scriptures refute, and which the Church with great consensus held unknown until the time of Martin Luther. Nor has anyone more sharply or illustriously defended the truth in this matter than Luther himself and those great men from Germany who succeeded Luther in defending the Gospel. So that it seems a wonder that this novelty could please any German.

This concerning the imputed obedience of Christ. Now let us return to the intended controversy.

CHAPTER IV. The truth concerning justifying faith alone is proved by testimonies of the Greeks.

This doctrine concerning justifying faith, taken from the sacred literature, was preserved and handed down pure by unanimous consent of the Fathers. The Greeks taught thus:

Clement of Alexandria: “By faith alone the faithful one is made perfect.”

Origen: “The Apostle says that the justification of faith alone suffices, so that you believe only to be justified.” And again: “From no work of the law, but for faith alone He said to that woman, ‘Your sins are forgiven.’” And again: “Nor is any good work of hers described in the Gospel, but for this faith alone Jesus said,” etc.

Eusebius among the errors of the Ebionites also mentions this: “That the observance of the law must be kept, as if faith alone in Christ did not suffice.”

Athanasius says: “The Apostle shows that men are made accursed by the law and subjected to a curse, but by faith they are heaped with blessings. Now he plainly demonstrates that faith itself alone has in itself the power of justifying.”

Basilus teaches thus: “The Apostle says, ‘Let him who glories, glory in the Lord,’ for that indeed is perfect and complete glorying in God when one is not lifted up because of his own righteousness, but acknowledges himself indeed to be destitute of true righteousness, yet to be justified by faith alone in Christ.”

Gregory Nazianzen teaches that only to believe is required for justification.

Epiphanius has it thus: “Righteousness is from faith apart from works of the law.”

Chrysostom taught thus: “Faith by itself is full of good works. Before works, faith must first be put on.” And the same: “If you believe, why do you add other things to faith, as if faith alone were not sufficient to justify?” And elsewhere: “He saved us by faith alone,” and again: “It is the work of faith alone.”

Theodoret in this sense has it thus: “Not by our own strength do we believe, but called we came; and when we had come, He did not require purity of life and innocence, but having received faith alone, He pardoned sins.” And on those words, “Justified freely by His grace,” he says: “By faith alone brought forward we received remission of sins, because as a kind of price of redemption the Lord offered His own body. Faith gave you remission of sins; it made you free from all reproach and righteous.”

He accomplished regeneration through washing.

The performance of good works indeed crowns those who labor, but it does not reveal God’s kindness and humanity. Faith, however, makes both manifest.

Righteousness from faith is a gift of God to all.

Concerning the righteousness of Christ imputed, it is thus taught:

Divine mercy, when all people were under the curse and entangled in the bonds of sin, gave salvation to all through the righteousness of one; and soon the Apostle shows that the righteousness of one was the saving remedy for the common sin.

Then he also teaches:

The righteousness of God is not revealed to all, but to those who have the eyes of faith.

That it is grasped by faith alone is the voice of the Church seeking and finding Christ.

Oecumenius:

By grace, that is, without your righteous works, you are saved, and again in such a way that you contribute nothing else besides faith.

Theophylact:

Show that the law makes people cursed, but faith blesses. He now shows that faith alone justifies.

And a little later:

For the law demands not only faith but also works.

But he beautifully said “before God.” For before men, those held by the law—like the Pharisees justifying themselves before men—might perhaps seem righteous.

CHAPTER V: Contains testimonies of the Latin Fathers.

Thus far we have heard the Greeks. The Latins follow.

Irenaeus teaches thus: All must believe as Abraham believed, and it was credited to him as righteousness.

And Irenaeus added: Faith in God justifies a person.

Cyprian holds the same: If Abraham believed God and it was credited to him as righteousness, certainly whoever believes God and lives by faith is found righteous, and is shown to have been blessed and justified long ago in faithful Abraham, as the blessed Apostle Paul proves.

That righteousness stands by faith and that life is there was foretold in Habakkuk:

The righteous shall live by faith.

That faith wholly avails, and we are able only as much as we believe.

In this sense he also said elsewhere:

As much capacity for faith as we bring, so much grace we draw.

So says Cyprian.

Arnobius taught thus:

No one is saved by works, or by letters of recommendation, or by sacrifices, but by the help of Christ alone.

Hilary also said:

It moves the scribes that sin is forgiven by a man, for they saw only a man in Jesus; and that he forgave what the law could not loose; for faith alone justifies.

The same, teaching on the parable of the two sons, says:

The younger, namely obedient to his confession, though not performing in time, because faith alone justifies.

Ambrose, moreover, upheld the same doctrine, for he writes thus:

Blessed are those whose iniquities are forgiven, etc.

Clearly blessed are those whose iniquities and sins are forgiven without labor or any work; no works of repentance are required of them, except only that they believe.

We obtain what we believe; for believing Christ to be the Son of God, we are adopted by God as sons. He could give nothing more to believers than that they should be called sons of God, the unfaithful being disowned.

And soon after:

For in His infinite magnificence God gave this to those who love Him—what is worthy of His majesty, not what men merit—because in a gift the sublimity of the giver is considered more than that of the receiver.

Faith is given which justifies those fleeing to it, so that it may forgive those whom the law holds guilty, so that acting under faith they may be free from sin.

Writing about David's sin, he says:

We judge according to the Apostle that a person is justified by faith without works of the law; let David therefore be justified by faith, who through the law recognized sin but believed forgiveness of sin through faith.

The righteousness of God is called that which appears to be mercy, because it has its origin from a promise.

And soon after:

They are justified by grace, because working nothing nor rendering repayment, they are justified by faith as a gift of God.

Concerning the righteousness of Christ imputed, Ambrose teaches thus:

The Apostle calls this righteousness which is credited before God as righteousness—that is, of faith—because the law had righteousness, but for the present, not such as would justify before God; for it could not forgive sins so as to make righteous people out of sinners.

Soon after:

Having their sins made manifest, they were shut up so that they could not excuse themselves but would seek mercy, so that He who was promised to Abraham might come and require from them only faith—the faith Abraham had—so that they might merit forgiveness of their evils and justification.

And in the same sense he says elsewhere:

Therefore let no one boast in works, because no one is justified by their deeds; but whoever is righteous has it as a gift because they are justified through washing; therefore there is faith which was obtained through the blood of Christ, because blessed is that one to whom sin is forgiven and pardon given.

Jerome teaches the same:

Ignorant that God justifies by faith alone, and thinking themselves righteous by works of the law, they did not guard—thinking it to be unnecessary—and were unwilling to subject themselves to the remission of sins. And the same: you know that you have found life in Christ not by the works of the law, but by faith alone, just as the Gentiles. But Augustine treats these matters more diligently and accurately, for he writes thus:

a) When the Apostle says that a man is justified freely without the works of the law through faith, he does not do this so that the works of righteousness, once faith is received and professed, are to be despised; but so that each one may know that he can be justified by faith, even if the works of the law have

not preceded; for they follow the one justified, they do not precede the one to be justified.

b) We gather that a man is not justified by the precepts of a good life except through faith in Jesus Christ—that is, not by the law of works but by the law of faith, not by the letter but by the spirit, not by the merits of deeds but by gratuitous grace. In which book, chapter 14, Augustine teaches that those works rejected from justification are not only ceremonies but also the precepts of the Decalogue, and that more fully.

c) This is (he says) that by which the righteous lives; this is the faith by which it is believed in Him who justifies the ungodly; this is the faith through which boasting is excluded so that it may depart from us in which we are puffed up, or so that it may stand out in which we glory in the Lord; this is the faith by which the bounty of the Spirit is obtained, about which it is said: "For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness"; this is the faith by which they are saved to whom it is said: "By grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves"; finally, this is the faith which works through love, not through fear, not by dreading punishment, but by loving righteousness.

d) If Christ did not die in vain, only that ungodly one is justified to whom, believing in Him who justifies the ungodly, faith is imputed for righteousness.

Concerning imputed righteousness and given to us, Augustine argues thus:

a) The righteousness of God has been manifested; those who wish to establish their own are ignorant of this and do not wish to be subject to it. He says: "The righteousness of God has been manifested"—he did not say the righteousness of man or the righteousness of one's own will, but the righteousness of God—not that by which God is righteous, but that with which He clothes man when He justifies the ungodly.

b) This is the righteousness of God which was revealed in the Old Testament and is revealed in the New; which is therefore called the righteousness of God because by imparting it He makes men righteous. In which book,

chapter 18, he calls it the garment of righteousness of faith, with which clothed we may be found not naked.

c) This is that righteousness of faith—not that by which He Himself is righteous, but that by which we are made righteous from it; therefore, let no Christian stray from this faith, by which alone it is Christian.

But if perhaps anyone is moved by this—that Augustine, often disputing about this righteousness, calls it the righteousness of God, not that by which God is righteous but that by which He makes us righteous—so that from this he infers that Christ's righteousness is not imputed to us according to Augustine's opinion (because it might seem that Augustine denies that Christ's righteousness is ours when he denies that the righteousness of God, by which God is righteous, is ours):

I respond: from Augustine's clear words I deduce Augustine's meaning. It is certain from Augustine's opinion that the grace of justification consists in the imputation of Christ's righteousness, offered and given to us—which most salutary doctrine Augustine hands down in these words: "Grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, in which He makes us righteous by His righteousness, not our own, so that it may be our true righteousness, which is from Him to us." These words of Augustine without doubt show what he thought about Christ's righteousness imputed to us. He disputes in that place against Pelagius, who indeed conceded grace in words (as do the Scotists today), but wished its force and virtue utterly extinguished; for he taught that grace is the assistance of God by which we are helped toward not sinning, placed in nature and free will. To drive this pestilent error from the Church, Augustine fled to the fountain of grace to open the doctrine of imputation; for on account of Christ our sins are not imputed to us, and Christ's righteousness is imputed. This one doctrine of imputation will drive out Pelagians and Tridentine Scotists from the Church.

Therefore, when Augustine teaches that we are righteous by the righteousness of God—not that by which He Himself is righteous—he wished to refute that opinion which perhaps then had a place among some heretics (and recently has been roused from hell by Osiander), concerning

the essential righteousness of God. Mad men were seizing upon these words for the righteousness by which God Himself is righteous. This monstrous opinion was rejected by Augustine because that righteousness which is imputed to believers is not the essential righteousness of God by which God Himself is righteous, but it is the righteousness which Jesus Christ our Lord rendered when He fulfilled perfect obedience.

He fulfilled the obedience of the law, and it is called the justice of God, although Christ as man performed this justice, just as the blood of Christ is called the blood of God, although Christ as man shed that blood, on account of the personal union. Gratian also collected certain statements from Augustine concerning faith alone, which are of this kind: "If charity is separated from the faith of Christians, to which alone forgiveness is promised, how can one who does not have charity have the faith of Christians, that is, have believed in Christ?" And shortly after: "For to eat the living bread is to believe in Christ, that is, to tend toward him by loving; since the wicked person does not believe in him whom he has not eaten, and thus he does not have the faith of Christians, by which alone sins are forgiven. How then will he escape the judgment of eternal damnation, if the Lord, to whom the Father has given all judgment, lives?"

Prosper, after Augustine, retained the same doctrine, for he says: "We are justified freely, because we did nothing, nor did we render anything in return; they were justified by faith alone as a gift of God." And the same: "The faith by which the impious is justified is not had except by the gift of God, and it is granted without any preceding merits, but it is given for this purpose, that it may be the beginning of merits; so that when it itself has been given, not asked for, other good things may follow by its petitions." "For the redemption of the blood of Christ would be cheapened, and the mercy of God would succumb to the prerogative of human works, if justification, which comes through grace, were owed to preceding merits, so that it would not be a gift of the giver but a reward of the worker." These are Prosper's words.

Leo I says: "The Catholic faith alone gives life and sanctifies."

Primasius says: "God justifies the impious through faith alone, not through works." And the same: "Know that you have it not from works but by faith alone through grace." Again: "Faith alone suffices for us for righteousness."

Sedulius says: "God justifies the converted impious through faith alone, not through good works which he did not have before; otherwise he would have been punished for works of impiety. This is said because faith is reckoned as righteousness to the impious who believes in Christ without works of the law." And shortly after: "Just as Abraham, believing from among the Gentiles, was justified by faith alone, so others, imitating his faith, are saved."

Cassiodorus says: "It is established that sinners are saved for nothing when it is certain that conversion is granted by gratuitous generosity."

Fulgentius says: "In the saints God crowns the righteousness which he himself freely bestowed upon them, freely preserved, and freely perfected; but he will condemn the wicked for impiety and unrighteousness which he himself did not cause in them. For in them he justifies his own works; in these he condemns works not his own." Again: "The apostle could have called those whom he called vessels of mercy 'vessels of righteousness,' but if they were called vessels of righteousness, perhaps they would think they had righteousness from themselves."

Gregory the Great retained and handed down this doctrine with utmost faithfulness. Thus he teaches: "I do not rely on my merits to beseech you to save me, but I presume to obtain it from your mercy alone; I do not hope in merits." "Mercy is that which grants forgiveness to penitents without any preceding merits." "The justice of God is faith, as it is written: 'Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him,' etc., because 'the righteous lives by faith.'" "This righteousness of ours is Christ himself."

Injustice is brought to the judgment of divine justice, and it will stink in the strictness of the Judge, which shines in the estimation of the worker. Not charity precedes faith, but faith precedes charity; for no one can love what they have not believed.

Concerning the righteousness of Christ imputed to believers, Gregory writes excellently: "Our righteousness is called ours, not because it is from us or our own, but because it becomes ours by divine generosity." Righteousness is compared to a garment when it is said through the Prophet: "Your priests shall be clothed with righteousness." All the elect of the heavenly homeland are indeed holy and righteous, but by participation in wisdom, not by comparison. The light of wisdom and the servants of wisdom are both called light, but the former is the illuminating light, the latter the illuminated light; as it is written: "He was the true light, which enlightens every man coming into this world," while the latter are only said: "You are the light of the world." Righteousness and wisdom, and the servants of wisdom, are indeed named, but the one is justifying righteousness, the other justified righteousness. For of God, who is wisdom, it is said: "That He might be just and the justifier"; but of them it is said: "That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him." Therefore, the illuminating light is to be venerated in one way, the illuminated light in another; justifying righteousness in one way, justified righteousness in another. So says Gregory.

Bede also taught the same: "David shows that no one should believe their free will or their own merits suffice for blessedness, but understand that they can be saved by the grace of God alone." And again: "By the righteousness of works no one will be justified, but by the righteousness of faith alone."

Alcuin: "The Catholic faith alone sanctifies humankind." "It is established that no one can attain true blessedness unless it pleases God, and no one can please God except through faith."

Strabo, the Anglo-Saxon author of the ordinary gloss, on those words: "We hold that a man is justified by faith without works," writes thus: "Not that the believer ought not to work afterward through love—as Abraham willed to sacrifice his son—for works follow the justified, they do not precede the one to be justified; but by faith alone without preceding works a man becomes righteous." The same, writing on the Epistle of James, demonstrates how the words of Paul and James are to be reconciled: "Abraham is said to be justified by faith without works; concerning works

that preceded, it is understood that by works which he did he was not righteous, but by faith alone."

Rabanus Maurus: "By Christ's grace alone the elect are freed from every offense."

CHAPTER VI: Here follow testimonies of those whom the Papists call their own, so that the voice of one Church may be recognized everywhere.

Remigius, Bishop of Auxerre: "Eternal life is not from merit, but from His will, that is, by mercy alone." And the same: "Truly these alone are blessed, these alone are saved, who are justified by grace and not from merits."

Smaragdus: "It is necessary that believers be saved by faith in Christ alone." And again: "According as He purposed—not from works of the law, nor legal sacrifices, but by faith alone and the shedding of His blood—He determined to save us; much more has He glorified those who work."

Gislebertus: "It must be believed that we are saved by faith alone—whether our own, for those who were able to believe, or another's, for those who were not able to believe." And again: "It is manifest that Abraham our father pleased God first by faith before circumcision; since we see an infinite number have perished though circumcised, and others even before Christ's advent, without this sign, obtained the grace of Christ by faith alone."

Antalmus: "In the grace of God which is given in Christ Jesus—not to Peter or Paul—for grace is given in Christ because this was appointed by God: that whoever believes in Christ is saved without works, by faith alone, and freely receives remission of sins." And again: "Justification which is of faith makes peace with God because it drives out the hostile presumptions of human merits and humbly subjects the soul to God when it knows it is saved by grace alone." And shortly: "From Adam's fault the grace of Christ alone frees, which is given not according to human merits but freely, since God is merciful."

Ansbertus: "Moreover, in that we give glory to Him, we confess that we have attained such dignity not by any preceding merits of good works but by His mercy alone."

Bernard handed down this doctrine received with great faith from the Fathers to the Church. After expounding the opinion of Augustine and Ambrose concerning justification, he says thus: "From these two pillars it is difficult for me to stray. With these, I say, I either err or am wise."

I confess, believing myself, that man can be saved by faith alone.

For just as one who recalls being held for another's debt—perhaps when near death—and lacks the means to repay, is nevertheless believed to obtain pardon through repentance and heartfelt contrition alone, and is no longer condemned for it, so faith alone and turning the mind to God, without the shedding of blood or the pouring of water, undoubtedly brings salvation to one who is willing but unable to be baptized due to some hindrance.

Concerning the certainty of faith, Bernard teaches thus:

Peter Abelard, a heretic, at the very outset of his theology—or rather, his foolishness—defines faith as an opinion. Were that so, then our martyrs would be fools for enduring such bitter suffering for what is uncertain. But far be it from us to think that in our faith or hope there is anything, as he supposes, hanging in the balance of doubtful opinion; rather, all that is in it rests upon certain and solid truth. Bernard has these and many more statements to this effect.

Regarding the imputed righteousness of Christ, he teaches as follows:

What could man, a slave of sin and bound by the devil, do on his own to recover the righteousness he had lost? Therefore, a righteousness not his own was assigned to him who lacked his own. And soon after: Why not righteousness from another source, since guilt also comes from another? One constitutes the sinner; another justifies from sin. Nor do I fear that, having been rescued from the power of darkness, I will be rejected by the Father of lights—justified freely by the blood of His Son. He will not condemn the righteous one who has shown mercy to the sinner. Should I call myself

righteous? Only by His righteousness—and surely safer for me when given than if innate. For this righteousness indeed has glory, but not before God; whereas that righteousness, since it is effective for salvation, offers no ground for boasting except in the Lord.

There is also this judgment: that all who despise the mercy and righteousness of God and seek to establish their own (which certainly does not justify but accuses) are left to that same righteousness of theirs—more to be oppressed than justified.

Christ was made by God for us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption: wisdom in preaching, righteousness in the forgiveness of sins, sanctification in the company He kept with sinners, redemption in the suffering He endured for sinners.

Indeed, such a fragrance of righteousness is spread everywhere that not only are you called righteous, but you are even called righteousness itself—and justifying righteousness. Therefore, whoever, pricked by conscience for sins, hungers and thirsts for righteousness, let him believe in you who justify the ungodly; and being justified by faith alone, he will have peace with God.

As for me, I will sing of the mercies of the Lord forever. Shall I remember my own righteousness? O Lord, I will remember Your righteousness alone—for it is also mine. Indeed, You have been made my righteousness by God. Should I fear that one righteousness will not suffice for both?

Blessed is the man to whom the Lord does not impute sin, says the saint. He did not say, “who has not sinned,” for there is no one here except One—and this is the Son of God, who did no sin, nor was deceit found in His mouth. Therefore, whatever He has decided not to impute to me is as though it had never been.

Thus far Bernard: on faith alone, on the certainty of faith, on sins not imputed, on the imputed righteousness of Christ—he preserves the integrity of the ancient Church, from which the Tridentines are far removed.

Rupertus: Faith alone in Jesus Christ justifies.

It is possible, and again: from this Justice it tends toward the unfaithful, because it is not on account of works, but on account of faith that anyone can be justified before Him, and again.

To hope in the name of the Lord is to lay aside the stubbornness by which they think themselves justified by works, and to believe that all justification lies solely in the name of the Lord, in faith in Jesus Christ.

Honorius of Autun: Those who groan as wretched and stripped of righteousness are the Lord's poor, because they know they cannot be saved except by God's grace alone.

Hugh of Saint Victor: The written law is called the law of deeds, because people placed the whole of their righteousness in the works of the law; but the law of faith or grace is so called because people by grace place the whole sum of their salvation in grace alone, knowing that just as no one will be saved by the righteousness of works, so no one is justified by works of righteousness; for righteousness does not come from good works, but from righteousness—that is, from justification—come good works.

Peter Lombard: To believe God is to believe that He is God, which even the wicked do; to believe in God is by believing to love, by believing to go to Him, by believing to adhere to Him and to be incorporated into His members; by this faith the impious is justified, so that then faith itself begins to work through love.

Thomas Aquinas: The Apostle shows here that Jews and Gentiles are equal with respect to the state of grace, showing that justification comes by faith in Christ alone. And again: The law was given so that sin might be recognized (Rom. 7); therefore, there is no hope of justification in it, but in faith alone.

Nicholas Gorran: For justification it suffices that one believes; it is not required that one works for it. And again: If one only believes in Christ, even if he does not work, his faith alone is therefore reckoned as sufficient for righteousness.

Others afterward retained this same doctrine up until the time of the Council of Trent. Therefore, those who make Martin Luther the author of this

doctrine, as many among the Papists chatter, are convicted of a notable falsehood, since from the beginning of the Church they hear the uninterrupted voice of the Church in this opinion up to Luther's time and even afterward. For this doctrine concerning justification by faith alone was received by common consent in the Roman Church before the Council of Trent.

Cardinal Gaspar Contarini, a learned and pious man, wrote a book on justification after Luther and others had already declared their opinion on this matter. In that book he testifies that Protestants and Catholics agree on this point. Contarini rightly says that, having carefully examined the doctrine of the Protestants, he professes to have found nothing in it that dissents from the opinion of the Catholics. But in the opinion concerning justification, Protestants do not agree with the Council of Trent; therefore, that Council was not a gathering of Catholics. And because Contarini had undertaken to explain the opinion of Catholics on justification in that book, it will not be irrelevant if we observe his words more fully on this matter, so that it may be established who are those who agree with the Catholic Church and who are the Tridentines—those who, against the doctrine of the Catholic Church, set their own seal by the judgment of the Cardinals themselves.

Contarini wrote this in the year of our Lord 1541, almost four years before the first session of that Council begun by Paul III. Thus, in this question, which is most serious, the Cardinal seems to have labored with that purpose: to bring light to the Tridentines and to admonish them concerning the true and ancient treatment of justification, which he himself had observed to have been preserved in the Church up to that day, however differently some little friars of the Scotist school had taught.

Now this opinion of the Catholics the Cardinal explains as follows:

We touch upon a double righteousness: one inherent in us, by which we begin to be just and become partakers of the divine nature and have charity diffused in our hearts; but the other not inherent but given to us with Christ—the righteousness, I say, of Christ and all His merit. For that God has given us Christ and all things with Him is the text of the Apostle to the

Romans. I think no one can contradict this. It remains to inquire which we ought to rely upon and by which we are to be considered justified before God. I absolutely think it is pious and Christian to say that we ought to rely—rely, I say, as upon a support which certainly sustains us—upon the righteousness of Christ given to us, not upon the holiness and grace inherent in us. So says he. But let the Cardinal continue:

Upon this alone, he says, certain and stable, we must rely, and on account of it alone believe that we are justified.

Before God, that is, to be considered righteous. This is that precious treasure of Christians, which whoever finds it sells all that he has in order to buy it. And further: Hence it is that we see by experience that holy men, the more they advance in holiness, the less they please themselves, and therefore the more they understand their need of Christ and of the righteousness of Christ given to them; and so they abandon themselves and rely on Christ alone. This does not happen because they see themselves as less holy than before, nor because they have become more dejected and lowly in spirit; on the contrary, the more they advance in holiness, the greater their spirit becomes, and the more perceptive they are. Therefore, being made more perceptive, they more clearly see the weakness of inherent holiness and righteousness, and at the same time they perceive many stains which offend their eyes, now made keener. And for this reason they acknowledge that they must not rely on their inherent holiness, charity, and grace, but must flee to Christ and to the glory of Christ given to them, on which they rely and depend.

This he says, and more to this effect. Contarenus also proves that this is the doctrine of Thomas Aquinas, and then he answers the objections of the Scotists. For the Scotists were the ones who hid this light. Finally, when he had answered all objections and explained the passages brought forward from Scripture, he concludes thus: "These passages brought forward seem to me so clear that they can leave no doubt about this opinion, in which Catholics and Protestants have agreed. And that they are not rightly understood by those who rely on them." So says Cardinal Contarenus, a little before the Council of Trent began.

Thus we understand from the confession of this man what the opinion of Catholics was before the Council of Trent concerning justification: if another and plainly contrary opinion has prevailed since that time, let the innovators see to it; for us it is enough to have pointed out the origin of this change. The Cardinal explains the opinion of Catholics thus: "We must rely on this righteousness of Christ alone, certain and firm, and because of it alone believe that we are justified before God."

But against this doctrine of the Church, held as Catholic before the Council of Trent and supported by the perpetual testimonies of the Church, that Council pronounces an anathema (Session 6, Canon 11). The Scotists prevailed in that Council. For that Council was not general, against which many kings and princes protested. Some even in the Council itself, in the midst of the Fathers, judged that it ought to be considered not a public council but a private conventicle. As the Abbot of Bellosanus, legate of the King of France, declared in the name of his king. Nor was that Council free, in which no one could cast a vote unless he had first been bound by an oath to the Roman Pontiff. Nor could it be a legitimate council, because it had not been called by legitimate authority. For the Pontificals preach that the authority of the Roman Pontiff alone is sufficient to call general councils—an authority by which general councils have never been called nor will be in the future.

I pass over the fraud, arts, and stratagems carried out with evil deceit in that same Council: when some were perceived to be somewhat freer in speaking, a plan was found to recall and remove them and substitute others more subservient; that the greatest number of bishops were from Italy; that at the last moment thirteen cardinals were suddenly created, all Italians, who were sent to the Council and by their number of votes and support restored the Tridentine cause, otherwise about to collapse; and finally that they resorted to poisons. For those who seemed to excel others in virtue and holiness were taken from their midst—among whom was Cardinal Contarenus, who was killed by poison, lest the outstanding learning and piety of this man should seem to have disturbed that Scotistic conciliabulum.

CHAPTER VII: Objections and adversaries' responses to the testimonies of the Fathers are refuted.

Thus far we have heard one voice of the Church sounding through different ages—in the Scriptures, in the Fathers, and in more recent writers—and preserved in the Church up to the Council of Trent. This is that true, visible Church in which through successions the true faith has always been handed down unchanged. The Pontifical or Jesuit Church which today attacks this faith is newly born; it brings a new faith

Therefore, that pontifical church (which we do not call the Roman Church, but the Roman Curia) exhibits something entirely different from the ancient faith. But what is a different and later faith, if not error? Now, before we reveal the origin of this error, let us see how Cardinal Bellarmine responds to these points.

From such a great cloud of witnesses, Bellarmine brings forward very few, to whom he responds as follows: He evades the testimony of Origen by saying that the works rejected by the Fathers from justification are either external works; or he replies to Hilary that they are works of the law; or works done by the powers of nature without faith, and thus he weakens Basil; or ceremonial works, and by this artifice he suspends the testimony of Ambrose. More often, he emphasizes that as if it were his only refuge: that these works are done by the powers of nature without grace. Therefore, concerning faith alone so often repeated by the Fathers, and the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness so faithfully preserved by them, he plainly has nothing to say. Where then are those who cry out that faith alone was unheard of before Luther? These are the evasions of men stumbling in the darkness.

He confuses internal and external work, to teach that the Fathers rejected external works, not internal ones. This is not entirely false, nor does it completely help the papal cause. For if we concede that not all internal works are rejected from justification, what will the papal party infer from this? Even faith itself is an internal work (John 6:28–29: “What shall we do,

that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said to them, ‘This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.’”).

Concerning ceremonial works, he trifles—this is the same sophistical workshop. For there was no need for the Fathers, speaking to the Christian people, so earnestly to reject ceremonial works, from which no danger was feared. Whenever they wished to warn of this, they used the term “ceremonies” or “sacrifices,” not “works.” Finally, the clear words of the Fathers prove that they wrote not about ceremonial but about moral works. For they exclude from justification those works which follow justification. But these are not ceremonial works; they are moral.

What he adds about works of the law and about works without faith or done by the powers of nature without grace proceeds from the same vanity. Therefore, to uncover all these evasions in a few words: we must demonstrate that even the works of the law done through grace are excluded from justification. If we confirm this from Scripture and the Fathers, the mouths of the Pharisees will be stopped.

Since the Apostle so clearly expounds justification by faith as to exclude works of the law, let us ask the blessed Apostle to explain his own mind and say what works he means. The Apostle answers in Ephesians 2:9–10: where, as is his custom, he establishes faith, rejecting works—“not of works, lest any man should boast”—he immediately adds these words: “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared that we should walk in them.” We ask: what are those works of which the Apostle here speaks? Surely they are the works which God has prepared, that we should walk in them. Therefore, the Apostle, excluding works from justification, then—being his own best interpreter—explains that those works are those for which we were created by God, that we should walk in them. He thus infallibly proves that works done through grace are rejected from justification: they are works for which, not from which or through which, we are justified; and hence they are not the form of justification by which (as the Tridentine sophists prattle) we are formally justified, but they are the end to which and the effect of justification.

The Apostle also teaches: “By the works of the law no flesh shall be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.” When he had shown that justification is not by the law, he explains what law he means—namely, the moral law—because that law, which leads men to the knowledge of their sins, is moral. For it is certain that there is no other law which, since it cannot justify on account of the weakness of our flesh, can nevertheless show us our sins and convict all men of sin and hold them guilty before God, except the moral law. Therefore, it is the moral law that is excluded from our justification.

The same is demonstrated from the nature of justification and imputation. Because sin is not imputed to those who believe in Christ. Hence the Apostle expounds our blessedness: “Even as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness without works: ‘Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered; blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.’” Sin is removed by imputation; righteousness is given by imputation. This is the virtue beyond the virtue of the moral law, which knows neither the remission of sins nor imputation. From this understanding of imputed righteousness, as from a rule, we comprehend many passages of Scripture that speak about the righteousness of works. For when the Lord has once received them into the comfort of blessedness or justification, so that He does not impute their sins to them but imputes the righteousness of His Son, they not only have God as propitious to them, but also their works—whose stains and blemishes are covered by the purity of Christ—are hence reckoned as righteous, and the justified person as just.

These works of grace, for which we were created in Christ Jesus out of the new creation—that is, out of justification—are the same works of the law. The law commands but does not supply strength; grace gives that we may do what the law commands. But the law demands perfect obedience; our obedience is imperfect. Therefore, Christ interposes His perfect obedience, which, because it is ours, our imperfection is not taken into account by God; because on account of Christ, neither the imperfection of our works nor our sins are imputed to us. Thus, we are even said to fulfill the law when we offer sincere love of obedience.

In this sense, that saying is often repeated by the Fathers: "The law commands; faith obtains." Augustine accordingly says: "Through the law comes knowledge of sin; through faith comes obtaining of grace against sin; through grace comes healing of the soul from the fault of sin; through health of soul comes freedom of will; through free will comes love of righteousness; through love of righteousness comes the working of the law." By these words, Augustine leads us from our transgression, by which we fell away from the law, as if in a circle back to works of grace, which are works of the law.

But if anyone objects that by "works of the law" the Scholastics understand not those done by faith and love, but those which the law extorts by threats, I reply that I am not here examining Scholastic speculations, since they have rightly explained neither works of grace nor works of the law. For how works extorted by threats can be called works of the law I do not see, since the law demands perfect obedience with all the heart, soul, and mind. The law indeed threatens punishments for disobedience, but obedience extorted by threats is not obedience to the law. Moreover, we are inquiring into the opinion of the Fathers, which is far removed from such subtleties. For the Fathers understand works in such a way that they are the same works both commanded by the law and obtained by grace, and yet entirely excluded from justification. The law requires these works out of justice, but faith supplies them out of obedience.

For when a justified person has once recognized God's mercy upon himself, he judges himself most ungrateful and wretched of all people unless he shows forth in good works testimonies of obedience and gratitude for infinite mercy. For the love of Christ compels us, judging this: that if one died for all, then all died. And Christ died for all so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who died and rose again for them, as the Apostle teaches. This is that love which compels and constrains justified people not to be idle but to strive always for good works—indeed, it moves, stirs up, gathers, and excites them.

Therefore, that accursed Jesuit faith, often held in the Church of Christ, which teaches that true faith can by itself be separated from love and other

virtues, is execrable. For if by true faith they mean justifying faith, it is certain that faith and charity, once joined, cannot be separated. But if they mean a profession of faith, we say that this faith can be separated from charity and from justification—and it is not justifying faith that we seek.

In John 12 it is said: "Many of the rulers believed in Him, but they did not confess Him, for they loved the glory of men more than the glory of God." From these words and similar passages Bellarmine concludes that faith existed without charity. I reply: this passage of Scripture and other similar ones speak of an external profession of faith, not of justifying faith. But this justifying faith is utterly unknown to the Jesuits, who consider an external profession of faith and participation in the sacraments—which are perceived by the senses themselves—to be sufficient for them.

Therefore, faith cannot be alone if we consider its effect and fruit in justification: because the love of Christ constrains us; because the goal of the commandment is love from a pure heart, a good conscience, and sincere faith; because we were created in Christ Jesus for good works; because faith works through love. By these words the Apostle describes the fruit of faith in the justified—which is not feigned. But if we consider the nature of justifying faith in its principles, faith alone justifies without charity and good works: because faith precedes charity and good works. For we work because we believe; we do not believe because we work. For charity and works follow justification; they do not precede being justified, because boasting is excluded. Therefore, the works that are excluded from justification are not only works done by the powers of nature, which precede justification, but also works done through grace—works that follow justification, according to Augustine: all our works, because no work of ours excludes boasting; according to Basil: all works except faith alone, because faith itself is full of good works, according to Chrysostom; all works before God, but not before men, according to Theophylact; works, because works do not admit the imputation of righteousness, according to Irenaeus; works that show merit, because faith seeks no merit, according to Cyprian; works that indeed admit the help of Christ, but not alone, according to Arnobius; works that do not allow justification to be free, according to Ambrose; works by which those who think themselves righteous become unwilling to submit to the remission

of sins, according to Jerome; works that could have no place in the justification of the ungodly, except the works of ungodliness, according to Sedulius; works that would prevent the justified from being called vessels of mercy, according to Fulgentius; all our works, because our own righteousness, which is from works, is unrighteousness and stinks, according to Gregory; works in which there is a righteousness of deeds, according to the Venerable Bede; the very works we ought to perform after justification, according to the Ordinary Gloss; works that do not permit the grace of Christ alone, according to Rabanus; all our works, because our works cannot drive out hostile presumptions and humbly subject the soul to God, according to Anselm; our works, because we are justified by an alien righteousness, not our own, according to Bernard; works that do not allow men to hope in the name of the Lord alone and lay aside the stubbornness by which they suppose themselves justified by works, according to Rupert; works that the justified person ought henceforth to perform through love, according to Lombard; works, because in them there is no hope of justification, according to Aquinas.

All these things clearly prove that the Fathers, along with the Apostle, rejected even works done by grace from justifying. Therefore, the Fathers preach faith alone—which they sometimes also call mercy alone, grace alone, the word alone, the name of God alone, and the help of Christ alone—not because faith is mercy, or grace, or the word, or the help of Christ, but because faith arises from and through these things. And by all these, works are excluded so that God’s favor alone may be established—which the Council of Trent strikes with an anathema.

CHAPTER VIII: On the Origin of the Error

Now let us speak about the origin of this error. No one in the Roman Church explicitly denied justification by faith alone before Martin Luther taught it from the Scriptures. Therefore, when foolish and shameless men out of ignorance often object to us that the doctrine of justification by faith alone was never heard before Luther (for many Papists are accustomed to babble thus), who would not marvel at their ignorance or impudence? For we can plainly affirm the contrary, and it is clear to all who study the ancient writers

that this doctrine was continuously preached by the Fathers and by more recent theologians up until the time of Luther and the Council of Trent; whereas the contrary error first arose then out of a spirit of contradiction.

The seeds of this error were scattered among the Scholastics, but they grew much more pestilently into a pernicious crop of tares among the more recent Jesuits. The occasion for the error came from the distinction of faith into formed and unformed—a topic Scholastic theologians often discuss in the third book of Sentences, distinctions 23 and 24, and Aquinas in Summa Theologica II-II, question 4, article 3. In that passage, Aquinas asks whether charity is the form of faith and answers affirmatively. Now if one were pleased to follow the subtleties of the Schools, we could much more readily prove that faith is the form of charity. But from this it began to be pronounced in the Schools that charity is the form of faith. From this others infer that formed faith justifies; finally, the Jesuits conclude that faith alone does not justify, because it is not unformed faith but formed faith that justifies.

They do not seem to understand the sense of their own Theologians, for these are not contradictions among Theologians: formed faith justifies, and faith alone justifies, since there are those among them who hold both.

What is said by Theologians—that faith which is formed justifies—if rightly understood, we do not reject; and rightly they reject the unformed, although the Schools speak rather crudely about the form of faith.

Aquinas himself does not treat it so badly as confusedly and crudely—that is, not in his usual manner—but Aquinas understands the form as that internal quality which constitutes its nature; for thus he explains himself: “Charity,” he says, “is the form of faith, inasmuch as through charity the act of faith is perfected.”

Then Aquinas concedes that, properly speaking, charity is not the form but the end of faith; but he contends that in voluntary acts the end must be taken as the form. For thus he says: “Voluntary acts receive their species from the end, which is the object of the will. Now, that from which something receives its species stands in the manner of a form in natural things; and

therefore, in a certain way, the form of any voluntary act is the end to which it is ordered.”

These are Thomas’s words—indeed very confused and improper. For by Thomas’s own concession, the end in voluntary acts has the nature of an object. But who ever said that charity is the object of faith? Not even the Jesuits have said this. But if it does not have the nature of an object, certainly it cannot have the nature of an end, if the end is understood to have the nature of an object. Charity can be called an effect of faith; it cannot be its object.

It is most true what Augustine says against Julian the Pelagian, who boasted of the virtues of unbelievers: virtues are to be distinguished from vices not by their duties but by their ends. Now that end which forms virtue and distinguishes it from vices can have the nature of an object, insofar as it moves and excites. In this sense, faith can be the end of charity because faith moves and excites charity; but charity does not stand in such a relation to faith. For we do not believe because we do good works, but we do good works because we believe. Faith, therefore, is in a certain way the end of charity, as also of all other virtues; for there are no virtues which are not in some way referred to faith.

Thus true virtue exists only in believers; for although others perform the same duties, because they do not act for the true end, they do not possess true virtues. And this is what Augustine affirms against Julian, who had boasted of the virtues of unbelievers: virtue is distinguished from vice not by duties but by ends.

Therefore, Aquinas’s opinion about the form of faith is unsound, because faith distinguishes, forms, and regulates charity; but charity does not form faith—it only shows it forth as its effect shows its cause.

Moreover, Aquinas’s opinion does not help the Jesuits at all. For they infer that people are justified by the inherent justice of works because charity, as they suppose, is the form of faith. But Thomas, who taught that charity is the form of faith, nevertheless expressly affirms that there is no hope of

justification in works, but in faith alone. Therefore, Aquinas teaches justification by faith alone—which these men deny.

Besides, Aquinas teaches that charity is the form of faith because faith is perfected through charity: that is, as Aquinas explains himself, faith becomes known, is exercised, and is shown forth through charity. For these are Aquinas's words: "James speaks of works following faith, which are said to justify—not according to what is called infusion of justification, but according to what is called exercise, showing forth, or consummation of justice; for a thing is said to be done when it is perfected and made known." So says he.

Therefore, the Jesuits differ very much from Aquinas's opinion. For when they attack our opinion—which in this matter is certainly entirely the same as Aquinas's—do they not manifestly attack his?

From Aquinas's opinion, therefore, not well understood concerning the form of faith, the Jesuits falsely and ineptly infer—against Aquinas's mind—that faith alone does not justify.

It will not be useless to open up and show—as succinctly as possible—the growth of corruptions and tares springing up among the grain.

Aquinas seems to have been the first to introduce this: that charity is the form of faith. He drew certain traces of this opinion from Lombard; he added the rest. Not indeed thinking badly (if we take his mind favorably), nor foreseeing how many

From this, the doctrines of merit were subsequently to be revived. Afterwards, John Scotus greatly amplified the doctrine of merit **de congruo**. Although this doctrine properly pertains to another question, it is so closely connected with this one that once the doctrine of merit was taken up, it almost entirely suppressed the doctrine of justification. Thus, the doctrine of merit was gradually introduced. Aquinas laid the foundations of merit, both **de congruo** and **de condigno**. He writes as follows:

"If the meritorious work is considered as proceeding from free will, then there cannot be condignity because of the greatest inequality; but there is

congruity, on account of a certain equality. It seems fitting that God should reward a man working according to his own virtue according to the excellence of His own virtue. But if we speak of a meritorious work as proceeding from the grace of the Holy Spirit, then it is meritorious of eternal life **de condigno**."

So says Thomas. Scotus, however, disagrees with Thomas concerning merit **de condigno**, but he extolled the doctrine of merit **de congruo** even to the point of absurdity. The opinions of Scotus on this matter are these:

"A sinner can, by his natural powers with common influence, consider sin as offensive to God." And soon after: "The will can detest sin so considered, and that movement can be continued and intensified before the infusion of grace." And further: "This movement is called attrition, and it is a disposition or merit **de congruo** for the deletion of mortal sin." And a little later: "If attrition is perfectly circumstanced in the moral genus, it seems entirely a sufficient disposition for acquiring justification at the termination of that attrition." And then: "If the same movement against sin remains in natural and moral being, which before was attrition, in that instant it becomes contrition."

He teaches almost the same in Book 2, Distinction 28. Most recent Scholastics follow him and teach that this act, by which a man does the utmost he can so that grace may be communicated to him, is, according to Scotus, from purely natural powers and meritorious **de congruo**. This is the opinion of the Council of Trent, as can be established from the earlier canons and from the words of Bellarmine, who explains the mind of that Council: "A man not yet reconciled can through works of penance obtain and merit **de congruo** the grace of justification." So says he.

Therefore, the Tridentine fathers follow the opinions of Scotus, although many very learned men protest because this opinion plainly differs in no way from the error of the Pelagians—as many learned men of the Roman Church testify, especially Francis Victoria, whose words I shall add:

"Men otherwise sharp and learned sin and err twice in this disputation because they do not rightly understand contrition: first, thinking that

contrition is so sufficient for the remission of sins that remission and grace are owed as if by justice once contrition is present. Whence it also comes about that they posit congruous merit for first grace, against the Apostle Paul, not considering that whatever disposition is posited in a sinner, the conferral of grace is entirely an act of liberality, and sins are remitted as gratuitously as grace was given to Adam in the first state—indeed more so—nor should one imagine any other merit except pure divine mercy. Nor is contrition more a merit for grace or remission of sins than good works are a merit for predestination. For this was largely the error of the Pelagians, if I understand anything."

So Victoria disputes learnedly and freely against the error of the Scotists, which was finally received in the Council of Trent.

Another Scholastic commentary, which brought wonderful confusion to the purer doctrine of justification drawn from Scripture and handed down by the Fathers, is this: Peter Lombard asks, "Is grace a virtue?" Subsequent theologians seized upon this conclusion to the great ruin of truth. Thus Scotus says: "Grace formally is a virtue, which is charity." And a little later: "And on account of this, God accepts one having it as worthy of beatitude by a dignity which consists in the correspondence of merit to reward; that is called grace, and so it includes some imperfection in that which is grace."

This is the Babylonian poison which Scotus served up at Trent.

It is worthwhile here to contemplate the cunning of the ancient serpent. Pelagius was first brought to light, who denied the grace of God and exalted free will. Pelagius was condemned by the clear judgment of the Church. Yet Pelagius revived in the Scotists, who to that Pelagianism concerning congruous merit devised also another fraud: that under the explanation and definition of grace, the grace of God might be utterly overthrown. This the Scotists do.

And so also the Tridentines. For when they deliver no other knowledge of grace than that it is our virtue and a quality inhering in us, what else did that serpent, who presented this scene, do but extinguish the universal knowledge of divine grace? Grace indeed is not a quality inhering in us, but is the

execution of the divine purpose in Christ—that is, as Victor and the ancient writers hold, the pure divine mercy or favor of God, which the Council of Trent cursed. For the grace of our justification is the same as that of our calling and predestination. But if anyone should say that the grace of calling or predestination is not only the favor of God but formally our own virtue, which is charity, he draws not from the sacred Scriptures but from that mystical cup of Babylon.

It seems necessary here to remark upon the depths of Satan in that canon of the Council of Trent which I proposed at the beginning of this disputation, in which canon they pronounce anathema upon those who teach that men are justified either by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of the grace and charity which is poured into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and inheres in them; or even that the grace by which we are justified is only the favor of God. So far the Tridentine canon. Who would not marvel at the absurdity of this decree? From one point learn all. For how can a man be justified by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness or by the sole remission of sins, to the exclusion of grace? Can one who preaches grace alone possibly exclude grace? We who teach that justification occurs by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, together with the Apostle and the Fathers, preach grace alone. For this is that grace which the Church of Christ has always acknowledged as the only one: that to those who believe in Christ sins are not imputed, but Christ's righteousness is imputed.

The Council of Trent says that those who affirm justification to consist in imputation—that is, in grace alone—exclude grace. Alas, by what great dizziness were those Fathers seized? What blindness and hardness of heart drove them to this? But indeed it was necessary that they be cast upon these rocks who wish the grace of God to be not only favor and mercy but our own virtue. And so in that confusion of words the Tridentine Fathers proceed in the same canon and belch forth smoke from the abyss. “To the exclusion of grace,” they say, “and charity which is poured into their hearts,” etc. Just as they deny grace to be only the favor of God, so with the same smoke they hide the charity of God from the eyes and sight of readers. For the Apostle affirms that the charity of God has been poured into our hearts

through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. The Tridentine sophists expunge that word “of God,” so as deliberately to obscure the favor of God. And what the Apostle said about the charity of God with which God pursues us, they—with monstrous sacrilege altering and omitting—wrest the Apostle’s words to refer to our charity, as it is a theological virtue.

The Apostle in that passage discusses the charity of God. For after he had taught that the charity of God was poured into our hearts, he explains that charity in the immediately following words: “For Christ, when we were still weak, at the right time died for the ungodly.” And immediately: “God commends His own charity toward us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us.” Will anyone affirm that the Apostle here is speaking of our charity by which we love God? The Tridentines affirm it and rise up against the Apostle. “God commends His own charity toward us,” says the Apostle. But these men say that they commend their own charity toward God. Therefore what John teaches—“In this is charity, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son as a propitiation for our sins”—the Tridentine Fathers, namely the “Catholics,” do not hesitate to alter in this way: “Rather, in this is charity, not that God loved us, but that we loved God.” This absurdity and foolish contentiousness they cannot avoid who turn the grace of God into our virtue and divine charity into our charity.

But that charity of God, about which Paul and John speak so clearly—

The Apostles; what is it but pure mercy, and that favor of God alone, which the Council of Trent willed to be removed from the Church and extinguished by anathema. Therefore, Aquinas and Scotus enter the Church like two thunderbolts of papal warfare, dreadful and mighty leaders with devastating armies. And although Thomas with his Thomists had inflicted great slaughter, nevertheless much of the ancient doctrine remained untouched and inviolate by him, and even defended by him: the genuine tradition of the Fathers held strong in many respects. But whatever remained intact and whole from the earlier injuries of the Thomists, all of that Scotus, with a terrible swarm of Locusts—I mean the Scotists—followed up, despoiled, and led away into Babylonian captivity. For by their smoke, “the sun was darkened,” as John says: so that the name “Scotus” seems in a way betrayed

in the very emergence of the Locusts. Indeed, as often as the Scotists dissent from Thomas, who follows purer springs, the Tridentine fathers, deliberately darkening, abandon the Aquinate and for the most part follow the opinions of Scotus. Sometimes even, recklessly pursuing worse things, they surpass Scotus himself in wickedness and corruptions.

Meanwhile, it must be observed that these opinions, whether of Thomists or Scotists, were only considered private opinions of the friars, and not decrees of the Roman Church, before they were sanctioned as decrees in the Council of Trent.

It remains for us to observe the disagreements between the Theologians and the Jesuits in this matter. So that it may more easily be established how much the speculation of the Theologians differs from the opinion of the Fathers, and also how much the Jesuits differ from the Theologians. For concerning formed faith and unformed faith, marvelous contradictions or absurdities are brought forth between the Scholastics and the Jesuits. For the Theologians understand unformed faith as that which is without charity. But the Jesuits, declaiming for Catholic faith, leave us no other faith than unformed. On unformed faith, Lombard writes thus: "The faith which demons and false Christians have is a quality of the mind, but unformed, because it is without charity." So he says. But Cardinal Bellarmine promulgates a new and astonishing tradition brought in from the Tridentine conciliabulum in these words: "The faith of the wicked and of demons is true and right faith on the part of the object." Then he proves that this faith is also Catholic and justifying. But that he adduces Augustine as patron of this wickedness, he does as he is accustomed—in vain and falsely.

Therefore, what for the Scholastics is unformed faith, this for the Jesuits is Catholic faith. And rightly so; for the Jesuits are confident that they can in no way prove themselves Catholics, their Church Catholic, their faith Catholic, unless (by a horrible blasphemy against the Church of God) they establish the faith of demons and the wicked as Catholic. This is familiar to Bellarmine and the other Jesuits: when they describe Catholic faith, they show us no other than that unformed faith of demons and reprobates.

Errors concerning faith among the Papists seem to arise and grow from this: that they apply no distinction to faith. This matter, as usual, produces great confusion. A distinction of faith therefore seems necessary. Now faith is taken variously in the Scriptures: for it is either historical faith, which is so called because we can have faith in a thing without expecting any advantage or utility from that thing which we believe. James speaks of this faith where he says that demons believe and tremble; or faith is the profession of faith, and thus religion itself. So it is called "the obedience of faith" in Romans 1, where faith is put for the profession of faith and for religion as a whole.

Moreover, faith, insofar as it denotes profession of faith, can be either true or temporary—as described in Matthew 13:21—or doubtful and deceitful—as described in John 2:24, where the Lord did not entrust himself to those who believed in him; and John 12:44, where those who believed in him preferred human glory to the glory of God. Concerning miraculous faith it is not necessary for me to speak. These things which have been briefly said—

They can show the occasion of the error that has prevailed among the Pontificians.

For they hold nothing higher concerning faith than to describe it as either historical or as the external profession of faith and religion. But besides these acceptations of faith, there is also in the Holy Scriptures a justifying faith, which is a certain trust resting upon the promise of God and receives without hesitation the promised remission of sins. Ignorance of this distinction, drawn from the clear Scriptures, leads the Pontificians into labyrinths of errors, so that they walk as if blind and fight in darkness like gladiators who are blindfolded. For they dispute about faith, the object of faith, grace, and justification so confusedly and obscurely that it is no wonder if truth flees from them, who seem deliberately to shun the light and yet dare to debate matters they do not understand. For how can they either understand or teach about faith, grace, and justification—either because they do not possess understanding or because they do not comprehend what they teach?

Therefore, when Bellarmine says that the faith of the wicked and of demons is true, real, and catholic with respect to its object, it must not be passed over in silence what he delivers concerning the object of justifying faith. He says: "The object of justifying faith is not a special mercy, but all things which God has revealed in the Scriptures." So he says. If he were speaking of faith as it is a profession of faith, he would seem to have spoken correctly; but the Jesuits abhor distinctions which can bring light to matters. Bellarmine intends this to be understood of justifying faith. For he repeats the same: "The object of justifying faith, which heretics restrict to the promise of special mercy alone, Catholics wish to extend as widely as the word of God extends. Rather, they contend that a certain promise of special mercy pertains not so much to faith as to presumption." So he says. He always speaks of justifying faith.

Above, from Lombard, we have shown that the faith which Bellarmine calls justifying—and which he affirms is the same as the faith of demons—is an unformed faith. Thus, for Bellarmine, unformed faith is justifying. Now indeed we shall show from Scotus that this faith which the Jesuits call justifying is nothing other than faith acquired from purely natural means.

When theologians dispute about the object of faith, they are accustomed to treat that distinction concerning acquired and infused faith. On this matter, these are the opinions of John Scotus: "It is certain that in us there is an acquired faith of revealed credibles." I shall add more from the same author: "On account of the credibility of revealed articles, so that a man may firmly believe all revealed articles and be determined to one side without fear of the opposite, it is not necessary to posit infused faith, nor can its necessity be concluded from this." So says Scotus.

Therefore, whatever Bellarmine teaches about justifying faith, Scotus confesses to be true concerning acquired faith. Because acquired faith apprehends the credible revealed in the Scriptures. But let Scotus bring forth more, if you please, so that this Tridentine faith may be more firmly held. He says: "By acquired faith from purely natural means, a man can assent to all things revealed by God." And shortly after: "This therefore must be held as certain: that of the things revealed in Scripture there is in us an acquired

faith, generated from hearing and from our actions, by which we firmly adhere to them." So he says.

Finally, he shows that the difference between acquired and infused faith is not on the part of the habits but on the part of the objects (if Velosillo has correctly reported Scotus's opinion in his annotations—for thus he observed it, although Scotus does not have this in the passage which he annotated). For if on the part of the objects there is no difference between justifying and acquired faith (as Scotus contends, and Bellarmine from Scotus), it will certainly follow that justifying faith is acquired, not infused.

Therefore, although recent theologians do not agree with the primary ones, yet it suits the Jesuits very well to agree with the Scotists. The Master teaches that formed faith is required because unformed faith, which is without charity, is that of demons and the wicked; but Bellarmine teaches that this unformed faith without charity, which is that of demons and the wicked, is catholic and justifying. Therefore, formed faith is not required, since among the Scotists and Jesuits there is no use of formed faith. The Master teaches that charity is required in formed faith, by which a person loves God above all things and neighbor as oneself. To this end, the ancient theologians taught that infused faith is necessary. But our John Duns Scotus expressly affirms: a person can, from purely natural powers, love God above all things and neighbor as oneself. So says Scotus. Therefore, either charity is from purely natural powers, or it is not necessary, since the Scotists can do from purely natural powers what charity commands. The majority of recent Scholastics follow this opinion and have crossed over into the camp of the Pelagians.

These doctrines are fixed among the Scotists and Jesuits, who are now sent by the Roman Pontiff as reinforcements to restore the Scotists to the battle line, which has been routed and is in a desperate state. For Scotus contends that the object of acquired faith is the believable revealed in the Scriptures—that is, whatever God has revealed in the Scriptures, as Bellarmine says. Moreover, the same Bellarmine affirms this to be the object of justifying faith. Therefore, justifying faith and acquired faith do not differ on the part of the object. And this is the horrible faith of Bellarmine: the same faith that

justifies, is Catholic, and right; the same as the unformed faith of the wicked; and the same as that of demons.

Since the Scotists brought those famous speculations about the object of faith from the abyss into the Church, and the Jesuits took them up from the Scotists, it seems necessary to speak succinctly about the object of justifying faith, so that amid the varying human inventions we may hold something certain from the Word of God.

Those who place the object of justifying faith as everything revealed in the Scriptures err in this: they do not distinguish between the external profession of faith and justifying faith. Scotus, when he deals with the object of faith, understands faith as including the profession of faith. This is seized upon by the Jesuits for justifying faith. We, setting aside contentions and other acceptations of faith, will inquire here about the object of justifying faith.

The Apostle deals with the object of justifying faith in Romans chapter 4: "Therefore," he says, "it is by faith, so that it may be by grace, in order that the promise may be firm to all the seed." In this passage, the Apostle reveals four things divinely linked together: grace, faith, the promise, and the firmness or certainty of salvation. "Therefore it is by faith, so that it may be by grace." Therefore, faith is aroused by grace and comes from grace. For what purpose is faith aroused by grace? "That the promise may be firm." Therefore, faith is aroused by grace so that it may rest firmly on the promise. Therefore, the promise is the proper object of justifying faith. Because faith is aroused by grace to apprehend its object—and it apprehends by means of the promise.

How much light do these few words of the Apostle bring! How much confusion for the Scotists and Jesuits!

1. "Therefore it is by faith, so that it may be by grace." Therefore, faith is by grace and from grace; and for that reason, what Bellarmine taught is false and impious: "Faith and our conversion are within the power of free will."
2. "It is by grace, so that the promise may be firm." Therefore, there is a firm certainty of the promise for every believer; and what the Jesuits chatter is

false and impious: "Firm trust in the promise belongs not to faith but to presumption."

3. "Therefore it is by faith so that it may be by grace, in order that the promise may be firm." Therefore, the firmness of the promise and our trust do not arise from our merits but from faith alone. This is against Bellarmine's error, which he states in these words: "The trust of the saints, which they place in God, arises not from faith alone but from good merits."

4. "That the promise may be firm to all the seed." Therefore, the firmness of the promise and sure trust in mercy are granted by grace to all the seed—that is, to all true believers; and for that reason it is false and impious to say that this trust is not granted to all true believers but only to prophets, apostles, and a few others through an extraordinary revelation of the Holy Spirit—as the Jesuits teach.

5. Therefore it is by faith, so that it may be by grace, that the promise may be firm. Therefore, faith through grace rests upon the promise, and the promise is the proper object of justifying faith. The same is evident from the definition of faith. The Apostle says, "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." For the things contained in the promise of grace are hoped for and are not seen. Therefore, since the Apostle defines faith by those things which are hoped for and not seen—because these declare the promise of mercy—it is exactly as if he said that faith is the substance and evidence of God's promise. Because justifying faith rests upon the promise, that is, upon those things which are hoped for and not seen, as its true and proper object.

Then the Apostle teaches: "He did not dispute against the promise of God with unbelief, but was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God." By these words, the Apostle teaches what distinguishes faith from unbelief. For he describes faith as trust in the promise. Therefore, those who exclude trust in the promise from justifying faith (as the Jesuits do, especially Cardinal Bellarmine) do nothing other than what the Apostle in this place calls ἀπιστίαν—hesitation concerning the promise, or unbelief.

The Apostle also says in the same passage that Abraham was strengthened in faith, giving glory to God, being fully persuaded that what God had promised, He was able also to perform. Therefore, it was imputed to him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone that it was imputed to him, but also for us, to whom it shall be imputed. In this passage, the Apostle deals with the faith by which Abraham was justified. Hence, these theses are firmly established:

First: Justifying faith is faith imputed for righteousness.

Second: Justifying faith is faith by which the believer is fully persuaded of God's promise.

Third: The faith of Abraham and our faith are the same with respect to object and mode of imputation.

All these are contained in the clear words of the Apostle. Thus, therefore, against the ἀπιστίαν of the Jesuits, the Apostle confirms us: Faith is that by which the promise is made firm, so that the promise may be firm. This firmness of the promise is trust in the promise; this trust is without hesitation. The Apostle excludes hesitation: "Let us not dispute against the promise of God with unbelief, so that we may be strengthened in faith, giving glory to God."

This school is far removed from the opinions of the Jesuits, who fight for hesitation and teach that all ought to be uncertain about salvation—that the promise is not to be received with certain trust—and that trust in the promise is presumption. So says the Jesuit. Therefore, they introduce hesitation and ἀπιστίαν and utterly destroy faith.

Now if anyone were to define faith as unbelief and hesitation—πίστιν as ἀπιστίαν—would he seem sane? Yet this is what the Jesuits teach. Indeed, they harass the Church of Christ with violent outcries so that they may introduce their own ἀπιστίαν. May the Apostle of Christ restrain these insane clamors! For thus the Apostle sets forth: Faith which hesitates in the promise of God is ἀπιστία—that is, it is certainly established by the manifest words of the Apostle.

But the Jesuits assert that Catholic faith hesitates in the promise of God. For they say it is not faith but presumption if anyone lays hold of a certain and firm promise of mercy. We conclude that the faith which they call Catholic is altogether ἄπιστίαν. And in the same way we prove that their faith does not give glory to God; because what hesitates in the promise does not give glory to God, according to the same Apostle. And this is the Catholic faith of the Jesuits—namely, ἄπιστία which cannot give glory to God.

Who can promise salvation to those who have so altered Catholic faith that in its place they have introduced a horrible confusion about ἄπιστία? I do not doubt that among the Papists there are many who utterly abhor this tradition of Tridentine faith. Yet I would not hesitate to affirm that no one can prove from the Word of God the salvation of those who follow this tradition—as all Jesuits do.

This is that faith which the Council of Trent drew from the Scotists against the Scriptures, against the ancient fathers, indeed against the Roman Church. For before the time of this Council, Catholic faith lived and flourished even in the Roman Church. Let them consider what hope of salvation they can have who have altered the ancient Catholic faith. We, however, hold firmly to the promise of God with steadfast faith. We have God as our author, by whose Spirit believers are led; we have the Apostle as our teacher, by whose doctrine the Church is established; we have Abraham as our father, whom we follow, whose faith is praised by the Apostle under that very name because he did not waver in unbelief at the promise of God, but was strengthened in faith and gave glory to God. The example of the father of believers is set forth by the Apostle for all believers to follow.

Let the Jesuits declare what father, what author they themselves follow—they who so greatly instill hesitation and unbelief regarding the promise, and who teach that firm confidence in the promise pertains not to faith but to presumption. Into this blindness they are justly cast by the judgment of God, who hope to be able to retain the truth along with a scandalous life.

The Jesuits contend that impure men, in whom there is no internal virtue, are true members of the holy Church. Cardinal Bellarmine contends that the

crimes and scandals of the Roman Pontiffs do not prevent the same Pontiff from being the tested, precious cornerstone, founded in the foundation, foretold by the prophet Isaiah. How dreadful a blasphemy against Christ this contains! But thus it was necessary for them to be blinded, who wish to join truth together with crimes and scandals.

Christ the Lord established His Church in a far different manner: “If anyone wills to do His will,” He says, “he shall know concerning the doctrine, whether it is from God, or whether I speak from Myself. He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but he who seeks the glory of Him who sent him, this one is true, and there is no unrighteousness in him.” Therefore, how can the Jesuits—who, in order to live more impurely, think holiness is not necessary in the members of the Church; who will to do the will of the Pope; who speak from themselves—how can they retain the truth of God?

Rightly and holily says St. Augustine: “In knowledge, error is to be avoided; in action, wickedness. Moreover, whoever thinks he can know the truth while still living wickedly is in error.” So says he.

These things we thought necessary to point out, so that it may be clear from what source the Jesuits today attack justification by faith alone: namely, from the doctrine of Scotus, unknown to the ancients. Indeed, by their sophistries they aim at nothing else than to hide justifying faith from the eyes of the faithful and to convert it into historical faith, acquired faith, unformed faith—finally, into the faith of demons. For there is nothing in the faith of the Scotists and Jesuits that is not also in the faith of demons.

How much safer is our faith, which rests upon the Word of God, having testimony from the Law and the Prophets, from the Apostles, from the whole Church, and finally even from our adversaries themselves. Therefore, so that the unconquered power of truth may appear, let us conclude at last with that forced and wrested testimony of Bellarmine which we cited above:

“On account of the uncertainty of our own righteousness and the danger of vain glory, it is safest to place our confidence solely in the mercy and kindness of God.” So says he. Which amounts to saying: Although I was hired by the Roman Pontiff to write these things against justification by faith

alone and confidence in mercy alone, yet I confess that this doctrine which I have attacked is safest. And because no opinion concerning faith can be safest unless it is most true, I am forced to confess that it is most true; and therefore the contrary opinion—which I tried to confirm concerning the merit of works by congruity in humans not yet reborn—is most false.

FOURTH CONTROVERSY: CONCERNING INHERENT GRACE

PAPIST THESES

- If anyone says that human beings are justified either by the sole imputation of Christ's righteousness or by the sole remission of sins, excluding the grace and charity which is poured forth into their hearts by the Holy Spirit and inheres in them; or even that the grace by which we are justified is only a favor of God: let him be anathema. (Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 11)
- Grace (as the Tridentine Synod decreed must be believed by all under penalty of anathema) is not only that by which remission of sins occurs, but a divine quality inhering in the soul, and as it were a certain splendor and light which blots out all stains of our souls and renders those same souls more beautiful and splendid. (Catechism of the Council of Trent, treatise on the sacrament of baptism)
- The common opinion of theologians is that grace is a supernatural habit infused into us by God, by which the soul is adorned and perfected, and so is rendered just and pleasing and acceptable to God. (Bellarmine, Book 1 on Grace and Free Will, chapter 3)
- Certainly if justifying grace were distinguished from habits of theological virtues, the Council of Trent could rightly be criticized; therefore justifying grace is not distinguished from the habit of charity. (Bellarmine, *ibid.*, chapter 6)
- A person not yet reconciled can through works of penance obtain and merit by congruity the grace of justification. (Bellarmine, On Justification, Book 5, chapter 22)

CHAPTER I. The State of the Question is Explained.

In the question concerning the grace of God, the Papists disturb the truth through their inherent errors, against which we must contend in this place. This question about the grace of justification is both most serious and most worthy of our understanding; hence, this discussion will bring with it the greatest utility and fruit. For from it, it will be evident that the very sources of religion among the Papists are infected with poison, and from this most pure fountain having been corrupted, other errors have easily flowed forth.

The ancient Pelagians, and all who either devised errors concerning grace or adopted those invented by others, sinned most greatly in this: that, having rejected the Scriptures, they embraced another meaning of this word than what the Holy Scriptures have handed down. For Pelagius indeed preached grace, but he understood it as free will and that grace which he thought man had received in creation. In the same way, the Tridentines preach the grace of God, but a grace fabricated by themselves, which they cannot demonstrate from the Scriptures.

For the Tridentines explain their opinion in such a way that they distinguish grace into that which is freely given and that which makes one pleasing. They teach that grace freely given is a supernatural good, conferred without any debt, chiefly for the salvation of others; concerning this grace there is no dispute among us. But they say that the grace which makes one pleasing is either permanent or habitual, or of special assistance. They contend that this permanent grace is a habit or quality inhering in us after the manner of a habit, by which quality indeed we are made pleasing to God and justified; moreover, they assert that this habitual quality is nothing other than charity. Thus they explain grace.

We judge that concerning the grace of God, the Word of God must be consulted; because unless we follow the light of the Scriptures as our guide, we cannot be freed from error. We do not reject the aforementioned distinction of grace into freely given and making one pleasing, because it is contained in the Scriptures, for what the Apostle calls χαρίσματα (charismata) is understood by the Scholastics as grace freely given. But here

we seek that grace by which we are saved; not so much concerned with other acceptations of grace, we insist especially on this one.

Among Latin writers, as well as χάρις (charis) among the Greeks, "grace" signifies comeliness and beauty. But in the usage of the Hebrew language you will not find this force of the word; the common expression among the Hebrews is: "he found grace in his eyes." It is said of Noah that he found grace in the eyes of the Lord; in Hebrew it is, i.e., he found mercy. Hence those very common expressions in the sacred writings: "if I have found grace in your eyes"; in Hebrew it is, "if I have found mercy."

Ignorance of idioms has misled incautious men in the use of this word. For if anyone, leaving aside the Hebrew sources, seeks the force of this word in the usage of the Latin or Greek language, he will be far from the truth.

Therefore, the explanation of grace must be sought from the sacred writings. As far as the force of the word is concerned, "grace" is exactly the same as "mercy" for the Hebrews.

Therefore, the Apostles in the New Testament use the term "grace" to reveal the mercy of God and that supereminent love which has been manifested in Christ Jesus, in freeing men from the captivity of the devil and the slavery of their sins, from which the law could not free men. And for this reason, this supereminent love of God is very often contrasted with the law and our works and our inherent righteousness: so that in the Church of believers it may be firmly established that believers have this liberation not from the law but from Christ, not at all from themselves but from the favor and mercy of God.

And this is that supereminent love and favor of God which in the Scriptures of the New Testament is called "grace"; and "the supereminent greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power, that we may be able to comprehend with all saints and know the supereminent knowledge of the love of Christ." Thus Scripture calls grace "the supereminent greatness of His power toward us" and "the supereminent love"; and it is established in the knowledge of Christ.

This is the grace of God, whose sound doctrine has been preserved in the Church, handed down through successive generations, and celebrated, until the Scholastic theologians altered it with their dreadful fabrications. For then the enemy of the human race came while men were sleeping and sowed weeds among the wheat, and then departed. These weeds, after they had taken deep root in the opinions of the brethren, became especially apparent at the Council of Trent. However, the Lord of the harvest will in due time command His reapers to gather them into bundles to be burned.

Nor could the Tridentines more clearly have passed from Christ to Pelagius than by corrupting this most salutary doctrine. For, having abandoned Christ and the Gospel so that they might establish a foundation of merit, they fabricate that the grace by which we are saved and justified is an inherent quality of the soul, a splendor of the soul, an inherent habit. They say that this habit can be acquired through our preparations and dispositions, just as external philosophy teaches that a habit is finally acquired through many dispositions. John Scotus, whom the Tridentines follow, teaches that a sinner can, by his purely natural powers, so perform these dispositions and preparations that grace is communicated to him by congruous merit.

Although there are some among the pontifical theologians whom shame has at last begun to affect regarding this gross Pelagianism, we hope that, upon thorough investigation, more will also judge it necessary for themselves to abandon these Tridentine principles.

Therefore, the question between the Catholic Church and the Pontificals is this: whether the grace of God by which we are justified is the mercy or favor of God alone, and that supereminent love of God with which He loved us sinners in Christ—as the Catholic Church has always taught—or whether it is rather a habit inherent in us, or our charity, and a splendor and radiance of the soul—as the Council of Trent teaches from the new commentaries of the theologians.

CHAPTER II: The Grace of God Proved from the Scriptures

First, as the plan of our work requires, we shall seek grace and the knowledge of grace from Sacred Scripture. Then other matters will be

examined by this touchstone. The Apostle says: "To him who works, his reward is not reckoned according to grace, but according to debt; but to him who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness." In this passage, the Apostle teaches that merit cannot coexist with faith and grace. For what is a reward that is owed by merit if not a debt? But that reward from debt or merit is not from grace. For to him who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness, and thus grace is demonstrated. Therefore, in the justification of the ungodly, faith and the grace of God alone are commended to us.

If reward and debt and merit—whether of congruity or condignity—cannot coexist with grace, how can this grace be an inherent habit? Because a habit arises from works, but grace excludes works; for to him who does not work, reward is imputed by grace. Nor will the distinction between an infused habit and an acquired habit suffice; for although the Tridentines acknowledge this habit as infused, they nevertheless stubbornly retain this conclusion: that this habit is had through many preparations and dispositions. And thus Scotus and his followers explain this habit so that it plainly differs in no way from an acquired habit. And manifest reason convicts them: for if this habit is had through our dispositions and preparations, how does it differ from an acquired habit? But all Tridentines agree that it can be acquired through our dispositions and preparations. In vain, therefore, is the name of an infused habit retained, so that Pelagianism, being concealed, may not appear to the unwary.

The ungodly are justified by grace, not working, but only believing in Him who justifies the ungodly; therefore, not by an inherent habit. When the ungodly are justified and from ungodly become godly by grace, let the Tridentines show us what habit or splendor inheres in the ungodly—which they can show without deadly error. For in the justification of the ungodly, the Apostle excludes all debt, and consequently all merit, all our preparations, everything inherent in us, so that he may establish grace alone.

Then the Apostle also teaches: "Therefore by faith, so that it may be by grace, in order that the promise may be sure to all the seed." That inherent

quality is understood to be in our love and in works. But the Apostle said: "Therefore by faith, so that it may be by grace." Therefore, in the justification of the ungodly, faith and grace are established without works and without our inherent quality. In the justified, love manifests itself and good works are done as fruits of this grace. Nor are works without grace; but we seek the grace by which the ungodly is justified before God, which the Apostle denies to be in inherent virtue in us.

And therefore the gratuitous election of God, which consists solely in God's good pleasure, is called the election of grace, Romans 11:5: "A remnant," he says, "has been saved according to the election of grace." Therefore, God by grace chooses people for faith and salvation. But if this grace were an inherent quality in us, then election and predestination would be according to our inherent qualities.

Therefore, we refute the Tridentine anathema from the Apostle: grace is that according to which God elects and predestines people to faith and salvation; it is therefore solely the mercy and favor of God. The Apostle argues thus: "But if it is by grace, it is no longer by works; otherwise grace would no longer be grace. But if it is by works, it is no longer by grace; otherwise work would no longer be work." So says the Apostle. What then will the Jesuits answer if someone reasons thus: "But if it is by grace, it is no longer by inherent qualities or by any habitual purity of the soul; otherwise grace would no longer be grace." For he argues about the grace of election, which, just as it excludes our work, so also excludes everything inherent in us.

And so that we may understand that the grace of God is something outside of us, not situated in our habits or virtues, the Apostle shows the grace of God hidden in the purpose of God and proceeding from there to us. Therefore, he calls the purpose "the purpose of grace," Romans 4:5; just as election is called "the election of grace," Romans 11:5; and predestination is called "the preparation of grace." Because predestination is according to purpose; from predestination comes calling, from calling justification, from justification glorification.

Hence Augustine observes that the fullness of Christ flows into the Church because from his fullness we have all received, and grace upon grace. What is "grace upon grace"? The grace of predestination and the grace of calling is grace solely from the mercy of God; for which and from which is faith. For faith, justification—that is grace upon grace. For justification, sanctification—and finally glorification—that is, grace upon grace. For eternal life is grace and the gratuitous gift of God, as the Apostle teaches in Romans 6:23: "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life."

But this grace, which is given according to purpose and election, which is given through predestination, through calling, through faith, through justification—will any sound person consider it to be an inherent quality in us? Are we chosen through an inherent quality in us? Are we predestined through an inherent quality? Are we called through an inherent quality in us?

The same truth is evident from those passages of Scripture which commend the love of God to us. For as the Apostle teaches: "The love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." For Christ, when we were still without strength, at the right time died for the ungodly, etc. Moreover, God commends his love toward us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. From these words the genuine explanation of grace must be sought: so that we understand grace as consisting in the love of God, not in our love.

Here let the Tridentines extricate themselves, who teach that the grace by which we are justified is not only the favor of God but an inherent virtue in us or our love. The Apostle says that the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. He had previously taught that we, being justified by faith, have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we also have access into this grace in which we stand. The Tridentines, who believe they are justified by inherent habits, are utterly ignorant of this peace with God.

Therefore, Cardinal Bellarmine consumes many pages to establish the uncertainty of grace and righteousness—

We are concerned if the Tridentines cannot find this peace with God. For where there is uncertainty of grace and righteousness, peace toward God cannot exist. But since we who are justified have peace toward God, and access to this grace in which we stand—as the Apostle teaches—whereas by their own works, inherent quality, and habitual merit they are justified, the Tridentines confess that they are always uncertain of grace and peace toward God. What clearer or more illustrious argument can be produced than this, by which the truth and wisdom are justified both by her children and even by her enemies?

Divine grace is certain, which bestows peace with God; Tridentine grace is uncertain and cannot bestow peace toward God; therefore, this is not the grace of God. That we are justified, that we have peace, that we glory in hope of glory, that we glory in afflictions—all this is from grace. Then the Apostle proceeds: if anyone asks, whence comes such great grace? The Apostle responds: from the love of God. For the love of God has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us. Therefore, it is not from us, but from God; not from our inherent quality, but from the poured-out love of God.

But the Tridentines say that this love of God, which the Apostle teaches has been poured out into our hearts, is a grace and love inherent in us, by which we love God. Thus the Council of Trent teaches under penalty of anathema (Session 6). Therefore, the words of the Apostle must be more carefully examined: “The love of God has been poured out” (ἐκκέχυται). The Apostle uses the verb “to pour out” to express the kindness of the giver, not the virtue of the one receiving this grace. And accordingly, it is not given as a reward in expectation of or due to natural merits, but according to the will and measure of the giver. Therefore, this is the love of God, not our inherent love; for God does not commend my love to me, but, as the Apostle says, “God commends His love to us.” Therefore, this love of God is diffused in our hearts.

Why in our hearts? It is said in the Psalms: “Grace is poured upon your lips.” These words were spoken concerning Christ, but what is said in Scripture about the Head is understood to refer to the members insofar as

there is a communication of grace from the Head to the members. Thus there is grace poured out upon our lips and grace poured out in our hearts: in our hearts for believing, on our lips for confessing; for with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. Grace is first in His heart, then on His lips—from the heart to the lips, and to all powers of body and soul. For the whole person and all that is in a person are sweetly subjected to God as soon as this grace, poured out in the human heart, has taken its place and seat there.

Hence the wise man says: “The heart of the wise instructs his mouth, and adds grace to his lips.” So grace is in the mouth and on the lips, but it proceeds from the heart; in the heart it is from God. This is that power which changes our heart—that is, the hard heart. For our heart by nature is hard. But this power of God changes our hard heart and softens it by His might; before God pours out this grace, our heart is hard. But grace poured out into our hearts makes what was hard and carnal now soft. Therefore, the softened heart is now ours. But that power by which the heart is softened is not ours; it is not our inherent habit. Concerning this power we contend with the Tridentines.

This power is best described in this passage by the Apostle. For he teaches: whence is it? what is it? where is it? by what power or operation does it exist and work in us? If you ask whence it is? It is from God, because “the love of God has been poured out into our hearts.” If you ask what it is? The Apostle explains it thus: “God commends His love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.” Therefore, that grace which God commends to us is the power of Christ crucified and dead for us sinners. If you ask where it is? It is in our hearts in which the love of God has been poured out. If you ask by what power or operation it exists and works in us, the answer is in those words: “through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.”

Behold, therefore, this is the charity of God, the virtue of Christ, the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Here I find nothing of my own, except a heart into which this grace has been poured.

But neither can my heart receive this grace unless it is changed by God—indeed, truly and newly created again by a new creation.

And so, with the Prophet, I will not cease to cry out: “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

Where then is that brightness and splendor—namely, that inherent quality of the soul which makes us pleasing and just before God?

This grace is the virtue of Christ, who died for us sinners—a virtue which cannot stand by merit of congruity, because a sinner not yet reconciled to God has nothing within himself by which he can please God until this charity of God touches his heart.

The source of grace, therefore, is outside of us—from God.

The seat into which it is poured is within—our heart, now new, now created anew.

The working power that brings about so much good in our hearts is the operation of the Holy Spirit.

Therefore, it is not our virtue, nor our quality; not our work, nor our operation.

We can call nothing our own except the heart—a hard heart by nature; a heart created anew by grace.

I do not here inquire into the free will of the will.

I know that I have freely willed whatever I willed, whether when this will served a hard heart or when it served a newly created heart.

The will freely willed whatever it willed.

This one thing is certain to me: that I have been freed from my misery and justified by grace.

Moreover, I am certain that this grace is not a virtue inherent in me, but the virtue of Christ who died for me, a sinner.

And I am fully persuaded that all the Tridentine devils cannot snatch this faith from me.

I have offered these remarks on account of this passage, which the Tridentines have wickedly twisted to a foreign meaning.

Therefore, the Tridentines—who turn this charity of God into our own charity, contrary to the clear words of the Apostle—rush blindly into their own destruction.

For Christ died for us sinners, weak, ungodly, his enemies.

Where then was that inherent brightness of the soul when we were sinners—weak, having no strength—ungodly and enemies?

Where in the world was that Tridentine inherent virtue at that time?

By their own confession, it certainly was not yet present.

But the grace of God was then glorious—and made even more glorious through our misery: for by grace we were freed from this misery.

Has anyone ever been found so foolish—or perhaps will be found in the future—who says that we are freed from our misery, from the slavery of sin and the yoke of the devil, by some quality inherent in us or by some internal brightness?

It will be evident that those who teach such things are insane.

Let the Tridentines therefore explain themselves: let them say how the grace by which we are justified and freed from misery can be a virtue inherent in us, so that we are not also freed from sins and misery by our own virtue.

Or if they cannot explain this, let them yield to the plain truth and say—against the Tridentine anathema—that the grace by which we are freed from our sins and misery comes solely from the charity of God.

For God commends his charity toward us in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

This is that charity of Christ from which nothing can separate believers:

“Who shall separate us from the charity of Christ? Shall tribulation? Or distress? Or famine? Or nakedness? Or danger? Or persecution? Or the sword?

I am sure that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the charity of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

From this passage let the Tridentines recall their hope and the grace they seek—placed, as they suppose, in their own charity—which is so changeable, uncertain, and wavering that by their own confession nothing can be more uncertain.

Hence it is that they are accustomed to dispute about the uncertainty of salvation: because, having abandoned the charity of God—from which no creature can separate believers—they cling to their own fiction, which cannot help them.

Wretched is the Tridentine grace—uselessly devised and fabricated by idle men—which cannot save or heal its followers but leaves them uncertain, doubting, and tormented by anxious stings of conscience.

This is that grace which can neither promise salvation nor grant peace to consciences.

CHAPTER III: Bellarmine’s response is refuted, and grace is confirmed.

Lest he seem to have said nothing, Bellarmine devises a reply even more trifling than nothing itself. For he says: “God loves us in two ways: in one way, so that we may be just; in another way, because we are just and holy.” So says he—but this is irrelevant to the point. For we do not deny that God loves His saints because He whom He once loved, He loves always: “Having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” But the whole controversy concerns the former way by which God loves us—that we may be just and holy. For this is that grace of justification which, since it

precedes our charity and is the cause of our charity, is certainly the grace by which God first loved us; it cannot be our own virtue.

But observe the sophist's artifice: "Charity which is in us," he says, "since it is both an effect and an object of God's benevolence—as an effect, it is posterior; as an object, it is prior." I know not what new monstrosity the Jesuits are always bringing forth! To prove that our charity is in some way prior to God's charity, he fabricates a horrendous fiction: that our charity is the object of divine charity, and as such, it is prior. And thus Bellarmine's sophistry plainly enervates the theology of the Apostle John. For if our charity is the object of God's charity and therefore prior, then John has misled us when he teaches: "In this is charity: not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins." Therefore, the object of divine charity was not our charity, but our misery. And lest anyone should boast of our foreseen charity, the same John teaches the antecedent cause of our charity: "We love Him because He first loved us." Who would think such bold sophistry should be tolerated in the face of such clear words of Scripture?

Moreover, these assertions break forth into open Pelagianism. For the object, as the Schools speak, is what moves, not what is moved. If, therefore, our charity is the object of divine charity, then it is not moved by God's charity but moves it. And what is this but what Pelagius taught—that there is something in us which could move and stir up God to love us? If anyone should say that Bellarmine blocked the way against this error when he said at the outset that "grace making pleasing" is a supernatural gift conferred without debt, we reply: not even thus is this error avoided; rather, this is to leap from one kind of Pelagianism into another. For those who have asserted that men are predestined on account of foreseen faith have stuck in the Pelagian mud and were condemned for it by Augustine, Prosper, Leo, Celestine—indeed, by the whole Church. And those today who boast of foreseen faith remain in the same mire, even if they acknowledge faith to be a supernatural gift of God. But what difference does it make whether you introduce the opinion of foreseen faith or foreseen charity? Except that those who establish that God's love is aroused by foreseen faith seem to sin more softly than those who do so by foreseen charity.

Furthermore, Bellarmine speaks contradictions and joins impossibilities together. For when he teaches that our charity is a supernatural gift of God without debt, and then affirms that our charity is the object of divine charity—who will reconcile these conflicting claims? If it is a supernatural gift, then God has already given it. But all God's gifts proceed from God's benevolence. Therefore, God first loved those to whom He gave this gift. But if you say "object"—that is, in whatever way prior to God's charity—then God's charity did not give us our charity. For from this fiction, our charity existed before it was given to us by God. And thus it would have to be said: our charity as the object of divine charity moved God to give us our charity. Who can utter or understand such absurdity? Yet from Bellarmine's opinion, this must necessarily be said. This is the hiding place of darkness into which the insane wisdom of Trent leads deranged men.

But the way of truth is clear and bright, shown beforehand by the Apostle John: the grace of God is founded in mercy—not in our charity, but in God's charity, by which He first loved us.

By the grace of God, our adversaries argue in such a way that people, seized with admiration for themselves and becoming arrogant, seek grace within themselves. Meanwhile, Christ, as if shut out, appears nowhere. But we, instructed by the divine Scriptures, seek the grace of God in Christ. The grace of predestination is in Christ, in whom He predestined us. The Scriptures establish this grace in the mercy of God, in which, to reveal it, either the purpose of grace is disclosed, or the imputation of Christ's righteousness is taught, or the price of our redemption in the blood of Christ is demonstrated, or justification by faith alone, excluding works, is established. Through these ways, the grace of God is illustrated in the Scriptures. However it may be revealed, grace is always placed in God's mercy and acceptance, not in our habits.

There are four things ordained to instruct us in this matter: justification, grace, the blood of Christ, and faith. These four are so ordered in the Scriptures: the blood of Christ merited justification, grace gives it to us, and faith apprehends it. Nor does Scripture allow anything else of ours to be admitted in this matter. For our charity comes after justification, along with

holy works. But so that the ungodly may be justified before God, there is nothing that can either merit this grace or receive it except the blood of Christ and our faith.

Then the Apostle opposes the kingdom of grace to the kingdom of sin and death. Does the Apostle describe a kingdom of our virtue or of some habit inherent in us? Where sin abounded, grace abounded all the more, so that just as sin reigned in death, so also grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life. What is that grace which abounded when our sins increased? The miserable Papists either cannot or will not understand this grace. This grace, which abounded over all our sins, which destroyed the kingdom of sin, which reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, is nothing of ours—not our virtue, not our habit—but solely the mercy and free acceptance of God and His favor, who imputed the righteousness of Christ to us who believe; for which reason the Apostle calls it the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ upon all and over all who believe.

Therefore, this explanation of grace for accomplishing our salvation is established with such great agreement of the sacred books; it brings with it so many and such great things along with the mysteries of salvation—concerning Christ’s precious blood, concerning predestination, concerning calling, concerning faith, concerning justification (all of which proceed from the treasury of grace and are stored up in it)—that whoever dares to move this stone from its place is found to shake the whole structure of our salvation and to undermine it with hidden tunnels.

Thus, this virtue and power of God speaking in His Scriptures with so much light and splendor sometimes strikes even the eyes of the Papists themselves, so that it draws them unwilling into admiration and sometimes even frees them from error; as it had struck Albert Pighius, who shook off the Papacy forever. For he teaches: “Let us seek the various acceptance of grace not from the Schools but from the divine Scriptures, since in them they almost imagine the grace of God as some uncreated quality infused into our soul by God, either the same as the habit of charity or distinct from it. I consider all these things fictitious and to have no authority from the Scriptures.” So says he.

The Papists say that Pighius, otherwise a Catholic teacher, was seduced by reading Calvin's books. But Pighius himself maintains that he drew his opinion from a selection of Scriptures. O Calvin, blessed even by the testimony of adversaries, whose writings keep such agreement with the holy Scriptures that what a most celebrated Papist Doctor admits he derived from reading Sacred Scripture, other Papists attribute to reading Calvin's books. Truly, unless the opinion of the Scholastics had conflicted with the clear Scriptures, Pighius would never have abandoned it. Therefore, by the power of the sacred Scriptures, Pighius was drawn back from the error of the Scholastics—which could also draw back Cardinal Bellarmine if he had been willing to read and handle them sincerely with a mind eager for truth.

CHAPTER IV: On the Work Worked

They rush headlong once they have fallen away from the knowledge of grace; they rush headlong and cannot stop where they might.

They discover. And hence it is that the Papists dream of grace as bound to the sacraments and other institutions, so that neither faith nor any good inward motion is needed, since they can obtain grace, as they say, by the very work performed—*ex opere operato*. This is the Papist grace.

And lest anyone should think we have done an injustice to these good men, we shall here set forth, as briefly as possible, the opinion of the Papists concerning the work performed. For this opinion both reveals the superstitious vanity of the Papists and greatly obscures the grace of God.

Martin Chemnitz, drawing from the Scholastics, shows that the opinion concerning the work performed is such that the sacraments are said to confer grace *ex opere operato*, even if there is no good inward motion in the recipient—provided no obstacle is placed. He teaches that this foreign and confused opinion of the Scholastics came from Gabriel [Biel], who gathered into one the disputations and opinions of all the scholastic theologians; from Peter Paludanus, Marsilius, Albert, and Mensinger.

Bellarmino exclaims that this explanation of the work performed is false, that an injury is done to the Scholastics, and that poor Chemnitz was unable

to understand the Scholastics. Bellarmine makes a great noise about this, yet he himself does not depart from this opinion. O miserable condition of those who oppose the truth! They are ashamed of the error which they nevertheless tenaciously hold; nor do these hypocrites cast off the opinion which they judge ought to be condemned.

Chemnitz cites Gabriel as teaching thus: “Besides the outward exhibition of the sign, no good inward motion is required in the recipient.” Bellarmine replies that Gabriel is cited corruptly; for he immediately adds, “by which motion one may merit grace either *de congruo* or *de condigno*.” Therefore, Bellarmine says, Gabriel does not exclude an internal motion disposing to grace, but a motion meritorious of grace.

We respond: this very disposing motion is, according to Biel and the Scholastics—and consequently according to the opinion of the Papists—a motion meritorious of grace. Therefore, Chemnitz is blamed without cause, and Bellarmine’s reply is vain. For when the internal motion disposing to grace is meritorious, Bellarmine says the same as if he had replied that Biel does not exclude a meritorious motion, but a meritorious motion. Now indeed, Bellarmine admits in his next words that this motion disposing to grace is meritorious of grace *de congruo*; for he adds: “For although that disposition can be meritorious *de congruo*, or even an increase of grace *de condigno* if it is an act proceeding from charity, nevertheless that grace which is given on account of the disposition is other than that which is given by the power of the sacrament.” So says he.

Let us follow this man a little through these shadows—like a blind Italian hurling smoke and flames so that he may hide in darkness. The question is whether in the work performed some good internal motion is required by Gabriel. Bellarmine says: “Not a good internal motion disposing to grace, but a motion meritorious of grace is excluded.” But that disposing motion is also meritorious, says Bellarmine. Lutherans, being slower, cannot understand such profound absurdities nor reconcile such contradictions among themselves.

But let us see the Roman ingenuity: “Although that disposition can be meritorious de congruo and de condigno, nevertheless the grace which is given through the meritorious disposing motion is other than that which is given by the power of the sacrament.” But the true grace of Christ is one and the same—not one kind and another. For the Church does not teach that one grace is given outside the sacraments and another in the sacraments; but it is one and the same grace of God—not another—given by the same Christ, whether with or without sacraments; who is not one and another, but one and the same in all His works. But the fictitious grace of Antichrist is one kind and another.

Nevertheless, let us grant this “other,” for unless we concede it, it cannot be proved that there is one grace of disposition and another of the sacrament. What has this to do with Chemnitz, who in this place is speaking not about dispositions but about sacraments? Chemnitz proves that, according to the opinion of the Papists, in the reception of the sacraments the work performed is sufficient without a good inward motion. Bellarmine replies that the grace which is from merit de congruo is not without a good motion, but that grace conferred by the power of the sacrament is indeed without a good inward motion of mind. And what else

First, what does Chemnitz claim is taught by the Scholastics? Then—unless perhaps the wretched Lutherans are unable to understand the profundity of Sathane as he exalts himself in the Jesuits—every good movement is excluded in the **opus operatum**, because every meritorious movement is excluded. For among the Papists, there is no good movement that is not meritorious; indeed, they even make some non-good movement meritorious. We prove this from Bellarmine as follows:

A man not yet reconciled does not yet have a good movement of the mind; but a man not yet reconciled could merit; therefore it follows that some non-good movement is meritorious.

The proposition is true from the Apostle: because one not yet reconciled—that is, an impious person—cannot think anything good. The assumption is

Bellarmino's, for he teaches thus: "A man not yet reconciled can, through works of penitence, obtain and merit by congruity the grace of justification."

Now, if a non-good movement is meritorious, then every good movement will be meritorious. Therefore, those who teach that in the **opus operatum** no meritorious movement is required certainly teach that no good movement is required.

But if this opinion does not please the Papists, why do they not express themselves clearly? Let them pronounce an anathema upon all who teach that in the **opus operatum**, for obtaining grace, a good movement of the mind is not required. For this is what they say; indeed, the Council of Trent holds the contrary. And therefore this is the common opinion of the Scholastics: that the sacraments confer grace **ex opere operato**, so that a good meritorious movement of the mind is not required. Thus our Scotus taught: "The sacrament, by virtue of the **opus operatum**, confers grace in such a way that a good interior movement which merits grace is not required; but it suffices that the recipient place no obstacle."

Now, those who exclude every internal meritorious movement certainly exclude faith, because faith is a meritorious movement if any is. Therefore, we do them no injury when we say that, according to their opinion, faith is not required in the **opus operatum**. And lest we search too long, Bellarmine himself admits that the grace of justification is given through the sacraments in such a way that actual faith or love is not aroused. For he says: "The sacraments justify, but certainly they do not justify except by concurring instrumentally toward the infusion of habitual justice. For if they ought to justify by arousing actual faith and love, baptism would be administered in vain to infants, and in vain would those be baptized or reconciled who had lost the use of reason and sense through illness." So says he.

We respond that this reasoning rests on a false foundation. It is false that the sacraments infuse habitual justice by an instrumental mode. First, the sacraments do not have the mode of an infusing instrument, but the mode of a sign. Second, they do not infuse grace which was not present before, but

seal that which had been received in believers. Finally, they do not infuse that habit because such a habit does not exist. For there is no grace of justification which faith does not apprehend.

The Apostle teaches that the sacraments are signs of faith (Rom. 4:11). Nor does that distinction of the Papists avail, by which they distinguish between sacraments of the Law and of the Gospel. For however these may be distinguished, it is certain that they agree in that matter for which the Apostle brings forward those words—to confirm both the doctrine of imputation and of sacraments. For he speaks of Abraham, not under the Law but in uncircumcision, and to this end the Apostle asserts these things: that Abraham may be understood as the father of all who believe in uncircumcision. For thus says the Apostle: “To Abraham faith was imputed for righteousness, and he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had in uncircumcision, so that he might be the father of all who believe in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be imputed to them also.”

From these words of the Apostle it is clear that the sacraments in uncircumcision are signs of faith. It is also clear that Abraham in this place is set forth as an example to all believers in the Church: because he is called the father of believers in uncircumcision, since in uncircumcision he received the sacrament as a seal of the righteousness of faith.

Therefore we argue thus: All believers are justified in the same way as Abraham was justified. This proposition is most certain, because Abraham is called in this respect the father of all who believe in uncircumcision. But Abraham was not justified through sacraments by concurring instrumentally toward the infusion of habitual justice, but by the imputation of righteousness. Therefore, all believers are justified in the same way. And this is the very conclusion of the Apostle: “that righteousness might be imputed to them also.” We see how great a conflict there is between the Tridentine doctrine and the Apostolic doctrine concerning the power of the sacraments. We have shown the power and use of the sacraments from the clear Scriptures. But can the Tridentines show from the Scriptures their own

marks—concerning the instrumental mode, their infusions, and infused habitual righteousness—in such a way that it is not apprehended by faith?

These things can easily be taken from Scotus, Gabriel, and others of the same leaven, but they cannot be taken from the Scriptures. Saint Peter also holds the same about Baptism as Paul taught concerning circumcision; for he teaches that baptism does not consist in effusions, or infusions, or habits without faith—which the dreamers imagine—but is the pledge of a good conscience before God. This pledge before God could not exist without faith; nor, therefore, could Baptism. Thus, let us gather the genuine use of the sacraments from the Holy Scriptures, which is sought in vain from the Scholastics.

Nevertheless, Baptism is not administered in vain to infants; because faith and the pledge before God are necessarily required in Baptism according to the Scriptures: for infants are baptized in the faith of their parents. Because the promise is given to believers and their children (Acts 2:38 and Genesis 17), just as infants were circumcised. But if the sacraments conferred the grace of justification without faith **ex opere operato**, as Bellarmine holds, all the baptized would have the grace of justification and would be sanctified; for grace justifies and sanctifies.

Augustine, disputing against the Donatists, applies a distinction between the reception of the sacraments and the grace of sanctification; by which he infallibly proves that grace is not necessarily conferred through the very reception of the sacrament **ex opere operato**. "As many of you," he says, "as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ; but the greedy, envious, drunkards are baptized: how then do they put on Christ?" Augustine replies: "People put on Christ sometimes only as far as the reception of the sacrament, sometimes as far as the sanctification of life." The first can be common to good and evil; the latter is proper to the godly. So he says. By this judgment, therefore, the very reception of the sacrament **ex opere operato** does not sanctify, does not confer the grace of justification: because this grace always sanctifies.

This response of Augustine is to be observed more accurately because from the same passage of Scripture, Aquinas concludes thus: "The sacraments of the new law cause grace by way of instrument, namely because the Apostle says, 'As many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.'" Aquinas does not rightly infer: for there is a twofold reply. The first is Augustine's, in that distinction we cited above. Because Augustine affirms that the wicked, who are not sanctified, receive the sacraments; therefore, the very reception does not cause grace by way of instrument, as Aquinas teaches. The other reply is that we understand the Apostle to be speaking of the children of God who truly believe. Moreover, that this was the Apostle's intention is clear from the whole scope of the entire sentence. For the whole sentence is this: "For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus; for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Here the Apostle speaks of the sons of God, truly justified and sanctified, and about their faith. Therefore, they act fraudulently who imagine faith removed from the sacraments, so that the sacraments themselves might be understood to confer grace by themselves without faith.

It is clear, therefore, that the opinion of the Papists concerning **ex opere operato** is such that they say the sacraments confer grace, or cause it—as those men say—by way of instrument, **ex opere operato**, without faith. The Scholastics teach that no meritorious motion is required; Bellarmine admits that actual faith is not required—that is, that faith which apprehends imputed righteousness is not here necessary. Thus they exclude the faith which the Apostle includes. Rightly, therefore, we say that this is their opinion: in **ex opere operato**, faith which apprehends the promise is not required.

From their own interpreters we investigate the sense of the Council of Trent, where it teaches thus: "If anyone says that through the sacraments themselves of the new law grace is not conferred **ex opere operato**, but that faith alone in the divine promise is sufficient to obtain grace, let him be anathema." These things are insidiously set forth by the Tridentines, as if our opinion were that faith alone was intended to make us reject the use of the Word and of the sacraments. But since the Council of Trent opposes these two—the work wrought (*opus operatum*) and faith, which in the promise

receives grace, whether in the sacraments or outside the sacraments—by this antithesis it is sufficiently clear that faith is excluded. This opinion of the Council is illustrated by Bellarmine when he teaches that faith, which he calls actual, is not required. Thus, if Bellarmine correctly explained the Council's opinion, actual faith—that is, faith apprehending the promise—is excluded. Therefore, all faith is excluded in adults, because they either believe or ought to believe. This is that new opinion which the Tridentines took from the Scholastics, which they can neither retain nor are willing to discard. They are ashamed of this absurd faith, and yet they cling to it tenaciously: either they themselves should entirely abandon it and condemn it with an anathema, or they should not be angry with us for attributing to them this novelty which they are unwilling to give up.

Bellarmino presents the opinion of all the Scholastics (from which the Tridentines declare they do not depart a nail's breadth) that in the work wrought no meritorious movement is required. Do they not entirely exclude faith? For even by the opinion of the Papists themselves, faith is a meritorious movement. We conclude, therefore, that this is the genuine opinion of the Papists: in the work wrought, faith is not required.

This opinion, which teaches that the sacraments confer grace by the force of the work wrought without any good meritorious movement on the part of the one not placing an obstacle, seems to have arisen around the time of John Duns Scotus. Thomas Aquinas appears to have brought some stones for this structure when he taught: "The sacraments of the new law cause grace by way of instrument." These gave occasion to the following Sophists to philosophize in their own manner. But Aquinas has nothing about the work wrought or about an obstacle. These things seem to have been added by later writers. And so the Tridentine faith, like a patched garment, finally cohered, stitched together from many and various scraps. Before these times, this opinion was unheard of in the Roman Church. So much concerning the work wrought.

CHAPTER V: Bellarmine's Objections Are Examined and Refuted

When Cardinal Bellarmine sees that he cannot prove that inherent grace unless he first rejects the righteousness of Christ imputed to believers, he undertakes a monstrous crime. For, attempting to prove this inherent righteousness, he tries to overthrow the imputation of Christ's righteousness. But he will more easily pull the sun from heaven than remove Christ, the sun of righteousness, from his Church. And in this matter, the dishonesty of the Jesuits is seen to assert itself more insolently in the Church of God, because they do not hesitate to raise questions which no one before them dared to raise. For learned and grave men in the Roman Church taught that these could agree with each other: namely, the imputation of Christ's righteousness and inherent righteousness. For they called inherent righteousness in us "holiness." So Cardinal Contarini, whose opinion I have already mentioned; so many others. For in the justification of the ungodly they understand and teach that we are justified not by our own but by another's righteousness imputed to us, namely Christ's. But when those who are justified advance in works of holiness—so that he who is justified may be justified still more—they were accustomed to call this righteousness, or the declaration and showing of our justification, "inherent righteousness." Against this opinion we have nothing to oppose. This opinion of the ancient fathers and of the Roman Church prevailed in the Church for a long time, until the Jesuits devised another from the patched-together fictions of the friars.

Moreover, in this place we observe that the doctrine of the imputation of Christ's righteousness was first rejected by the Jesuits. For the Scholastics neither confirm nor equally reject by name the imputation of Christ. But the Jesuits, when they saw that they could not receive the Scholastics' invention concerning congruous merit, concerning the work wrought, concerning the infusion of habitual grace unless they rejected the imputation of Christ's righteousness, preferred to repudiate Christ with his righteousness rather than not embrace these fictions.

Let us now hear with what arguments Bellarmine rejects the imputed righteousness of Christ in order to establish inherent righteousness.

First, he argues from this passage: "By the obedience of one man, many are appointed as righteous." "We," he says, "through the obedience of one Christ, believe that many are made righteous, in this sense: that by the merit of Christ's obedience God is reconciled to us, and by Him we are given righteousness, which is a quality infused into and inherent in our soul." So he says. An excellent proof by the Cardinal: "We believe." The most learned Cardinal, in a most important article of religion, seems to stammer and speak without sense. "By the merit," he says, "of Christ's obedience God is reconciled to us, and by Him we are given righteousness, which is inherent in us." The latter part of this statement conflicts with the former. For if by the merit of Christ's obedience God is reconciled to us, so that we are given righteousness by God, we ask the Lord Cardinal: What is that righteousness given by God, yet obtained by the merit of Christ's obedience? He answers: It is inherent in us. But the Lord Cardinal does not realize that he is joining impossibilities: for the righteousness which arises from the merit of Christ's obedience is outside us, because Christ was made righteousness for us by God. And hence the Apostle defines the blessedness of a believing man in imputed righteousness: "Christ was made righteousness for us by God," righteousness given to us, righteousness imputed to us—they demonstrate an alien righteousness, not an inherent one.

Then see how the Lord Cardinal entangles and ensnares himself. "By the merit," he says, "of Christ God is reconciled to us, and by God we are given righteousness which is inherent in us." Whence comes inherent righteousness? From our own merit: this is the common opinion of all the Tridentines. Whence comes righteousness given to us by God, imputed righteousness? From the merit of Christ's obedience, says the Cardinal. Here the more the Cardinal struggles, the more he is bound by his own knot. For that inherent righteousness comes from our own merit is the opinion of all those who accept congruous merit, and hence of all Jesuits. And so Bellarmine teaches thus: "A man not yet reconciled can obtain and merit by congruous merit the grace of justification." But if the grace of justification comes to us from congruous merit, where then is the merit of Christ's obedience and the righteousness given to us by God? Certainly the merit of Christ is plainly extinguished by this Jesuitical congruous merit; nor can the

Lord Cardinal be so dull as not to see that these are incompatible: righteousness given to us by God from the merit of Christ's obedience, and inherent righteousness which a man not yet reconciled can merit by congruous merit. And yet this most learned Cardinal wished to include these contradictory things in one senseless period.

When an ungodly person is justified, he has imputed righteousness given by God, because he is destitute of his own. But when a man not yet reconciled merits by congruous merit the grace of justification, he takes grace from himself; he does not receive it as a gift. Moreover, "ungodly" is understood as anyone who is not reconciled to God; so according to the Lord Cardinal's opinion, when an ungodly person is justified, it must be understood that the ungodly person justifies himself. This is the pestilent doctrine of the Pelagians, taken up by the Tridentines, which empties out the grace of Christ. From this we see into what abyss they headlong rush who attack the doctrine of imputation.

Nevertheless, the Cardinal proceeds and wishes to prove this dream of his from the antithesis of the Apostle's words. For the Apostle had said: "Just as through the disobedience of one man many were appointed sinners," and immediately added: "so through the obedience of one man many are appointed righteous." "It is certain," says the Cardinal, "that we are not appointed sinners through imputation of the righteousness that was in Adam, but through unrighteousness inherent in us as a habit; therefore we are also appointed righteous—if the Apostle's antithesis has any force—not through imputation of righteousness which is from Christ, but through righteousness inherent in us as a habit."

I reply: Both are certain—that Adam's sin is imputed to us and that unrighteousness is inherent in us. The Cardinal denies the imputation of sin so that he may more easily deny the imputation of righteousness. But he is refuted by clear testimonies of Scripture. God threatens that He will visit the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and fourth generation. This cannot happen unless by imputing the parents' sins to impious and impenitent children. But if the Cardinal hesitates concerning Adam's sin as if it were not imputed, let him consult the Apostle in that very passage which

the Cardinal cites. For in the same chapter the Apostle has these words: "But sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over those who did

They have sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression.

By these words, the Cardinal can understand that the law acts so that sin is imputed.

Therefore, there is an imputation of sin, just as of righteousness.

He can also understand that death reigning from Adam until Moses proves that Adam's sin is imputed to infants—namely, to those who have not sinned in the likeness of Adam's transgression.

For Adam's sin was actual, but the sin of infants born from Adam is original.

Although they do not sin in the likeness of Adam's sin, nevertheless they have Adam's sin imputed to them, and thus they are constituted sinners by imputation.

The Cardinal says: "It is established that we are not constituted sinners by the imputation of the unrighteousness that was in Adam."

How is this established? Or by whom?

Whoever says this—how can original sin be defended?

Either original sin must be utterly denied with Pelagius, or we are constituted sinners by the imputation of the unrighteousness that was in Adam, because original sin is an imputed sin.

We do not deny that this sin inheres and even dwells within us; but what the Cardinal adds—that we are constituted sinners by inherent unrighteousness in the manner of a habit—cannot be universally true, because we are constituted sinners by original sin, which is not inherent in the manner of a habit.

Next, the Cardinal strives to prove that grace is a habit inherent in us from these words:

“The water that I will give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life.”

This spring, says the Lord Cardinal, is the Holy Spirit dwelling within through grace.

Moreover, it cannot be doubted that by “spring” something permanent and fixed is understood, and by this is signified grace inherent in the soul in the manner of an inherent habit, from which flow rivers of good works that leap up to eternal life.

For water rises as high as the place from which it descends, etc., because this spring descends from heaven; therefore its waters reach all the way to heaven.

So says Bellarmine.

These and similar are Bellarmine’s arguments, with which he deceives and trifles, leading the reader astray.

But my good hours are not to be spent so uselessly as to linger in refuting these matters, which bear no semblance either of dialectic or even of sophistry.

Exactly like these are the things that Aquinas argued concerning this fiction of inherent righteousness.

For after raising certain objections in his customary way, when at last he began to establish his opinion against those objections, he relies on a truly marvelous foundation, as he reports:

“But on the contrary, on that text of Psalm 103, ‘to make his face shine with oil,’ the Gloss says that grace is a brightness of the soul reconciling holy love; but brightness of the soul is a certain quality, just as beauty of the body; therefore grace is a certain quality.”

So says Thomas.

Thus they play in the gravest controversies of faith, and the Jesuits take up their games.

By this argument Aquinas will never accomplish what he proposed unless first the authority of the ordinary Gloss is established as sacrosanct in the Church, from which we might safely and firmly define controversies of faith.

But neither did Aquinas correctly report the opinion of the Gloss, for the full words of the Gloss are these:

“Grace therefore, and a certain brightness which is for reconciling holy love to man, is called oil.”

So says he; thus Aquinas perverts the words of the Glossator.

Moreover, the Glossator himself, wishing to report Augustine’s opinion in that place, twisted it from the author’s meaning not with intent to corrupt but to abbreviate.

For Augustine’s words are:

“What is the gladdening of the face with oil? The grace of God, a certain brightness in manifestation, as the Apostle said: ‘To each is given the Spirit for manifestation.’”

So says Augustine.

From observation of this matter, the prudent reader can easily judge by what modes, degrees, and increments the tares have grown in the Lord’s field.

For here one may certainly detect the wickedness of the enemy of man and catch him, as it were, like a thief or robber in flagrant crime.

The Apostle sowed good seed in the Lord’s field: “To each,” he says, “is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”

The Apostle speaks of the gifts of the Spirit, which are given for the building up of others; for “there are varieties of gifts,” he says, “but the same Spirit.”

It is certain that the Apostle here disputes not about justifying grace—which theologians call *gratia gratum faciens*—but about the gifts of the Holy Spirit and about grace which the Scholastics call *gratis data*.

Augustine quoted the Apostle's words so as to retain their sense.

For he speaks of the manifestation of the Spirit, which is

In the context of grace freely given, he added one word, calling this grace "brightness," alluding to the allegory of oil. Then Augustine discusses the grace which is between humans and humans, saying: "A certain grace which is evident among humans, for fostering holy love, is called oil in divine brightness." Here Augustine explains himself, lest anyone might snatch this away to refer to grace between God and humans.

From this single added word, see what a great crop the enemy man has scattered. The Ordinary Gloss reports this imperfectly: "Brightness," it says, "which is for fostering holy love in a human." Here you see some things omitted, some added, and the sense inverted and altered. Then Aquinas draws from this a definition of grace, so that it becomes the brightness of the soul, fostering holy love. Subsequent theologians accept this without examination and apply it to sanctifying grace, adding also that this brightness is a habitual inherent quality, not really distinct from charity. Finally, the Council of Trent collected all these corruptions, alterations, and additions, and composed the Tridentine article concerning this infused habit conferred in the sacraments *ex opere operato*. And so what was initially handed down in Scripture about grace freely given and received from the Fathers, by the dishonest industry of theologians and Jesuits, aided by the enemy man, was turned and changed into sanctifying grace. And thus this contrived brightness and sown habitual quality burst forth and grew into a crop in the Church, until it will be eradicated by the Lord's command.

Moreover, we observe from Aquinas that this opinion arose from human ingenuity without the testimony of Scripture. For if this opinion could have been confirmed by the testimony of Scripture or the Fathers, there is no doubt that Aquinas would have brought it forward and not hesitated in the words of the Glossator. Therefore, lacking the testimony of Scripture and

antiquity, since he could not find older and better sources, relying on the testimony of one Gloss, he taught this.

CHAPTER VI: Testimonies of the Greek Fathers are cited.

The ancients before Augustine treated this question of grace more sparingly because before Pelagius no one had called this part of the truth into doubt. Nevertheless, we will bring forward the tradition of the ancients on this matter, if we first alert the reader to the baseless vanity of the Papists. For Bellarmine affirms that this opinion which defends grace as an inherent habit is the opinion of the whole Church; to confirm this matter he brings forward two recent councils: that of Vienne (about which more below) and that of Trent. But let us seek the opinion of the whole Church not from recent testimonies but from the consensus of all antiquity.

Thus, then, the Greeks taught in the Eastern Church:

Clement of Alexandria: "It is necessary to have a sound mind, and one which is not hindered by any repentance from the pursuit of good, for which indeed we especially need divine grace, right and chaste doctrine, and a pure affection of soul, and the attraction of the Father." Here he explains divine grace through the attraction of the Father; therefore he acknowledges that it is placed not in our virtue but in the favor of the one attracting.

Origen: "Grace is first joined to us through faith, as also the Apostle says: 'By grace you have been saved through faith.' And soon after the grace of belief comes the amendment of morals and the conversion of life." So he says. There are many things which Origen explained in few words: 1. Grace is through faith; therefore not through a habit indistinct from charity, because faith is really distinct from charity. 2. Grace is through faith; therefore the sacraments do not confer this grace *ex opere operato*, because in *ex opere operato* the Papists do not require faith. 3. Grace is first present through faith; therefore not through habits, because it is present in us before all habits. 4. After grace comes the conversion of life. Therefore habits and qualities which consist in the conversion of life are effects of grace and from grace. From all these it is clear that the grace which the Papists have recently contrived was entirely unknown to Origen.

Basil teaches thus: "The immense grace of God's humanity precedes us in the love of Christ Jesus our Lord, whose obedience unto death, as it is written, is our redemption." Therefore Basil placed the grace of God in the love of Christ, not in our love. And the same: "Salvation is not in virtue, not in human wisdom, but in the grace of God."

Chrysostom: [Text breaks off here.]

From the Galatians, it is said: "He who relies on faith alone is accursed." The Apostle demonstrates the contrary—that he who relies on faith alone is blessed—and afterward: "The law requires faith to be made known, but also works; yet grace saves and justifies by faith."

What is grace? It is the remission and purification of sins. Cyril of Alexandria says: "Grace prevails, which justifies the impious and frees from every stain those who have obtained mercy." And elsewhere: "Grace is given to the saints by the Father through the Son." Paul testifies: "I thank my God always for you because of the grace of God given to you in Christ." Theodoret says: "Grace grants forgiveness of sins; this confirms God's promise, giving the blessing to the nations." So he says. But that papal disposition and splendor neither grants forgiveness of sins nor lays hold of the promise.

The same author says: "Grace conceived me through faith"—this is the voice of the Church. "The salvation of humans depends solely on the mercy of God; we do not obtain it as a reward or wage of righteousness, but it is a gift of God's goodness." So he says. What can be said more clearly against inherent habit? Therefore, if the Lord Christ possesses this—that He is both God and propitiator, priest and lamb—and has procured our salvation in His own blood, you will require faith alone.

Theophylact says: "The righteousness of God is by faith; it does not need labors or our works, but belongs entirely to the grace of God." So he says. If all the righteousness of God belongs to grace and does not need our labors, certainly it will not need our habits. The same author excellently explains the grace of justification with these words: "All are justified freely by the grace of God, which comes through redemption—that is, by the perfect freedom

which Christ accomplished; for He gave Himself as the price of redemption and justified all." Thus taught the Greeks.

Testimonies of the Latin Fathers are now presented. The Latins follow:

Irenaeus: "Paul, announcing the weakness of man, says: 'I know that no good dwells in my flesh,' signifying that the good of our salvation is not from us, but from God." This he says excellently against merit of congruity.

Tertullian: "Some think as if God does not deign to bestow even upon the unworthy what He has promised, and they make His liberality into servitude." "Since human nature, which it received, cannot preserve salvation without the grace of God, how without God's grace will it be able to restore what it lost?"

Cyprian: "Whatever is pleasing is ascribed not to human virtue but is proclaimed as from God's gift. All that we can do is of God, I say, of God; as much as we bring of capable faith, so much from there do we draw an overflowing of grace." "This we ask for day and night: that the sanctification and vivification which is taken from God's grace may be preserved by His protection." "We pray that God's will may be done in us; that it may be done in us requires God's will—that is, His working and protection—because no one is strong by his own powers but is safe by God's indulgence and mercy."

Ambrose: "It is manifest that grace is a gift of God, not a due reward for works, but granted by gratuitous favor with mercy intervening." And soon after: "To give pardon to sinners is nothing other than grace."

Jerome, where he first taught against the Pelagians that only God is wise—not by grace as in other things, but by nature—and that all humans are sinners according to the Apostle, and justified by faith without works of the law, finally adds this: "The Apostle shows especially that righteousness is not in human merit but in God's grace, which receives the faith of believers apart from works of the law." "Then we are just when we confess ourselves

to be sinners, and our righteousness consists not in our own merit but in God's mercy."

What is the difference between Pelagians and Papists? Pelagius taught that humans are justified not by grace but by merits; the Fathers prove the contrary—not by merits but by grace. Pelagius, when admonished, tried to join these contradictory things: both by grace and by merits—that is, to concede the grace of God in words but in reality to take it away. The Fathers testify that Pelagius, when admonished, conceded grace at least in words under ambiguous generality, hiding what he really thought, so that by the word 'grace' he might break envy and avoid offense. The Papists also do this, who have devised a new acceptance of grace, unheard of in the ancient Church: that grace is in our inherent habits, so that it may be acquired by merit of congruity, so that it is conferred *ex opere operato*. Therefore, whatever the Fathers argued against Pelagius holds against the Papists.

Augustine treats the controversy about grace most accurately against the Pelagians—indeed truly also against the Papists. For he teaches thus: "Grace through our Lord Jesus Christ, in which He makes us just by His judgments, not our own, so that our true righteousness may be that which is from Him." So he says—no less against Pelagians than against

Concerning the Tridentines:

They deny, along with the Pelagians, the imputation of Christ's righteousness.

Let people understand that they are justified from sins by the same grace through which it came about that the man Christ could have no sin.

****Grace**** is that which is given freely, not on account of the merits of the worker, but by the mercy of the giver.

Why is it called grace? Because it is given freely.

Why is it given freely? Because your merits did not come first, but the kindness of God anticipated you.

What does “given freely” mean? It costs nothing. You have done nothing good, and yet forgiveness of sins is given to you.

Your works are examined and all are found evil. If God were to render what is owed for those works, He would condemn you.

But God does not repay you with the punishment you deserve; He gives you unmerited grace.

Therefore, those who are set free by grace are not called vessels of their own merits, but vessels of mercy—whose mercy comes only from Him who sent Jesus Christ into this world to save sinners.

“Give me life according to your word.”

He does not say, “Give me life according to my merit,” but “according to your word.”

What is this but “according to your promise”?

He wishes to be a son of the promise, not of self-exaltation, so that according to grace the promise may be made sure to all the seed.

These words sharply sting the papists, whom he calls sons of pride, because they deny that the promise of grace is to be received by faith for righteousness—for Augustine firmly maintains the imputation of Christ’s righteousness, which the Tridentines stubbornly reject.

“In your righteousness, not in my own; for mine was preceded by iniquity.

When I shall be righteous, it will be your righteousness, because I will be righteous by the righteousness given me by you.

So it will be mine in such a way that it is yours—that is, given to me by you.”

For I believe in Him who justifies the ungodly, so that my faith may be counted as righteousness.

Between **grace and predestination** there is only this difference:

Predestination is the preparation of grace, but grace is the actual giving of the gift.

Augustine says these and many other things to this effect.

Where then were those fictions about congruous merit, works performed, and inherent habitual quality?

****Prosper**** says:

Just as there are no crimes so detestable that they can shut out the gift of grace, so there can be no works so excellent that by them this gift—which is bestowed freely as a sign of predestination—should be owed.

Where punishment is prescribed, there must be repentance; where forgiveness is given, there is grace.

Repentance comes first; grace follows.

Therefore, there is no repentance without grace, nor grace without repentance.

For repentance must first condemn sin so that grace may then abolish it.

No one is freed from the penalty of the first man except through the grace of our Lord, prepared and predestined in the eternal counsel of God before the foundation of the world.

How far these things are from the sense of the papists!

****Sedulius**** says:

It is called the grace of God or the Son of God because through His grace He freely forgave sins.

Can the papists twist this to their notion of infused and inherent habit?

Leo says:

The cause of our restoration is nothing but the mercy of God, whom we would not love unless He first loved us.

Isidore says:

Grace is provided out of mercy and compassion and is apprehended by faith alone, not from works.

Primasius says:

We are saved by faith alone through grace.

Fulgentius** says:

Christ died for sinners and for the ungodly so that we might be called to believe not by merit but by grace.

After explaining the chain of divine grace, he adds:

All these things—that is, both the beginnings of our calling and

He always had the increases of justification and the reward of glorification in predestination, because in the calling, justification, and glorification of the saints, he foreknew the works of his grace. Gregory says: We are debtors of grace; for we alone gave evil works by living wickedly. If just retribution were preserved, we would be rendered not to Christ but to punishment. But man merited one thing through justice, and received another through grace. How sincerely Pope Gregory opposes the Pontificians! Indeed, that fabrication of the Tridentines concerning our preparations and the merit of congruity, Gregory thus uproots from its foundations in those words of Job: “Who has first given to me, that I should repay him?” No one, he says; for in order that divine grace may follow him, no one first conferred anything upon God. For if we anticipate God by doing good works, where is that which the Prophet says: “His mercy shall prevent me”? If we gave any good works, or merited by his grace, where is that which the Apostle says: “By grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should glory”? If our love anticipates God, where is that which the Apostle John says: “Not that we loved God, but that he first loved us”? Gregory has many more things in this sense, and immediately: if at least we anticipate the gifts of good works by our own virtue in thinking well, where is that which is wholesomely said through Paul: that all

confidence of the human mind concerning itself may be cut off from the very root of the heart, when he says: “Not that we are sufficient to think anything as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is from God”? These are the words of Gregory.

Therefore, the ancient Roman Pontiffs are ours—indeed, they are Christ’s—and they agree with the Church of Christ against the Tridentines.

Cassiodorus says: Indeed, there is a wretched freedom of the will in the evil part, so that the transgressor deserts the Creator and turns himself to unspeakable vices; but in the good part we lost free will through Adam’s sin, to which we cannot return except through the grace of Christ; as the Apostle says: “It is God who works in you both to will and to accomplish, according to his good will.” Olympiodorus says: The sum of salvation is placed in the mercies of the Lord and in his kindness rather than in judgments. Fortunatus says: The will of man does not have good unless the Lord inspires it, according to that saying: “My God, his mercy shall prevent me.” Maxentius John says: We believe that from Adam until now no one has been saved by the vigor of nature, except by the gift of the grace of the Holy Spirit in faith in the name of Jesus. But we believe that natural free will avails for nothing else except only for discerning and desiring carnal or secular things. And immediately: Therefore, we anathematize those who, contrary to the word of the Apostle, dare to say: “It is ours to will, and God’s to accomplish,” since the same teacher testifies that both to will and to accomplish are a divine gift. Bede says: Faith is given by the Father to believers, so that no one may glory in his own faith, which is not from himself as if it were his own, but is given by God as grace. Such a one shall receive blessing—that is, multiplication from the Lord—namely this: that we may be advanced well in the present and removed well in the future; and this not from merits, but from grace alone; because he shall receive mercy from God—that is, because the good will of God precedes in him and his grace, which is not from merits but from God. These are the words of our Bede.

Few things which are worthy of observation:

1. No one has faith from himself—against the Pelagians.

2. Faith is grace; therefore grace does not arise from works—against the Pontificians.

3. The faithful have this grace so that they may be able to merit well in the present; therefore, the will to merit comes from grace, and not grace from the will and disposition to merit, as the Pontificians say.

4. Grace causes us to merit, but not from merits—an expression of Bede to be observed, which clearly shows that when the ancient fathers used the words “to merit” and “to deserve,” they did not mean what the Pontificians mean, because while the fathers retain the words “to merit” and “to deserve,” they reject the idea of merits; for “to merit” among the ancients meant to obtain without merit.

Thus Gregory: “O necessary sin of Adam, O happy fault, which merited to have such and so great a redeemer.” So he says.

Therefore, in vain and foolishly do the Pontificians conclude from the word “merit” the fathers’ opinion about merit, because the fathers teach that we merit without merit, since they even say that sin merited.

Alcuinus: “From which the first man, sold under sin by free will, began to have an evil freedom, because goodness of will was taken away from that very freedom, which no one could have from himself thereafter unless helped by divine mercy through grace.”

Rabanus: “Man can no longer be saved except through the grace of Jesus Christ, namely, his redeemer.”

Thus far we have placed testimonies of the fathers; now follow those whom the Pontificians number among their own, who nevertheless have nothing in common with them in this matter.

Remigius: “The heavens declare the glory of God: namely this, that he made us safe not from works which we have done, but according to his mercy.”

Haymo: “The righteousness of God, that is, the justification by which he justifies those who believe in him—this is the righteousness by which all

believers are justified by the gift of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

“In the present time the righteousness of God is made manifest, not only that by which he himself is righteous or by which he is justified who is essentially righteousness itself, but that which he gives to the ungodly when out of mercy he makes a believer from an unbeliever, makes a chaste and continent person from an adulterer and fornicator, makes a righteous person and a lover of virtues from an unrighteous person and sinner.”

Hincmar: “The grace of God justifies the ungodly, that is, it makes righteous people out of the ungodly.”

Gilbert: “It is by the grace of God that a man justified by faith is able in some way through it to do what he knows.”

“What is the righteousness of God? I call it the righteousness of God not by which God is righteous, but by which he clothes a man when he freely justifies the ungodly; to this righteousness the law and the prophets bear witness.”

Anselm: “We are nothing unless we are ruled by the mercy and grace of God.”

“From the vice of Adam only the grace of Christ sets free, which is given not according to human merits, but freely, since God is a judge who connects many things rather than few.”

For Anselm refuted both Pelagians and Tridentines in few words:

- The Pelagians indeed taught that grace is given according to human merits. Augustine often warns that this was the sum of the Pelagian poison.
- The Pontificians also teach the same thing—namely that through their so-called dispositions, preparations, works of penance, works performed, and merits of congruity grace is acquired.

Bernard: “It suffices for me for all righteousness to have only one to have as favorable, to whom alone I have sinned, that all which He Himself has

decreed not to impute to me, so that, as if it had not been, not to sin is the justice of God; the justice of man is the indulgence of God. Here certainly merit is lacking, but not mercy to him. I shudder at whatever is of my own, so that I may not be my own, except that it is perhaps more my own which makes me belong to myself; grace renders me justified freely, and thus freed from the slavery of sin. Moreover, many things written by this holy man in this opinion—let these suffice for refuting the inherent justice of the Tridentines.”

Rupert: The grace of the Holy Spirit is true, and it alone is the remission of sins. We have received grace for grace: namely, the grace of eternal salvation for the grace of present faith, to which He Himself called us freely—that is, without any of our preceding merits—through His preachers, and justified us by the free remission of sins.

Hugh of St. Victor: I cannot will unless the grace of God is with me, for there is no human effort without the grace of God; since the first man sinned, we lost the good of nature and likewise of free will.

Thus far, grace was directly and sincerely received and explained by the Fathers; nor were the Tridentine monstrosities of this kind—such as habitual quality, or inherent justice in us, or congruous merit, or a work performed, or the like—written, preached, or even heard at all in the Church before the year of Christ one thousand—that is, before the loosing of Satan. Thereafter, a change in the doctrine of grace in the Roman Church began.

Therefore, the Fathers excellently defended faith against heretics, especially against Pelagius, explaining the grace of God in such a way that they understood by grace nothing other than the favor of God and acceptance. Grace is the remission of sins; grace justifies by faith; grace is given measure for measure of faith; grace is provided from mercy and consists in mercy; grace is the preparation of predestination; grace is in imputation; grace illustrates the justice of God by which He justifies us, by which He clothes the ungodly. These and similar things preached with great faith and diligence by the ancients—what else do they demonstrate than that grace was held by all these as solely the favor of God? And that at that time there

was no place in the Church for Tridentine signs; and consequently all the Fathers who wrote before the year of Christ one thousand are struck by the Tridentine anathema.

CHAPTER VIII: On the Origin of the Error

Now, to reveal the origin of this error: Peter Lombard in this matter first deserted the footsteps of the ancient Fathers and administered poison to the following theologians. For he asks whether grace is a virtue, and thus concludes: That grace (which frees the will) is not unfittingly called a virtue, because it heals and aids the weak will of man. Then Aquinas teaches that grace is a quality of the soul, but in the next article denies it to be a virtue. Moreover, he describes such a quality as inhering in the soul, and to use his words: "Insofar as it is a quality, it is said to act in the soul, not in the manner of an efficient cause, but in the manner of a formal cause, as whiteness makes white, and justice makes just." So says he.

From this source that celebrated doctrine received among the Pontificals is derived: that the justice of man by which he is justified before God is an inherent quality and charity, or that works justify formally. But this manner of teaching was unheard of in the Church before these centuries.

Nor must we pass over that Aquinas on the same matter does not set forth consistent but conflicting things. For in his commentaries on the Epistles, he retained this doctrine of the grace of justification intact, so that he frequently confirms justification by faith alone. But in the Summa (by which writing Aquinas seems to have accommodated his genius to the prescription and mandate of the Roman Pontiff—which is also evident concerning other friars, especially Augustine of Ancona, who confesses that he taught according to the prescription of the Roman Pontiff), the doctrine of justification is deeply obscured and he changes this part of the doctrine. For he defines justification in the remission of sins and in the acquisition of justice. He says: "The justification of the ungodly is the remission of sins with the acquisition of justice." Therefore, what the ancients taught from Scripture concerning the imputed justice of Christ we see either omitted or

rejected by Aquinas, who substituted acquisition in place of imputation. Henceforth, imputation...

The doctrine was thoroughly rejected by the Council of Trent.

Concerning preparation, Aquinas taught:

"Since eternal life exceeds every faculty of nature, man—whether in the state of integral nature or in the state of corrupt nature—cannot attain it without grace."

So says he.

He confirms this opinion in the same place, question 12, article 2:

"There can be no merit without grace," he says.

Therefore, Aquinas teaches against the Tridentines that there is no merit of congruity by which one not yet reconciled can merit the grace of justification.

Scotus opposes this opinion; the Tridentines follow Scotus.

And Aquinas and Scotus seem to have divided these errors as two provinces of the Antichrist: Aquinas introducing the merit of condignity, and Scotus the merit of congruity.

Yet Aquinas confirms the former error in such a way that he also laid certain foundations for the second.

For he teaches thus:

"A meritorious work of man can be considered in two ways: one, according as it proceeds from free will; another, according as it proceeds from the grace of the Holy Spirit.

If it is considered according to the substance of the work and as proceeding from free will, then there cannot be condignity on account of the greatest inequality; but there is congruity on account of a certain proportional equality.

For it seems fitting that God should reward a man working according to his own power according to the excellence of His own power.

But if we speak of a meritorious work as proceeding from the grace of the Holy Spirit, then it is meritorious of eternal life by condignity."

These are his words, by which he plainly subverts the doctrine of God's grace handed down from Scripture and the Fathers.

Bonaventure, a contemporary of Aquinas, taught differently concerning merit.

For he holds thus:

"Grace already possessed cannot be merited through the use of grace, neither with respect to the merit of congruity nor with respect to the merit of condignity."

Concerning grace, he disputes in such a way that you will scarcely find among the Scholastics anyone who illustrates this doctrine more clearly, for he writes:

"Grace, with respect to the principle from which it comes, is divided into the grace of predestination, vocation, justification, and magnification.

For first God proposed grace, second He offers it, third He confers it, fourth He completes it."

Likewise he adds:

"As it is compared to being, it is divided into prevenient and subsequent, or operating and cooperating."

Therefore, when Peter Lombard defined grace as a virtue, Bonaventure does not follow the master as a servile herd (as many were accustomed to do), but as a serious critic:

"It must be said," he says, "that the Master (where he says that grace is a virtue) does not intend by that word to make known grace as to its essence, but as it were indirectly and in a certain way through its effect; because

grace does not issue into those acts except by means of the habits of the virtues—namely, faith and charity.

Therefore, making grace known, he says that grace is nothing other than faith with love, because through those habits grace is said to issue into acts, by which it becomes known to us."

In this place Bonaventure has many things in this opinion.

And although sometimes he speaks from the shadows of his age, nevertheless he brought forth many and better things in few words for opening up the nature and distinctions of grace than Cardinal Bellarmine, who consumed almost two whole pages on the distinctions of grace.

Afterward this matter was discussed in the Council of Vienne under Clement V, as can be established from the first Clementine.

For when from the disputations of theologians various and uncertain opinions on this matter were circulating—some of them saying (to use the words of the Clementine) "that through the virtue of baptism guilt is indeed remitted to infants, but grace is not conferred," others on the contrary asserting "that both guilt is remitted to them in baptism and virtues and informing grace are infused as to habit, though not for the time being as to use"—then Pope Clement says:

"But we, attending to the general efficacy of Christ's death, which through baptism is applied equally to all the baptized, have deemed—the Holy Council approving—the second opinion (which says that informing grace and virtues are conferred in baptism on infants as well as adults) as more probable and more consonant and agreeable to the sayings of the saints and modern doctors of theology."

So far the Clementine.

O, by how unequal masters this ancient house (I mean the Church) is ruled!

In ancient councils the ancients used constantly to confirm faith from Scripture; but in this assembly there is no mention of Scripture, but only of saints and modern doctors.

By "saints" here they understand Saint Thomas Aquinas; Bonaventure...

Concerning the future or other ferment of it: for before the Lombards, no one among the saints taught thus. Moreover, they establish this conclusion not as heavenly doctrine, but as a more probable opinion to be chosen—a clearly new and foreign practice. For when the Church of Christ treats of the Catholic faith, it is not accustomed to approach hesitantly, wavering toward some uncertain more probable opinions; rather, it delivers a certain truth defined from the Scriptures.

The Council of Vienne was celebrated under Clement V in the year of Christ 1311. From this source flowed the subsequent disputations of the Scholastics concerning infused habit and inherent virtue, concerning the work wrought in the sacraments, and concerning merit of congruity outside the sacraments. And so John Scotus teaches thus: "Grace formally is the virtue which is charity." This from Aquinas; he himself added certain things which prepared the way for the profane doctrine of merit of congruity among the Tridentines. For thus he says: "A sinner is able by natural powers, with common influence, to consider sin committed as offensive to God. The will is able to detest sin so considered, and that movement can be continued and intensified before the infusion of grace; moreover, this movement is called attrition. And it is a disposition or merit of congruity. If the same movement against sin remains in natural and moral being, which before was attrition, in that state it becomes contrition." This doctrine was either introduced by Scotus or diligently retained.

Scotus therefore writes of merit of congruity so that it is understood to exist before the infusion of grace in moral and natural being, and in natural powers. And this is that faith which the Roman Curia follows today; this is that preparation and disposition which the Tridentines oppose to justification by faith alone, when they say: "If anyone says that the impious are justified by faith alone, so that he understands nothing else to be required which cooperates toward obtaining the grace of justification, and that it is in no way necessary for him to be prepared and disposed by a movement of his own will, let him be anathema." This is that movement of the will which Scotus had described above. And so Bellarmine from the decree of the

Council of Trent teaches thus: "A man not yet reconciled is able through works of penance to impetrate and merit by congruity the grace of justification."

Therefore, the Tridentines clearly revive from hell the error of Pelagius. For what Augustine and other fathers condemned in Pelagius was especially that Pelagius taught that grace is given according to merits—concerning which matter Augustine in Book 1, Chapter 6 of **On the Grace of Christ** against Pelagius and Caelestinus testifies that this opinion utterly overturns the grace of God. And so he affirms that Pelagius denied grace. But if he denied grace who taught that it is given according to merits, certainly Pelagius no more denies grace than the Pontificals do. For what difference is there whether you say that grace is given according to merits—which the orthodox fathers condemned in the heretic Pelagius—or whether you teach thus: works done before reconciliation and grace merit the grace of justification?—which the Tridentines teach today.

In words they wish to seem to depart from Pelagius; in reality they agree. Pelagius more openly attacked grace, which these men do more secretly. Pelagius first taught that we are saved not by grace but by our merit. The fathers from the Scriptures taught: not by our merits but by the grace of God. The Tridentines join these together, just as Pelagius, when admonished, joined them; and they wish to retain both, saying "both by grace and by merits." But because in the justification of the impious grace and merits cannot stand together—"if by grace, then it is no longer by works; otherwise grace is no longer grace"—therefore the Tridentines, when in this matter they cannot serve two masters commanding such contrary things, must cast away one or the other: either grace or merit.

For just as those who wish to retain the true worship of God together with Baal, however much they profess in words, in reality trample on the worship of God; so those who join grace and merits in justification—which, if Scripture is believed, cannot be joined—utterly reject the grace of God, however much they may seem to admit it with cold words. The Pelagian poison is hidden within the Tridentines; if you press them with one little question, it will immediately burst forth, what was hidden.

We ask therefore—since these men chatter much about the help of grace—whether the will is helped because it willed, or whether it willed because it is helped? They say: "The will is helped because it willed; the help of grace..."

They grant with words, but in reality they remove with the Pelagians; for Prosper observes that this was the chief point of the Pelagian heresy. If they say that the will wills because it is assisted, they take away that preparation and the merit of congruity, which the Tridentines borrowed from Scotus. Nor will it help the Tridentines if they say that unreconciled man can merit, not eternal life, but the grace of justification, and through grace at length eternal life. For the Fathers, who execrate Pelagius, contend only about the grace of God. For the question was not whether eternal life is to be obtained through grace, but the controversy of the ancients with Pelagius was about how anyone can be brought to the state of grace. The Fathers contend against Pelagius that for obtaining grace and reconciliation, our works, free will, and merits are of no avail. They grant that we can obtain glory through grace, but deny that we can obtain grace through our works. Since the Pontificals profess this, they are stuck in the manifest mire of Pelagianism and, with Pelagius, as enemies of divine grace, they are condemned by the Fathers and by the Church of God.

Therefore, it can be established that, as far as the origin of this error is concerned, before the thousandth year no one in the Roman Church was found who disputed or thought about the grace of God differently than what the Sacred Scriptures hand down. For both the Greek and Latin Fathers, and all who were in agreement with the Roman Church, fought bravely against the errors of the Pelagians once they arose; so that apart from the Pelagians, no one doubted this matter, and the Roman Church remained intact. This can be clearly established from the writings of Celestine and Leo, Roman Pontiffs, against the Pelagians in Gaul. Celestine gathered many testimonies of the Roman Pontiffs against the Pelagian heresy, approves the writings of Augustine against the Pelagians as Catholic, and (what carries more weight with the Tridentines) Celestine, Bishop of Rome, testifies that the writings of that same Augustine were always especially approved by the Apostolic See: "so that Augustine," he says, "was always held among the best teachers even by my predecessors." Moreover, Leo convened the Second Council of

Orange concerning the same matter against the errors of the Pelagian heresy reviving throughout Gaul. In that council, the Catholic and Apostolic doctrine of Augustine on grace and free will was renewed and confirmed, with canons themselves widely excerpted from the books of blessed Augustine. The faith of the Roman Church remained intact in the footsteps of those Pontiffs up to the year of Christ one thousand.

After the thousandth year, Satan being loosed, the ancient faith among many began to waver with uncertain opinions and new fictions, until in the Council of Vienne, Pope Clement V chose not the Catholic faith, but an opinion fluctuating among probabilities: that sacraments confer grace. Hence arose the obscure disputations of theologians about inherent quality, about the work wrought, about merit of congruity; but these were circulated among private opinions of the friars until at length in the Council of Trent these pernicious speculations were established as ecclesiastical dogmas.

THE END.