

**Philip Melanchthon's *Sketch
of Theology, The Argument of
the Epistle to the Romans, and
A Theological Introduction to
Paul's Letter to the Romans***

Edited and machine translated by Seth Kasten

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Preface

This is a translation of *Corpus Reformatorum Vol. XXI*¹ col. 1-59. CR XXI contains an introduction to Melanchthon's *Loci*, an unpublished *Sketch* of the *Loci*, an early version of his Romans commentary, and all three versions of the *Loci*. The early working out of the Romans commentary and the *Loci* are tightly related and took place at the same time, beginning in 1519, which explains the inclusion of both the early Romans commentary and the *Sketch*². Here follows a very helpful summary on the relation of these texts from Kramer's introduction to Melanchthon's *Commentary on Romans*³:

As part of his duties as a member of the theological faculty, Melanchthon began in 1519 to lecture on St. Paul's letter to the Romans—the course which Luther had taught from 1515–16. It is possible that Melanchthon even used Luther's notes as a basis for his own work.⁴ Melanchthon's first writing on Romans was "A Theological Introduction to Paul's Letter to the Romans" (*Theologica Institutio in Epistolam Pauli ad Romanos*), published in 1519. In 1520 some of his students published his preliminary

¹ Commonly abbreviated CR. Ed. Heinrich Ernst Bindseil, C.A. Schwetschke and Son (M. Bruhn), Brunswick, 1854. Accessed via Google Books:

https://www.google.com/books/edition/Corpus_reformatorum/_BE_RAAAAIAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1.

And Google Play:

<https://play.google.com/store/books/details?id=T7w3AQAAAMAAJ&rdid=book-T7w3AQAAAMAAJ&rdot=1>.

² Latin: *Lucubrationcula*, or *Little Night Work*. I have chosen to translate this as *Sketch* because it conveys the purpose of the text to a modern English audience.

³ Melanchthon, Philip. *Commentary on Romans*. Tr. Fred Kramer, Second English Edition, p. 9 in digital, CPH, 2010.

⁴ See Luther's Works, American Edition (St. Louis: Concordia, 1972), 25:xii.

study of the contents of Romans arranged topically under the title “Themes or Topics of Theological Matters” (*Rerum Theologicorum Capita seu Loci*). Unsatisfied with this publication, Melanchthon reworked these topics into his highly acclaimed *Loci Communes Theologici* of 1521. Then, in 1522, Luther obtained a copy of Melanchthon’s Romans lectures and lectures on Corinthians and had them published under the title of “Annotations” (*Annotationes Phil. Melanchthonis in Epistolas Pauli ad Romanos et ad Corinthios*).

The *Sketch* was written prior to the 1521 *Loci*, commonly called the first edition. Melanchthon’s *Loci* underwent significant changes across different editions, with three primary eras according to the CR: 1521-1525, 1535-1541, and 1542-1559. To avoid confusion, scholars often present the *Loci* with the year of the version, e.g. 1521 *Loci*, 1535 *Loci*, or 1543 *Loci*. Within each of these ranges, the editions saw minor revisions (typographical corrections, small edits, etc) but not major changes. This must be emphasized as the 1543 edition is also sometimes called the 1559 *Loci*, which are substantially the same.⁵ All three editions have been translated and published in modern English.⁶ Additionally, the German edition of 1555⁷ has been translated into English; this German edition is notably different from the other editions,⁸ and the German was done by Melanchthon himself (and is not

⁵ 1559 was the last year of revisions of the *Loci*. Melanchthon died in 1560.

⁶ See *Commonplaces: Loci Communes 1521*. Tr. Christian Preus, CPH, 2014. *Common Theological Topics: Loci Communes Theologici (1535)*. Tr. Paul A. Rydecki, Repristination Press, 2020. *Loci Communes 1543*. Tr. J.A.O. Preus, CPH, 1992.

⁷ See *Melanchthon on Christian Doctrine: Loci Communes 1555*. Tr. Clyde L. Manschreck, Oxford University Press, 1965.

⁸ As Preus notes (*Commonplaces: Loci Communes 1521*, see fn. 6 above) this results in four different published editions of the *Loci*.

a translation from any known Latin edition). The following CR volume (XXII) is fairly comprehensive in covering translation of the *Loci* into other languages, namely German, Italian, French, Dutch, Venetian, and Croatian and secondary literature on the *Loci*. While it has been said that there are three main editions of the *Loci* (or four if the 1555 German is counted), the *Sketch* presented in this volume makes for another, though it is more of a rough draft or outline than a true edition, and it was not published for public use until far after the Reformation and Melanchthon's death.

The *Theologica Institutio in Epistulam Pauli ad Romanos* (*A Theological Introduction to Paul's Letter to the Romans*) mentioned by Kramer above has never been translated into English prior to this volume. In addition to this work, I have included the *Argumentum epistolae ad Rom.* (*The Argument of the Epistle to the Romans*) which is appended to the beginning of that work in the CR. I quote Kramer again to give context to the history of the *Romans Commentary*⁹:

Melanchthon himself did not publish a commentary on Romans edited by his own hand until 1532. The 1532 commentary is published in a modern edition in Melanchthons Werke, edited by Robert Stupperich. Melanchthon revised and expanded this commentary, then published his revised work in 1540.

It is my hope that the reader finds this translation to be helpful in understanding the complex history of the *Romans Commentary*, the *Loci*, and Melanchthon's theology. All footnotes are original to the CR and are not my own. In the translation of the *Sketch*, the *Argument*, and the *Theological Introduction to Romans* I have omitted the numerous textual variant notes; they do not easily translate into English. Please consult the original for these. Translation was done with

⁹ Kramer, p. 9 in digital.

ChatGPT 4o and 4o mini. Take this translation with a grain of salt for this reason; I have done some revisions manually to the machine translation, but my Latin is amateur and my German non-existent. When non-Latin text appears in the original, I have preserved it and put the English in square brackets after.

Seth Kasten

August 6, Anno ✠ Domini 2025

Introduction to Philip Melanchthon's Theological Commonplaces

With Melanchthon's philological writings in Volumes XVI–XX of this *Corpus Reformatorum* completed, we proceed to his dogmatic books, among which the most serious of all is this one, variously titled by the author himself: *Loci communes rerum theologicarum seu Hypotyposes theologicae*, *Loci communes theologici*, *Loci theologici*, *Loci praecipui theologici* [*Commonplaces of Theological Matters* or *Theological Outlines*, *Theological Commonplaces*, *Theological Topics*, *Principal Theological Topics*].¹⁰

These *Commonplaces*, containing the first system of evangelical doctrine, which Luther judged to be "an invincible book, worthy not only of immortality but also of canonical status in the Church,"¹¹ were, in the first century of the

¹⁰ See the editions to be mentioned below. — The task of editing these *Loci* in this *Corpus* had previously been undertaken by the illustrious and learned man Mauritius Roediger, which he publicly announced in the year 1829 with this dissertation: *Viro Perillustri ac Summe Venerando Io. Frider. Guil. Koch S. S. Theol. Dr. etc. semisecularia muneris solemnna die V. Octobris A. 1829. feliciter celebranti observanter ac pie gratulatur Maurit. Roediger. Insunt quaedam de Philippi Melanthonis Locis communibus theologicis propediem in Corpore Reformatorum edendis. (Halis Sax. 28 pagg. 8.)*. [To the most illustrious and most highly venerated man, Johann Friedrich Wilhelm Koch, Doctor of Sacred Theology, etc., respectfully and piously congratulated by Mauritius Roediger on the happy celebration of the 50-year jubilee of his office, on the 5th of October, 1829. Contained in it are some notes about Philipp Melanchthon's *Theological Commonplaces*, soon to be published in the *Corpus Reformatorum*. (Halle an der Saale. 28 pages. Octavo.)] From this dissertation we will cite more below in the author's own words. — By his untimely death (for on September 14th, 1837, in the 34th year of his life, he already departed this life), this illustrious and learned man was prevented from carrying out that undertaking.

¹¹ Jakob Heerbrand [in his *Funeral Oration on the Death of the Incomparable Man, Dr. Philipp Melanchthon*, held in the Academy of Tübingen on May 15, 1560. Tübingen 1560. 4½ pages. Quarto. — Again

Reformation (to use the words of Augusti¹²), in the hands of all theologians. Academic schools and gymnasiums had no other handbook; certain bodies of doctrine gathered by public authority, for example the *Misnian* and *Pomeranian*, granted them symbolic force. And so, many teachers of the evangelical churches were, in their public sermons and sacred discourses, expounders of the *Commonplaces*. But as this century drew to a close, the authors and supporters of the *Formula of Concord* so alienated the minds of Lutheran theologians from these *Commonplaces* and accomplished so much that the παιδείας τρόπος [method of instruction] introduced by Melanchthon was gradually and slowly abandoned. Hence it has come about that a book once most widespread and read by all is in our times to be counted among the rarer ones.

But before we present the book itself to readers, we must speak about the history of this most excellent work, a task in which the book of Georg Theodor Strobel composed with great care and diligence, under the title: *Attempt at a Literary History of Philipp Melanchthon's Theological Commonplaces as the First Evangelical Textbook*, published at Altdorf and Nuremberg in 1776 (octavo), is the best guide. For he treated

published in Wittenberg, 1560. Quarto. — Reprinted in the book: *Orations, Epitaphs and Writings that Were Published on the Death of Philipp Melanchthon, All, etc.* Wittenberg, 1561. Octavo. fols. R 4a—T 4b; also in G. Th. Strobel's *Miscellaneen Literarischen Inhalts*, Vol. VI, pp. 215–251, and in this *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. X, pp. 293–313; here p. 305.] reports the following: "Luther thought so highly of them [the *Loci*] that he said, *Nothing greater exists after the apostolic writings than the Loci of Dr. Philipp, and for that reason they should be retained in the Church and schools, because in them he teaches, contends, and triumphs, and the whole body of heavenly doctrine is embraced therein. Not even in all the writings of all the Fathers is so much theological learning to be found as is contained in these Loci. And even if all their writings were fused together, still the Loci of Philipp would not result.*"

¹² See the preface of the book: *Phil. Melanchthonis Loci theologici illustrati a Io. Christ. Guil. Augusti* [Philipp Melanchthon's *Theological Commonplaces Illustrated by Johann Christoph Wilhelm Augusti*] (Leipzig, 1821, Octavo) p. IV.

this subject in such a way as could be expected from a most learned man and one most experienced in this kind of literature, although we do not approve all of his opinions.

We will divide this history of Melanchthon's *Commonplaces* into seven chapters:

Chapter I. On their first sketch, not published by the author himself.

Chapter II. On the editions of the years 1521–1525, which comprise the first era of the book published by the author himself.

Chapter III. On the editions of the second era of the book, which includes the years 1535–1541.

Chapter IV. On the editions of the third era of the book, which comprises the years 1542–1559.

Chapter V. On the German translations of this book.

Chapter VI. On its other translations.

Chapter VII. On books related to this work.

But these chapters we will not present in a continuous series, but in such a way that each of the first five chapters is introduced with a connected preface in place of an introduction; the remaining two will be added at the end.

[Introduction to] Philip Melanchthon's First Sketch of the Theological Commonplaces not Published by the Author Himself

Melanchthon, in the year 1518, having been called from Tübingen to Wittenberg by Prince Frederick the Wise to teach

Greek literature, was wholly engaged at the same time in sacred literature, both of the Old and the New Testament, and besides the Gospel of Matthew and Paul's letter to Titus, he especially began to expound to his hearers the Epistle of the same [Paul] to the Romans. For the exposition of this epistle had been his delight from nearly the very beginning of his academic office¹³. For he devoted himself all the more willingly to the Apostle Paul, inasmuch as already at that time, when he was a student of theology at Tübingen, he had turned his mind away from the commentaries and ravings of the Scholastics and monks¹⁴.

¹³ This is evident not only from the repeated treatment of this same epistle (see Strobel's book: *Historisch-Litterarische Nachricht von Phil. Melanchthons Verdiensten um die heilige Schrift etc.* [Historical-literary report on Philip Melanchthon's merits regarding Holy Scripture etc.], Altdorf and Nuremberg 1773, 8vo, pp. 96–119; and this [Melanchthon's] *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. XV, pp. 441 ff., 493 ff., 797 ff. Compare also Martin Mylius' *Chronologia Scriptorum Phil. Melanchthonis* [Chronology of the writings of Philip Melanchthon], [Görlitz 1582, 8vo], Preface fol. b 5b), but also from these very words of his: "I transcribed with my own hand twice the epistle to the Romans in Greek, at the time when I painted better still, and my hands were more skillful, and I had more leisure. But I gave one copy to Doctor Hess of Wroclaw." [circa 1519?] (see Johann Manlius, *Locorum communium collectanea*, Vol. III, p. 93, Basel edition 1564, 8vo [p. 545 in the Frankfurt-am-Main edition of 1594, 8vo]). This very autograph and also the first outline of the *Loci communes* are likewise noted in the *Hamburg Briefwechsel der Gelehrten des Jahres 1751* [Hamburg Correspondence of Scholars from the Year 1751] [see below, p. 5, note 11], p. 513 ff.

¹⁴ Jakob Heerbrand says the following in the oration cited above [*Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. X, p. 303]: "Therefore, that he rejected the usual delusions and commentaries of the Scholastics and monks, rather than the doctrines of the faith, was not done out of childish frivolity, thoughtlessness, or rashness. Nor did he do it being moved by Luther's companionship or authority. For while he was still living [in Tübingen], he already rejected the useless, thorny, intricate, and frivolous opinions and disputations of the Scholastics, and indeed that entire type of doctrine which, neglecting the authority of sacred Scripture, mixes Aristotle with theology and makes from two complete things one corrupted thing, receives human traditions unwritten, the decrees of popes and councils without any discrimination, grants men a pretorial authority for interpreting Scripture, so

From both these things, namely, from the author's mind being offended by the commentaries of the Scholastics and drawn toward the Apostle Paul and especially his Epistle to the Romans, and at the same time from his presence at the Leipzig disputation in the year 1519 the *Loci communes* first drew their origin¹⁵.

Concerning the year in which these first appeared, a controversy arose among learned men, about which Roediger reports the following on pp. 18–24 of the dissertation cited above: There were those who said that the first edition of these had already seen the light in the year 1520, among whom were Seckendorf¹⁶ and Andreas Weber¹⁷; and besides Jakob Heinrich

that Scripture must sound forth what they will it to mean—as if they could not err due to their position and rank—this kind of doctrine, I say, he already cast away.” In the booklet titled *Ad Paulinae doctrinae studium adhortatio* [An Exhortation to the Study of Pauline Doctrine], [Basel, published by Adam Petri (1520), 8vo, 1½ sheets—reprinted in *Liber selectarum Declamationum Mel.* [Book of Selected Declamations of Melanchthon], Strasbourg, by Crato Mylius 1541, 4to, pp. 1 ff.; in *Selectarum Declamationum Mel.*, Vol. I, pp. 8 ff.; in *Declamations of Melanchthon*, Vol. III, edited by Richardius, pp. 28 ff.; and in his *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. XI, pp. 34 ff.; at this place, p. 38], Melanchthon says of the Scholastic doctors: “They have made of theology for us nothing other than that goatish old woman of Greece, philosophy.”

¹⁵ Compare Melanchthon's letter to Johannes Hess written on April 17, 1520 [in his *Corpus Reformatorum*, Vol. I, at the end of p. 158]; the dedicatory letter of the same to Plettener, prefixed to early editions of the *Loci theologici* [reprinted in his *Corpus*, Vol. I, pp. 510 ff.]; and Roediger's dissertation cited above, p. 10.

¹⁶ *Commentarius de Lutheranismo*, 2nd edition [Leipzig 1694, Folio], Supplement to Index I, § 49, where he lists among Melanchthon's writings the following: “The same *Loci communes rerum Theologicarum* [Commonplaces of theological matters], or outlines, published in Wittenberg 1520, in octavo, consist of 17 and a half leaves.” [At this point, Feuerlin argues in a letter cited by Koblius (in the preface to a book to be mentioned shortly, pp. 12 ff.) that the year 1520 is nothing more than a typographical error for 1521.]

¹⁷ *Programma de prima Locorum communium Phil. Melanchthonis editione* [Program concerning the first edition of the *Loci communes* of Philip Melanchthon], Kiel 1770, 4 leaves, 4.

von Balthasar¹⁸, even Semler took their side¹⁹, who, having mentioned a double edition from the year 1521 published in Wittenberg [which appeared with Melanchthon's preface to Tilomann Plettener], adds: "Es fehlet also noch ein Druck, welcher Melanchthon's Zuschrift an Plettner nicht haben kann, wie aus dieser zu ersehen ist. [There must therefore still be another printing which cannot have Melanchthon's letter to Plettner, as can be seen from this one]." Melanchthon's words here indicated begin the preface to Tilomann Plettener, who in the year 1521 was made Doctor of Theology at Wittenberg, and to whom the preface was written: "Last year, when about to expound Paul's epistle, which is addressed to the Romans, we arranged the most common topics of theological matters, and thus the material of that epistle itself, according to a kind of systematic method. Which little sketch, although it had been prepared only for this, that it might indicate as clearly as possible the argument and καὶ ἔλεγχον [and examination] of the Pauline disputation to those whom we were privately teaching, nevertheless began to be published by I know not whom, of whom, whoever finally published it, their zeal is approved by me more than their judgment, namely because I had written in such a way that, without Paul's Epistle, it could not be sufficiently understood what I had followed in the whole work. Now, because it is not in my power to suppress a little book made almost public property, it seemed good to revise it and bring it back to the anvil, for very many things were needing a more careful disputation, and very many also a

¹⁸ *Historia Locorum theologicorum Phil. Melanchthonis eiusque Pars I. varias recensens editiones* [History of the theological *Loci* of Philip Melanchthon and its Part I, reviewing various editions], Greifswald, without year, 8 leaves, 4.

¹⁹ In Baumgarten's *Evangelische Glaubenslehre*, Vol. II, 1759, Introduction p. 146, note 96.

polishing."²⁰ Strobelius²¹ says that these things are to be understood of copies made by the hand of others and circulated among friends, not of a printed book, who himself saw or found none published before the year 1521. Strobelius indeed strove, following Feuerlinus²², to establish and confirm his

²⁰ From these things it is clear, besides what we said above about the origin of these *Loci*, that the proximate occasion and cause of the first edition of them, which came forth by the author's own care in the year 1521, must be sought in the counsel and zeal of certain persons to publish that outline which he himself had delivered to his hearers in 1520.

²¹ In the book: *Versuch einer Litterär Geschichte von Ph. Mel. Locis theol.* p. 19: "Es ist unstrittig, dass Melanchthon mit diesen Worten [evulgare coeperit; libellus propemodum publici iuris factus.] auf keine Publication oder Evulgation durch den Druck, sondern bloss auf eine schriftliche Communication und Bekanntmachung dieses Buchs gezelet habe." [It is undisputed that Melanchthon with these words [evulgare coeperit; libellus propemodum publici iuris factus] referred not to a publication or dissemination through printing, but merely to a written communication and making known of this book.] To which, however, he himself added the following in the same place: "Eine Abschrift dieser locorum wird nicht blos in den Händen Hessi allein gewesen seyn. Es können sich solche auch verschiedene Zuhörer Melanchthons abgeschrieben haben, und wie leicht konnte es da nicht geschehen, dass ein Verleger aus Begierde etwas damit zu gewinnen, dieses Buch, ohne Wissen des Verfassers gedruckt hätte? wie es ihm mit vielen andern Arbeiten, besonders mit Erklärung biblischer Bücher gegangen ist. Melanchthon beugte also diesem vor, und gab solche selbst, nachdem er sie nochmals auf das sorgfältigste durchgegangen, im öffentlichen Druck zu Wittenberg im Jahr 1521. heraus." [A copy of these *loci* will not have been only in the hands of Hesse alone. Various other hearers of Melanchthon could also have copied them, and how easily could it have happened that a publisher, out of eagerness to gain something, printed this book without the author's knowledge? as happened to him with many other works, especially with the explanation of biblical books. Melanchthon therefore forestalled this, and himself, after going through them again with the greatest care, brought them out in public print at Wittenberg in the year 1521.] He almost verbatim repeated the same in *Neue Beyträge zur Litteratur besonders des XVI. Jahrh.*, V, 2. p. 320 sq.

²² In his letter written at Göttingen on 25 November 1751 (to Professor Kohl of Hamburg), which is found in this very rare book: *Gesammelter Briefwechsel der Gelehrten, welche zum Wachsthum der Wissenschaften, insonderheit der gelehrten Geschichte und zum Andenken der vor dreihundert Jahren zuerst zum Stande gebrachten edlen Buchdruckerkunst in eine correspondirende Gesellschaft*

opinion by means of two letters of Melanchthon to Johannes Hess, dated February 20 and April of 1521 (in Corp. Reform. Vol. I. p. 284–286 and p. 366), at p. 285: "I am still explaining Paul's Romans, now treating chapter X. The Method [i.e., the theological topics], which I promised for this summer, I hope to publish." And at p. 366: "My Method is now being printed. Therefore, we will send a fuller version than had once been written." — But nevertheless those words of Melanchthon: "— began to be published — they published — the little book made almost public property" press urgently that we should think of a printing either undertaken but not brought to completion, or at least immediately suppressed²³. Moreover,

zusammengetreten; auf das Jahr MDCCLI. Hamburg MDCCLI. 50 plagg. 8. Fascicul. 49. pag. 769-784. (I have this book from the ducal library of Wolfenbüttel in my hands.) Of this letter inscribed: *Sr. Hochw. Hrn. Dr. und Generalsup. Feuerlein, Schreiben an den Herausgeber, von der ersten Ausgabe der Locorum theologicorum, und andern seltenen Schriften und Schriftensammlungen des vortrefflichen Melanchthons.* [The Most Reverend Dr. and General Superintendent Feuerlein, letter to the editor, about the first edition of the *Locorum theologicorum*, and other rare writings and collections of writings of the excellent Melanchthon.] the part which concerns the *Loci theol.* (p. 769-778) has been repeated by Kohl in the preface of the book *Gesammelter Briefwechsel etc.*, immediately to be described more accurately on p. 10-20.

²³ Similarly, Augusti in his above-mentioned edition of the *Locorum theol.* p. 169 indicates; for although he agrees with Strobel, he nevertheless adds: "Quodsi quis supponere velit, susceptam fuisse antea ab aliis, inscio atque invito auctore, impressionem, haec tamen editio spuria nunquam lucem vidisse, sed suppressa credenda est." [But if anyone should wish to suppose that a printing had been undertaken earlier by others, without the author's knowledge and against his will, nevertheless this spurious edition is to be believed never to have seen the light, but to have been suppressed.] Nearly the same thing had already been said by Kohl in the year 1751 in *Hamburgische Berichte von den neuesten Gelehrten Sachen*. Tom. XX. for the year 1751. p. 695: "Wahrscheinlich ist es demnach, dass solche erste Ausgabe entweder im J. 1520., oder gleich zu Anfang des 1521. Jahrs, kurz vor der von dem Melanchthon ausgefertigten Edition, die Druckpresse verlassen habe. Die grosse Seltenheit dieser Ausgabe, oder vielmehr der gänzliche Untergang derselben rühret wohl daher, weil Melanchthon, welcher sie nicht für seine Arbeit erkennen wollte, sondern gar übel damit zufrieden war, die ganze Auflage, ehe sie noch

that opinion is strengthened by a testimony which Kraftius brought in the book edited by himself: *Neue Theolog. Bibliothek* [New Theological Library] Vol. VIII. Fasc. 73. p. 245, from Caspar Uhlenberg²⁴: "Furthermore, he says, in order that he (Melanchthon) might refute in fact the charge which Eck had made, namely ignorance of theological matters, after the Leipzig disputation he began to teach sacred letters privately, gathering a band of students, to whom he explained the Epistle of the Divine Paul written to the Romans. But before he began it, NB, in place of a preface, he dictated the most general topics of theological matters, arranged according to a methodical order, which he said would be useful to students of theology for understanding the mind of the Apostle. Some of the students, without consulting the author, published this little sketch in print: which, in the following year 1521, he revised and, with certain additions, again published under this title: *Loci communes*, etc."

However, an anonymous person (Professor Kohl) appeared to have edited that written little sketch from Melanchthon's very autograph in the year 1752: *Gesammelter Briefwechsel über die in den gelehrten Geschichten annoch strittige curiöse Frage: Ob vor der Ausgabe der Locorum Theologicorum Philippi Melanchthonis, vom Jahr 1521 eine andere, von ihm vielleicht unterdrückte, vorher gegangen sei? Nebst dem original Abdruck derjenigen Schrift, welche eben dieselbe von Melanchthon unterdrückte Lucubratiuncula zu*

gemein gemacht worden, sogleich zu sich genommen, und zu Maculatur gemacht hat." [It is therefore probable that such a first edition either left the printing press in the year 1520 or at the very beginning of the year 1521, shortly before the edition prepared by Melanchthon himself. The great rarity of this edition, or rather its complete disappearance, probably stems from the fact that Melanchthon, who did not want to recognize it as his work but was very dissatisfied with it, immediately took the entire print run to himself before it had become common and made it into waste paper.]

²⁴ In his book: *De vita, moribus ... Praedicantium Lutheranorum etc.* in the year 1622 in the *Vita Melanthonis*.

*seyen gemutmaßet wird, deren er selbst in der Vorrede zu seiner Ausgabe von 1521 selbst gedenket. Hamburg, 1752. bei Nic. C. Wörmer. 9¼ plagg. 8.*²⁵ [Collected Correspondence about the still disputed curious question in the learned histories: Whether before the edition of the *Loci Communes Theologici* of Philip Melanchthon from the year 1521 there had been another, perhaps suppressed by him, earlier? Together with the original printing of that writing, which is conjectured to be precisely the same little sketch suppressed by Melanchthon himself, about which he himself in the preface to his edition of 1521. Hamburg, 1752, by Nic. C. Wörmer. 9¼ leaves, 8vo.] — From this book the same outline of the *Loci* was repeated by Strobel in 1794 in *Neue Beyträge zur Litt. bes. des XVI. Jahrh.* V, 2, p. 323–344, thus titled: *Erster Entwurf von Melanchthons Locis: "Theologica institutio Philippi Melanchthonis in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos"* [First Draft of Melanchthon's *Loci*:

²⁵ This extremely rare book, which is listed in Kraft's book cited above Vol. VIII. pp. 239–245 (it is found in the Senate Library of Hamburg and Nuremberg and in the Royal Library of Berlin), begins with a preface (pp. 3–36), in which Kohlius recounts the history of this inquiry and his opinion, arguing that before the *Loci theologici* first published by Melanchthon himself in the year 1521, a similar shorter booklet, called by the author *Lucubratuncula* [sketch], was printed by the press without the author's knowledge and against his will; this is followed (pp. 36–54) by "Theologica institutio Philippi Melanchthonis in epistolam Pauli ad Romanos" ["Theological instruction of Philip Melanchthon on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans"], published from Melanchthon's autograph manuscript, which Kohlius considers to be that *Lucubratuncula* [sketch] printed but then immediately suppressed; appended to this are the following: 1. A letter from the editor to Balthasar of Greifswald (pp. 55–60), 2. A letter from Balthasar in reply to the former (pp. 61–64), 3. A letter from the editor to Goering of Minden (pp. 65–69), 4. A letter from Goering to Feuerlin of Göttingen (pp. 70–86), 5. An epitome of Feuerlin's letter to the editor (pp. 87–89), 6. A letter from Goering to the editor (pp. 90–96), 7. The editor's response written to Goering (pp. 97–116), 8. A letter from Hamberger of Göttingen to Feuerlin (pp. 117–123), 9. A notice of this book in the *Hamburgische Berichte* [Hamburg Reports] (pp. 124–133), 10. Some unpublished Melanchthoniana (pp. 134–138), 11. An index (10 unnumbered pages).

"Theological Institution of Philipp Melanchthon on the Epistle of Paul to the Romans"]²⁶: from where again Friedrich Traugott Friedemann edited and prefaced it in this little book: *Phil. Melanthonis prima adumbratio locorum theologicorum* [Philipp Melanchthon's First Outline of the Theological Loci]. Wittenberg, 1823. IX and 17 pages, 8vo., likewise in the same year and place in the *Miscellanea maximam partem Criticis, curated by Friedemann and Seebode*. Vol. III. Part 2. p. 354–370.

And indeed I do not doubt that this Institution is genuine²⁷, since it is written in Philipp's own hand; but that it is the same as that little composition, of which Melanchthon himself makes mention in the first edition of the *Loci* in 1521 as having begun to be published and almost having become public property, I absolutely deny. For that Institution is so different from the book published in 1521 and so little suited to be compared with Melanchthon's description, here included: "*Most things lacked a more accurate discussion, many also polish,*" that I seem rightly to think it was written for Melanchthon's own use, not for that of his hearers²⁸, and sent along with that copy of the letter to the Romans [which he himself copied] to Johann Hess²⁹, about whose work

²⁶ "Theologica – Romanos." thus Melanchthon himself titled this booklet in the autograph, as Kohlius noted in the cited place p. 36.

²⁷ Kohlius, who possessed this autograph of Melanchthon, first described it more thoroughly in the *Hamburg gelehrten Briefwechsel des Jahres 1751* [Hamburg Scholarly Correspondence of the Year 1751], p. 513 ff.

²⁸ This is confirmed by Melanchthon's own Preface, which is found in the copies of the third edition of the *Loci*: "It is useful to have firm and clear testimonies concerning each article of Christian doctrine, arranged in order and proposed as if on a chart, so that, when minds are disputing within themselves or are troubled, fixed statements may be in view, which educate, uplift, strengthen, and console the wavering. For this domestic use I originally set up these *loci* — — first, that I might educate myself," etc. Compare also the preface of the second edition of the *Loci*.

²⁹ See above p. 2, note 6.

Melanchthon writes that it is marvelously growing³⁰; and that the same is referred to by the words cited above (p. 5 sq.): "*written once upon a time.*"

Thus the true little composition is lacking, which Melanchthon says was revised and hammered into shape by himself. But by fortunate chance this very true one was found by Maurit. Roediger in a paper codex no. 973 octavo of the Ducal Library at Gotha, which migrated from Dresden to Gotha at the beginning of this century. Three things are contained in this volume: α) Melanchthon's Annotations on the Epistle to the Romans, similar to those which Luther published in 1522, but only up to the end of chapter XIII, written by a certain hearer³¹ somewhat more negligently, as it seems, and more freely, and indeed in such a way that for the first four chapters he seems to have first painted the text with red ink and inserted the annotations before Melanchthon's face, but for all the rest to have taken them down with a pen while Melanchthon recited. — Shortly thereafter, a part of Luther's preface was written before these, which the scribe seems to have intended to complete on the following blank leaves. β) The edition of the *Loci Communes* Wittenberg 1521, octavo. In the margin, everywhere by the same hand as it seems, but later (almost at the same time as that part of Luther's preface), some little notes were added, either briefly repeating the text in Latin, or translating it into German, or even illustrating it. γ) That little composition comprising the most common

³⁰ In the letter of April 17, 1520 (reprinted in this *Corpus Reformatorum* Vol. I. pp. 156–161), where on pp. 158 f. the following is read: "I am now getting ready for the *Obelisci* and Paul's Epistle to the Romans. The work of the *Obelisci* is growing wonderfully. For I am not, as I began, writing annotations, but shall write *loci communes* concerning Law, Sin, Grace, Sacraments, and other mysteries. I followed the advice of the rhetoricians, who order the arts to be gathered into *loci communes*."

³¹ In the margin at the beginning of chapter IX is written: *Hans Hesse yn d. Nicklas Gasse*. — No doubt everything was written in Wittenberg.

theological topics, which is followed by Melanchthon's Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, edited by Luther in 1522³². This part of the volume is a transcript of the writing taken down by pen as Melanchthon recited, as the whole character of it shows; and what Melanchthon seems to have added ἐν παρόδῳ [in passing, incidentally], not by dictation, was generally inserted among the dictated parts, marked with a cross, and are found only in a few places in the lower margin; add to this that in one place of the Sketch the following is read: "Nota: aliqua notabilia exempla margine annotate etc." ["Note: some notable examples annotated in the margin etc."], and the scribe, after taking these from the margin, wrote in the margin: "ex margine collegi" ["I gathered from the margin"]. In the Commentary, however, once a space was left blank and in the margin was written: "defectus" ["defect"]. At the end of the volume are those writings of Luther on law, sin, and grace, composed later. – And with the exception of those things that were added later, this third part of the volume seems to have been written at the end of the year 1520 or the beginning of the year 1521; and that student, by whose hand everything is written, seems in this third part to have wished to correct the earlier negligence using the booklet of a more diligent fellow-student.

However, that the little sketch, placed before the more accurately written Commentary, is the same as that indicated by Melanchthon himself will easily appear by a comparison made between it and the Wittenberg edition of 1521 in octavo (marked by the title of the first edition). Therefore I here publish it, transcribed by Maurit. Roediger from that Gotha

³² The letter to Melanchthon which Luther prefixed to this edition is reprinted in *Luther's Letters* edited by de Wette Vol. II. pp. 238–240.

codex and compared with this Wittenberg edition, the manifest faults of the manuscript being corrected.³³

The *Sketch* of Philip Melanchthon

The theological topics or Loci are nearly these: God, One, Three, Creator, Man, Sinner, fruit of sin, vices likewise, penalties, Law, Restoration (through Christ), Grace, Fruits of grace (or virtues), Predestination, promises, Sacramental signs, The condition or state of men, Judgement (i.e. beatitude or damnation).

In these matters, since it is not permitted, due to human weakness, for some to attain them, so again there are certain ones which the entire common crowd of Christians has plainly been repelled from holding. We shall worship the mysteries of divinity more rightly than investigate them. Since God the Best and Greatest clothed His Son with flesh, in order that we, drawn away from the contemplation of majesty, might be invited to the study of our own frailty. Therefore, there is no reason why we should expend much effort on inaccessible topics concerning the one God, the Trinity, etc., or concerning the mystery of creation. But the topics of sin, law, and grace, whoever is ignorant of these, I do not know how he may be called a Christian. Since Christ is properly known from these topics. Nor can it happen that one holds the way of blessedness who has neglected these topics, since these alone show the shortcut to the journey of divine blessedness. And these Paul treated, as it were, describing a certain method of the whole Christian instruction, and such a method that, unless someone

³³ The blessed Maurit[ius] Roediger handed over this *Lucubrationcula* [sketch], equipped with full critical apparatus, to the Reverend Hermann Agathon Niemeyer, from whose hands I myself received it.

has diligently and accurately meditated on this epistle, he not only seems about to waste his effort on the remaining sacred writings, but not even to understand Christ. And before I speak about the argument of the epistle, I will briefly examine those topics which this epistle comprises, namely: Free Will, Sin, Law, Grace.

On Free Will

The human being has two parts: the power of knowing [and] the power in which affections arise.

First: the power of knowing is that by which we perceive or understand, reason, and know one thing from another.

- And to this belong the hands, feet, ears, etc. Angels know good and evil but only do good.

Secondly: knowledge is neither good nor evil. The power from which affections arise is that by which we turn away from or pursue what is known. Some call this power the will, others appetite, others affection.

Thirdly: knowledge serves the will, and thus they call free will by a new name the will conjoined with knowledge or the counsel of the intellect. For just as a tyrant is in a republic, so is the will in a human being. And just as a counselor is subject to the tyrant, i.e., subordinate, so too is the intellect: which at times gives good advice, at times bad advice. It is up to the will to obey or to resist.

- The works of knowledge are to perceive, to see, to hear, to reason, to understand. The works of affection are to turn away, to pursue, to love, to hate, to fear, to grieve.
- There are four kinds from which the other affections arise:
 - Pleasure and Hope: both present
 - Pain and Fear: both absent

Let us simply call free will the will. Indeed, we will not use the name "free will" at all. Likewise, they call the intellect conjoined with the will "reason." Let us simply call it knowledge. Indeed, we will not even use the name "reason." For in the usage of terms writers everywhere vary.

Fourthly: to the power of knowing pertains the law, i.e., the counsel for doing good. To the power of affections belong virtue, vice, sin, and grace. This distinction must be observed carefully, because the power of knowing is spread more widely than the power of affections.

- We know many things to be evil, yet we are not able to restrain our affection.

By nature we know good and evil, yet we only desire evil. Nor will you easily understand the power of law or of grace unless you keep in mind this distinction: that knowledge is one thing, affection another.

See how free the will is.

Fifthly: Freedom properly does not belong to the part of knowing. Rather, it seems free insofar as it obeys the will, which drives it here and there.

Definition of freedom: Freedom is the ability to act or not to act, to be able to act in one way or another. Therefore the question is raised: to what extent the human will is free.

Sixthly: The will, compared with predestination, is not free, neither in good things, nor in evil, neither in external works nor in internal affections, as is discussed at length in chapter 9 to the Romans [9:18]: "He has mercy on whom He wills, and whom He wills He hardens," etc. So also Exodus 4 concerning Pharaoh [v. 21]: "I will harden his heart so that He will not let the people go." So 1 Kings [1 Samuel] 10 concerning Saul and the soldiers [v. 26]: "And there went with him a part of the army whose hearts God had touched." So 3 Kings [1 Kings] 12 concerning Jeroboam [v. 15]: "And the king did not listen to the people, for the Lord had turned him

away, that He might confirm His word which He spoke by the hand of Ahijah the Shilonite to Jeroboam son of Nebat." Therefore there is nothing in our power, neither internal affection nor external work, if you compare our [power] with predestination. And all things happen as they have been destined by the divine counsel. And the reason of this mystery is loftier than human weakness can attain, and in contemplating it you are admonished that it is of divine kindness that the whole sum and rule of all things remains with Him. For if anything were in our power, surely we would depend on our own counsels, and thus we would be drawn away from God to ourselves, which is the greatest impiety and misery.

I did not wish, however, that you be made anxious or dispute concerning the matter of predestination, asking why God should rescue this man and condemn that one, or why He should impute to us what He Himself has destined. For He is the Lord, He does what pleases Him. Moreover, the time will come, when the feeling of the flesh has been worn down, that you will understand that from nowhere else is there more certain consolation than from predestination.

The topics of predestination are greatly consolatory

Seventh: Because the topic of predestination is loftier than human grasp, the nature of human will must simply be considered: whether it can apply itself to any matter whatever, or turn itself away from any matter whatever whenever the intellect advises. Therefore the human will, simply compared with affections, is not free but captive, ruled both by good and evil affections. And this opinion is taught even by the experience of things themselves, namely that the human mind is master of no affection, however faint, and is proved by the

sixth chapter of Paul to the Romans [v. 16]: "You are slaves either of sin unto death or of obedience unto righteousness," where a twofold slavery is described: one of carnal affections, the other of the spirit. And [in] chapter 7 [v. 5]: "When we were in the flesh, the passions of sins which were through the law were working in our members to bring forth fruit unto death." And [in] chapter 8 [v. 14]: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God." In these places he clearly declares that man is ruled by affection, not that he rules over affection, nor is it in our power to control affection. And here affection is overcome by affection, for some are fiercer than others, so that although Julius shrinks from and abhors danger, yet because he burns (with a fiercer affection, namely), he does not shrink from grace or rather glory, and almost scorns it.

- Nothing is placed in our powers, either before [grace] is given.

Eighth: Now if you say, "If the will is free neither in good nor in evil, then just as a man cannot be turned from evil to good, so he cannot be turned from good to evil," [then] the solution [is as follows].

Here consider the power of affections. For in one who is outside the Spirit, there are only evil affections; therefore he does not turn toward good. Conversely, in one who is renewed by the Spirit, there are two kinds of affections, both good and evil. Here, whichever are stronger and more forceful, to them man yields. Thus truly the human soul is subject to affection, [and] it can turn from good to evil because it is seized by a stronger evil affection. And thus you see that perseverance is not in our strength.

Ninth: The Schools falsely imagine that there is indeed affection in man, but that the will is so free that it sets affection whenever it pleases as if someone who hates another could simply command his own will not to pursue him with hatred. And this they call a good purpose and an elicited act (which are

the darkneses of Egypt). But I say that such purposes are thoughts of the intellect, and nonetheless the will still burns with hatred. Thus, if someone loves, he does not remove love whenever he thinks, "henceforth I will not love." But it can happen that another stronger affection may expel love from the soul as if he were gravely offended by the one he loves; certainly his love would be diminished through self-love. For in us love of ourselves burns so fiercely that all other affections arise from it. Namely, you love one from whom you receive some pleasure or benefit; you hate one who opposes your pleasure or benefit. If you compare the will with external works, it is free. Thus it can either command external works to do what it desires, or the opposite as it can fix its eyes upon what it desires, or turn them away. For just as the intellect can conceive two contradictories, that Julius is a tyrant and that he is not, yet assents to only one, and nevertheless the tongue can utter what contradicts the intellect's assent, so likewise the will, however it is affected, can command the servile body to do the opposite. And just as he lies who speaks otherwise than he feels, so too the will lies, making an outward show different from its inward affection. And this is external liberty, which, although it extends more broadly in man (because the more he knows, the more he can direct his external works differently), yet it is also in beasts, as when you call back a hungry dog that is rushing toward a carcass placed before him; it is quite clear that he can and sometimes does turn back.

- The soul's affections are far more numerous than those of the body.
- Love is properly an affection of the will. Envy is properly an affection of the will. Likewise hatred.
- A will that envies cannot set aside the affection of envy while reason asserts it.

That there is liberty in external work, Paul is witness, 1 Corinthians 7 [v. 37]: "For he who has stood firm in his heart, not having necessity, but having power over his own will, and

has decreed this in his heart to keep his virgin, does well." For since there he speaks about giving in marriage or not giving in marriage, it is clearly about external work he speaks. Now indeed it is clear that although there is liberty regarding externals, nevertheless external powers are almost always overcome by affection, so that it can happen that you command your tongue not to accuse him whom you hate, but when the occasion arises, just as a very hungry dog scarcely is called back from the prey set before him, so it is.

- External works in themselves are neither good nor evil, but such as the affection is. For God is the inspector of hearts.
- External powers are finally overcome by affection. Example: Der hundert wen er hungrig ist und zu lang mit ihm spielt also läuft er zum Esse [The dog, when he is hungry and you play with him too long, then he runs to the food].

So also man, when stirred, his affections burst forth. Now also innumerable things are done by us through affection which we ourselves do not understand, whose judgment is distorted by affection. Therefore nothing is more dangerous than to trust in external and plainly captive liberty, as though you could govern it by counsel, for counsel is almost always seized and anticipated by affection.

On Original Sin

We will pursue the whole force and nature of the inherited fault in the Methodical topics.

First. What Original Sin is.

It is a native propensity, natural impulse, and energy toward sinning propagated from Adam into all men.

- Just as a stone is naturally carried downward, so nature is toward sinning.

Second: Whence; when God, most good, most great, had created man without sin, His Spirit was present with him,

who would inflame man toward what is right. The same Spirit would have governed all the posterity of Adam unless Adam had fallen. Now after he fell, God turned away from man so that the Spirit of God is not present as governor to those being born. (That lack of the Spirit causes us to be prone to sin.) Thus the soul, lacking heavenly light and life, is darkened and embraces itself with the greatest love! For it cannot happen otherwise than that a creature which has not been absorbed by the love of God most greatly loves itself.

The first affection of man devoid of grace.

Therefore the first and highest affection of man's nature is love of self, by which he is carried to will and hope for only those things which seem to be good, pleasant, sweet, and honorable to his nature, and to hate and fear those things which oppose his nature, like death, and to turn away from him who either restrains him from the things he desires or commands him to seek things which are displeasing. Hence arises hatred of God and hatred of the Law, about which below.

Second. That there is Original Sin the Jews deny, and the Pelagians denied as well. Their opinion is refuted by Augustine in *On the Merits of Sins and the Baptism of Little Ones* learnedly as in all things, etc.

Testimonies proving Original Sin. From the New Testament, they are almost these. To the Romans 5 [v. 12]: "Just as through one man sin entered into the world, and through sin death, so death passed to all men because all sinned." And again in the same place [v. 15]: "By the offense of one, many died." To the Colossians 1 [v. 10]: "Through Him it pleased [God] to reconcile all things." But if we have been reconciled, then we were previously condemned. To the Galatians 3 [v. 13]: "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law," therefore we were accursed. Ephesians 2 [v. 3]: "And we were by nature children of wrath like the others."

Testimonies from the Old Testament: Psalm 50 [v. 6, or 51:7]: "Behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins my mother conceived me." By which verse David clearly signifies that he was born a sinner. Genesis 12 [v. 3]: "In your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed;" therefore all men were accursed. Since this promise was one of blessing, it was necessary that what was previously accursed should be blessed. See the third chapter of the Acts of the Apostles.

What is the force of Original Sin? It is a certain lively energy for sinning, the original guilt, just as in fire there is a lively force for inflaming. That energy always stirs all the powers of man toward sinning, so that man always burns with evil affections. And that is what Paul says in the seventh chapter of Romans [v. 5]: "The passions of sins were active," or, "had effective force in our members to bear fruit for death." And thus human nature is so condemned that it is never not sinful, never not burning with mad affections. This damnation the Lord signifies in Genesis where He says to the serpent [ch. 3, v. 15]: "And you shall lie in wait for his heel," where He made the human race subject to the ambushes of the serpent and the injury of sin. It follows that man is always a sinner, always sins, can plainly do no good at all, but all that he does, however splendid, he does out of love for himself. This you will rightly understand if you look into the internal affections, not the masked external works. For an external work is neither good nor evil in itself, but of such a kind as is the affection from which it arises.

- In outward appearance there is no difference between the pious and the impious.

For since human nature is utterly damned so that it cannot be well affected, it comes about that man always sins according to nature, whatever he may do. You love a parent, you love a friend, you love only because he has deserved well; you would love less if he offended. ([That] love is most truly

sin because of the love of myself.) You help a poor man for love of yourself, you help hoping that you will in turn be enriched or gifted by God, to say nothing of how often these things are done for glory or other base affections. And these works, however splendid, are truly sins and truly mortal sins.

- Spiritual love, i.e., the Spirit, always loves constantly even in adversities and the greatest tribulations and not because of love of self.

In this way philosophers by animal glory, and likewise most rulers, men whose virtue has been praised and celebrated in literature—Aristides of Athens, Fabricius, Cato, Scipio Nasica, the Romans—truly always sinned because their virtues were nothing other than fruits of the flesh. Granted, they were gifts, just like wealth, just like eloquence, just like beauty; nevertheless, that they were fruits of the flesh is evident.

- Just as food and drink are remedies for nourishing the body and by themselves neither good nor evil, and no one presumes to be saved through these, so gold and silver are neutral things which very rarely are well used, so also all gifts of nature, virtues, and all things, and no one is saved through them.

Eloquence, magnanimity, etc., are gifts of God, but given to nature.

Note: All men truly and always are sinners and sin; many clear passages of Scripture testify to this. Gen. 6 [vs. 5]: “Every imagination of the thoughts of the human heart [was] vain and perverse at all times.” This statement clearly testifies to the perverse and wicked tendency of human nature toward sinning. Now what it says “Every imagination at all times is vain,” clearly shows that sin is committed always. Isaiah 9 [vs. 17]: “All men are hypocrites and wicked, and the whole mouth has spoken foolishness.” Isaiah 41 [vs. 29]: “Behold, all are unjust, and their works vain; wind and emptiness are their arrangements.” Isaiah 53 [vs. 6]: “All we like sheep have gone astray, each one has turned to his own way.” David [Ps. 116:11, or 115:2]: “Every man [is] a liar.” John 1 [vs. 12]: “As many as

received him, to them He gave power to become sons of God, to those who believe in His name, who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, etc., but of God.” Likewise, John 15 [vs. 4]: “As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remain in the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me.” But from Paul, in the entire Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, nothing else is undertaken except to prove that all works and affections of men are sins. Therefore, in chapter 8, he compares spirit and flesh with each other, teaching that the flesh is subject to sin, but the spirit lives. Furthermore, understand “flesh” not only as the body or works of the body (such as drunkenness, lust, etc.), but the whole human nature, both soul and body, and what is best in human nature: reason, will, and their most beautiful efforts (as they appear): all are fruit of the flesh. As much as the virtue of Socrates or Cato may appear splendid, it is no less fruit of the flesh than sexual lust is. Unless you take the word “flesh” to mean human nature and human powers, however splendid, you will never grasp Paul’s meaning. And that the word “flesh” should be so used, Genesis chapter 6 [vs. 3] teaches: “My Spirit shall not abide in man, because he is flesh”; and Hebrews 9 [vs. 10]: “In various washings and justifications of the flesh,” where he calls it the righteousness of the flesh, that is, of human powers. Therefore, we shall call “flesh” whatever is outside the Spirit, so that however splendid the virtues of Paul (before he believed), or the human wisdom of Socrates, the human righteousness of Cato, the human temperance of Fabricius, the human self-control of Xenocrates, or the human courage of Zeno of Elea. These virtues are truly vices and plainly fruits of the flesh.

- The soul is much more alive than fire, and the more alive it is, the more prone it is to sin. In its innermost roots clings hatred; and if man were to recognize this, he could not bear this misery and the void of all good, which is spread from the love of self.

On the contrary, you will call “spirit” whatever the Holy Spirit works in us: true, absolute, and solid wisdom, piety, righteousness, temperance, moderation, chastity, and the other fruits numbered by Paul in Romans 8.

Thus Paul compares spirit with flesh in a rhetorical and most elegant contention [vs. 6ff.]: “The mind of the flesh is death; the mind of the Spirit is life and peace. For the mind of the flesh is enmity against God, for it is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can it be.” In which comparison, since it is clear that “Spirit” means the grace of Christ, it is necessary that we call “flesh” whatever is not spirit and is outside the spirit. Otherwise, the comparison will not be complete, if there is some intermediate disposition between Spirit and flesh. Therefore, when he says that the mind of the flesh is death, and is hatred of God, and cannot be subject to the law of God, what else does he say but that all human affections are sins?

The whole life and doctrine of the Gospel is contained in Paul’s Epistle to the Romans.

Therefore, the power of original sin is an energy that seizes man, according to nature, always to sin. Why then do we boast of free will? Why of human powers? And from these things it is sufficiently clear that the beginning of repentance is not placed in our powers (this experience sufficiently teaches). Just as Jeremiah testifies in chapter 31 [vs. 18ff.]: “Turn me, and I shall be turned; for after you turned me, I repented.”

For it is evident that no man can fulfill the law of God by his own powers. And even if you do not give in to lust, do not steal, do not kill, yet truly, you do these works out of fear of punishment or for gain, and it is plainly necessary to confess: if the law had not forbidden it, you would prefer to satisfy your desires and indulge your nature rather than be restrained by law and fear.

So far about free will.

On the Law

First: Law is a judgment by which good things are commanded and evil things are forbidden.

Second: One kind is natural, another divine, another human.

Third: Natural law is a common judgment to which all humans equally assent, and indeed which God has engraved upon the mind of each person, suited to morals. For there are certain common judgments or theses (i.e., common formulas) fitted to shaping life, which all humans comprehend, just as there are theoretical or speculative principles, such as: Whatever is, is; or is not. The whole is greater than its part. So too the laws of nature are certain practical principles suited to a way of life, and they must be understood in order. For the higher law is always the rule of the lower.

First order (of natural law)

First law. God is to be worshiped.

Second. Life is to be protected and propagated.

Third. There is to be generation (for man is born to preserve society).

Fourth. Marriages are to be joined.

Fifth. Offspring is to be protected.

Sixth. No one is to be harmed.

Seventh. Things sought and acquired are to be used in common (because in this way life is most easily lived). And this last law of nature in the first order, concerning the sharing of things, is therefore to be compared with the higher laws: for if the higher laws cannot be observed together with this one, then certainly this one must be moderated. The higher law is always the rule of the lower.

Second order (of natural law)

Accordingly, let this be the second order of the laws of nature: the higher laws remain the same: that God is to be worshiped, life is to be preserved, generation is to take place, marriages are to be joined, offspring is to be preserved. Now, since human desire does not allow us to use things in common, there must be a certain manner of general sharing. And from the second law follows another law in place of the seventh: because a general sharing of things cannot exist due to the desires of men, things must be divided.

Eighth. In order to preserve life, goods must be exchanged. Hence arise contracts, purchase, sale, leasing, conditions, etc.

Ninth. In order to preserve the life of many, the wicked must be restrained and prevented. Hence come magistracies, laws, judgments, wars, punishments for the wicked, and rewards for the good.

In this way the lower laws are corrected by the higher. For since life is to be preserved and human desire does not allow all things to be held in common without endangering life, it is necessary to reduce sharing to a certain manner. For the condition of human life demands some sharing of goods. Therefore Plato writes that the best state is that in which all things could be held in common. Just as that household which privately has all things in common is best managed, so we must strive in public matters to come as near as possible to a sharing of goods.

- Where all things are common, there are no wrongs.

Accordingly, things are shared through contracting, buying, selling, etc. Thus, because the law demands that no one be harmed, greater regard must be had for the many, and action must be taken in the commonwealth that as few as possible be harmed. Therefore the wicked must be restrained, prevented, and fined. Hence come magistracies, etc. Thus, although the

very sense of nature teaches that life is to be preserved, still it is to be preserved only insofar as the first law permits, which commands that God be loved with supreme love, and therefore to be obeyed. As Abraham, although the lower law commanded that his life be preserved, still had to obey the first law, which commands that God be worshiped.

- The law is spiritual, i.e., it requires affection.
- Let heaven and earth be mixed by those who say every thought is affection.

Fourth. That there is a law of nature, Paul concludes in Romans 2. For since there is a conscience defending or accusing the deed, it follows that there is a law of nature.

- Human reason which teaches that one must not steal or kill is natural law.

Fifth. The same Paul treated the first law of nature in the first chapter [of the Epistle to the Romans]: the Gentiles knew God, etc. The remaining laws Christ summed up in a most elegant statement and nothing like it is found in any writings or monuments of any nations: “Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do also to them.” That is, just as we wish our own life to be preserved and our safety protected, so too let us preserve the life, safety, and property of others. The law concerning generation and entering into marriages is expressed by Scripture when it says [Gen. 1:22 or similar]: “Be fruitful and multiply.” But this Christ tempered because of the foulness of lust joined to the duty of generation.

From human laws, the laws of nature cannot be gathered; rather, the laws of men ought so to agree with the laws of nature that, if anything be established contrary to them, it ought not to have the force of law. Of this more below concerning human laws.

- Many laws have been enacted by Rome which are against the law of nature, such as the leisure of priests who are fed by the labor and blood of the people.

On Divine Laws

First. Divine laws are whatever is commanded in the canonical Scriptures.

- The authority of human and divine law is not equal, as a certain canon roars like a lion.

Second. You will have done something worthwhile if from the beginning of the Bible you gather all the laws into one heap and annotate them:

Gen. 1 [v. 22, cf.]: Be fruitful and multiply

Gen. 2 [v. 17]: From the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat

Gen. 3 [v. 19]: By the sweat of your face you shall eat your bread

Gen. 4 [v. 7]: Its desire shall be for you, and you shall rule over it

Likewise [v. 15]: Whoever kills Cain, vengeance shall be taken on him sevenfold

In this way it will also be useful to arrange the laws further into commonplaces.

Third. Divine laws are threefold: Ceremonial, Judicial, and Moral.

Ceremonial laws are those which prescribe ceremonies and rites of sacrifices.

Judicial laws are those which prescribe the giving and execution of justice.

Moral laws are those which provide for the common conduct of men. Now the moral laws are contained in the Decalogue, concerning the love of God and neighbor.

- Moral laws are spiritual and require affection. For it is not impossible for man to avoid fornication in appearance, or not to kill, or not to curse. But it is impossible for him to achieve and fulfill these with the proper affections.
- Human laws have nothing to command concerning internal affections, since no one has control over affections.

In moral laws, the force of the laws must be carefully considered so that they are spiritual, that is, that they require affection. For when it is commanded You shall have no other gods, it is commanded that the one and only God be loved most vehemently; that one should trust in God alone; that all our hope be placed in the one God.

- Love of self is not easily uprooted. So too when it is commanded “You shall not kill,” not only is outward murder by the hands forbidden, but also the affections: Let us not grow angry, Let us not slander, Let us not falsely accuse, Let us not persecute anyone in hatred.
- We are always sinners, but it is not imputed to us because of faith in Christ, and this is the benefit of Christ. He who does not have the grace of Christ cannot do anything of the law, even if he performs it outwardly, but with unwilling affections.

On the Abrogation of the Law

It is often customarily said that the law has been antiquated by the coming of Christ and that the ceremonial and likewise the judicial laws have been abrogated. It is sufficiently agreed upon and attested by the Epistle to the Hebrews (chapter 9, verse 10): “In various washings and fleshly ordinances imposed until the time of correction,” etc. That it says until the time of correction signifies that the ceremonies were not perpetual. Likewise, since that law was given only to the Jews, the Gentiles ought not and were not bound by the ceremonies or judicial [laws]. However, the moral law or Decalogue is prescribed to the Gentiles by the law of nature concerning the love of God and neighbor. Therefore, the question arises whether the moral law, which commands God to be loved, has been antiquated by the grace of Christ or not. I answer:

First. Since Christ is the author of the New Testament, it is necessary that the whole law be antiquated, because in saying “New,” He has made the old obsolete and removed it

(Hebrews 8:13). From this it follows that not only the ceremonial or judicial [laws] but also the moral law has been antiquated. This you will understand thus: not that after the coming of Christ it is lawful to hate God or neighbor, nor indeed is Christ the author of sin (but its forgiver and the reforming Spirit), but that whoever has the Spirit of Christ and trusts in Christ is doubly free from the law.

First, because, since without divine help it is impossible to do anything of the law, Christ is the mediator, and He imparts the Spirit through whom we are drawn to love and do those things that are commanded by the law, just as it is impossible by nature to love one's enemy from the heart, it is impossible to hate carnal pleasure, and likewise [to do] those things commanded by the law. You are therefore bound and conquered by the law and cannot rule your own mind. Furthermore, if you believe in Christ who promises the Spirit of love or of chastity, then Christ imparts the Spirit and makes you such that, even if there were no law, you would still be displeased to hate your enemy or to serve pleasure. Therefore, He first frees us from the law by imparting the Spirit who draws us to gladly do good, even if there were no law. Without this Spirit, no man can fulfill the law. Therefore, the law is antiquated, not that you should not do it, but that, whereas before the law ruled over you, now you rule over the law, if you trust in Christ. Thus, it is not so much the law as the tyranny and dominion of the law that has been abolished. The law does not reign; it does not accuse those who are in Christ, since they themselves do what is commanded by the law. And this is what Paul says in Romans chapter 3, verse 31: "Do we then make void the law through faith? By no means, but we establish the law."

It follows that whoever does not trust in Christ is subject to the law, and the law is fulfilled to the extent that we

trust [in Him]; and just as we never fully trust here [in this life], so also we never fully fulfill the law.

Next, those who are in Christ are free from the law. For although we are always sinners and never satisfy the law, nevertheless we owe nothing to the law, even if we truly sin, because Christ has antiquated the law and taken it away. Let us not fear the punishment of the law, but let us confidently trust that sin is not imputed because of Christ, who fulfilled the law. Many pious people are anxiously troubled with certain vile affections, for whom this consolation is necessary:

The Freedom of Christians

Christians are free from the law; that is: even if they do not fulfill the law, nevertheless it is not imputed, provided they trust. It is not imputed for this reason: because we are grafted into Christ, who satisfied for all the faithful. Thus it was said to Paul (2 Corinthians 12:9): My grace is sufficient for you.

The manner of absolution. The same is to be impressed upon those confessing and being absolved, that they may know for certain and not doubt at all that what they have done wrong is forgiven. Just as Christ said in the Gospel (Matthew 9:2): Take heart, son, your sins are forgiven. And in Romans 4 (verse 5): To the one who believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness according to the purpose of God's grace. The same must be impressed upon the dying: that by no human work is sin compensated for or satisfaction made for sin, but that Christ alone has satisfied, who alone by His body appeases the Father.

For Christ alone is both the victim and the priest, reconciling the Father, as is discussed in the noble Epistle to the Hebrews, chapter 10 (verse 14): For by one offering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified. And in this lies the sum of Christianity, nor will you understand the kindness of

Christ more certainly from anything else than from this remission.

- We have no sacrifice, nor did they have one in the Old Testament. But there is one only, and the sacrifices of this old law represent the figure of the sacrifice which is Christ, the Son of God.

On the Distinction between Law and Gospel or Grace

Law is a sentence commanding and demanding good.

- Christ is not a lawgiver but a fulfiller. Man muss Christum nicht vor eynen richter halten. [One must not regard Christ as a judge.] For the law is a judge and an exactor; but Christ did not come to judge anyone. Example. If I owed a moneylender 10 florins, and he sent his servant to demand it from me (this little servant is Moses, through whom the law was given), and I truly had nothing with which to pay the moneylender, my neighbor (that is, Christ) seeing that it was being demanded from me, and said, “I forgive you that amount of gold so that you may pay, etc.,” this is the voice of the Gospel: Trust in Christ, etc.

The Gospel is a proclamation by which guilt is remitted and Christ is shown, who bestows the Spirit who may encourage and inspire us toward what is right. The law says: Love your brother. The Gospel says: It is forgiven that you have not loved. And behold Christ, in whom, if you trust, He Himself grants the Spirit who will inflame your heart so that you may love. Therefore, the law is a message of wrath—commanding, demanding, and terrifying; the Gospel is a voice of joy and peace, the voice of bridegroom and bride.

- The Gospel is the word about Christ, whence many things in the New Testament have been brought forth which do not pertain to the Gospel.

On the Distinction between Commandments and Counsels

Some have separated commandments from counsels more or less in this way: that counsels are what Christ commands in Matthew chapter 5, namely: not to be angry, not to say to a brother Racha or Fool, likewise not to resist evil, to

offer the other cheek, not to dispute in court, to lend to anyone, to love enemies, etc. But that all these are commandments can easily be gathered from that text. First, the law demands the highest perfection, that you love God with all your heart and your neighbor as yourself. Likewise, “you shall not covet,” in which laws also are comprehended these: to lend, not to be angry, not to dispute, etc. Therefore, they cannot be counted among counsels. To this pertains what is written at the end of the chapter: “Be perfect, therefore, as your Father is perfect.” Likewise, “not one iota or one stroke will pass from the law until all is accomplished.”

- The scholastics say: “All the things in Matthew chapter 5 which they call counsels, they did not consider to have been given in the Decalogue: ‘You shall not covet,’ where all counsels are utterly abolished except for virginity, which is neither above nor below a commandment, but outside it. For he has fulfilled no command who keeps virginity. Therefore, this is alone a counsel.”
- We, then, do nothing with our tricks and laws and commendations but bury divine doctrine, and [instead] with our glosses, [we should] extract the true understanding of Scripture.

Second: Whoever says “Racha” is guilty before the council; and whoever says “Fool” is guilty of hellfire. Now if he can be accused who said “Racha,” and his punishment is hell who said Fool, it follows that these are commandments, not counsels.

Third: If it is allowed to interpret these as counsels, I do not see why we should not interpret the entire law as counsels; therefore, plainly, the things contained in Matthew chapter 5 are commandments.

Fourth: The one and only counsel in Scripture is that of virginity. Matthew chapter 19 (verse 12): “There are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let him who can receive this, receive it.” And 1 Corinthians 7 (verse 25): “Concerning virgins I have no commandment, but I give a counsel.” However, virginity is so

far from being above the law of commandment that it does not even fulfill it, that is, the law. For the virgin, indeed, when she desires, does not fulfill it.

- Just as the tailor or shoemaker has done nothing for the law, so the virgin.

On Human Laws

Human laws are those which are established by magistrates. In these, it must especially be observed that nothing be enacted which is contrary to the law of nature or the divine law. For the law of nature and the divine law are the rules of all human laws. Therefore, it cannot be decreed that parents be killed, which was the custom among certain barbarous nations. Likewise, no one can be prohibited from contracting marriage. Nor can it be established concerning usury, revenge, and similar things, because such laws would conflict with Scripture. One must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29).

Note: Human laws are either civil or pontifical.

Civil laws are those which have been enacted in the republic by a magistrate, prince, king, or city. The authority of these laws is to be sought in Romans 13: "Every soul be subject to higher powers." The office of magistrates and civil laws is nothing other than to punish and restrain wrongs. And it is the duty of the magistrate to take care that no one be harmed. In this regard, laws are enacted concerning the division of property, the forms of contracting, and the punishments of evildoers. Thus Paul (Romans 13:4): "He is the minister of God, an avenger unto wrath for him who does evil."

- Laws are for the wicked, and the good have no need of them.
- The magistrate is a living law.
- But if the law does not restrain, it no longer fulfills its office.
- Canon law ought to yield to civil law.

On Pontifical Laws

First. Insofar as pontiffs establish matters concerning lawsuits and judgments, they clearly act as secular rulers. Otherwise, with respect to lawsuits, even the priests themselves have been subjected by divine law to the power of the world, as is evident from Romans 13 and 1 Peter 2.

- Pontifical laws concerning the power of benefices are all fictitious and false. For each prince has the authority in his own domain to dispense according to his own judgment, as reason permits.
- It is not true what they fabricate, that Constantine gave the right to judge priests and their subjects to the pontiffs, which is well enough established. For they themselves are bound to be subject to the secular rulers. Nor do they have the authority to establish anything concerning morals. Nor is the priestly character anything, but a human fiction. There are two principles that govern all human laws, namely: Necessity and Charity. (Only charity is the mistress of things).

Second. Concerning the faith, the pontiffs have no right to change anything. As Paul says to Timothy (2 Timothy 3:14): “Continue in those things which you have learned, knowing from whom you have learned them.” Nor is that to be numbered among the articles of faith which is determined by men. For what men determine we do not know to have proceeded from the Holy Spirit, if it cannot be proved from Scripture. And in Galatians 1:16: “I did not confer with flesh and blood.”

- The Council of Constance established the most manifest heresy. Therefore, they err most grievously who say that a council cannot err.

Third. Nor do they have the right to establish rites and ceremonies, except insofar as they have usurped it for themselves through custom. For formerly, if something in the rite seemed needing alteration, it was done by the common consent of the church. Thus, whatever a town’s church deemed

appropriate to establish concerning fasting, prayers, and the like. And the priests were more heralds of what had been decreed by the church than authors of it; they were asked and they proclaimed the law, as is evident in the Canons of the Apostles, so called. But now, since they have usurped the right and dominion through custom, I do not deny that it is permitted for them to establish rites and ceremonies, but in such a way that they do not burden Christian liberty. Such a burden is celibacy; such are the vows. For Paul says (2 Corinthians 10:8): “The Lord gave us power for building up, not for tearing down.”

- For laypeople judge divine matters more rightly than the Schools of the theologians. We have come to the point where we contend about matters of nothing [rebus nihili], namely, external works and ceremonies, and omit the necessary and more useful things, namely, concerning faith.

Fourth. One must obey superiors, whether they rule by right or have usurped power by whatever means, as in 1 Peter 2:13: “Be subject to every human institution for God’s sake.”

Fifth. No human constitutions bind to mortal sin, except insofar as the consideration of avoiding scandal requires. Nor do they command anything except external works. But all human laws are governed by Necessity and Charity. Since even divine laws are governed by these, as in Matthew 8 and 12, where Christ touches a leper contrary to divine law. Now scandal is that kind of offense by which piety or charity is harmed. In Romans 15:2: “Let each of you please his neighbor for his edification.”

- It does not matter if something of human traditions is omitted without scandal to one’s neighbor, provided you do not seek license, but meanwhile do something better. But those who disturb charity and omit them out of contempt are a scandal. These, moreover, truly sin mortally. But where there is no danger to faith or piety, it does not matter. See Paul (1 Corinthians 8).

On Grace

The word gratia (grace) properly means favor, as when Julius shows favor to Curio. So also when God shows favor and goodwill to Abraham, this favor, this goodwill, is called gratia. And this is more a trope of Hebrew than of Greek. Beware that you do not imagine, in the Thomistic way, that it signifies some quality in the soul, as heat is in heated water. In Romans 5, Paul clearly indicates that gratia means favor, when he says (v. 15): “The gift in grace,” i.e., the gift through grace, that is, the gift which the gracious (or favoring) God imparts. Therefore, the word gratia signifies something in God, not in man, just as the favor with which Julius embraces Curio is in Julius, not in Curio. Now then, God, favoring man, is present to him and works in him. Therefore, the works or outflows of grace into man are: faith, hope, charity.

- The sum of the Gospel is that it teaches grace. And there is no human teaching by which the affections are overcome and the conscience healed except by the word of life. For all other writings, whatever they may be, wound, even those of all the Theologians and holy Fathers.
- Paul (1 Corinthians 13:2): “Even if I move mountains with faith,” etc. There he speaks of love of neighbor and not of God.
- The beginning of human justification is the promise, and our righteousness is a certain divine reckoning, when a man believes his sin to be abolished through Christ, and believes that God will fulfill His promises concerning Christ. And now the man (when he believes these things) is righteous and has the Spirit restoring him.
- But all these things are utterly alien to philosophical study, and are learned rather through use and life, indeed, through the worst tribulations and the anguish of the spirit and by no words.
- Gratia is a word signifying the favor of God, by which God embraces man, a favor which is in God and not in man and as much as God favors man, so much He is present to him and holds him in His hands. And His works are: faith, hope, charity, and all other good affections whatever.

On Faith

Writers vary in the use of the word faith. For there is faith of miracles, which does not justify. There is also historical faith, that is, a kind of opinion by which I believe Livy or Sallust and other historians of good faith. Thus also the impious believe the world to have been created, that Christ was crucified, rose again, and many other things, which faith also does not justify. But faith properly related to the promise is justifying faith, as is evident from chapter 4 to the Romans, where Paul refers faith to the promise. And in Galatians 5 [verse 5]: “For we through the Spirit by faith wait for the hope of righteousness.”

First. Faith is the assent which God inspires in the mind so that it may firmly cling to the divine promise: that what God has promised, salvation through Christ, if you believe that your sin is forgiven through him, by that faith you will be saved. If you believe that through Christ sin is taken away, that the life-giving Spirit is given, that death is conquered, by that faith sin will be forgiven, you will be made alive by the Spirit, you will conquer death. For these things God has promised to give to the human race through Christ, as in Genesis to Abraham [22:18]: “In your seed all nations will be blessed.” So also everywhere the prophets. Isaiah 49 [verse 8]: “I have given you as a covenant to the people to raise up the land and to possess the desolate inheritances (that is, all nations), to say to those who are bound, ‘Come out,’ and to those who are in darkness, ‘Be revealed.’” Jeremiah 31 [verse 31]: “Behold, the days are coming, says the Lord, and I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah,” etc. (The prophets can be read in place of the Gospel and are truly the Gospel). The Gospel is the promise of forgiveness through Christ.

Ezekiel 11 [verses 19 and following]: "I will remove the heart of stone from their flesh and give them a heart of flesh, that they may walk in my commandments." John 1 [verse 12]: "To all who received Him He gave the power to become sons of God." And [chapter] 3 [verse 36]: "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life." And by promises of this kind the soul must be fortified and confirmed so that it may always trust that God favors us through Christ, who is both the pledge and the author of salvation.

- Truly, truly, these things have not been delivered in vain, but they alone feed us. Only acknowledge Christ and you have God as one who favors you.

It is indeed the sign of the salvation of the human race, just as the Lord says through Isaiah (66:19): "I will lift up a sign to the nations." And figures of this sign were the signs of the Old Testament handed down, for example, the rainbow, likewise the Ark of the Covenant, likewise the pillar of fire, and the cloud covering the ark. But by faith in the Christ who was to come, as many as were saved were saved, because Christ alone appeased the Father. And let this only be said for the first [point]. Note: some notable things are annotated outside the margin, etc.

- Many are the impious who believe that Christ was born, was crucified, and so on, and this kind of faith is opinion, just as I believe Sallust or Livy to be a true writer, therefore I believe the history written by him to be true. In the same way we believe that the things written in the Gospel books are true.
- That opinion or faith is a gift of nature and is not infused by the Holy Spirit, but is placed in the grasp of our reason.
- Another is justifying faith in Christ, which arises from the promise and whose beginning is the promise and the word. And this is not historical [faith] but above our grasp and is divinely bestowed, about which it is said (Luke 17:5): "Lord, increase our faith."
- Note: the divine promises must be very intensely impressed and marked, for they feed disturbed souls.

- Likewise, the human grasp is too weak to trust in the promises without external signs. Therefore they had various signs in the Old Testament, yet always one and the same faith in the Christ to come.
- Note: the Gospel and the preaching of the promises, just as the Law is the enforcer of things to be done, so also is the promise of the forgiveness of sins, etc.
- It must be diligently noted that there are many places in the Old Testament concerning the promise, but [they are] placed very obscurely and understood by very few. As [in the case of] Adam and Eve (Gen. 3:15): "She shall crush your head." The Hebrew is: your seed, the seed of Eve, i.e., Christ shall crush sin. There God promised to redeem the human race, but very obscurely. Thus to Noah a promise was made in the rainbow and the cloud, etc. Thus to Abraham the Offspring was promised, in whom all the tribes of the earth shall be blessed, and so the promise was always made clearer, until they arrive at this promise: if a man trusts in Christ, he is accepted and justified before God, etc.
- Note: Justifying faith is [this]: because a man hears the grace promised and upon it is built up in faith, as in the Gospel (Matt. 16:18): "Upon this rock I will build my church." And after this faith, love flows immediately and infallibly.
- Likewise, this alone is the study of theology: to exercise the promises, which is very necessary. God testifies that He forgives us our sins, and, as the Spirit works, the human soul conceives this promise, consents, trusts in the promise, clings to it, and believes that God will fulfill the promise. By that faith he is reckoned righteous. *Wer wolt dach sunst nun meher als kun seyn vnd wolt bitten (tantam maiestatem) [Who, after all, would now want to be more than they can be, and would dare to petition (such majesty)]?* Therefore everything is placed in the sweetest promises. But where now does it remain according to the Schools of Theology? Satisfaction and good works and merits *de congruo* and *de condigno*, etc.
- Again, note: these promises are pure consolations for broken consciences and comforts of souls falling and fainting. From them is established in us the continual struggle of the flesh and faith. And the life of man is warfare, etc. We therefore have our own [promises] just as they had theirs in the Old Testament.

- In baptism is the promise: “He who has believed,” etc. The sign: washing.
- In penance, the promise: “Whose sins you shall forgive,” etc. The sign: the priest’s absolution.
- In the Eucharist, the promise: “This is the cup of [my] blood,” etc. The sign is the Body of Christ or the bread, etc.
- Note: the whole of Scripture is divided into two, namely into Law and Promise. The Law is not believed, but the Promise is. To believe is [to receive] the word of promise, not of the Law. The Law commands. Just as sin is from Adam, and after sin, fear, so the favor of God is through Christ, which Christ acquired for us with His own blood. This favor stirs up in our souls faith and love.
- Thus all are sons of wrath from Adam.
From Christ, sons of righteousness, life, and spirit.
- All these things noted above I have gathered from the margin here and there, etc.

Second. Now if you trust in such promises, you will understand that you are saved through mercy alone. Your works are altogether nothing, of whatever size and of whatever kind they may seem. You do not believe God if you also trust in works / God wills to be trusted purely in Himself without any regard to works. That faith is righteousness. By that faith we shall be saved.

Third. Nor do even the holiest works contribute more to righteousness than eating and eating. Therefore, Christianity is a kind of sabbath in which we abstain from all works.

Fourth. Hence it is permitted to console consciences: that we are certain of our salvation whatever we may have done. That we are certain the sin has been forgiven if we believe: Unless you certainly believe and trust that the guilt has been forgiven, you accuse God of lying, as though He had promised in vain what He is not going to give.

Whence Faith is

Fifth. It is plainly impossible by human powers to believe. For it can happen that you trust someone whom you

hate. But the conscience hates him whom it fears. Further, that faith is a work of divine grace is proved by John [1:13]: “Who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh,” etc., and [6:28–29]: “What shall we do, that we may work the works of God? Jesus answered and said: This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He has sent.” But if it is God’s work, then it is not ours. Likewise [v. 45]: “They shall all be taught of God,” i.e., they are taught by God. “Everyone who has heard from the Father and learned comes to me.” Likewise [v. 44]: “No one can come to me unless it is given him by my Father.” Likewise Philippians 1 [v. 29]: “To you it has been given for Christ’s sake not only to believe in Him but also to suffer for Him.” And [1 Tim. 1:13]: “I obtained mercy so that I might be faithful.” Likewise Ephesians 2 [v. 8f.]: “By grace you have been saved through faith, and this not of yourselves; for it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

- Note. The beginning of a justified man is faith. For by faith alone the assaults of the flesh and demons are driven back. Therefore in Scripture are the promises and the Gospel as a kind of seal and pledge by which the heart of man is confirmed. The mind must first be directed to the promises, by which alone the soul must be fortified.
- Faith is a birth in God, as in John [1:13]: “They were born of God.” Likewise: “The weapons of our warfare” [2 Cor. 10:4] are nothing but the saving promises.
- Note. All Scripture has been published so that we may be armed by it in the struggle of death. And all Scripture either commands or promises. The Law and the Old Testament command; the Gospel and the New Testament promise to us the Spirit by whom we may fulfill them.

On the Use of Faith

First: The principle of justification is through faith, when the soul, having embraced the divine promise, trusts that

its guilt has been forgiven and therefore that God is kindly disposed and favorable to it (this must be exercised frequently in the soul by thinking). As Paul [Romans 4:5]: “To the one who believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.”

- This is not a doctrine of words but a life to be acquired.
And it is learned by living, not by speaking or reading.
Here verbosity is of no use, nay, it is harmful.

Second: Faith obtains the help of God so that the law may be fulfilled, which plainly cannot be done without the aid of the divine Spirit. But because you believe the promise by which the Lord has pledged help and protection, you obtain the Spirit as a helper. And that is what Paul says [Romans 3:31]: “I establish the law,” that is, it is fulfilled through faith. And [Jeremiah 31:33]: “After those days, says the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts,” i.e., into their affections, “and in their heart I will write it, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people.”

- Note: For by faith we are united to God, by love to neighbor
Therefore faith is the height of justification.
- The only word of life, i.e., the divine word, calms the conscience and not any vile work
For the writings of all the theologians do not comfort them but rather wound them.

Third: Just as this alone is the consolation of the conscience: faith in the forgiveness of sin, so also it is necessary for the one justified always to trust that, although he does not fulfill the law, although he also somewhere openly sins through weakness, God nevertheless overlooks it and does not impute it on account of Christ.

And this is the sum of Christianity.

- (Der wogefall vnd gutikeit von Christo vincit corda nostra arida vnd macht sie das sie weich werden vnd fliessen als honigk vnd kert vnd wendet sie vmb her etc. Das macht recht from inde fluunt opera ex amore et illa fide etc. [The favor and kindness of Christ conquers our dry hearts and makes them so that they become soft and flow like

honey and turns and changes them all around etc. That makes true piety, from which works flow out of love and that faith etc.])

And this is that forbearance of God which properly declares divine mercy. Nor can it happen that Christ is pleasing or smiles upon you unless you contemplate in Him this example of mercy. This sense of mercy so seizes the godly to love Christ, to the Eucharist, and to praise, that it most effectively calls them away from sin and makes it so that what God commands is a delight, in order to do what must be done. This is what Paul declares when he concludes that peace is the fruit of faith (Galatians 5:22). And the prophets, when they say the people will dwell in confidence (Ezekiel 38:14; Jeremiah 23:6; etc.). So Paul in Romans 5 says: "Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand and we boast in hope of the glory of the children of God." Isaiah 9: "Christ is called the Prince of Peace." And again: "Of peace there shall be no end." The same, chapter 12: "Behold, God is my Savior, I will act with confidence and not be afraid." Jeremiah 33: "I will reveal to them an entreaty of peace and of truth." Isaiah 66: "Behold, I will cause to flow over her like a river of peace." And Christ gave this peace when He said (Mark 5:34): "Go in peace." He is speaking of inner peace.

On the Sacraments

First. Something must be said here in passing about sacramental signs, since we have also spoken of the promises. For in Scripture the terms must be observed carefully, namely, promise, Testament, pact, covenant, and similar terms by which divine promises are signified.

- Sacraments are signs of divine promises, which signs in themselves do nothing except that they are a seal, a written pledge, a token by which we exercise ourselves that the promises are effective.
- You do not make use of a sacrifice as if you are doing something good, but you exercise yourself that the promise is effective. Nor is it any greater thing to partake of the Eucharist than to be baptized.
- To partake of the Eucharist is of no value on behalf of another. I am not speaking here of prayer.

Second. Visible signs are almost always added to divine promises, along with which mortals have from time to time some enduring and perpetual monument and mnēmosynon (i.e., memorial) of the divine promise, lest the memory of the promise perish. For when antiquity has testified by outward signs or ceremonies, the memory of those things lasts more surely for posterity, something that is evident from many examples in history, as when the day of the Allia was held perpetually as accursed on account of the disaster suffered at the Allia: the Roman people remembered it more surely. Also, so that mortals might believe more surely in the promise confirmed, as it were, by a faithful token or some bond.

Third. What is a sacrament? A sacrament, therefore, is a sign testifying to a divine promise, which is Paul's view in Romans 4, where he says (verse 11): “And he received the sign of the righteousness of faith which is in uncircumcision”—that is, God testified to Abraham that He was kindly disposed and favorable toward him. And He testified by the sign of circumcision. Likewise He testified to Adam that He was kindly disposed by the promise and the sign, namely, the skins with which He clothed him. To Noah by the ark and the bow. To Abraham and his descendants by circumcision. To the people of Israel in many ways by many signs. To Christians by baptism, absolution, and the Lord's food and drink.

Which Things are Sacraments

Fourth. It follows that those are properly sacraments which are signs of divine promises. Therefore, in the New Testament, the sacraments are properly: to be baptized, to be absolved, and to partake of the body of the Lord. For these have promises attached. Ordination is a fiction. Perhaps not without reason would you add to the sacraments prayer and meditation on divine doctrine.

Fifth. You rightly make use of the sacrament if, trusting in the promise, you use it for this, that by it, as by a more certain and more evident proof, and so as by a pledge of a gracious God, you confirm your faith.

- The mind must not be fixed on the sign itself and the external reminder, but on the promise.

As, for example, if you grieve that you have sinned, so that you may be certain the offense is forgiven, go to a priest who will absolve, and believe the one absolving. For that absolution is, as it were, a pledge or seal by which you may be certain the guilt is forgiven. So also when you partake of the body of the Lord, partake in this way: that you are certain and trust that, by this pledge, the guilt is forgiven. For the sacraments are saving only through faith. Thus it is certain that God is appeased toward the one who is baptized, whether by the faith of another or by his own.

In adults, by their own faith; in infants, namely by the faith of the Church.

Note: For two reasons signs have been added to the divine promises. First, for warning posterity and so that it may not be handed over to oblivion, just as the sons of Ishmael, etc. And Genesis 20 [?]: “They shall be in your hand.” Second, for certainty, because the human capacity is much weaker, so that it could not cling to them without signs.

On Charity

Charity is twofold: of God and of neighbor.

Note. Just as the beginning of justification is faith, so charity is the work of faith toward the neighbor. For when faith shows God to man as favorable and merciful, it cannot be but that man thinks well of Him in return, loves Him in return, praises Him (praise is the foam of love), gives thanks to the most gracious Father and Savior. Thus from faith love is born, which love so saturates the mind of man that there is no pleasure, no thing in which he delights, that does not likewise please the best Father. This Paul testifies in Galatians 4 [verse 6]: “Since you are sons of God, God sent the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.” And this affection shows itself when God seems to be angry, when He seems to punish, and in continual conflict between love for ourselves and, to that extent, hatred of God.

- That love is the crucifixion of our Adam and continual struggle with love of ourselves, and this love crucifies our love.
- We cannot praise and love God unless we have set before our eyes His immense and indescribable beneficence toward us.

On Love of Neighbor

From love of God is born love of neighbor. For he who loves is not moved by an impure affection toward any creature, and so embraces all creatures equally, whether they offend or benefit, according to the law: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. This charity has external works, about which you should think thus: these external works do not make a man a Christian, but are works of life's necessity. Therefore no works make one a Christian. (Faith has no external works but only crucifixion. But the love of faith, which is the first work of faith, this one has external works.) For just as eating and drinking do not make a man a Christian but serve the necessity

of life, so giving to the neighbor, protecting the neighbor, do not make a man a Christian but are works of life's necessity. You cannot live unless something is supplied to you. Again, another cannot live unless you supply something to him. Now just as you do not make much of your works of necessity—sleeping, drinking, eating—so you should not make much of the works which you perform for another's necessity. And just as you serve your necessity by drinking and eating, so charity commands that you serve another's necessity. For the force of love wants both to be poured out and to pour out (the force of love never receives, but its very nature is to pour out) whatever we are or can be. So Paul in Galatians 5 [verse 13]: For you were called to freedom; only do not use freedom as an opportunity for the flesh, i.e., no external work condemns or saves. And it follows [same verse]: But through charity serve one another, i.e., although you are free and there is no regard for works, yet you owe this to necessity: that you serve your neighbor.

Charity is the best of laws. What you owe to your neighbor is sufficiently indicated by the law when it says: Love your neighbor as yourself, and: Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them. Charity itself, Love itself, teaches sufficiently what, to what extent, where, when, and how something is to be supplied to the neighbor—by counsel, by work, by hand, by thing, by money. All these things charity makes common. Nor is there any regard here for friends or enemies. For we owe to all, just as Christ poured Himself out not only for those not giving thanks but even for those offending Him. In short, you owe all things.

- It cannot be but that the laws suffer slander from the prudence of the flesh if the Spirit of Christ and charity are lacking.

Note: Some have disputed in what order men ought to be loved. It is agreed enough that God is to be loved above all. But after God, they judged that one should first love oneself,

then one's relatives, etc. This order is plainly carnal. For as regards love, all men are to be loved equally (the friend as the enemy). And because love is poured out, it comes about that we ought not to put ourselves before those we love but after them. As for the fruit of love, since you cannot help everyone, help those with whom you are in contact: those of your household, your offspring, your parent. For thus Paul [1 Timothy 5, verse 4]: If any widow has children or grandchildren, let her first learn to rule her own house and to return recompense to her parents. Likewise [verse 8]: If anyone does not care for his own, and especially those of his household, he has denied the faith and is worse than an unbeliever. And [Galatians 6, verse 10]: While we have time, let us do good to all, especially to those of the household of faith. In short, the best of all laws, both human and divine, is charity.

On Hope

By faith the promise is apprehended, and thus the goodness and mercy of God through the divine promise. This taste of divine goodness encourages one to hope in temptation. And just as there is no regard for works in faith but only for the promise, so in hope there is no regard for works but only for divine mercy. And just as one does not believe the divine promise when one relies on works, so neither is hope placed in divine goodness alone when it is likewise placed in works. Indeed, because you do not have works, you truly have the occasion for hoping. For God most purely wills to be believed in Himself, trusted in Himself, hoped in Himself, loved in Himself.

- Hope is the affection nearest to faith.

The more purely we hope in God, the more clearly we know that there is nothing good in us.

It is idolatry to think that hope comes from merits.

It profits a man nothing not to have done evil works if he does not trust in the promise.

See on hope in Psalm 5, in verse [13]: And let all who hope in you rejoice, etc. Here, many things up to the end [of the Psalm] about hope.

(Since to Philip Melanchthon's *Theological Institution in the Epistle of Paul to the Romans* (reprinted below) there is appended the *Summary of the Epistle to the Romans* and the *Sketch* which I have just published together with the Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans is closely connected to it in the manuscript, I have also decided to add this for the sake of clarity: *The Argument of the Epistle to the Romans*, in the form which I followed in the *Sketch*, compared with the printed version. At hand is the 1523 edition from Basel, in which the *Annotations of Philipp Melanchthon on both Epistles of Paul to the Corinthians* immediately follow.)

The Argument of the Epistle to the Romans

First: Whatever in the end was the occasion for writing this epistle, it is clear enough to Paul that he wished to describe and express Christ as precisely as possible to the world and to teach as certainly as possible what benefit the world receives through Christ. If you are ignorant of the benefit of Christ, from where will you seek help against conscience? Furthermore, the occasion for writing seems to have been that the Jews were claiming the benefit of redemption for themselves because of their righteousness. Against the Gentiles

they contended that they were rejected because they had not received Christ, and thus both parties were boasting in their own righteousness. Therefore, before all things, he condemns all human righteousness, all human strength, all human merits, and plainly teaches that all people are subject to sin, but are freely given [righteousness] through Christ, so that whoever believes in Him might be saved, with no regard for any of human works whatsoever, whether they appear good or evil.

- Paul never speaks in this epistle about the ceremonial law, but about the moral law.
- This epistle is a kind of torch which all the Gospel histories follow: Paul's letters are fitting for all ages, all people, and not, as many dream, written only for his own time.
- Note: To know Christ is not only to know that He is the Son of God as an object, but to know the use of Christ, which all schools are ignorant of. They do know the history and the order of the event. For it is impossible for us to think rightly about Christ unless we have first recognized our own weakness, then indeed Christ becomes pleasing. Nor do we know Christ unless we know His benefits. Nor will we know His benefits unless we have known our own weakness. We will never think rightly about Christ unless we have known His use, and this is what it is to have known His divinity.
- Just as John pointed out Christ to the Jews before His glorification, so Paul, after His glorification, reveals His benefit to the Gentiles.

Secondly. The first part of the epistle, in eight chapters, treats grace, law, and sin—and that in the most fitting order and plainly with a rhetorical method.

Thirdly. The state of the case: that we are justified by faith. This statement is proved by many arguments. Then the law and sin are compared with grace. Now the force of this statement, that we are justified by faith, is this: That nothing of human works is good, that nothing of human strength can do anything, but because Christ has been given for the remission, if you believe, the sin is forgiven, and if you trust that you will be saved on account of Him, that faith is reckoned by Him in

place of any work, whether it appears good or evil, as righteousness. Therefore, whether conscience or any affections of the flesh trouble you, if you seize Christ as a pledge of salvation, you will be saved and helped, etc.

To teach Christ is not to teach the law.

Note. Charity regards external works, and not faith, which is the first work of faith.

Example or Similitude

Just as it is impossible for fire to be without heat, and for water to be without moisture,

So it is impossible for faith in Christ to be without joy, for joy to be without charity, for charity to be without works. Thus works follow of their own accord, and with the greatest and unquenchable love works follow infallibly: But we, by a perverse order, begin the matter and understand nothing. But whoever has once tasted his own bad conscience, or been burdened by an evil conscience, he easily judges what works are worth. Indeed, he will understand that we are not sinners, but sin itself. If there is no faith there, So gnad vns goth [May God have mercy on us].

Faith here is the cause to which all the proofs tend.

[The other part of this page is blank, and the following leaf begins].

The Epigraph, i.e. the inscription, by which above all Paul commends his office to the Romans and defines the Gospel. Text: Paul, a servant, etc.

To this genuine little work on the Loci Theologici there is joined by us PHILIP MELANCHTHON'S THEOLOGICAL INTRODUCTION TO PAUL'S LETTER TO THE ROMANS which Kohlius, Professor at Hamburg, first published from Melanchthon's autograph in the year 1752, in the book *Gesammelter Briefwechsel* [Collected Correspondence], etc.

(see p. 5 ff., where we have written out the complete index), pages 36–54. And afterward Strobel and Friedemann repeated it in the books cited above on p. 7 ff., judging it to be Melanchthon's first sketch of the Loci Theologici. It is joined here so that the reader himself may compare both with the Loci Theologici and persuade himself that this institution is indeed genuine, since it is written by Melanchthon's own hand, but not the same as that little treatise which Melanchthon himself in the first edition of the Loci in the year 1521 mentions as having begun to be published and made almost a matter of public domain, but rather the Obelisks [marginal marks or drafts] written by the author for his own use, not for that of hearers (see above p. 7 ff.).

It is reprinted here from that very rare book: *Gesammelter Briefwechsel* [Collected Correspondence], etc., which contains the first edition.

A Theological Introduction to Paul's Letter to the Romans

Among the theological topics [are these]: concerning God, one and triune, the Creator, man, sin, the law, the incarnation of the Word, grace, the sacraments, the church, the keys, the power and conditions of men. The ones that are principal and most relevant to us are SIN, LAW, and GRACE, since the rest contain rather curious than useful debates. For in these three the sum of our justification is contained, about which the philosophers have prattled many things in such various ways that from such diverging opinions it could already be clear that all philosophy is darkness and lies. Not to mention that the matter itself sufficiently proves that τὸν

διάλεξιν φιλοσόφου [the discourse of the philosopher] is ineffective for changing the hearts of men, for restoring the affections of men. These topics, indeed, are treated especially by Paul in this epistle.

Εἰσαγωγὰ εἰς ἐπιστολήν [Introductions to the Epistle]

The topics, as I think, of the epistle are three: the first, concerning JUSTIFICATION; the second, concerning PREDESTINATION and the calling of the Gentiles; the third, concerning the FORMATION OF MORALS.

I

In the first, there is very much difficulty. For whether the contention is about legal matters, circumcision, and other ceremonies, or whatever other reason may have given Paul the occasion to write the epistle: it is certainly evident that Paul in this epistle speaks chiefly about the LAW OF MORALS, and not only about the works of ceremonies, but especially περὶ ἠθικῶν [concerning ethical matters]; nor merely about faith, that is, a historical opinion about Christ, but about JUSTIFYING faith. Accordingly, they are mistaken who place the aim of this epistle solely in ceremonies, and in the law insofar as it commands concerning ceremonies.

II

It is evident, moreover, that Paul wished by this epistle to set forth Christ and the grace of Christ to the world, so that by a certain precise disputation it might rightly be known that Christ is the author of our righteousness.

III

We all reckon, by the counsel of natural reason, that it is better to live with virtue than among so many vices. But in ourselves we detect a certain love for vices, such as makes it so

that through it we are well off in vices, but not in virtue. Therefore, our conscience always fights against the desire of nature, which, although it sees what is good, right, and pious, nevertheless does not attain it. When the nations saw this, they variously prescribed a theory of RIGHTEOUSNESS, or of perfect virtue. One judged virtue to be acquired by nature, another by habit, another otherwise. Then, when they had concluded that virtue is acquired by habit, they saw that it is not as sweet as vice is. How to insert that sweetness into the souls of men became a matter of contest. Plato, in the second book *On the Laws*, holds that in perfect virtue there cannot be happiness unless it is also pleasant, and that there is no blessedness unless the mind of man is satisfied in all respects. Wherever anything bitter, gloomy, difficult, or morose occurs, it does not pertain to blessedness, but he nevertheless does not declare that in virtue there is pleasantness. Accordingly, it is evident that the nations were ignorant of that form of righteousness which would be both solid and constant, and which would so bless us from the soul that it would be more pleasant to live well and according to virtue than to loosen the rein for the desires of nature. And it is evident that Plato himself confesses this.

But now the Jews commonly thought that they attained righteousness if they had performed the works of the law. But there are no such works of that kind, so efficacious that they can change the inner inclination of our hearts. Still, amid so many works, the mind teemed with vicious affections; still, the burden of the law was unpleasant; still, each one preferred to exercise his own liberty, that is, preferred to fulfill the desires of nature. And just as a stone, whether you roll it or throw it upward, does not change the inclination and impulse of its nature by which it is carried downward, so the mind is not cleansed by any external works. And it comes about that we cannot help being liars, when the affection of the soul resists

the work. But Christ died for our justification. Everywhere the Prophets desire that God would rain righteousness upon the earth. Which is the anxious prayer of pious minds who, when they condemn themselves and plainly feel that they cannot attain what they strive for, sigh that God would supply a purifying, enlightening Spirit, and further justify through Christ. For God sent *χριστόν* [Christ] into the world, who by His death would both make satisfaction for our offenses and merit the justifying Spirit, that is, the one renewing our affections, and who changes the inner inclination of sin, so that those who believed Him to be the author of righteousness, their sins would be abolished, and to them the Spirit of righteousness would be given. This *χριστόν* [Christ] of our righteousness Paul sets forth before our eyes. O immense benefit! So to know *χριστόν* [Christ], that, if you are oppressed by the law, by the conscience of sins, He removes the burden, places it on His own shoulders; if you thirst for righteousness, He supplies it. O happy are they to whom it has been given so to know Christ! O madness! O darkness! to comfort a sorrowful conscience from elsewhere, to hope for righteousness and perfect virtue from elsewhere than from Christ!

IV

You say: Why do we not attain righteousness by our own strength? Because of original sin. ORIGINAL SIN is the innate ardor, impulse, rush, by which we are drawn to vices. Just as in fire there is a rush by which it is borne upward, so in man toward sin. Just as in Genesis chapter eight [v. 21], the Lord declares: the intention and thought of man is evil from his youth. For because God has stripped us of His Spirit and light, that is, of original righteousness, we are carried into ourselves and our own, we begin to embrace life and whatever is pleasant in life with supreme love; in short, we wish to be blessed by

ourselves. Hence it comes about that nothing is as hateful as death; that all the charms of life are pleasant; that desire resists, if anything is commanded contrary to reason; from this comes hatred of the law; from there also slavish fear, from there the material of all destructive affections. For this desire cannot be removed by our strength, just as a man cannot raise himself when dead. And we sufficiently perceive from experience that we cannot turn our hearts away of our own accord from what we passionately love, when reason commands it. But we always love ourselves, always hate death, always wish to be blessed by ourselves. Let this desire and will be called free.

V

The will can be considered either in relation to predestination, then it is in no way free, but this is a more sublime matter than can be grasped by us, or it is considered only by its own nature; then, in relation to the affections, it is not free, and just as affection is the weight of external action, so it drags the limbs with it, if it begins to rage with any force; thus there will be no freedom even in external actions. But simply considered in relation to external action, it is free, so that, just as the intellect cannot assent to both contradictories but only to one, and yet can conceive both, so the will clings with affection to something, but can command the limbs externally to the opposite. But just as one part of a contradiction is a lie, so too the external action that is done with the soul's affection resisting is false. O hypocrisy of works, by which we impious ones are justified!

VI

Law is a sentence, either divinely promulgated or shown by natural reason, by which right things are commanded. And this Paul calls the law of works, because it commands deeds, and the same is called by Paul the LETTER,

that is, an ineffective sentence, which does not accomplish what it commands. For Tarquin was not bound to obey, just because reason advised him to restrain his hands from parricide, his soul from impious hatred of his father-in-law, indeed, he could not. For law is an ineffective thought, but affection is the life of the soul, so that it cannot be overcome or driven out by the law. Whoever wants rightly to understand the power of the law must absolutely compare thought with affection. Nor is anyone so dull as not to understand that thought is overcome by affection. Or what goals? What precepts of our reason? Do they achieve that we avoid προπαθείας [preliminary impulses]? And it cannot happen otherwise than that from προπαθεία [preliminary impulse] a πάθος [full affection] arises sooner than you can take hold of it with reason. The matter itself is detected by experience, so that it is plainly evident that in this respect also the philosophers erred, who judged that perfect virtue is born in us through our own precepts. And there are among the scholastics those who leave no room for grace in a good work. Then, after you have sinned, what does the law accomplish? A thousand lashes of the conscience. For who does not know that sin is not removed by the law, nor by subsequent works, however good? A weak, sorrowful conscience always remains; hatred of the law remains, of the lawgiver; from the sweet name of God becomes the name of executioner, avenger, and whatever is harsher than these. Therefore Paul says the law works wrath, and the letter kills.

VII

But you can explain these sayings in two ways, that the law is the power of sin, that the letter kills, that the law works wrath. First, that the law so far from helping to avoid sin, rather provokes to sin. For since desire is drawn in the opposite direction, we feel it more inflamed when the bridle of the law

is applied, or even driven forward by the law, so that out of fear we perform slavish and false works. But as for being drawn by desire in another direction, Paul in chapter VII of Romans indicates that he was led into this state by the law. Then, that the law, after sin has occurred, troubles the conscience, instills in us hatred of God and fear of punishment, through which man cannot but despair, just as Scripture almost always speaks of the law as a messenger of wrath, an exactor, and the like. By "letter," Paul means whatever is outside of grace.

VIII

Grace, which Paul also calls spirit, is the spirit by which we are enlightened, purified, impelled to good things. You will compare grace with law, as affection with thought. Accordingly, just as the life of all living beings is affection, all living beings are drawn of their own accord, according to their affection, toward something: so man according to nature is drawn toward evils, because "no one comes to me" etc. And this being-drawn, just as it is the life of man, so it is more powerful than all thought. For we are also drawn to many things apart from our own thought. So a certain contrary affection ought to be created in our hearts, by which we are drawn of our own accord, even if there were no law, toward good things. This affection was merited through Christ and is called GRACE. Thus it is true that the law is not laid down for the just, that is, the just man is of such a kind that of his own accord and unprompted he is going to do good things and is drawn toward good things, even if no law had ever been set forth.

PARTS OF GRACE: FAITH, a constant assent to the divine word, and by this we are enlightened and God is shown to us.

CHARITY, love of God and of neighbor, hatred of self. HOPE, an affection which is especially shown in adversities, and by it we trust God to preserve us through His own goodness. It is clear that hope is born from love. For since it is not permitted here to obtain God completely, whom we love, we hope to obtain Him more fully elsewhere. Hope includes a certain disgust for life and for human things. To these add the fruits of the spirit, in Paul to the Galatians, which are works of grace.

IX

By this grace are justified, all as many as are predestined: both the fathers before Christ incarnate, each by a more or less manifest revelation of Christ, but all by faith in the one to come, and those who have been justified after Christ.

X

It is a familiar trope with Paul that we are justified by faith, which people commonly understand to mean that faith is something required, apart from the remaining works. As in: Suppose Cato was in every respect upright and virtuous, yet because he did not believe, he was not at all just nor acceptable to God. Something like this is found about Abraham in St. Jerome. But it is clearly false. This, rather, is Paul's true meaning: to be JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, that is, that no work is so good, so splendid, as to be able to change our genuine affections, but precisely by the fact that we believe Christ to be the author of our righteousness, and call upon His name, He straightway supplies new affections. Faith compels us to invoke. Invocation obtains help, not that faith and grace are not both parts of grace, but that faith is the first benefit of grace, and justification is not completed all at once in us, but affections are changed and purified continually. Thus no work

is so great that by it death can be overcome, and thus that we can be made blessed. Accordingly, we are blessed by faith, that is, because we believe in Christ, because we have cast ourselves upon Him, He slays and kills the irresistible power of death.

XI

RIGHTEOUSNESS IS FROM FAITH pertains to two things: to obtain the Spirit who perseveres and renews and restores us, and then also to calm the conscience and abolish past sin. First, if you feel yourself too weak to resist affections, behold: you will be freed from πάθημα [suffering, passion] by no works, but only by the Spirit you will be purified, if you call upon and implore Christ. Thus the Prophet: "The Lord is my strength and my song, and He has become my salvation." Likewise Christ in Matthew 11: "Come to me, all who labor and are heavy laden!" Then, when there has been a transgression, you will not quiet the conscience with any works, but by faith alone and pure in Christ you will be pacified, by which you believe that He has borne our iniquities. That is the confession on which the Church is founded; against this the gates of hell shall not prevail.

XII

Grace does not abolish sin once for all, but continually purges it, Romans 7 and 8, unto death. Therefore, as long as we live, we are always sinners; there are always remnants of the old man in us, until, with the flesh abolished, the law of God becomes as delightful as is the concupiscence of sin. So understand Psalm 1: "In the law of the Lord is his delight."

XIII

THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN GENTILE
RIGHTEOUSNESS AND CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOUSNESS.

The righteousness of the Gentiles, which in the Gospel is Pharisaic and is called by Paul righteousness or servitude of the law, is that by which we perform external images of works, with affection resisting. But we do this either from affection for gain or out of servile fear. In this righteousness, first, virtue is not pleasant and easy. Then, it is impossible, so long as love of self and fear of those things that oppose us are in us, that many vices do not lie in wait. LOVE OF SELF is the root of all evil. It also leads a man into vain confidence in himself. Finally, it cannot fight against resisting affections. Therefore, if affection begins to rage, then even external works can no longer be guarded.

CHRISTIAN RIGHTEOUSNESS is that by which we are drawn to good by the spontaneous Spirit, even if there were no law. First, this humbles and removes confidence in ourselves, and acknowledges nothing of its own. Then it is also easier; finally, it is master over affections, because it always hangs upon the eyes of χριστός [Christ]. Moreover, in this righteousness, what is lacking we trust is not imputed because of Christ's merit.

Lastly, the distinction between works-based righteousness and faith will be revealed by death, when none of our works, none of our efforts will be sufficient to contend with death. Briefly: Pharisaic righteousness is not righteousness, but a lying appearance of works, nor can hearts be changed by any or all means, except by Him who created them. Jeremiah 13: "Can the αἰθίοψ [Ethiopian] change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then also you can do good, who are accustomed to do evil." Moreover, all righteousness of works and of the good things of this life conquers neither sin, nor hell, nor death, and we must be saved solely by faith in the word, into which we are incorporated and grafted into Christ the conqueror, and with Him, we shall conquer.

Behold, what is faith? The only harbor, the only defense, the only anchor, the only rampart. In all our uncertain matters, faith alone lifts the burden of the law and of sin, faith alone calms our consciences, faith alone conquers death and hell. Believe in Christ, call upon Christ through faith: already the justifying and purifying Spirit is present! Already peace is given to the conscience, already the terror of death yields, already the threats of hell are shut. For whoever believes in Christ shall not see death. These things seem to me to be treated first by Paul: concerning which, if anyone has better thoughts, it would be no burden to follow them, etc.

SECOND POINT, OF PREDESTINATION, is that about which, apart from the few words Paul said, no reasoning of man, no intellect, can add anything. See John chapter 6 on these matters.

THIRD POINT, OF MORALS, is whole, where observe this rule:

Let the rule of all indifferent works be charity.

SUMMARY OF THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS.

The state of the cause: Righteousness is from faith without works, and no work can change the affection, but faith alone obtains righteousness, that is, our renewal.

THE SPEECH is of the judicial kind; it has an introduction, a narration, a confirmation, aptly composed.

The inscription: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, etc. In that inscription you will observe:

What is the servitude of the law?

What is the servitude of Christ?

What is the law?

What is the Gospel?

Introduction: First, I give thanks to my God... Secondly, it has places apt for goodwill, from the beginning. Then follows attention: For I am not ashamed. The Gospel is

by no means a shameful thing; but the law is a shameful thing, which does not effect what it commands. The Gospel is by no means a shameful thing, namely, it is effective for justification, because the Gospel is the power of God, and it is that by which God justifies.

Narration: For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven upon all ungodliness.

The design of the narration is: Since Paul wished to prescribe the source and anchor of righteousness both for the Gentiles and the Jews, he rightly began with the fact that both the Gentiles and the Jews had a law, those a natural one, these even a divine one, but that the law had profited neither Gentiles nor Jews in subduing affections, but all felt affections repugnant to the law and that they did not attain what the law prescribed.

The summary of the narration truly consists in these axioms:

The Gentiles had the law of nature.

The Gentiles, even though they had the law of nature, nevertheless sinned.

The Jews had the divine law.

The Jews, even though they had the divine law, nevertheless sinned.

Therefore all sinned, that is, both Gentiles and Jews, and were not helped by the law so as to sin less. But righteousness is through Christ, and is not to be compared with any works. Paul extends this narration up to the fourth chapter, and mixes in it several digressions, which, unless someone notices, I do not think will easily follow the thread of the argument.

The first digression is from the beginning of chapter two, For which cause you are inexcusable, etc., up to the middle of that chapter: Behold, you are called a Jew, etc.

The second digression is from the beginning of chapter three up to this place: We have charged both Jews and Greeks, that they are all under sin.

Confirmation, which is in the fourth chapter, has six arguments:

Abraham was justified by faith, not by works; therefore neither are we justified except by faith, namely, [as] sons of Abraham.

David says that blessedness is through the non-imputation of sin; therefore it is not from works.

Abraham was justified before circumcision; therefore, he was not justified from works.

Through the law there is no promise, and justification was before the Mosaic law; therefore justification is not from the works of the law.

If the inheritance is from the law, if the law suffices for justification, then the promise of Christ is in vain, and if it is from us, we do not need Christ.

The law produces wrath; therefore it does not reconcile. The law causes hatred of God; therefore not love.

After these, in the fourth chapter, follows amplification, by which he turns the case toward the Gentiles. At the beginning of the fifth chapter is exhortation to trust in Christ. Then in the same chapter, where he says Moreover, just as through one man sin... there he begins a passage wholly separate from the preceding, in which he compares sin, grace, and law, and it is a didactic section in which he teaches what sin, grace, and law are, and from where they come.

This is the summary:

Through Adam came sin.

Through sin, death.

Sin was even before the Mosaic Law.

But it was not recognized.

Through Christ comes grace.

Through grace, life.
Through the law, sin abounds.
So that, once sin is recognized, grace may abound even more.

Is the law, then, the cause of sin?

The answer: no.

The law is good.

We are evil.

We use a good thing badly, as a bridle is the cause of a horse's rage, not in itself, but as it provokes him to rage.

These matters are treated from the end of chapter five up to the place in chapter seven: But we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal. The whole of chapter six, together with the beginning of chapter seven, up to the place (verse 7): What shall we say then? Is the law sin? is a digression, and contains a moral disputation and the distinction between the reign of sin, the law, and grace.

That we are not under the law, but under grace and that passage removes the freedom of the will.

From part of chapter seven (verse 14): We know that the law is spiritual, up to part of chapter eight (verse 12): Therefore, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh.

That sin has such great power that even in Paul himself it still resists the law. But it is gradually subdued. However, he has been delivered from impossibility; and before someone is in Christ, it is impossible to do anything of the law; the law cannot be fulfilled outside Christ.

The rest, up to chapter 9, are exhortations and certain consolations.

Chapter 9 contains the predestination and calling of the Gentiles.

Chapter 10 [contains] the comparison between the righteousness of faith and the pharisaic righteousness.

Chapter 11 is an exhortation.

The rest are moral teachings.