

▸ John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*

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▸ **Book Four: The External Means or Aids by Which God Invites Us Into the Society of Christ and Holds Us Therein**

• ▸ **The True Church With Which as Mother of All the Godly We Must Keep Unity (Chapter I)**

- ▸ *(The Holy Catholic Church, our mother, 1-4) The necessity of the church*
  - ▸ We need outward helps to beget and increase faith within us.
  - ▸ God deposited this treasure in the church that the gospel might flourish.
    - ▸ He instituted pastors and teachers of the Word.
    - ▸ He instituted the sacraments.
  - ▸ For those to whom he is Father the church may also be “mother”.
- ▸ *What is the relationship of church and creed?*
  - ▸ The article in the creed regarding the church refers to the visible church and also to the number of the elect.
  - ▸ No hope for the future inheritance remains to us unless we have been united with all other members under Christ, our Head.
  - ▸ Though despair might set in that there is no remnant of the church left, God miraculously keeps his church alive.
- ▸ *“The communion of saints”*
  - ▸ It is a community in which the heart and souls of the multitude of believers are one.
  - ▸ If truly convinced that God is the common Father of all and Christ is the common Head, those united in brotherly love cannot but share their benefits with one another.
  - ▸ Even if the whole world were overthrown, the church could neither totter nor fall.
    - ▸ It stands by God’s election
    - ▸ It has in a way been joined to the steadfastness of Christ.
    - ▸ The promises apply to us:
      - ▸ There will be salvation in Zion [Joel 2:32; Obad 17].
      - ▸ God will abide in the midst of Jerusalem forever, that it may never be moved [Ps. 46:5].
  - ▸ We are not to distinguish between reprobate and elect--that is for God alone.
  - ▸ Rather, we are to establish with certainty in our hearts that all those who have entered into fellowship with Christ, are set apart as God’s property and personal possession.
- ▸ *The visible church as mother of believers*
  - ▸ There is no other way to enter into life unless this mother conceive us in her womb, give us birth, nourishes us at her breast, and keep us under her care until glory.
  - ▸ Apart from her bosom one cannot hope for forgiveness of sins or any salvation.
- ▸ *(Her ministers, speaking for God, not to be despised, 5-6) Education through the church, its value and its obligation.*

- ▶ The preaching of the heavenly doctrine has been enjoined upon pastors.
  - ▶ All those who reject the spiritual food offered through the church deserve to perish in their hunger.
  - ▶ God wills to teach us through human means.
  - ▶ He also provides for our weakness in that he prefers to address us in human fashion through interpreters in order to draw us to himself rather than thunder at us and drive us away.
  - ▶ God's power is not bound to outward means, but he has chosen this ordinary manner of teaching.
    - ▶ Fanatical men, refusing to hold fast to it, entangle themselves in many deadly snares.
    - ▶ They despise public assemblies.
  - ▶ By his Word, God alone sanctifies temples to himself for lawful use.
  - ▶ If we rashly attempt anything without his command, strange inventions cling to the bad beginning and spread immeasurable evil.
- ▶ *Meaning and limits of the ministry*
  - ▶ Some exaggerate its dignity beyond measure.
  - ▶ Others contend that what belongs to the Holy Spirit is wrongly transferred to mortal men.
  - ▶ Christ declares that he sends the apostles to bring forth fruit from their labor.
  - ▶ It must be remembered that "neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but it is God alone who gives the growth" [1 Cor. 3:7].
- ▶ *(The visible church: its membership and the marks by which it is recognized, 7-9) Invisible and visible church*
  - ▶ Scripture speaks of the term "church" in two ways.
  - ▶ It can refer that which is actually in God's presence, into which no persons are received but those who are children of God.
  - ▶ It often refers to the whole multitude of men spread over the earth who profess to worship one God and Christ.
  - ▶ We are commanded to revere and keep communion with the latter, which is called "church" in respect to men.
- ▶ *The limitation of our judgment*
  - ▶ The Lord by certain marks and tokens has pointed out to us what we should know about the church.
  - ▶ Those who seemed utterly lost and quite beyond hope are by his goodness called back to the way.
  - ▶ Those who more than others seemed to stand firm often fall.
  - ▶ We recognize as members of the church those who profess the same God and Christ with us.
    - ▶ By confession of faith.
    - ▶ By example of life.
    - ▶ By partaking of the sacraments.
- ▶ *The marks of the church and our application of them to judgment*
  - ▶ Wherever a church of God exists:

- ▶ We see the Word of God purely preached and heard.
- ▶ And the sacraments administered according to Christ's institution.
- ▶ The church universal is a multitude gathered from all nations.
  - ▶ It is divided and dispersed in separate places.
  - ▶ It agrees on the one truth of divine doctrine
  - ▶ It is bound by the bond of the same religion.
- ▶ *(A church with these marks, however defective, is not to be forsaken: the sin of schism, 10-16)*  
*Marks and authority of the church*
  - ▶ Distinguishing marks: the Word preached, and sacraments administered.
  - ▶ These cannot exist without bringing forth fruit and prospering by God's blessing.
  - ▶ With these marks present, there is no deceitful or ambiguous form of the church seen.
    - ▶ No one is permitted to spurn its authority, flout its warnings, resist its counsels, or make light of its chastisements.
    - ▶ We are not to desert it or break its unity.
    - ▶ The Lord esteems the communion of his church so highly that he counts as a traitor and apostate from Christianity anyone who arrogantly leaves any Christian society that cherishes the true ministry of Word and sacraments.
- ▶ *The inviolable validity of the marks*
  - ▶ It is a deadly temptation when one is prompted to withdraw from a congregation where the signs of the Lord are present.
  - ▶ But if devoid of Word and sacraments, it advertises the name of the church in deceit.
- ▶ *Heeding the marks guards against capricious separation*
  - ▶ The marks are a sufficient pledge and guarantee that we may safely embrace as church any society in which both these marks exist.
  - ▶ Some fault may creep into the administration of either doctrine or sacraments, but this ought not to estrange us from communion with the church.
    - ▶ Not all articles of true doctrine are of the same sort.
    - ▶ Some are so necessary to know that they should be certain and unquestioned by all men as the proper principles of religion, such as:
      - ▶ God is one.
      - ▶ Christ is God and the Son of God.
      - ▶ Our salvation rests in God's mercy.
    - ▶ Among the churches there are other articles of doctrine disputed which still do not break the unity of faith.
  - ▶ We must not reject it so long as it retains them, even if it otherwise swarms with many faults.
- ▶ *Scandal in the church no occasion for leaving it*
  - ▶ In bearing with imperfections of life we ought to be considerate.
  - ▶ Some do not see a quality of life corresponding to the doctrine of the gospel among those to whom it is announced, and immediately judge that no church exists in that place.
  - ▶ The church is always at the same time mingled with good men and bad.

- ▶ *Paul and the needs of his congregations*
  - ▶ Among the Corinthians, almost the whole body was infected.
  - ▶ He does not lay upon them the ultimate anathema, but recognizes and proclaims them to be the church of Christ and the communion of saints.
  - ▶ Many things were done without decency or order, yet the church abides among them because the ministry of the Word and sacraments remains unrepudiated there.
- ▶ *Fellowship with wicked persons*
  - ▶ They object that Paul severely rebuked the Corinthians for tolerating an infamous man in their fellowship.
    - ▶ He declares it wrong to even eat with a man of shameful life. [1 Cor. 5:11]
    - ▶ They exclaim, "If it is not permitted to eat ordinary bread, how is it permitted to eat the Lord's bread?"
  - ▶ Even the openly wicked are not always removed from the company of the saints.
    - ▶ This, admittedly, is a fault.
    - ▶ But even if the church be slack in its duty, still each individual has not the right at once to take upon himself the decision to separate.
    - ▶ We are not at all harmed if one who is unworthy foists himself upon us.
- ▶ *The false claim of perfection comes from distorted opinion*
  - ▶ This springs up from an ill-advised zeal for righteousness.
  - ▶ Overscrupulousness is born rather of pride and arrogance and false opinion of holiness than out of true holiness or zeal for it.
  - ▶ Those who more boldly than others incite defection from the church have for the most part no other reason than by their contempt of all to show that they are better than others.
    - ▶ In a great multitude there are many men, truly holy and innocent in the Lord's sight, who escape their notice.
    - ▶ Even among those who seem diseased there are many who in no wise are pleased with, or flatter themselves in their faults, but aroused over and over by a profound fear of the Lord, aspire to a more upright life.
    - ▶ The holiest sometimes undergo a most grievous fall.
- ▶ *(The imperfect holiness of the church does not justify schism, but affords occasion for the exercise within it of forgiveness of sins, 17-22) The holiness of the church*
  - ▶ The church's holiness is not yet complete.
  - ▶ The church is holy, then, in the sense that it is daily advancing and is not yet perfect.
    - ▶ It makes progress from day to day but has not yet reached its goal.
    - ▶ From the creation of the world there was no time when the Lord did not have his church.
    - ▶ He ever sanctifies certain vessels unto honor that there may be no age that does not experience his mercy.
- ▶ *The example of the prophets*
  - ▶ All things have been so far corrupted that Isaiah does not hesitate to liken Jerusalem to Sodom and Gomorrah.
  - ▶ Still, the prophets did not because of this establish new churches for themselves, or erect new altars on which to perform separate sacrifices.

- ▶ *The example of Christ and of the apostles*
  - ▶ Even then, the desperate impiety of the Pharisees and the dissolute lifestyles could not prevent them from practicing the same rites and assembling along with the rest of the people.
  - ▶ He who voluntarily deserts the outward communion of the church is without excuse.
  - ▶ Neither the vices of the few nor the vices of the many in any way prevent us from duly professing our faith there in ceremonies ordained by God.
- ▶ *Forgiveness of sins and the church*
  - ▶ Some are angry against upright teachers because they teach them to groan throughout life under a burden of vices and to take refuge in pardon.
  - ▶ Our adversaries say this leads people away from perfection.
  - ▶ It is a devilish invention of our minds to be cocksure about our perfection.
  - ▶ Thus forgiveness of sins appropriately follows the mention of the church.
  - ▶ The Lord has promised his mercy sole in the communion of saints.
  - ▶ Forgiveness of sins, then, is for us the first entry into the church and Kingdom of God.
    - ▶ Without it, there is for us no covenant or bond with God.
    - ▶ We are initiated into the society of the church by the sign of baptism, which teaches us that entrance into God's family is not open to us unless we first are cleansed of our filth by his goodness.
- ▶ *Lasting forgiveness for the members of the church!*
  - ▶ The Lord through forgiveness of sins receives and adopts us once for all into the church.
  - ▶ Through the same means he preserves and protects us there.
  - ▶ Unless we are sustained by the Lord's constant grace in forgiving our sins, we shall scarcely abide one moment in the church.
    - ▶ The Lord has called his children to eternal salvation.
    - ▶ Therefore, they ought to ponder that there is pardon ever ready for their sins.
    - ▶ Sins have been and are pardoned daily to us who have been received and engrafted into the body of the church.
- ▶ *The power of the keys*
  - ▶ To impart to us this benefit, the keys of the church have been given.
  - ▶ The mission of reconciliation has been entrusted to the ministers of the church.
  - ▶ By it, they are repeatedly to exhort the people to be reconciled to God in Christ's name.
  - ▶ Our sins are continually forgiven us by the ministry of the church itself when presbyters or bishops strengthen godly consciences by the gospel promises in the hope of pardon and forgiveness.
    - ▶ This is done both publicly and privately as need requires.
    - ▶ God's children, as long as they dwell in mortal bodies remain unable to stand before God without forgiveness of sins.
    - ▶ This benefit so belongs to the church that we cannot enjoy it unless we abide in communion with the church.
    - ▶ It is dispensed to us through ministers and pastors of the church, either by preaching of the gospel or by the administration of the sacraments.

- ▶ *(Incidents illustrating forgiveness within the community of believers, 23-29) All believers are to seek forgiveness of their sins*
  - ▶ Certain anabaptists feign that in baptism God's people are reborn into a pure and angelic life, unsullied by any carnal filth.
  - ▶ But if after baptism anyone falls away, they leave him nothing but God's inexorable judgment.
  - ▶ Sinners who lapse after receiving grace are held out no hope of pardon.
  - ▶ No falsehood is more clearly refuted by Scripture.
    - ▶ The Lord commands the saints to daily pray, "Forgive us our debts."
    - ▶ The Lord requires the saints to confess their sins, and he promises pardon.
    - ▶ What boldness is it either to exempt them from sin or if they have stumbled, to exclude them from grace?
- ▶ *God's abundant grace to sinful believers under the Old Covenant: the Law*
  - ▶ The patriarchs were far from perfect, yet far from being banished from the chosen people, these men were raised up as heads!
  - ▶ David committed that crime (horrible even among the Gentiles) and yet received pardon.
  - ▶ As often as promises of divine mercy are manifested in the Law and the Prophets toward the Israelites, so often does the Lord prove that he shows himself willing to forgive the offenses of his people!
- ▶ *God's abundant grace to sinful believers under the Old Covenant: the Prophets*
  - ▶ The prophets are full of promises of this kind, which offer mercy to a people though they be covered with infinite crimes.
  - ▶ For if the Lord had not foreseen that his people would be continually burdened with diseases of sins, he would never have established this remedy.
- ▶ *God's abundant grace to sinful believers under the New Covenant*
  - ▶ The riches of his mercy have been poured out.
  - ▶ Let us not doubt that the Heavenly Father's clemency flows forth to us much more abundantly, rather than that it is cut off or curtailed.
- ▶ *God's abundant grace toward delinquent churches*
  - ▶ Neither the Galatians nor the Corinthians were barred from the Lord's mercy.
  - ▶ Indeed, the very ones who had sinned more than the others are expressly invited to repentance.
  - ▶ For the Lord's covenant remains, and shall remain forever inviolable, which he solemnly ratified with Christ.
- ▶ *Are only unconscious sins forgivable?*
  - ▶ Those who speak thus allow pardon for no sin, except one that is an error of ignorance.
  - ▶ What depravity it is not to grant any expiation for voluntary sin!
  - ▶ Nothing is more apparent than that Christ's sacrifice is alone sufficient to forgive the voluntary sins of the saints inasmuch as the Lord has attested this by carnal sacrifices as seals.
  - ▶ Who can excuse David, the patriarchs, the Corinthians, or Peter if we bar the way to God's mercy which manifests itself so generously.

- ▶ *The question of “second repentance” in the ancient church*
  - ▶ “Slight errors” were distinguished from public crimes, which with great scandal came under the church’s cognizance.
  - ▶ The Lord’s Word surely prescribes a greater moderation of disciplinary rigor.
  - ▶ It is not to be pushed so far that he for whom it ought to be chiefly concerned becomes overwhelmed with sorrow.
- ▶ **A Comparison of the False and the True Church (Chapter II)**
  - ▶ *(Departure from true doctrine and worship invalidates the Roman Church’s claim to be the true church, 1-6) The basic distinction*
    - ▶ As soon as falsehood breaks into the citadel of religion and the sum of necessary doctrine is overturned and the use of the sacraments is destroyed, surely the death of the church follows--just as a man’s life is ended when his throat is pierced or his heart mortally wounded.
    - ▶ If the true church is the pillar and foundation of truth it is certain that no church can exist where lying and falsehood have gained sway.
  - ▶ *The Roman Church and its claim*
    - ▶ Instead of the ministry of the Word, a perverse government compound of lies rules there, which partly extinguishes the pure light, partly chokes it.
      - ▶ The foulest sacrilege has been introduced in place of the Lord’s Supper.
      - ▶ The worship of God has been deformed by a diverse and unbearable mass of superstitions.
      - ▶ Doctrine has been entirely buried and driven out.
      - ▶ In withdrawing from deadly participation in so many misdeeds, there is accordingly no danger that we be snatched away from the church of Christ.
    - ▶ The communion of the church was not established on the condition that it should served to snare us in idolatry, ungodliness, ignorance of God, and other sorts of evils.
    - ▶ Rather, it is to hold us in the fear of God and obedience to truth.
    - ▶ Since their one purpose is to defend their own cause in any way they can without regard for truth, I shall say only a few things which good men and those zealous for truth can extricate themselves from their deceits.
      - ▶ Why do they not mention Africa, Egypt and all Asia.
      - ▶ This sacred succession of bishops, by virtue of which they boast that the churches have been maintained, has ceased to be
      - ▶ What about Greece?
        - ▶ Why do they say that the church perished among the Greeks, among whom the succession of bishops has never been interrupted.
        - ▶ They make the Greeks schismatics, but with what right?
        - ▶ Because in withdrawing from the apostolic see, they lost their privilege.
        - ▶ Would not they who fall away from Christ deserve to lose it much more?
  - ▶ *The false church, despite its high pretensions, shows that it does not hear God’s Word*
    - ▶ When priests corrupt his worship with wicked superstitions, he moves elsewhere and strips the place of holiness.

- ▶ This fact sorely troubled weak consciences, that, while the Jews seemed to be God's people, they not only rejected the teaching of the gospel but also persecuted it.
- ▶ In the letter to the Galatians, he states that many have a place in the church to whom the inheritance does not apply.
- ▶ Many born and brought up as slaves boast without hesitation that they are children of God and of the church.
- ▶ They haughtily despise God's real children even though they themselves are bastards.
- ▶ If a reason be sought, Paul points out that only those born of the pure and lawful seed of doctrine are accounted God's children [Rom. 9:6-9]
- ▶ *The Church is founded upon God's Word*
  - ▶ The Romanists vex us today and frighten the uneducated with the name of the church, even though they are Christ's chief adversaries.
  - ▶ The church was founded not upon men's judgments, not upon priesthoods, but upon the teaching of apostles and prophets [Eph. 2:20].
- ▶ *Defense against the charge of schism and heresy*
  - ▶ They treat us as persons guilty of schism and heresy because we:
    - ▶ Preach a doctrine unlike theirs.
    - ▶ Do not obey their laws.
    - ▶ And hold our separate assemblies.
  - ▶ This is indeed a very grave accusation.
  - ▶ Augustine makes the following distinction:
    - ▶ Heretics corrupt the sincerity of the faith with false dogmas.
    - ▶ Schismatics, while they sometimes even hold the same faith, break the bond of fellowship.
  - ▶ This conjunction of love depends upon unity of faith that it ought to be its sole rule.
    - ▶ Whenever church unity is commended to us this is required:
      - ▶ That our minds agree in Christ.
      - ▶ And our wills should be joined with mutual benevolence in Christ.
    - ▶ Apart from the Lord's Word, there is not an agreement of believers but a faction of wicked men.
- ▶ *Christ's headship the condition of unity*
  - ▶ Cyprian derives the source of concord of the entire church from Christ's episcopate alone.
  - ▶ He declares that heresies and schisms arise because:
    - ▶ Men return not to the Source of truth.
    - ▶ Seek not the Head.
    - ▶ Keep not the teaching of the Heavenly Master.
  - ▶ They have expelled us with anathemas and curses--more than sufficient reason to absolve us, unless they wish to condemn the apostles also as schismatics, whose case was like our own.
  - ▶ It behooved us to withdraw from them that we might come to Christ.

- ▶ *(The Roman church compared with ancient Israel as to worship and jurisdiction, 7-11) The condition of the Roman Church resembles that of Israel under Jeroboam*
  - ▶ The true church existed among the Jews and Israelites when they kept the laws of the covenant.
  - ▶ Afterward, having forsaken the law, they sank into idolatry and superstition and partly lost that privilege.
- ▶ *Despite the idolatry of the Jews, their church remained*
  - ▶ In falling away, there yet remained remnants of the church of God in certain degrees.
  - ▶ We shall not say that there was the same decline in Israel as in Judah at the time when both first turned aside from the pure worship of God.
- ▶ *The papal church corrupts and to be repudiated*
  - ▶ They were obliged to nothing that had not been instituted by God.
  - ▶ We can have scarcely any meeting with the papists without polluting ourselves with manifest idolatry.
  - ▶ Let anyone show one prophet or any godly man who once worshiped or sacrificed in Bethel.
    - ▶ Rather, they knew that they could not do it without contaminating themselves with some sacrilege.
    - ▶ The communion of the church ought not to extend so far that, if it degenerates into profane and corrupted rites, they have to follow it headlong.
- ▶ *Why we must separate from the corrupted church*
  - ▶ If we think of the church that we should reverence its judgment and defer to its authority then we cannot admit that they have a church without the necessity of subjection and obedience to it awaiting us.
  - ▶ We shall willingly concede to them what the prophets granted to the Jews and Israelites of their own age, when equal or even better conditions prevailed there.
  - ▶ The keys have an indissoluble bond with the Word, which has been destroyed from among them.
    - ▶ They disworn from their communion all that genuinely profess themselves servants of Christ.
    - ▶ By this reckoning either they are not churches or no mark will remain to distinguish the lawful congregations of believers from the assemblies of Turks.
- ▶ *Vestiges of the church under the papacy*
  - ▶ We do not deprive the papists of those traces of the church which the Lord willed should among them survive the destruction.
  - ▶ But it was not they who preserved the covenant; rather, leaning upon its own strength, it kept itself alive by struggling against their impiety.
    - ▶ Their treachery could not obliterate his faithfulness.
    - ▶ When the Western countries were oppressed by the tyranny of the Antichrist, the Lord used two means to keep his covenant inviolable:
      - ▶ Baptism remained a witness to his covenant.
      - ▶ He caused other vestiges to remain, that the church might not utterly die.

- ▶ He did not allow his church either to be destroyed to the very foundations or to be leveled to the ground even to punish the ungratefulness of men who had despised his word.
  - ▶ He let it undergo frightful shaking and shattering.
  - ▶ But even after this very destruction, God willed that a half-demolished building remain.
- ▶ *The sound elements do not make the corrupted church a true church*
  - ▶ When we categorically deny the papists the title of *the church*, we do not for this reason impugn the existence of churches among them.
  - ▶ We by no means deny that the churches under his tyranny still remain churches.
- ▶ **The Doctors and Ministers of the Church, Their Election and Office (Chapter III)**
  - ▶ *(The ministry given by God: its high and necessary functions, 1-3) Why does God need men's service?*
    - ▶ He alone should rule and reign in the church as well as have authority or pre-eminence in it.
    - ▶ He does not dwell among us in visible presence.
    - ▶ He uses the ministry of men to declare openly his will to us by mouth.
      - ▶ This is a delegated work.
      - ▶ They are not transferred the right and honor, but only that through their mouths he may do his work.
    - ▶ He first declares his regard for us when from among men he takes some to serve as his ambassadors.
    - ▶ Who would not dread the presence of his power, and who would not be stricken down at the sight of such great majesty?
    - ▶ Nothing fosters mutual love more fittingly than for men to be bound together with this bond: one is appointed pastor to teach the rest, and those bidden to be pupils receive the common teaching from one mouth.
  - ▶ *The significance of the ministry for the church*
    - ▶ This human ministry is the chief sinew by which believers are held together in one body.
      - ▶ It is upheld by the safeguards in which it pleased the Lord to place his salvation.
      - ▶ This is that the body of Christ be built up.
    - ▶ For neither light and heat of the sun, nor food and drink, are so necessary to nourish and sustain the present life as the apostolic and pastoral office is necessary to preserve the church on earth.
  - ▶ *The prestige of the preaching office in the Scripture*
    - ▶ God often commended the dignity of the ministry by all possible marks of approval in order that it might be held among us in highest honor and esteem.
    - ▶ There is nothing more notable or glorious in the church than the ministry of the gospel, since it is the administration of the Spirit and of righteousness and of eternal life.
  - ▶ *(The Scriptural offices of the ministry described, 4-9) The several sorts of officers according to Eph., ch. 4*
    - ▶ The following preside over the government of the church:
      - ▶ Apostles.

- ▶ The whole earth is assigned to them to bring into obedience to Christ.
- ▶ They were sent out to lead the world back from rebellion to true obedience to God, and to establish his Kingdom everywhere by the preaching of the gospel.
- ▶ Prophets.
  - ▶ They are interpreters of God's will, but to those who excelled in a particular revelation .
  - ▶ They do not exist today or are less commonly seen.
- ▶ Evangelists, although lower in rank than apostles, were next to them in office and functioned in their place.
  - ▶ They are not established in the church as permanent ones.
  - ▶ But only for that time during which churches were to be erected.
- ▶ I do not deny that the Lord has sometimes at a later period raised up apostles, or at least evangelists in their place, as has happened in our own day [Luther?].
- ▶ I call this extraordinary because in duly constituted churches it has no place.
- ▶ Next come pastors and teachers, whom the church can never go without.
  - ▶ Teachers.
    - ▶ They are not put in charge of discipline or administering the sacraments, or warnings and exhortations.
    - ▶ But only of Scriptural interpretation--to keep doctrine whole and pure among believers.
  - ▶ Pastors: This office includes all of the above functions within itself.
- ▶ *Temporary and permanent offices*
  - ▶ If we group evangelists and apostles together, we shall then have two pairs that somehow correspond with each other.
  - ▶ As teachers correspond to the ancient prophets, so do our pastors to the apostles.
  - ▶ By the meaning and derivation of the word all ministers of the church can properly be called "apostles" because all are sent by the Lord and are his messengers.
- ▶ *Apostles and pastors*
  - ▶ Here is the holy, inviolable, and perpetual law imposed upon those who took the place of the apostles.
    - ▶ They are commanded to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments.
    - ▶ From this we infer that those who neglect both of these pretend falsely to be apostles.
  - ▶ The manner of teaching not only consists in public discourses, but also has to do with private admonitions.
  - ▶ To all who have been appointed watchmen in the church the Lord announces: if by their neglect, anyone perish through ignorance, he "will require the blood at their hand" [Ezek. 3:17-18]
  - ▶ What the apostles performed for the whole world, each pastor ought to perform for his own flock.
- ▶ *The pastor is bound to his church*
  - ▶ We do not deny that a pastor bound to one church can aid other churches.
  - ▶ But to keep peace, to each be assigned his task to keep all from being in confusion.

- ▶ As a general rule: each person should be content with his own limits and not break over into another man's province.
- ▶ But he who is called to one place ought not to think of leaving or to seek release.
- ▶ If it be expedient for anyone to be transferred to another place he ought not to attempt this on his own private resolve, but to await public authority.
- ▶ *The designation of ministers of the Word: presbyters*
  - ▶ In indiscriminately calling those who rule "bishops," "presbyters," "pastors," and "ministers," we are employing Scriptural usage which interchanges these terms.
  - ▶ To all who carry out the ministry of the Word it accords the title of "bishop".
  - ▶ Paul also mentions "gifts".
  - ▶ He lists others as powers: healing, interpretation, government, and caring for the poor.
  - ▶ Each church had from its beginning a senate, chosen from godly, grave, and holy men, which had jurisdiction over the correcting of faults.
- ▶ *The deacons*
  - ▶ The care of the poor was entrusted to the deacons.
  - ▶ Women could fill no other public office than to devote themselves to the care of the poor.
  - ▶ There are two kinds of deacons:
    - ▶ One to serve the church in administering the affairs of the poor.
    - ▶ The other to care for the poor themselves.
- ▶ *(The calling, authorization, and ordination of ministers, 10-16) Orderly calling is requisite*
  - ▶ There is nothing which order should be more diligently observed than in establishing government; for nowhere is there greater peril if anything be done irregularly.
  - ▶ No one should assume public office in the church without being called.
  - ▶ If he has this ground, he has been ordained to it by the Lord's command.
- ▶ *Outer and inner call*
  - ▶ The treatment of this matter involves the following:
    - ▶ What sort of ministers they should be.
    - ▶ How should they be appointed.
    - ▶ By whom they should be appointed.
    - ▶ By what rite of ceremony they should be installed.
  - ▶ There is the good witness of our heart that we receive the preferred office not with ambition or avarice, not with any other selfish desire, but with a sincere fear of God.
- ▶ *Who can become a minister of the church? How this takes place*
  - ▶ Only those are to be chosen who are of sound doctrine and of holy life.
  - ▶ They are not to be notorious in any fault which might both deprive them of authority and disgrace their ministry.
  - ▶ We must always see to it that they be adequate and fit to bear the burden imposed upon them, and that they be instructed in those skills necessary for the discharge of their office.
- ▶ *Who should choose ministers?*
  - ▶ The election of the apostle provides no sure rule in this matter.
  - ▶ For it was somewhat different from the calling of the rest.

- ▶ *Human agency*
  - ▶ For men to appoint bishops in every respect consonant with a lawful calling cannot be denied.
  - ▶ Thus, the choice had an open testimony from heaven, yet church order was in no respect neglected.
- ▶ *The vote of the people*
  - ▶ Other pastors ought to preside over the election in order that the multitude may not go wrong either through fickleness, through evil intentions, or through disorder.
  - ▶ The call of a minister is lawful according to the Word, when those who seemed fit are created by the consent and approval of the people.
- ▶ *Ordination*
  - ▶ They used no other ceremony than the laying on of hands.
  - ▶ I judge that this rite derived from the custom of the Hebrews, who presented to God by the laying on of hands that which they wished to be blessed and consecrated.
  - ▶ In this way they consecrated pastors and teachers and the deacons.
  - ▶ It is useful for the dignity of the ministry to be commended to the people by this sort of sign.
  - ▶ It also warns the one ordained that he is no longer a law unto himself, but bound in servitude to God and the church.
- ▶ **The Condition of the Ancient Church, and the Kind of Government in Use Before the Papacy (Chapter IV)**
  - ▶ *(Historical development of the ministry; three classes of ministers: teaching and ruling presbyters: one presbyter selected to be bishop: the archbishop, 1-4) Fidelity of the ancient church to the Scriptural archetype*
    - ▶ Scripture sets before us three kinds of ministers.
    - ▶ Whatever ministers the ancient church had it divided into three orders.
      - ▶ Part of the presbyters were chosen pastors and teachers.
      - ▶ The remaining were charged with the censure and correction of morals.
      - ▶ The care of the poor and the distribution of alms were committed to the deacons.
  - ▶ *The position of the bishop*
    - ▶ All those to whom the office of teaching was enjoined they called “presbyters.”
    - ▶ In each city these chose one of their number to whom they specially gave the title “bishop” in order that dissensions might not arise.
    - ▶ The bishop was not much higher in honor and dignity as to have lordship over his colleagues.
    - ▶ The bishops recognize that they are superior to the presbyters more according to the custom of the church than by the Lord’s actual arrangement.
    - ▶ Each city then, had a college of presbyters, who were pastors and teachers.
    - ▶ All exercised among the people the office of teaching, exhorting, and correcting.
  - ▶ *The chief duty of bishop and presbyters*
    - ▶ Both bishops and presbyters had to devote themselves to the dispensing of Word and sacraments.

- ▶ The primary duties of the bishop were to feed his people with the Word of God, or to build up the church publicly and privately with sound doctrine.
- ▶ *Archbishops and patriarchs*
  - ▶ Each province had one archbishop.
    - ▶ At the Council of Nicaea, patriarchs were ordained to be higher in rank and dignity than archbishops.
    - ▶ This was an extremely rare practice.
  - ▶ These ranks were established so that any incident in any church whatever that could not be settled by a few might be referred to a provincial synod.
    - ▶ If the magnitude or difficulty of the case demanded larger discussion, the patriarchs, together with a synod, were summoned.
    - ▶ From here, there was no appeal except to a general council.
- ▶ *(Deacons and archdeacons: the administration of property and alms: minor clerics, 5-9) The office of deacon*
  - ▶ They received the daily offerings of believers and the yearly income of the church.
  - ▶ They were to distribute some to feed the ministers, some to feed the poor.
  - ▶ It was not secular management that they were undertaking, but a spiritual function dedicated to God.
- ▶ *The use of church possessions*
  - ▶ All that the church possesses, either in lands or in money, is the patrimony of the poor.
  - ▶ The Lord sanctions that all who work for the church be supported at the public expense.
- ▶ *Fourfold division of revenues*
  - ▶ Clergy.
  - ▶ Poor.
  - ▶ Repair of churches and other buildings.
  - ▶ Another for the poor, both foreign and indigenious.
- ▶ *Church treasure distributed to the poor*
  - ▶ At first they spent very little on the embellishment of sacred things.
  - ▶ The church has gold not to keep but to pay out and to relieve distress.
- ▶ *The preparatory stages of the office*
  - ▶ Those who wished to consecrate themselves and their service to the church were brought up under the bishop's care.
  - ▶ This ensured that only well-prepared persons might minister to the church.
  - ▶ These were more the rudiments of recruits than the functions to be considered as true ministries of the church.
- ▶ *(History of changes in the election and ordination of ministers: consent of the magistrates, clergy and people in the election of bishops, 10-15) Paul's directions mainly followed: consent of the people*
  - ▶ Calling upon God's name, to meet to choose pastors was the early custom.
  - ▶ There was a form of examination in which they tested by the standard of Paul the life and teaching of those to be chosen.

- ▶ They did not always follow one procedure as to who ought to ordain ministers.
  - ▶ In ancient times no one was even received into the assembly of the clergy without the consent of all the people.
  - ▶ Afterward in the remaining orders, the people commonly left it to the bishop and presbyters to select and recognize those who were suitable and worthy.
  - ▶ All ordinations took place at stated times of the year in order that no one might creep in secretly without the consent of the believers, or be too readily promoted without witnesses.
- ▶ *Consent in episcopal elections, to the time of Theodoret*
  - ▶ The freedom of the people to chose their own bishops was long preserved.
  - ▶ The holy fathers took care that this freedom of the people should in no way be diminished.
  - ▶ When any bishop designated his won successor, the designation was valid only if all the people confirmed it.
- ▶ *Balance between people and clergy*
  - ▶ It scarcely ever happens that so many heads can unanimously settle any matter; and it is generally true that the uncertain crowd is divided into contrary interests.
  - ▶ An excellent remedy was:
    - ▶ The clergy alone made their choice.
    - ▶ They then offered the one they had chosen to the magistrates or senate and leading citizens.
    - ▶ The latter, after deliberation, ratified the election if it seemed just.
    - ▶ They then brought the matter before the people, who, although not bound by the previous decisions, nevertheless could not raise a tumult.
    - ▶ After the people's desires were heard, the clergy then made their choice.
  - ▶ Thus, neither were the clergy allowed to apoint whom they wished, nor was it necessary for them to follow the foolish desires of the people.
- ▶ *Clergy and political rulers*
  - ▶ Gregory thinks that the election will not be lawful unless they also, convened together, assent to it.
  - ▶ The emperor's consent was required in only two churches--those of Rome and Constantinople--because these were the two imperial capitals.
  - ▶ Gregory says he was established in the government of the church by the emperor's command, even though he had already in a solemn rite been called by the people.
    - ▶ But the custom was this: when officials, clergy, and the people had designated anyone, he would at once report to the emperor, who would confirm the election with his aproval or abrogate it by his disapproval.
    - ▶ It is one thing to deprive the chruuch of its own right; it is another to yield this honor to a king or emperor, that he may confirm a lawful election by his own authority.
- ▶ *The procedure in ordination*
  - ▶ A decree of the Council of Nicaea said that the metropolitan, together with all bishops in a province should meet to ordain the person elected.
  - ▶ Al least three should meet, while the absent ones attest their consent by letter.
  - ▶ This cannon lapsed through disuse, but it was later renewed by many synods.

- ▶ *Consecration by the metropolitan*
  - ▶ This was done everywhere without exception.
  - ▶ Then a different custom gradually grew up, that those elected repair to the metropolitan city to seek ordination
  - ▶ Not much later another custom, still worse, prevailed, that the bishops of almost all Italy sought their consecration from Rome.
    - ▶ The ceremony was the laying on of hands.
    - ▶ All acted in common, yet, because the bishop presided and things were done under his auspices, the ordination was called “his”.
- ▶ **The Ancient Form of Government Was Completely Overthrown by the Tyranny of the Papacy (Chapter V)**
  - ▶ *(Appointment of unqualified persons without vote of the people, 1-3) Scandalous neglect of requirements for the episcopate*
    - ▶ Let any one of them who has not utterly lost shame answer me what sort of bishops are now commonly elected today.
    - ▶ The practice of having an examination of learning has, to be sure, become too old-fashioned.
      - ▶ They choose a lawyer who knows how to plead in a court rather than how to preach in a church.
      - ▶ For a hundred years scarcely one man in a hundred has been elected who has comprehended anything of sacred learning.
      - ▶ If their morals are appraised, we shall find few or almost none whom the ancient canons would not have judged unworthy.
      - ▶ Boys scarcely ten years old, by the pope’s dispensation have been made bishops.
  - ▶ *The community deprived of the right to elect its bishop*
    - ▶ Now all the people’s right in electing a bishop has been taken away.
    - ▶ The whole power has been transferred to the canons alone.
      - ▶ They confer the episcopate on whom they please.
      - ▶ They introduce him directly before the people, but to be adored not to be examined.
      - ▶ Very many decrees of synods stringently forbid its being done otherwise, and if it be done otherwise, declare it void.
      - ▶ If these things are true, no canonical election remains today in the entire papacy either by divine or ecclesiastical right.
      - ▶ The people once had an excellent canon, I say, to whom the Word of God prescribed that a bishop ought to be above reproach, a teacher, not contentious etc.
  - ▶ *Neglect has led to the intervention of princes*
    - ▶ When the people began to be more negligent in holding elections, and cast that responsibility upon the presbyters as not applying to themselves, the latter abused this opportunity to usurp a tyranny for themselves which they afterward confirmed by issuing new canons.
    - ▶ Ordination is so empty and thin that it even lacks every outward trapping.
    - ▶ Princes in some places have obtained by agreement with the Roman pontiffs--the right to nominate bishops.

- ▶ Bishops are sent from the court to occupy churches, while it should be the part of godly princes to abstain from such corruption!
- ▶ It is wicked of the church to force upon any people a bishop whom they have not desired or have not at least approved with a free voice!
- ▶ They preferred it to be their own gift, rather than to belong to persons who had no more right to it than they, and who abused it just as wickedly.
- ▶ *(Abuses associated with collation to clerical benefices, 4-7) Abuses in the appointment of the presbyter ("priest") and deacon*
  - ▶ The Roman masters first interpret the title as meaning an income sufficient for their support.
  - ▶ They confer holy orders upon them, if only they be rich enough to support themselves.
- ▶ *Ordination is travestied*
  - ▶ The proper ordination of a presbyter is a call to govern the church.
  - ▶ Of a deacon, their call is to gather alms.
  - ▶ They disguise their action, indeed, with much pomp so that by the very show it may hold the veneration of simple folk.
    - ▶ But among the same, what value can these masks have when nothing solid or true underlies them?
    - ▶ For they employ ceremonies either from Judaism or devised from among themselves, which it were better to eschew.
  - ▶ It is not necessary that they even know how to render the meaning of a single verse.
  - ▶ Those who are deficient even in these childish elements are not barred from the priesthood, provided they bear some commendation of money or favor.
  - ▶ In the mockery of such open sacrileges, they shamelessly laugh at God and men.
- ▶ *The nature of benefices*
  - ▶ I contend that nowadays in the papacy scarcely one benefice in a hundred is conferred without simony.
  - ▶ Some are advanced by kinship or affinity; others by parental influence; still others curry favor for themselves.
  - ▶ Priestly livings are conferred for this purpose: not to benefit the churches but those men who receive them.
- ▶ *Monstrous abuses*
  - ▶ One man is appointed to govern five or six churches.
  - ▶ And that man be named pastor who, even though he wish to, is unable to be present with his flock.
- ▶ *(Negligence and idleness of monks, canons, and others holding clerical office, 8-10) Monks as "presbyters"*
  - ▶ It is so out of harmony with the monastic profession to have such a place in the church, that originally when men were admitted from monasteries into the clergy, they ceased to be monks.
  - ▶ Decrees of Innocent and Boniface did allow them to remain in the monasteries who became priests.
  - ▶ Scripture openly testifies that the presbyter's duty is to rule his own church.

- ▶ Is it not an impious profanation to transfer it to another, indeed, utterly to change God's sacred institution.
- ▶ Let them deny, if they can that it is an open mockery of God when anyone is made a presbyter with the purpose of abstaining from his true and genuine office.
- ▶ *Beneficed and hired priests*
  - ▶ Some hire out their labor in celebrating masses or chanting and earn a living, so to speak, by the fees they collect for this.
  - ▶ They go about like hungry dogs, and by their importunity, like barking, extort from unwilling men something to thrust into their empty stomach.
  - ▶ What great shame it is to the church that the honor and office of presbyter have come to this pass.
  - ▶ All such sacrificers who have work or wages only in the hawking of masses not only fail their office, but have no lawful office to exercise.
    - ▶ No place is given them for teaching; they have no people to govern.
    - ▶ In short, nothing is left to them by the altar on which they sacrifice Christ.
- ▶ *Pretenses of the clerical orders*
  - ▶ Canons, deans, chaplains, provosts, and all who are fed by idle benefices must be considered to be of the same class.
  - ▶ For what ministry to the church can they perform?
  - ▶ They have cast off as burdens too troublesome the preaching and care of discipline, and the sacraments.
  - ▶ We cannot bear to have them falsely usurp honor for themselves and thus violate Christ's holy institution.
- ▶ *(Corruption and covetousness prevail in the ranks of bishops, pastors, and deacons, 11-19)*  
*Bishops and parish priests*
  - ▶ I grant them that they have a godly and excellent office, if only they would fulfill it.
  - ▶ They act just as if the pastor's function were to do nothing.
  - ▶ Many throughout life devour the revenues of the churches without ever coming to the point of even taking a look at them.
  - ▶ They deem them farms which they have put in charge of their vicars as stewards or tenant farmers.
- ▶ *Early stages of this evil: Gregory and Bernard*
  - ▶ Gregory states that "The world is full of priests, but in the harvest a worker is rarely found; for we indeed take upon us the priestly office but do not fulfill the work of that office."
  - ▶ What would he say if he saw almost none of the bishops and extremely few clergy who actually mount the pulpit even once in his whole life.
  - ▶ Bernard brings sharp rebukes against the whole order, and at a time when it was considerably purer than it is now.
- ▶ *Claim and actuality*
  - ▶ Everything there is is so alien to Christ's institution, and has degenerated from the ancient ordinances of the church.

- ▶ We, they say, are the pillars of the church and the leaders of religion, the vicars of Christ, the heads of the believers; for their apostolic power has come to us by succession.
- ▶ They are incessantly bragging of these follies as if they were speaking to stocks.
- ▶ *The priests' moral conduct*
  - ▶ Today there is no order of men more notorious in excess, effeminacy, voluptuousness, in short, in all sorts of lusts.
  - ▶ In no order are there masters more adept or skillful in every deceit.
  - ▶ I say nothing about their arrogance, pride, greed and cruelty or their dissolute licentious life.
  - ▶ There are scarcely any bishops, and one in a hundred parish priests, who if his conduct were to be judged according to the ancient canons, would not be subject either to excommunication or at least to deposition from office.
- ▶ *The deacons*
  - ▶ Let the deacons come forth, with their most holy dispensing of church goods.
    - ▶ But the Romanists today do not create their deacons for that purpose.
    - ▶ They are only charged with ministering at the altar, reading or chanting the gospel, and goodness knows what other trifles.
  - ▶ There is nothing of alms.
  - ▶ Today the poor get nothing more of those alms than if they were cast into the sea.
- ▶ *Distribution of church income*
  - ▶ All these ancient customs which we have set forth here have been not only disturbed but completely erased and hidden.
  - ▶ City bishops and presbyters are made rich by this booty.
    - ▶ They are then turned into canons, and seized the largest part for distribution among themselves.
    - ▶ Not one penny of all the church's goods goes to the poor, to whom at least half belonged.
- ▶ *False and true splendor of the church*
  - ▶ Men have transferred to flesh and the world the things spiritually spoken of Christ's spiritual kingdom.
  - ▶ The church never abounded less with these blessings which their words express than under the apostles.
  - ▶ Yet all admit that the force of Christ's Kingdom flourished most at that time.
- ▶ *Fraudulent and honest expenditure of church funds*
  - ▶ What is bestowed upon the adornment of churches is wrongly applied if that moderation is not used which both the nature of sacred things prescribes and the apostles and other holy fathers have prescribed both by teaching and by example.
  - ▶ Nothing at all pleases except what savors of excess and the corruption of the times.
  - ▶ Meanwhile, so far are they from taking due care of living temples that they would rather let many thousands of the poor die of hunger than break the smallest cup or cruet to relieve their need.
- ▶ *Clerical possessions and power*

- ▶ We see with what faithfulness the great part is administered by those who are called bishops and abbots.
- ▶ Was it fitting that they whose life ought to have been a singular example of frugality, modesty, continence, and humility should rival the magnificence of princes in number of retainers, splendor of buildings, elegance of apparel, and banquets?
- ▶ How do they reply to ancient decrees of synods, which establish that the bishop should have a little house not far from his church with inexpensive fare and furnishings?
- ▶ **The Primacy of the Roman See (Chapter VI)**
  - ▶ *(Refutation of assumptions regarding the preimacy of Peter, 1-7) The requirement of submissio to Rome*
    - ▶ It originated neither in Christ's institution nor in the practice of the ancient church.
    - ▶ They try to persuade the world that the chief and almost sole bond of church unity is that we cleave to the Roman see.
  - ▶ *The office of high priest of the Old Covenant cannot be cited as evidence for papal supremacy*
    - ▶ They must first show that this arrangement was established by Christ.
    - ▶ They refer to the high priesthood of the law.
    - ▶ The answer is easy:
      - ▶ There is no reason why what has been useful in one nation should be extended over the whole earth.
      - ▶ No one is ignorant of the fact that the high priest was a type of Christ.
      - ▶ With the priesthood transferred, the right should be transferred.
        - ▶ But to whom was it transferred?
        - ▶ Obviously not to the pope but to Christ, who as he alone keeps that office, consequently resigns that honor to no one else.
  - ▶ *Jesus' word to Peter did not establish this lordship of the church*
    - ▶ They must first show that power over all churches has been committed to him who is ordered to feed Christ's flock, and that to bind and to loose is nothing else but to rule the whole world.
    - ▶ As Peter has received the command from the Lord, so he exhorts all other presbyters to feed the church.
    - ▶ Nothing has been given to Peter above the rest.
    - ▶ The manner of binding and loosing is the command to reconciliation to God and at the same time to exercise vengeance upon those who shall reject this benefit.
  - ▶ *Perverse claim concerning the keys*
    - ▶ How shamefully they twist those passages which refer to binding and loosing.
    - ▶ Since heaven is opened to us by the doctrine of the gospel, the word "keys" affords an appropriate metaphor.
      - ▶ Men are bound and loosed in no other way than when faith reconciles some to God, while their own unbelief constrains others the more.
      - ▶ I gather from the promise itself that nothing but the dignity of the office of apostle is meant.
      - ▶ Nothing is here given to Peter which was not also common to his colleagues.

- ▶ *Honor, not power according to Peter*
  - ▶ I willingly yield honor to Peter, that he be placed among the first in the building of the church.
    - ▶ Or , I will also concede that he be the first of all believers.
    - ▶ But I shall not allow them to deduce from this that he has primacy over others.
  - ▶ Honor of rank is greatly different from power.
  - ▶ We see that the apostles generally yielded honor but we read nothing of power.
- ▶ *The one foundation*
  - ▶ They argue very ineffectively when they wish to establish upon the sole name of Peter sovereignty over the whole church.
  - ▶ Peter had confessed that Christ was the Son of God [Matt. 16:16]. Upon this rock Christ builds his church.
- ▶ *The place of Peter among the apostles according to the account of Scripture*
  - ▶ You will not find anything but that Peter was one of the Twelve, the equal of the rest, and their companion, not their master.
  - ▶ He indeed refers to a council anything that is to be done, and advises what needs to be done.
  - ▶ But at the same time he listens to the others, and he not only lets them express their views, but leaves the decision to them; when they have decreed, he follows and obeys.
  - ▶ When he writes to the pastors, he does not command them from his authority, as a superior, but makes them his colleagues and gently urges them, as is customarily done among equals.
  - ▶ When he is accused of having gone over to the Gentiles he still answers it and clears himself.
  - ▶ Paul even contends that he is Peter's equal in the office of apostle.
  - ▶ He recalls that when Peter did not act faithfully, he corrected him, and Peter obeyed his reproof.
- ▶ *(Monarchy in the church to be accorded to Christ alone, 8-10) The church can have no human head*
  - ▶ There is no reason why they should make a universal rule out of a particular example and extend to perpetuity what happened once.
  - ▶ If one man was over twelve men, does it follow from this that one ought to be put over a hundred thousand men?
  - ▶ Even though all are equal in power, one should be the moderator.
  - ▶ But what prevails among the few is not to be applied directly to the whole earth, over which no one person is competent to rule.
  - ▶ Individual churches should have their own bishops, but what more do they prove?
  - ▶ Monarchy is not praised in this sense either by Homeric Ulysses or by others as if one man ought to hold sway over the whole earth.
  - ▶ Rather, they mean to indicate that a kingdom cannot have two kings and power is impatient of a consort.
- ▶ *Christ's headship not transferable*
  - ▶ They do injury to Christ when they would have one man set over the church universal, on the pretext that the church cannot be without a head.

- ▶ Scripture attests that Christ is the Head and claims this honor for him alone.
  - ▶ Thus it should not be transferred to anyone else except to one whom Christ himself has appointed his own vicar.
  - ▶ But this is nowhere read, and can be abundantly refuted from Scripture.
- ▶ *Unity in Christ, not in a human monarch*
  - ▶ Why does Paul not say that Christ has set one over all to act as his viceregent?
  - ▶ For that the occasion especially demanded and it ought in no way to have been omitted if it had been true.
  - ▶ Christ is present by the ministry of men set over church government.
    - ▶ Why not rather, through the ministerial head, to whom he has entrusted his functions?
    - ▶ Paul mentions unity, but the common ministry, and a particular mode to each.
- ▶ *(Admission that Peter was bishop in Rome does not establish Rome's perpetual primacy. 11-13) If Peter himself had had supremacy, Rome could not claim it*
  - ▶ Now, suppose I should concede them another point: that the primacy of the church was so established in Peter that it should always abide in unbroken succession.
  - ▶ Still, how will they prove that his see was established at Rome in such a way that whoever may be bishop of the city should preside over the whole world?
  - ▶ What did Christ do himself?
    - ▶ In Jerusalem the Prince of Shepherds could not acquire honor for a place.
    - ▶ Could Peter, far inferior to him, do so?
- ▶ *Alleged transfer of the primacy from Antioch*
  - ▶ But where was his first see?
    - ▶ At Antioch they say.
    - ▶ Therefore the church of Antioch rightfully claims the primacy for itself.
  - ▶ But what oracle has revealed to man that the Lord so commanded?
  - ▶ Let them choose whatever they will--I will immediately infer and easily prove that Rome can in no way claim the primacy for itself.
- ▶ *Ranking of the other patriarchates*
  - ▶ Why then, did not Antioch retain second place?
  - ▶ How did it happen, then, that Alexandria took precedence over Antioch?
  - ▶ If honor is due each church according to the dignity of its founder, what shall we say also of the remaining churches?
  - ▶ Paul names three disciples who seem to be pillars, James, Peter, and John.
    - ▶ Do not the churches of Ephesus and Jerusalem deserve second and third place where John and James presided?
    - ▶ Yet among the patriarchates Jerusalem of old had last place, Ephesus could not even cling to the last corner.
    - ▶ Let them either confess that order was preposterous, or grant us it is not a perpetual principle that to each church is due the same degree of honor as to its founder.
- ▶ *(Peter's presence in Rome unproved, while Paul's is beyond a doubt, 14-15) On the sojourn of Peter to Rome*

- ▶ I do not see how their account of Peter's presiding over the church at Rome has any credibility.
- ▶ It is clear from the first and second chapters of Galatians that for about twenty years after the death of Christ, he was at Jerusalem, then came to Antioch.
- ▶ Yet the period from the death of Christ to the end of Nero's reign (under whom they relate that he was killed) totals only thirty-seven years.
- ▶ Paul recites a long list of the godly whom he sends greetings in Rome and includes in it all known to him, but of Peter he is utterly silent.
- ▶ *Slender and inconclusive evidence*
  - ▶ Someone will say, that at least he governed the church unto his death.
  - ▶ I shall reply, the writers themselves do not agree on who succeeded him.
    - ▶ Some make it Linus; others Clement.
    - ▶ They tell many absurd tales about a disputation that took place between Peter and Simon Magnus.
  - ▶ The affairs of that time are so involved in a variety of opinions that we should not believe without question everything we read.
  - ▶ Paul attests that Peter's apostolate applies especially to the Jews, but his own to the Gentiles.
  - ▶ It becomes us to pay more attention to Paul's apostolate than to Peter's.
- ▶ *(Roman Church honored but not as unifying head, 16-17) The significance of the church at Rome during the earliest period*
  - ▶ I do not deny that ancient writers everywhere give great honor to the church of Rome. This happened for the following reasons:
    - ▶ The opinion that it was founded and established by Peter's ministry was of great value.
    - ▶ Because Rome was the capital city of the Empire, the men there were probably more excellent in doctrine, prudence, skill and breadth of experience.
  - ▶ When the East, Greece, and Africa were agitated with much dissension among themselves over opinions, Rome was calmer and less troubled than they.
  - ▶ Godly and holy bishops, deposed from their sees, often betook themselves to Rome as an asylum and haven.
- ▶ *According to early church teaching, the unity of the church plainly required no universal bishop*
  - ▶ Cyprian makes the universal bishopric Christ's alone.
  - ▶ Where is the primacy of the Roman see, if the unbroken episcopate rests in Christ's hands alone, and each bishop holds his part of it?
  - ▶ The unity of the hierarchy under an earthly head--was utterly unknown to the ancient fathers.
- ▶ **The Origin and Growth of the Roman Papacy Until it Raised Itself to Such a Height that the Freedom of the Church Was Oppressed, and All Restraint Overthrown (Chapter VII)**
  - ▶ *(Modest position of the Roman see in early times, 1-4) Position of the Roman see in the Councils of Nicaea and Ephesus*
    - ▶ As to the antiquity of the primacy of the Roman see, there is nothing pertaining to its establishment earlier than that decree of the Council of Nicaea.

- ▶ First place among the patriarchs was granted to the Roman bishop, and he was ordered to take care of the suburbicarian churches.
- ▶ It did not establish him as head of all but make him one of the chiefs.
- ▶ In the Council of Ephesus, Celestine used a trick to ensure the dignity of his see.
- ▶ He made Cyril of Alexandria (who would have presided anyway) his proxy.
- ▶ The Second Council of Ephesus had Leo's legates present, yet Dioscorus, patriarch of Alexandria, presided as if by his own right.
- ▶ *In the Council of Chalcedon and the Fifth of Constantinople*
  - ▶ The church of Rome occupied the first seat.
    - ▶ But Leo himself admits that this was an extraordinary privilege.
    - ▶ He does not contend that it is his due but only pretends that the Eastern bishops had stirred up everything at the previous council and wickedly abused their power: therefore a grave moderator was needed.
  - ▶ In sending his legates to the Fifth Council at Constantinople he did not wrangle for the first seat but readily allowed Mennas, patriarch of Constantinople, to preside.
- ▶ *The proud titles of the later Roman bishops not yet known in the early period*
  - ▶ The very title of "primate" and other proud titles with which the Romanists wonderfully vaunt themselves, it is not difficult to judge when and how they crept in.
  - ▶ The Council of Carthage forbade that anyone be called "prince of priests" or "first bishop" but only "bishop of the prime see".
- ▶ *Gregory I refused the title "Universal Bishop"*
  - ▶ Not until the time of Gregory did contention arise over the title of "universal bishop".
  - ▶ He stoutly protests that the appellation is profane, in fact, sacrilegious, the very precursor of Antichrist.
  - ▶ He is obviously imitating him who, spurning fellowship with the angels, tried to climb the pinnacle of uniqueness!
- ▶ *(Limitations of its authority in relation to that of emperors and metropolitans, 5-10) Origin of Roman jurisdiction*
  - ▶ There was no time when the Roman see did not seek to gain control over other churches.
  - ▶ Since the pious had great need of outside help, and they discerned in the Roman Church their best help, they willingly granted to it as much authority as they could.
  - ▶ Afterward, evil and wicked men also added greatly to the dignity of the Roman Church; for to flee lawful judgments, they betook themselves to its asylum.
  - ▶ Any presbyter condemned by his bishop, or any bishop by a synod of his province, immediately appealed to Rome.
- ▶ *The peculiar features of the Roman power of that time*
  - ▶ Church power is comprised under these four headings:
    - ▶ Ordination of bishops.
    - ▶ Calling of councils.
    - ▶ Hearing of appeals or jurisdiction.
    - ▶ Motions of chastisement or censures.

- ▶ Gradually the custom prevailed that all Italian bishops should come to Rome to seek consecration, except metropolitans, who did not allow themselves to be reduced to this servitude.
- ▶ What had been voluntary began afterward to be considered obligatory.
- ▶ *Mutual admonition*
  - ▶ Just as the Roman bishops formerly used them toward others, so they bore them in turn.
  - ▶ Such freedom was then customary among the holy bishops to use their brotherly right toward the Roman prelate, admonishing and chastising him whenever he sinned.
  - ▶ He in turn, when occasion demanded, reminded the others of their duty and rebuked any fault.
- ▶ *Authority in the convening of synods*
  - ▶ It was the duty of each metropolitan to summon a provincial synod at stated times. In this matter the bishop of Rome had no jurisdiction.
  - ▶ Moreover, only the emperor could call a universal council.
  - ▶ We do not deny that the bishop of Rome was one of the chief bishops, but we refuse to accept what the Romanists now contend--that he had dominion over all.
- ▶ *Use of forged documents*
  - ▶ The Roman pontiff sent legates to make it appear that he had been given this as a privilege by the Council of Nicaea.
  - ▶ It was found that no such thing as the Romans had pretended was written in these.
  - ▶ Thus the decree was ratified which denied to the Roman pontiff the supreme jurisdiction.
  - ▶ But even greater and more shameful was the wickedness of those who added a forged epistle to the council, wherein some bishop of Carthage, condemning the arrogance of his predecessor, Aurelius, begs pardon as a suppliant.
  - ▶ So childish do they bear false witness under the pretense of antiquity that even blind men are able to sense it.
- ▶ *Constantine, Bishop Melchides, and the Synod of Arles*
  - ▶ If it was under the ordinary jurisdiction of the Roman see to hear an appeal in a church case, why does Melchides allow others to be associated with him by the emperor's command rather than as his own official duty?
  - ▶ Constantine commits the judgment of the appeal to the bishop of Arles; he sits as judge to review as seems best to him, the Roman pontiff's decision.
  - ▶ We therefore see how far the Roman pontiff then was from that supreme dominion which he declares to have been given him by Christ over all churches, and which he falsely asserts that he held in all ages by the consent of the whole world.
- ▶ *(Attitude of fifth- and sixth-century popes: Rome vs. Constantinople, 11-16) Falsification and usurpation*
  - ▶ I know how many letters there are, how many rescripts and decrees on which the pontiffs allot everything to their see.
  - ▶ But all men even of small wit and learning know this: most of these documents are so insipid that at first taste it is easy to detect from what shop they came.
- ▶ *Papal power at the time of Gregory I*

- ▶ The Empire was shaken and torn apart, but that the faith might not utterly perish, all bishops on every side allied themselves more closely to the Roman pontiff.
  - ▶ This resulted in the marked increase not only of the prestige of the see but also of power
  - ▶ He takes upon himself the right to correct those who have sinned; if all do their duty, he makes himself equal to the rest.
- ▶ *Limitations of the office under Gregory*
  - ▶ This, then, was the entire power of the Roman bishop, to take a stand against obstinate and unrestrained prelates where there was need of some extraordinary remedy--and that to help, not hinder, the other bishops.
  - ▶ He repeatedly complains that under the guise of the bishop's office, he was drawn back into the work, and that he was more entangled in worldly cares than he had ever served as a layman.
- ▶ *Rome and Constantinople in conflict over supremacy*
  - ▶ The bishop of Constantinople was quarreling with the bishop of Rome over the primacy.
  - ▶ The majesty of empire seemed to demand that the church should also have a place of honor second to the church of Rome.
    - ▶ Nothing did more to bestow the primacy upon Rome than the fact that the Empire was then there.
- ▶ *How Leo resented the recognition of Constantinople*
  - ▶ It was decreed at the first Council of Constantinople that the bishop of that city should have privileges of honor after the Roman pontiff, since Constantinople was new Rome.
    - ▶ But long after, when a similar decree was passed at Chalcedon, Leo vehemently protested.
  - ▶ We know that church organization admits, according to the varying conditions of the times, various changes.
  - ▶ It must have been foreseen that Constantinople, not content with second place, would contend with Rome over the primacy.
- ▶ *Pride of John the Faster, and modesty of Gregory*
  - ▶ John burst forth with the claim that he was the "universal patriarch."
  - ▶ Gregory did not fail to defend the cause of his see, and steadfastly opposed him.
  - ▶ The pride as well as the madness of John was truly intolerable.
    - ▶ He wanted the boundaries of his bishopric to be the same as the boundaries of the Empire.
  - ▶ Gregory abominates as wicked, impious, and execrable that title, by whomever it is assumed.
- ▶ *(Rome's jurisdiction enhanced through relations with usurpers Phocas and Pepin, and thereafter established to the injury of the church, 17-18) The eventual establishment of the papal supremacy*
  - ▶ Phocas granted to Boniface III what Gregory had never sought, that Rome should be head of all the churches.
    - ▶ In this way the controversy was terminated.
  - ▶ Greece and all Asia were a little later cut off from communion with Rome.
- ▶ *The decay of the church until the time of Bernard of Clairvaux*

- ▶ The tyranny of the Roman see was continually strengthened and increased.
  - ▶ Partly this was due to the bishop's ignorance, partly to their sloth.
- ▶ Bernard complains that the ambitious, the greedy, the simoniacs, the sacrilegious, the keepers of concubines, the incestuous, and all such monsters had come into the church for its authority.
  - ▶ He cries out that the church is full of ambitious men.
- ▶ *(Later papal claims contrary to the principles of Gregory I and Bernard, 19-22) The present-day papacy in its claims to power*
  - ▶ What similarity does that spiritual government of which they boast have to the condition of these times?
  - ▶ With great arrogance they declare that the power to command is in their hands while with others rests the necessity to obey.
    - ▶ All their pronouncements are to be so received as if confirmed by Peter's divine voice.
  - ▶ What is unbearable is that they leave no jurisdiction on earth to control or restrain their lust if they abuse such boundless power.
  - ▶ Though he be utterly wicked, he denies he is bound to give an accounting.
  - ▶ The pope's words: "The subjects' deeds are judged by us but ours by God alone."
- ▶ *New forgeries support extravagant claims*
  - ▶ They have falsely substituted the names of ancient pontiffs, as if things had been so established from the very beginning.
  - ▶ It is perfectly certain that whatever more is attributed to the Roman pontiff than that which was granted to him by ancient councils is recently invented.
- ▶ *Gregory condemned what popes now affirm*
  - ▶ Cyprian states: "None of us says he is the bishop of bishops, or by tyrannical terror compels his colleagues to obey him."
  - ▶ If Gregory's testimony ought to prevail, by making their pontiff universal they declare him to be Antichrist.
- ▶ *The corruption of the present-day papacy*
  - ▶ I appeal to those who today wish to be thought the best and most faithful patrons of the Roman see whether they are not ashamed to defend the present state of the papacy.
    - ▶ For it clearly is a hundred times more corrupt than it was in the times of Gregory and Bernard, though even then it displeased these holy men.
  - ▶ It is depraved to stubbornly look upon as sacred and divine what all the saints have unanimously disapproved.
    - ▶ They even call upon the ancients for support.
  - ▶ They are doing just as anyone who, to establish the monarchy of the Caesars, would praise the ancient condition of the Roman republic.
    - ▶ That is, they would borrow the praises of freedom to adorn their tyranny.
- ▶ *(Arraignment of the later papacy, 23-30) Does there exist in Rome any church or bishopric at all?*
  - ▶ New conflict with them arises when we say that there is no church at Rome in which benefits of this sort can reside.

- ▶ Suppose all these things were true.
  - ▶ None of these things has any value unless there be a church and bishop at Rome.
  - ▶ This they must concede to me: what is not a church cannot be the mother of churches.
  - ▶ Do they, then, wish to have the apostolic see at Rome? Let them show me a true and lawful apostolate.
    - ▶ Where will they show us any semblance of the church?
    - ▶ Where in their church is there a ministry such as Christ's institution requires?
  - ▶ Let them say, therefore, in what way they would have him regarded a bishop who does not even in pretense touch any part of this office with his little finger.
- ▶ *The apostasy*
  - ▶ It is not with a bishop as it is with a king. For a king, even though he does not fulfill his kingly responsibility, nevertheless retains the honor and title.
    - ▶ But in judging a bishop we take into account Christ's command.
  - ▶ I deny that their pontiff is the chief of the bishops since he is no bishop.
    - ▶ At what point shall I begin? With his doctrine or his morals?
  - ▶ There is no other reason why the pontiffs rage with such madness against the reviving doctrine of the gospel:
    - ▶ They see that their whole kingdom will fall and crumble as soon as Christ's gospel gains sway.
  - ▶ Of old, Rome was indeed the mother of all churches.
    - ▶ But after it began to become the see of Antichrist, it ceased to be what it once was.
- ▶ *The kingdom of Antichrist*
  - ▶ To some we seem slanderers and railers when we call the Roman pontiff "Antichrist".
    - ▶ But they are accusing Paul of intemperate language, after whom we speak.
    - ▶ Paul writes that Antichrist will sit in God's temple [II Thess. 2:4].
    - ▶ His kingdom will consist in boasting and blaspheming of God [Dan. 7:25; Rev. 3:10; 13:5].
  - ▶ This tyranny does not wipe out either the name of Christ or of the church, but rather misuses a semblance of Christ and lurks under the name of the church as under a mask.
    - ▶ All the heresies and sects which have been from the beginning belong to the kingdom of Antichrist.
    - ▶ The "seat of abomination" will be raised up when universal apostasy seizes the church, even though many scattered members persevere.
      - ▶ This calamity was to be neither caused by one man, nor finished in one man.
      - ▶ He designates Antichrist by this mark, that he will deprive God of his honor in order to take it upon himself.
  - ▶ The Roman pontiff has shamelessly transferred to himself what belongs to God alone, and especially to Christ.
- ▶ *The papacy far removed from a true church order*

- ▶ To bind the honor of primacy to a place, that he who is Christ's most hateful enemy, the supreme foe of the gospel, the greatest waster and scatterer of the church, the cruelest slaughterer and butcher of all the saints, should be considered nonetheless Christ's vicar, merely because he occupies the see which was once the first see of all--this is utterly stupid.
- ▶ The Roman Church of which men boast was long ago turned into a court.
  - ▶ I am not blaming the vices of men, but I am showing that the papacy itself is directly contrary to church order.
- ▶ *The wicked behavior and the heretical teaching of the popes stand in stark contrast to their claims*
  - ▶ If we come to actual men, it is well known what kinds of vicars of Christ we shall find: Julius, Leo, Clement, and Paul are pillars of the faith who never grasped anything of Christ except what they had learned in Lucian's school.
    - ▶ This is the first article of that secret theology which reigns among them: there is no God.
    - ▶ The second: everything written and taught about Christ is falsehood and deceit.
    - ▶ The third: The doctrines of life to come and of a final resurrection are mere fables.
    - ▶ Not all speak thus, I admit.
      - ▶ But this long ago began to be the customary religion of the pontiffs.
- ▶ *Apostasy to John XXII*
  - ▶ Let us imagine that the impiety of the pontiffs whom I mentioned is hidden, because they have neither published it by preaching nor by writings.
    - ▶ Nevertheless, they have betrayed it only in table, bedchamber, or at least within walls.
  - ▶ Let them expunge from the list of popes John XXII who openly asserted that souls are mortal and die along with bodies until the day of resurrection.
    - ▶ None of the cardinals opposed this great madness, but the School of Paris impelled the king of France to force him to recant.
    - ▶ This example relieves me from having to dispute with my opponents any longer over their statement that the Roman see and its pontiffs cannot err in faith.
- ▶ *Moral abandonment of the popes*
  - ▶ To bind Christ, the Spirit and the church to a place, so that even a devil may rule there and still be considered the vicar of Christ--this is not only impious but absurd and alien to common sense.
  - ▶ Roman pontiffs have for a long time been quite devoid of religion or have been its greatest enemies.
    - ▶ They no more become vicars of Christ because of this see than an idol, when it is set in God's temple, is to be taken for God.
  - ▶ The whole college of cardinals, and the flock of clergy, have been prostituted to all wickedness, filthiness, and uncleanness, and to all kinds of crimes and misdeeds, so that they resemble monsters rather than men.
    - ▶ They reveal themselves to be nothing more than bishops.
  - ▶ It is disagreeable to traverse such a filthy mire, and one must spare chaste ears!
  - ▶ Even if Rome had once been the head of churches, today it is not worthy of being regarded among the smallest toes of the church's feet.

- ▶ *The cardinals*
  - ▶ I do not know how it has come about that they have suddenly loomed so huge.
    - ▶ In Gregory's time this title belonged to bishops alone.
    - ▶ I do not find this title among writers of the earlier period.
    - ▶ They then had no function except to be present and be under the bishop in the ministering of doctrine and sacraments.
  - ▶ Today their log is so changed that they have become cousins of kings and emperors.
    - ▶ They have no true and lawful office in the church, they only retain the color and empty shell.
- ▶ **The Power of the Church with Respect to Articles of Faith; and How in the Papacy, with Unbridled License, the Church Has been Led to Corrupt All Purity of Doctrine (Chapter VIII)**
  - ▶ *(Ecclesiastical power limited by the Word of God, 1-9) Task and limits of the church's doctrinal authority*
    - ▶ Their power is spiritual.
    - ▶ This consists either in doctrine, jurisdiction or in making laws.
      - ▶ The doctrinal side has two parts: authority to lay down articles of faith and authority to explain.
      - ▶ The power of the church is therefore to be not grudgingly manifested but yet to be kept within definite limits.
      - ▶ If we simply grant to men such power as they would be like, it is clear how abrupt is the fall into tyranny, which ought not be present in the church.
  - ▶ *The doctrinal authority of Moses and the priests*
    - ▶ It is given not to the men personally, but to the ministry to which they have been appointed.
      - ▶ More precisely, it has been given to the Word, whose ministry is entrusted to them.
    - ▶ They have no authority to teach or to answer, except in the name and Word of the Lord.
      - ▶ God has enjoined upon them not to bring anything of themselves but to speak from the Lord's mouth only.
      - ▶ Therefore, if the priest wishes to be heard, let him show himself to be God's messenger.
  - ▶ *The doctrinal authority of the prophets*
    - ▶ Is not he who is bidden to hear a word from the Lord's mouth forbidden to invent anything of his own?
      - ▶ God does not allow anyone to teach more than he has commanded.
        - ▶ Afterward, he calls whatever has not come forth from himself alone, "chaff."
      - ▶ Therefore, none of the prophets opened his mouth unless the Lord has anticipated his words.
    - ▶ What could come forth from the defiled mouth of Isaiah and the foolish mouth of Jeremiah but filth and folly, if they spoke their own word?
  - ▶ *The doctrinal authority of the apostles*
    - ▶ They are to be heard for Christ's sake.
    - ▶ But they show by their name how much is permitted to them in their office.

- ▶ They are not to speak whatever they please, but are faithfully to report the commands of Him by whom they have been sent.
- ▶ The power of the church, therefore, is not infinite but subject to the Lord's Word and, as it were, enclosed within it.
- ▶ *Unity and multiplicity of revelation*
  - ▶ How could they either have comprehended God's mysteries with the mind, or have uttered them, except by the teaching of him to whom alone the secrets of the Father are revealed?
  - ▶ God has never manifested himself to men in any other way than through the Son, that is, his sole wisdom, light and truth.
  - ▶ This has not always manifested itself in one way.
    - ▶ Patriarchs were given secret revelations which were confirmed by signs.
    - ▶ What they received they handed on to their descendants.
- ▶ *Scriptural foundation of the Word of God in the Old Covenant*
  - ▶ Where it pleased God to raise up a more visible form of the church, he willed to have his Word set down and sealed in writing.
    - ▶ This would allow his priests to seek from it what to teach the people.
    - ▶ Every doctrine to be taught should conform to that rule.
  - ▶ Then followed the prophets, through whom God published new oracles which were added to the law.
    - ▶ These were not so new that they did not flow from the law and hark back to it.
    - ▶ As for doctrine, they were only interpreters of the law and added nothing to it except predictions of things to come.
    - ▶ Their task was pure exposition of the law.
  - ▶ Then histories were added to these.
  - ▶ These were composed under the Holy Spirit's dictation.
  - ▶ Therefore, that whole body, put together out of the law prophecies, psalms, and histories, was the Lord's word for the ancient people.
  - ▶ And to this standard, priests and teachers, even to the coming of Christ, had to conform their teaching.
- ▶ *"The Word became flesh"*
  - ▶ But the Wisdom of God was revealed in the flesh, so that Wisdom heartily declared to us all that can and ought to be comprehended, concerning the Father, by the human mind.
  - ▶ Christ, the Sun of Righteousness, has shown brightly while before there was only dim light.
  - ▶ We have a perfect radiance of divine truth, like the wonted brilliance of midday.
  - ▶ He has so fulfilled all functions of teaching in his Son that we must regard this as the final and eternal testimony from him.
    - ▶ In this way this whole New Testament time, from the point that Christ appeared with the gospel even to the Day of Judgement, is designated "the last hour."
    - ▶ This is done so that we may learn not to fashion anything new for ourselves beyond this or to admit anything contrived by others.

- ▶ It is as if, leading us away from all doctrines of men, he should conduct us to his Son alone; bid us seek all teaching of salvation from him alone; depend upon him, cleave to him, and hearken to his voice alone.
- ▶ *The apostles authorized to teach what Christ commanded*
  - ▶ No other word is to be held as the Word of God, and given place as such in the church, than what is contained first in the Law and Prophets, then the writings of the apostles.
  - ▶ The only authorized way of teaching the church is by the prescription and standard of his Word.
  - ▶ They were to expound the ancient Scripture and to show that what is taught there has been fulfilled in Christ.
- ▶ *Not even the apostles were free to go beyond the Word: much less their successors*
  - ▶ Peter, who was well instructed the master, reserves nothing else for himself or others except to impart the doctrine as it has been handed down by God.
  - ▶ What is this but to reject all inventions of the human mind in order that God's pure Word may be taught and learned in the believer's church?
  - ▶ This is the difference between the apostles and their successors:
    - ▶ The former were sure and genuine scribes of the Holy Spirit and their writings are therefore to be considered oracles of God.
    - ▶ But the sole office of the others is to teach what is provided and sealed in the Holy Scriptures.
    - ▶ Faithful ministers are not permitted to coin any new doctrine, but that they are simply to cleave to that doctrine which God has subjected all men without exception.
- ▶ *(Rejection of claims of doctrinal infallibility apart from the Word, 10-16) The Roman claim*
  - ▶ Compare this power of the church with that power by which those spiritual tyrants who have falsely called themselves bishops and prelates.
  - ▶ They take it for granted that a universal council is the true image of the church.
    - ▶ They conclude without hesitation that such councils are governed by the Holy Spirit, and therefore cannot err.
    - ▶ They are contemptuous of God's Word, since they coin dogmas after their own whim.
- ▶ *The presence of Christ in his church does not annul its bond to the Word*
  - ▶ The church, they say, has excellent promises that never is she to be forsaken by Christ, her spouse, but guided by his Spirit into all truth.
  - ▶ But of the promises they habitually allege, many were given just as much to individual believers as to the whole church.
  - ▶ The Lord is ever present with his people and governs them by his Spirit.
    - ▶ But believers in this flesh receive only the first fruits and some taste of his Spirit.
    - ▶ Consequently, being aware of their own weakness, nothing better is left for them but to keep themselves carefully within the limits of God's Word.
- ▶ *The church not infallible*
  - ▶ They will object that whatever is partly attributed to any one of the saints belongs utterly and completely to the church itself.
  - ▶ God distributes the gifts of his Spirit to each of the members according to measure.

- ▶ But the riches of the church are always far from that supremes perfection of which our adversaries boast.
- ▶ If Christ daily sanctifies all his people, cleanses and polishes them, and wipes away their stains, it is obvious that they are still sprinkled with some defects and spots, and that something is lacking to their sanctification.
  - ▶ But to consider the church already completely and in every respect holy and spotless when all its members are spotted and impure--how absurd and foolish this is!
  - ▶ Therefore, the church has been sanctified by Christ, but only the beginning of its sanctification is visible here.
- ▶ If this custody rests in the prophetic and apostolic ministry, it follows that this safekeeping of the truth wholly depends on whether the Word is faithfully kept and preserved in its purity.
- ▶ *Word and Spirit belong inseparably together.*
  - ▶ This is a pivotal point.
  - ▶ This makes their claim to an inerrant church invalid.
  - ▶ “The church cannot err in matters necessary to salvation.”
  - ▶ We can only affirm this statement in so far as the church, having forsaken all its own wisdom, allows itself to be taught by the Holy Spirit through God’s Word.
  - ▶ Our opponents locate the authority of the church outside God’s Word; but we must insist that it be attached to the Word, and do not allow it to be separated from it.
  - ▶ We expect nothing more from the Spirit than that he will illumine our minds to perceive the truth of his teaching.
- ▶ *Tradition subordinate to Scripture?*
  - ▶ Augustine’s words are, “When the Lord said nothing, who of us may say, ‘these things are or those things are’? Or if one dare say so, what proof does he provide”?
  - ▶ Every schoolboy knows that in the writings of the apostles, there abides the fruit of that revelation which the Lord then promises to the apostles.
- ▶ *Contradiction in doctrinal decrees of the church*
  - ▶ Men must listen to the church, they say.
  - ▶ Who denies this?
  - ▶ The reason is that the church makes no pronouncement except from the Lord’s Word.
  - ▶ How perilous it is if men are given such authority.
- ▶ *Feebleness of our opponents’ examples*
  - ▶ Infant baptism is raised as an example of a mandate that is from tradition rather than from scripture.
  - ▶ It would be a very poor refuge, if to defend infant baptism, we were compelled to flee to the mere authority of the Church.
  - ▶ The Council of Nicaea states that the Son is consubstantial with the Father.
    - ▶ But why did the fathers condemn Arius, other than because he compromised the prophetic and apostolic writings.
    - ▶ What else are the Nicene fathers saying when they declare them of one essence but simply expounding the real meaning of scripture.

- ▶ **Councils and their Authority (Chapter IX)**

- ▶ *(True authority of church councils, 1-2) Two prefatory remarks*

- ▶ The fact that I shall be severe does not mean that I do not esteem the councils as I should.
  - ▶ I in fact, venerated them from my heart, and desire that they be honored by all.
  - ▶ But here the norm is that nothing of course detract from Christ.
- ▶ The fact that I attribute less to councils than my opponents claim does not mean that I am afraid of councils as if they supported their side and opposed ours.

- ▶ *True and false councils*

- ▶ The authority of councils is “Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them.” [Matt. 18:20]
  - ▶ But that refers as much to a little meeting as to a universal council.
  - ▶ The added condition for a council, then, is that it be gathered together in the name of Christ.
- ▶ I deny that they are gathered in Christ’s name who, casting aside God’s commandment that forbids anything to be added or taken away from his Word, ordain anything according to their own decision.
- ▶ They are not content with the oracles of Scripture, that is, the sole rule of perfect wisdom, concoct some novelty out of their own heads.

- ▶ *(Defects of pastors render their councils fallible, 3-7) The truth can also support and assert itself in the church without and against the “pastors”*

- ▶ They suppose that the truth does not abide in the church unless there is agreement among the pastors; and that the church itself exists only if it becomes visible in general councils.
- ▶ This is far from having always been true.
- ▶ They hold to a vain pretense of priesthood.

- ▶ *Defection of the pastors foretold*

- ▶ It was prophesied that false teachers would bring destructive heresies. [II Peter 2:1]
- ▶ Danger threatens not from the common people, but from those who claim to be pastors and teachers.
- ▶ Since the pastors could become so degraded in such a short time, how much corruption could a long succession of years bring among them?

- ▶ *The need to judge them with discrimination*

- ▶ I am only warning that discrimination is to be made among these pastors themselves.
- ▶ Lest we also immediately regard as pastors those who are so called.

- ▶ *The truth can also stand against councils*

- ▶ A notable example is the council convened by Ahab [I Kings 22:6, 2]
  - ▶ Four hundred prophets were present.
  - ▶ But because they convened with no other purpose than to flatter the wicked king, Satan is sent by the Lord to be a lying spirit in the mouths of all.

- ▶ *Example from John 11:47*

- ▶ In that council which the high priests and Pharisees convened at Jerusalem against Christ, what was lacking as far as outward appearance is concerned?

- ▶ We must not admit that the church consists in the assembly of the pastors, whom the Lord nowhere assumes to be forever good but has declared will sometimes be evil.
- ▶ *(Departing from Scripture, councils have deteriorated, but even those of Nicea and Chalcedon were defective, 8-11) The validity of conciliar decisions*
  - ▶ Scripture would stand out in the higher place, with everything subject to its standard.
  - ▶ In this way, we willingly embrace and reverence as holy the early councils, such as those of Nicaea, Constantinople, Ephesus I, Chalcedon, and the like, which were concerned with refuting errors--in so far as they relate to the teachings of faith.
  - ▶ In more recent councils the church has degenerated from the purity of that golden age when the task was exposition of Scripture.
- ▶ *Councils against councils!*
  - ▶ We cannot otherwise distinguish between councils that are contradictory and discordant.
  - ▶ Unless we weigh them all according to the Word of the Lord.
- ▶ *Human failings in the councils*
  - ▶ In the ancient and purer councils one may count something lacking.
  - ▶ Some did not see certain issues because they were concerned with pressing business at hand.
  - ▶ Some entered into the councils with too much feeling.
- ▶ *Human fallibility in the councils*
  - ▶ Our opponents admit that councils can err in those matters which are not necessary to salvation.
  - ▶ Even though being compelled, they admit this, they still thrust upon us the decision of every council on whatever matter.
  - ▶ They do this indiscriminately as if it were an oracle of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ *(We must not obey blind guides; decisions of later councils faulty in the light of Scripture, 12-14) No blind obedience*
  - ▶ The Lord took particular care to alarm us, so that we should not allow ourselves to be led into others' errors, masked under whatever name.
  - ▶ All blind guides, whether they are called high priests, or prelates, or pontiffs, can do nothing but hurtle their partners with them over the same precipice.
  - ▶ To test all spirits of all men by the standard of God's Word in order to determine whether or not they are from God.
- ▶ *The actual significance of councils fo the interpretation of Scripture*
  - ▶ We indeed willingly concede that the best and surest remedy is for a synod of true bishops to be convened, where the doctrine at issue may be examined.
  - ▶ It will have much more weight than if each one, having conceived it separately at home, should teach it to the people.
- ▶ *False evalutaion of conciliar decisions of the part of the Roman Church*
  - ▶ The Romanists aim at another goal.
  - ▶ They teach that the power of interpreting Scripture belongs to councils, and without appeal.
  - ▶ But not one syllable of purgatory, intercession of saints, or auricular conffesion and the like will be found in Scripture.

- ▶ If, in fact, the interpretation of Scripture was given to councils, from which council did we find this interpretation?
- ▶ **The Power of Making Laws, in Which the Pope, with His Supporters, Has Exercised Upon Souls the Most Savage Tyranny and Butchery (Chapter X)**
  - ▶ *(Church laws and traditions, and the Christians's conscience before God, 1-4) The basic question*
    - ▶ May the church lawfully bind consciences by its laws?
    - ▶ Our contention is against "human traditions" not against holy and useful church institutions, which provide for the preservation of discipline or honesty or peace.
    - ▶ Their error is that they say their laws are "spiritual", pertaining to the soul, and declare them necessary for eternal life.
    - ▶ Thus the freedom given to the consciences of believers is utterly oppressed and cast down.
    - ▶ They should acknowledge one King, their deliverer Christ, and should be governed by one law of freedom, the holy Word of the gospel, if they would retain the grace which they once obtained in Christ.
  - ▶ *The Roman constitutions enslave consciences*
    - ▶ Paul, [I Cor. 7:35] foresaw how great a wound would be inflicted upon consciences if in those matters which the Lord left free, necessity were imposed.
    - ▶ One can scarcely count the constitutions which these men have very grievously decreed under pain of eternal death, and which they with the greatest severity require as necessary for salvation.
    - ▶ My purpose here is, therefore, to attack constitution made to bind souls inwardly before God and to lay scruples on them, as if enjoining things necessary to salvation.
  - ▶ *The nature of conscience*
    - ▶ When men have an awareness of divine judgment adjoined to them as a witness which does not let them hide their sins but arraigns them as guilty before the judgment seat--this awareness is called "conscience."
    - ▶ It does not allow man to suppress within himself what he knows, but pursues him to the point of making him acknowledge his guilt.
  - ▶ *Bondage and freedom of conscience*
    - ▶ The conscience relates to God in such a way that a good conscience is nothing but an inward upright of heart.
    - ▶ Conscience is a lively longing to worship God and a sincere intent to live a godly and holy life.
    - ▶ Conscience refers to God alone, without regard to other men; my conscience is subject to the observance of this law, even though no man were alive in the world.
    - ▶ God does not cease to retain freedom of conscience.
  - ▶ *(Conscience in relation to human and papal laws: God the only lawgiver, 5-8) The meaning of human laws for the conscience*
    - ▶ While the whole world was shrouded in the densest darkness of ignorance, this tiny little spark of light remained, that men recognized man's conscience to be higher than all human judgments.

- ▶ Even then God willed that some testimony of Christian freedom appear even then, to rescue consciences from the tyranny of men.
- ▶ Paul shows us that even rulers' laws also have dominion over the conscience.
- ▶ If this is true, the same will have to be said of church laws.
- ▶ But though individual laws of the church may not pertain to the conscience, we are still held by God's general command, which commends to us the authority of magistrates.
- ▶ Thus, human laws, whether made by magistrate or by church, even though they have to be observed, still do not of themselves bind the conscience. For all obligation to observe laws looks to the general purpose, but does not consist in the things enjoined.
- ▶ *The church has no right to set up independent constitutions to bind consciences*
  - ▶ False bishops have burdened our consciences with new laws on the pretext that they have been appointed by the Lord spiritual lawgivers.
  - ▶ If they were true bishops, I would grant them authority in this respect, not as much as they claim, but as much as is required duly to maintain the government of the church.
  - ▶ Bishops have no right to command the church to observe as obligatory what they have themselves conceived apart from God's Word.
- ▶ *All arbitrary lordship is an encroachment upon God's Kingdom*
  - ▶ In his law the Lord has included everything applicable to the perfect rule of the good life.
  - ▶ So that nothing is left to men to add to that summary.
- ▶ *Directions to determine which human constitutions are inadmissible*
  - ▶ We should have in his will the perfect rule of all righteousness and holiness, and thus in knowing him possess the perfect knowledge of the good life.
  - ▶ He alone has authority over our souls.
  - ▶ We are not to seek from men the doctrine of the true worship of God, for the Lord has faithfully and fully instructed us how he is to be worshiped.
- ▶ *(Ecclesiastical constitutions authorizing ceremonies in worship are tyrannous, frivolous, and contrary to Scripture, 9-18) The Roman constitutions are, according to the foregoing principles, to be rejected*
  - ▶ The constitutions with which the pope and his minions burden the church, are pernicious and impious.
  - ▶ How do we sin, if today we cannot bear what Paul has taught to be unbearable--that the lawful order of divine worship is reduced to men's decision?
- ▶ *The papal constitutions deny God's law*
  - ▶ The Papists nullify God's commandment for the sake of the traditions of men.
  - ▶ It is seen as a grave transgression for one man to despise, judge, and cast out another because of what are trivial and indifferent matters.
  - ▶ But now, as though this were but a slight evil, those trifling elements of this world are more highly esteemed than the heavenly oracles of God.
- ▶ *Roman constitutions meaningless and useless*
  - ▶ They prescribe observances for the most part useless and sometimes even foolish
  - ▶ Pious consciences are oppressed with an immense multitude of them, and reverting to a kind of Judaism, so cling to shadows that they cannot reach Christ.

- ▶ *Their mysteries are mockeries*
  - ▶ Romanist ceremonies, which they would have to be great mysteries, are nothing but pure mockeries.
  - ▶ They have partly taken their pattern from the ravings of the Gentiles, partly, like apes, have rashly imitated the ancient rites of the Mosaic law, which apply to us no more than do animal sacrifices and other like thing.
- ▶ *The Roman Church constitutions, though their senseless accumulation, bring Jewish vexations upon the conscience*
  - ▶ These traditions by being heaped one upon another have increased to such a number as to be unbearable to the Christian church.
  - ▶ Where these perverse lawgivers have once taken authority, they never cease to command and forbid, until they come to the limit of over-scrupulousness.
- ▶ *Ceremonies to show forth Christ, not to hide him*
  - ▶ It is not the way to take care of the weak--to overwhelm them with great heaps of ceremonies.
  - ▶ New worshipers differ from the old in that under Moses the spiritual worship of God was figured and, so to speak, enwrapped in many ceremonies.
  - ▶ But I do not say that no ceremonies shall be given to the ignorant to help them in their inexperience.
  - ▶ Therefore, God has given us a few ceremonies, not at all irksome, to show Christ present.
- ▶ *Corruption of ceremonies regarded as expiatory sacrifices*
  - ▶ Ceremonies are not sacrifices by which God is appeased.
  - ▶ For the works of the law have grace onnly from God's free kindness, because in them our obedience is weak and defective.
  - ▶ All ceremonies are corrupt and harmful unless through them men are led to Christ.
  - ▶ But those ceremonies in use under the papacy are separated from teaching so as to hold men to utterly meaningless signs.
- ▶ *General application of common insights*
  - ▶ Whenever this superstition creeps in, men wish to worship God with their fictions, all laws enacted for this purpose immediately degenerate to these gross abuses.
  - ▶ For God threatens not one age or another but all ages with this curse, that he will strike with blindness and amazement those who worship him with the doctrines of men.
- ▶ *The Roman constitutions cannot, as they assume, count as church constitutions*
  - ▶ They want us to believe a good part of their observances has come down from the aposltes.
  - ▶ It is not a church which, passing the bounds of God's Word, wantons and disports itself in the framing of new laws.
- ▶ *The Roman constitutions do not reach back to the apostles, or even to the "apostolic tradition"*
  - ▶ There is no doubt that we shall agree very well with the church if we show ourselves in all things obedient to the Lord.
  - ▶ But to trace the origin of these traditios back to the apostles is pure deceit.
- ▶ *(Accumulation of useless rites falsely called "apostolic": obligation to weak consciences, 19-22) Post-apostolic accumulation ofuseless rites*

- ▶ Under the apostles the Lord's Supper was administered with great simplicity.
- ▶ Their immediate successors added something to enhance the dignity of the mystery which was not to be condemned.
- ▶ But afterward they were replaced by those foolish imitators, who, by patching pieces from time to time, contrived for us these priestly vestments that we see in the Mass, these altar ornaments, these gesticulations, and the whole apparatus of useless things.
- ▶ *Augustine interpreted*
  - ▶ Augustine's statement that certain churches in his time shrank from solemnly imitating Christ in foot washing, lest that rite seem to pertain to baptism, would indicate that there was no kind of washing that had any similarity to baptism.
  - ▶ For since Augustine is giving only conjectures, judgment in so great a matter should not be based upon them.
- ▶ *The decree of Acts 15:20*
  - ▶ The apostles, they say, and the elders of the primitive church framed a decree outside the command of Christ.
  - ▶ If this was allowed to them, why should it not be allowed to their successors to follow the same practice as often as the situation requires?
  - ▶ But this is no new law laid down by the apostles, but the divine and eternal command of God not to violate love.
- ▶ *Obligation to weak brethren*
  - ▶ The leaders of Jerusalem were not making new laws, but forestalling scandals.
  - ▶ It was scandals which were explicitly forbidden by the Lord.
- ▶ *(Traditions and human inventions in worship condemned in Scripture and by Christ himself, 23-26) The appeal to the authority of the church contradicts the evidence of Scripture*
  - ▶ Part of the reverence paid to God consists simply in worshiping him as he commands, mingling no inventions of our own.
  - ▶ The more clearly God's will is revealed to us, the less excusable is our wantonness in attempting anything.
- ▶ *Perverse worship an abomination to God*
  - ▶ The Lord has strong reasons to abominate such perverse rites, which are performed for him according to the wilfulness of human nature.
  - ▶ Those who expect God's approval for their paltry observances, and offer to him a sham obedience which is paid actually to men, do not hold to the right path.
- ▶ *Refutation of Romanist counter evidence*
  - ▶ The supporters of superstition also allege that Samuel sacrificed in Ramah, and that, although he did so apart from the law.
  - ▶ The refutation: it was not a second altar that he set against the sole altar, but, because the place of the Ark of the Covenant had not yet been determined, the town where he was living was designated as most convenient.
  - ▶ On the other hand, Gideon is an example of how God hates what mortals think up out of themselves to worship him.

- ▶ For Gideon's ephod brought ruin not only upon himself and his family, but upon all the people.
- ▶ *Christ's warning against the leaven of the Pharisees*
  - ▶ 'Leaven' means whatever of their own doctrine men mix with the purity of God's Word.
  - ▶ Christ meant to forewarn the people not to be led by the bad examples of their teachers to despise doctrine.
- ▶ *(Right ordering of church government and worship: decency, love and a free conscience, 27-32) Necessity of church constitutions*
  - ▶ Some form of organization is necessary in all human society to foster the common peace and maintain concord.
  - ▶ Therefore, we are so far from condemning the laws that conduce to this as to contend that, when churches are deprived of them, their very sinews disintegrate.
  - ▶ But one thing must be guarded against: they are not to be considered necessary for salvation.
- ▶ *The problem of right church constitutions*
  - ▶ We have excellent and dependable marks to distinguish between impious and legitimate constitutions:
    - ▶ All things must be done decently and with becoming dignity.
    - ▶ The human community itself must be kept in order with certain bonds of humanity and moderation.
  - ▶ When we have the church set up in good order, we provide for its peace and quietness.
- ▶ *True decorum in worship, not theatrical show*
  - ▶ We shall not say that decorum exists where there is nothing but vain pleasure.
  - ▶ True worship should not be fruitless but should indicate to believers with how great modesty, piety, and reverence they ought to treat sacred things.
  - ▶ Ceremonies, to be exercises of piety, ought to lead us straight to Christ.
- ▶ *Bondage and freedom of church constitutions*
  - ▶ I approve only those human constitutions which are founded upon God's authority, drawn from Scripture, and therefore, wholly divine.
  - ▶ The Lord has in his sacred oracles embraced and clearly expressed both the whole sum of true righteousness, and all aspects of the worship of his majesty, and whatever was necessary to salvation.
  - ▶ But because he did not will in outward discipline and ceremonies to prescribe in detail what we ought to do.
  - ▶ Here we must take refuge in those general rules which he has given.
  - ▶ Because he has taught nothing specifically, it will be fitting to change traditional practices, though we ought not to do this rashly, or needlessly.
- ▶ *Bondage and freedom over against church constitutions*
  - ▶ It is the duty of Christian people to keep the ordinances without superstition, yet with a pious and ready inclination to obey.
  - ▶ In them a man commits no crime if out of imprudence or forgetfulness he departs from them; but if out of contempt, this willfulness is to be disapproved.
- ▶ *Observances should be few and edifying*

- ▶ All observances ought to display manifest usefulness, and few should be allowed.
- ▶ Also, a faithful pastor's teaching is added to bar the way to perverse opinions.
- ▶ We establish no perpetual law.
  - ▶ This present age offers proof of the fact that it may be a fitting thing to set aside, as may be opportune in the circumstances, certain rites that in other circumstances are not impious
  - ▶ Consequently, they can scarcely be sufficiently cleanse of frightful superstitions without removing many ceremonies probably established of old with good reason and not notably impious of themselves.
- ▶ **The Jurisdiction of the Church and its Abuse as Seen in the Papacy (Chapter XI)**
  - ▶ *(Jurisdiction and discipline: the power of the keys and the civil magistracy, 1-5) The basis of church jurisdiction in the power of the keys*
    - ▶ The power of which we speak depends entirely upon the keys which Christ gives to the church in Matthew 16:19 and a complementary passage, John 20:23.
    - ▶ The command concerning forgiving and retaining sins and that promise made to Peter concerning binding and loosing ought to be referred solely to the ministry of the Word.
    - ▶ When the Lord committed his ministry to the apostles, he also equipped them for the office of binding and loosing.
    - ▶ Christ gave his ministers this assurance so that the promise might not be vain or empty, but full of power and strength.
    - ▶ The power of the keys is simply the preaching of the gospel, and that with regard to men it is not so much power as ministry.
  - ▶ *The power of binding and loosing*
    - ▶ The church binds him whom it excommunicates--not that it casts him into everlasting ruin and despair, but because it condemns his life and morals, and already warns him of his condemnation unless he should repent.
    - ▶ It looses him whom it receives into communion, for it makes him a sharer of the unity which it has in Christ Jesus.
    - ▶ No one may despise the judgment of the church, or think it immaterial that he has been condemned by the vote of the believers.
      - ▶ The Lord testifies that such judgment by believers is nothing but the proclamation of his own sentence, and that whatever they have done on earth is ratified in heaven.
      - ▶ For they have the Word of God with which to condemn the perverse.
      - ▶ They have the Word with which to receive the repentant into grace.
  - ▶ *Civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction*
    - ▶ The church does not have the right of the sword to punish or compel, not the authority to force; not imprisonment, nor the other punishments which the magistrate commonly inflicts.
    - ▶ Then, it is not a question of punishing the sinner against his will, but of the sinner professing his repentance in a voluntary chastisement.
    - ▶ The does not assume what is proper to the magistrate; nor can the magistrate execute what is carried out by the church.
  - ▶ *The church and the Christian magistrate*
    - ▶ It is not fitting for us to accuse to the magistrate those who do not obey our admonitions.

- ▶ When emperors and magistrates began to accept Christ, this spiritual jurisdiction was not at once annulled but was only so ordered that it should not detract from the civil jurisdiction or become confused with it.
- ▶ *The spiritual character of ecclesiastical jurisdiction*
  - ▶ Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is that offenses be resisted, and that any scandal that has arisen be wiped out.
  - ▶ This spiritual power is completely separate from the right of the sword.
  - ▶ It is not to be administered by the decision of one man but by a lawful assembly.
- ▶ *(Abuses caused by the unwarranted assumption of power by the bishops, 6-10) Administration of justice in the ancient church was not the function of an individual*
  - ▶ Ecclesiastical power was not in one man's possession to do whatever he pleased but in the hands of the assembly of the elders.
  - ▶ Presbyters are to the church what the Senate is to the city.
  - ▶ Presbyters were of two kinds.
    - ▶ Some are ordained to teach.
    - ▶ Others were censors of morals.
  - ▶ As the bishop is above the rest in honor, so there is more authority in the assembly than in one man.
  - ▶ It is a very wicked misdeed that one man, transferring the common power to himself, both opened the way to tyrannous license and seized from the church what had belonged to it.
- ▶ *Deterioration of jurisdiction and discipline*
  - ▶ Bishops considering their duty as something unworthy of their care, have delegated it to others.
  - ▶ When the Romanists boast of their spiritual jurisdiction, we can readily show that nothing is more contrary to the procedure instituted by Christ.
- ▶ *The worldly power of the bishops contradicts the meaning of this office*
  - ▶ They are often far removed from what they wish to be regarded: pastors of the church.
  - ▶ Christ wished to bar the ministers of his Word from civil rule and earthly authority.
    - ▶ The office of pastor is distinct from that of prince.
    - ▶ In fact, they are things so different that they cannot come together in one man.
- ▶ *Assumption of princely powers by the bishops*
  - ▶ Bishops were eventually given the right of the sword.
  - ▶ But Christ has simply rejected the office of judging.
  - ▶ This could have no other outcome than that they should forsake their duties and move into the other [civil] camp.
- ▶ *How has this worldly power of the bishops come about?*
  - ▶ From slight beginnings the Romanists have little by little made great increases.
  - ▶ In the past, if any conflict arose, the pious, to avoid the necessity of a law suit, committed the judgment to the bishop, because they had no doubt about his integrity.
  - ▶ The Romanists have made out of voluntary arbitration--something wholly unlike the noise of the law courts--an ordinary jurisdiction.

- ▶ Some time later, they betook themselves to the bishops for protection, to be shielded by their faithfulness.
- ▶ These men with marvelous subtlety turned themselves from protectors into lords.
- ▶ But, seized with blind greed, they have destroyed themselves, their successors, and the church.
- ▶ *(Inordinate and fraudulent claims of the papacy and its usurpation of worldly powers, 11-16)*  
*The origin of papal world supremacy*
  - ▶ At last, the Roman pontiff, not content with modest baronies, first laid his hand on kingdoms, then upon the Empire itself.
  - ▶ He sometimes boasts that he has it by divine right, sometimes pretends the Donation of Constantine, sometimes another title.
  - ▶ Therefore, highly as we think of ourselves, let us remember that a ministry has been laid upon us, not a lordship given.
- ▶ *The Donation of Constantine fraudulent and absurd*
  - ▶ Those only moderately versed in the history of those times need not be taught not only how fabulous, but also how absurd, it is.
  - ▶ Many, such as Valla, have refuted that fable.
- ▶ *The relationship of Henry IV and Hildebrand*
  - ▶ Henry IV provided Gregory VII [Hildebrand] with occasion to alter the arrangement.
  - ▶ Gregory achieved this: his successors were able with impunity not only to shake off the yoke but also to subject the emperors to themselves.
- ▶ *Appropriations anathematized under Gregory the Great*
  - ▶ The keepers of church possessions laid hands on the estates which they reckoned as church property and imposed titles upon them as evidence of claim.
  - ▶ Gregory then called a council of bishops together, inveighed stoutly against that profane custom, and asked whether they would anathematize the cleric who tried to occupy some possession by inscribing a title on his own initiative.
- ▶ *Immunities of the Roman clergy*
  - ▶ The Roman clergy count it beneath their dignity to answer in personal cases before a civil judge.
  - ▶ In ancient times, ecclesiastical cases were referred to the bishop's judgment.
  - ▶ But in other cases he showed himself ready to do whatever the emperor has ordered.
- ▶ *Bishops subject to secular courts*
  - ▶ By this very exception, holy men sought only to prevent the less religious princes from obstructing the church in the conduct of its office by their tyrannical violence and license.
  - ▶ They did not, however, disapprove of princes interposing their authority in ecclesiastical matters, provided it was done to preserve the order of the church, not to disrupt it.
  - ▶ For since the church does not have the power to coerce, and ought not to seek it, it is the duty of godly kings and princes to sustain religion by laws, edicts, and judgments.
- ▶ **The Discipline of the Church: Its Chief Use in Censures and Excommunication (Chapter XII)**

- ▶ *(Discussion of power of the keys in the discipline: the ends and processes of discipline, 1-7); Necessity and nature of church discipline*
  - ▶ Discipline depends for the most part upon the power of the keys and upon spiritual jurisdiction.
  - ▶ If no society, indeed, no house which has even a small family, can be kept in proper condition without discipline, it is much more necessary in the church, whose condition should be as ordered as possible.
  - ▶ All who desire to remove discipline or hinder its restoration surely contributing to the ultimate dissolution of the church.
- ▶ *Stages of church discipline*
  - ▶ The first foundation is to provide a place for private admonition.
  - ▶ If anyone either rejects such admonitions, or persists in his own vices, Christ commands that he be called to the tribunal of the church, that is, the assembly of elders.
    - ▶ If he reverences the church, he may submit and obey.
    - ▶ But if he perseveres in his wickedness, then Christ commands that he be removed from the believers' fellowship.
- ▶ *Concealed and open sins*
  - ▶ Some sins are private; others, public or openly manifest.
  - ▶ This, then will be the right sequence in which to act:
    - ▶ Proceed in correcting sins according to the steps laid down by Christ.
    - ▶ But in open sins, if the offence is indeed public, to proceed at once to solemn rebuke by the church.
- ▶ *Light and grave sins*
  - ▶ Of sins, some are faults; others crimes or shameful acts.
  - ▶ To correct these latter ones, we must not only use admonition or rebuke, but a severer remedy, such as excommunication.
- ▶ *The purpose of church discipline*
  - ▶ First, that they who lead a filthy and infamous life may not be called Christians, to the dishonor of God.
  - ▶ The second is that the good be not corrupted by the constant company of the wicked.
  - ▶ Third, that those overcome by shame for their baseness begin to repent.
- ▶ *The handling of church discipline in various cases*
  - ▶ Let us keep the division set above: that some sins are public; others, private or somewhat secret.
  - ▶ The first kind does not require the steps which Christ lists; the church ought to do its duty in summoning the sinner and correcting him according to his fault.
  - ▶ The second kind, according to that rule of Christ, the case does not come before the church until the sinner becomes obstinate.
- ▶ *In the ancient church, discipline applied to all offenders alike*
  - ▶ No one was exempt from this discipline, both princes and common people submitted to it.

- ▶ The whole sequence of the action, besides the calling on God's name, ought to have that gravity which bespeaks the presence of Christ in order that there may be no doubt that he himself presides at his own tribunal.
- ▶ *Severity and mildness in church discipline*
  - ▶ Severity as is joined with a "spirit of gentleness" befits the church.
    - ▶ We must take particular care that he who is punished be not overwhelmed with sorrow.
    - ▶ Thus a remedy would become destruction.
  - ▶ In this respect we cannot at all excuse the excessive severity of the ancients.
- ▶ *The limits of our judgment according to church discipline*
  - ▶ Gentleness is required in the whole body of the church.
  - ▶ Each layman ought to temper himself to this mildness and gentleness.
  - ▶ It is not our task to erase from the number of the elect those who have been expelled from the church, or to despair as if they were already lost.
  - ▶ For God, whenever it pleases him, changes the worst men into the best, engrafts the alien, and adopts the stranger into the church.
- ▶ *Excommunication is corrective*
  - ▶ Christ limits the force of binding to ecclesiastical censure.
  - ▶ Those who are excommunicated are not cast into everlasting ruin and damnation, but in hearing that their life and morals are condemned, they are assured of their everlasting condemnation unless they repent.
  - ▶ And although excommunication also punishes the man, it does so in such a way that, by forewarning him of his future condemnation, it may call him back to salvation.
- ▶ *Against willful excess in demanding church discipline*
  - ▶ Individual laymen, if they see vices not diligently enough corrected should not therefore at once depart from the church.
  - ▶ Pastors themselves, if they cannot cleanse all that needs correction, should not for that reason resign their ministry or disturb the entire church with unaccustomed rigor.
- ▶ *Disruptive severity: Donatists and Anabaptists*
  - ▶ The overscrupulousness of the Donatists inveighed fiercely against the bishops as betrayers of discipline and in an impious schism separated themselves from Christ's flock.
  - ▶ The Anabaptists act in the same way today.
  - ▶ They recognize no assembly of Christ to exist except one conspicuous in every respect for its angelic perfection.
- ▶ *Augustine requires discrimination in discipline*
  - ▶ If the contagion of sin invades the multitude, the severe mercy of a vigorous discipline is necessary.
  - ▶ But we are to use severity towards the sins of a few.
- ▶ *(The use and purpose of fasting, private and public: principles to be guarded in it, 14-18)*  
*Public and mutual practice of penance*

- ▶ The remaining part of discipline is where the pastors, according to the need of the times, should exhort the people fasting or to solemn supplications, or to other acts of humility, repentance, and faith--of which the time, the manner, and the form are not prescribed by God's Word.
- ▶ For we see there that whenever anything grave occurred, the people were called together, and supplications and a fast appointed.
- ▶ The apostles, therefore, followed what was not new to the people of God, and what they foresaw would be useful to them.
- ▶ *The purpose of fasting*
  - ▶ The first objective is appropriate to private fasting.
  - ▶ The second is for both the whole church and the individual believer.
  - ▶ The third will happen during a common scourge.
- ▶ *Fasting and prayer*
  - ▶ Fasting, as it is a sign of self-abasement, has more frequent use in public than among private individuals.
  - ▶ Whenever men are to pray to God concerning any great matter, it would be expedient to appoint fasting along with prayer.
- ▶ *Fasting and the practice of penance*
  - ▶ If either pestilence, or famine, or war begins to rage, or if any disaster seems to threaten any district and people--then also is it the duty of the pastors to urge the church of fasting, in order that by supplication the Lord's wrath may be averted.
  - ▶ But, you object, this is an external ceremony which, together with others, ended in Christ.
  - ▶ No, it is an excellent aid for believers today and a profitable admonition to arouse them in order that they may not provoke God more and more by their excessive confidence and negligence.
- ▶ *The nature of fasting*
  - ▶ We do not understand it simply as restraint and abstemiousness in food, but as something else.
  - ▶ There is another sort of fasting, temporary in character, when we withdraw something from the normal regimen of living, either for one day or for a definite time, and pledge ourselves to a tighter and more severe restraint in diet than ordinarily.
- ▶ *(Danger of superstition, notions of merit, and hypocrisy in fasting and the observance of Lent, 19-21) Misconceptions of fasting*
  - ▶ But we must always take especial precaution lest any superstitions creep in.
  - ▶ They should always urge what Joel teaches, that they are to "rend their hearts, not their garments", admonish the people that God does not greatly esteem fasting of itself, unless an inner emotion of the heart is present, and true displeasure at one's sin, true humility, and true sorrowing arising from the fear of God.
  - ▶ Another evil, is to regard fasting as a work of merit a form of divine.
  - ▶ A third error is to require it to be kept too strictly and rigidly as if it were one of the chief duties, and to extol it with such immoderate praises that men think they have done something noble.

- ▶ *Degeneration of fasting in the history of the church*
  - ▶ Superstitious observance of Lent has prevailed because the common people thought that in it they were doing some exceptional service to God.
  - ▶ On the contrary, it is plain that Christ did not fast to set an example for others, but to prove, in so beginning to proclaim the gospel, that it was no human doctrine but actually one sent from heaven.
- ▶ *Depraved indulgence in seasons of fasting*
  - ▶ Worse times then followed, and to the misdirected zeal for the people was added the incompetence and lack of training of the bishops, as well as their lust for mastery and their tyrannical rigor.
  - ▶ Wicked laws were passed which bind consciences with deadly chains.
  - ▶ Both in fasts and in all other parts of discipline the papists have nothing right, nothing sincere, nothing well-ordered and arranged, to give them occasion to boast, as if anything remained among them deserving praise.
- ▶ *(Requirement of clerical celibacy a harmful innovation, 22-28) The discipline of the clergy and its degeneration*
  - ▶ It is contained in the canons that the ancient bishops imposed upon themselves and their order a discipline.
  - ▶ There is no need to relate how all this has fallen into disuse, since today nothing more unbridled and dissolute than this order can be imagined, and they have broken into such license that the whole world cries out.
- ▶ *Priestly celibacy and its contradiction of Scripture*
  - ▶ In one thing they are extremely rigid and inexorable--in not permitting marriage to priests.
  - ▶ Yet this prohibition clearly shows what a plague all their traditions are.
  - ▶ For it has not only deprived the church of good and fit pastors, but has also brought in a sink of iniquities and has cast many souls into the abyss of despair.
- ▶ *Marriage enjoined and spiritually interpreted*
  - ▶ Christ deems marriage worthy of such honor that he wills it to be an image of his sacred union with the church.
  - ▶ With what shamelessness will that be called unclean or defiled in which a likeness of Christ's spiritual grace shines forth!
- ▶ *Refutation of an opposing Scriptural argument*
  - ▶ The Levitical priests, whenever their turn to minister came, had to sleep apart from their wives in order to be pure and unspotted to handle sacred things.
  - ▶ Therefore, it would be very unseemly for our sacred rites--which are much nobler and occur daily--to be administered by married men.
  - ▶ Because the pastors of the church do not play this part today, it is pointless to compare them with the priests.
- ▶ *The ancient church and celibacy*
  - ▶ It was an astonishing shamelessness on their part to peddle this ornament of chastity as something necessary.

- ▶ Nicaea decreed that marriage remained sacred among them; and it caused them no shame, nor was it thought to cast any spot upon the ministry.
- ▶ *Late development of the requirement of celibacy*
  - ▶ Then those times followed when the too superstitious admiration of celibacy became prevalent.
  - ▶ If my adversaries claim antiquity against me, my first answer is that this freedom of bishops to be married existed both under the apostle and for some centuries afterward.
  - ▶ We ought to hold the example of the earlier church of greater importance than to judge as unlawful or unseemly what then was accepted with praise and was customary.
- ▶ *Abuses under the rule of celibacy*
  - ▶ Whenever the defenders of this new tyranny seek the pretext of antiquity in defense of their celibacy, we shall have to require of them:
    - ▶ That they restore that ancient chastity in their priests.
    - ▶ That they remove adulterers and fornicators.
    - ▶ That they do not allow those to whom they forbid an honorable and modest use of the marriage bed to run unpunished into every sort of lusts.
- ▶ **Vows; and How Everyone Rashly Taking Them Has Miserably Entangled Himself (Chapter XIII)**
  - ▶ *(The nature of vows , and prevalent errors concerning them, 1-7) Degeneration and dangers*
    - ▶ The world, according to the depravity of its own disposition, has always repelled with such obstacles as it could the helps by which it ought to have been led to God.
    - ▶ For some centuries this wickedness: whole people everywhere, despising God's law, burned with a mad zeal to vow anything that had tickled them in dreams.
  - ▶ *God as the One to whom we make our vows*
    - ▶ It is well to consider three things:
      - ▶ Who it is to whom the vow is made.
      - ▶ Who we are who make the vow.
      - ▶ With what intention we make our vow.
    - ▶ The purpose of the first thing is to make us realize that it is God with whom we have to deal.
  - ▶ *The man who makes the vow*
    - ▶ We should measure our strength, so as not to neglect the blessing of freedom which God has given us.
    - ▶ He is a rash man who vows what is either not in his power or conflicts with his calling.
  - ▶ *Vows classified according to intention*
    - ▶ Your intention in making a vow is important if you would have God approve it.
    - ▶ Because the Lord looks upon the heart, the same thing may sometimes please and be acceptable to him, sometimes strongly displease him.
  - ▶ *Vows of future reference*
    - ▶ Vows which have regard for the future tend partly to make us more cautious, as we have said, partly to arouse us, as by some stimulus, to our duty.

- ▶ That those vows which look to one of these ends, especially in outward things, are lawful, provided they are supported by God's approval, agree with our calling, and are limited to the endowment of grace given us by God.
- ▶ *Lawful vows in general*
  - ▶ All believers have one common vow made in baptism.
  - ▶ The sacraments are like contracts by which the Lord gives us his mercy and from it eternal life; and we in turn promise him obedience.
  - ▶ My advice is to undertake only sober and temporary vows.
    - ▶ If from time to time you go to excess in making vows, the whole religious character of it will be cheapened by the very repetition.
    - ▶ If you bind yourself with a perpetual vow, either you will fulfill in with great trouble and tedium, or else, wearied by its long duration, you will one day venture to break it.
- ▶ *Perverse vows*
  - ▶ God hates nothing more than counterfeited worship.
  - ▶ Hypocrites, when they have performed such follies, believe that they have procured for themselves exceptional righteousness.
- ▶ *(Monastic vows and the decline of monastic life, 8-10) The monasticism of the ancient church*
  - ▶ A far different mode of living once prevailed in monasteries.
  - ▶ Those who wished to exercise themselves in the greatest severity and patience retired there.
  - ▶ The monastic colleges were, so to speak, seminaries of the ecclesiastical order.
  - ▶ Pious men customarily prepared themselves by monastic discipline to govern the church.
- ▶ *Augustine's description of monasticism*
  - ▶ He defends the holiness of that profession against the slanders of the Manichees.
  - ▶ He inveighs against certain degenerate monks who were beginning to corrupt that institutions.
- ▶ *Comparison of earlier with later monasticism*
  - ▶ Intelligent readers may judge by comparison the shamelessness of those who claim antiquity to support present monasticism.
  - ▶ Our present-day monks find in idleness the chief part of their sanctity.
  - ▶ Present-day monasticism is so different that you could scarcely find things more unlike, nor to say contrary.
- ▶ *(The erroneous claim of monastic perfection, 11-14) Monasticism--a state of perfection?*
  - ▶ I should like to ask them why they dignify their order alone with the title of perfection, and take the same title away from all God's calling.
  - ▶ When they are pressed, they fall back on this dodge -that they have not yet attained perfection, but that they are in such a state that they aspire to it more than all other men.
- ▶ *Christ's rule of life is for all Christians*
  - ▶ All declare with one voice that men must of necessity obey every little word uttered by Christ.
  - ▶ This opinion is that a more perfect rule of life can be devised than the common one committed by God to the whole church.
- ▶ *The meaning of Matt. 19:21*

- ▶ “If you wish to be perfect, sell all that you have and give to the poor.”
- ▶ They boast that they are made perfect by forsaking all their possessions.
- ▶ If the sum of perfection lies in this, what does Paul mean when he teaches that he who gives all his goods to the poor is nothing unless he has love?
- ▶ *Monastic sectarianism*
  - ▶ Do they not separate themselves from the lawful society of believers, in adopting a peculiar ministry and a private administration of the sacraments?
  - ▶ The ancient monks, even though they dwelt apart from others, yet they had not a separate church.
  - ▶ By erecting a private altar for themselves, what else have present-day monks done but broken the bond of unity?
- ▶ *(Differences of ancient and monastic professio: New Testament widows and deaconesses were not nuns, 15-19) The degeneration of the conduct of monks*
  - ▶ I have spoken rather of monasticism than of monks, and noted not those faults which inhere in the life of a few, but those which cannot be separated from the order of living itself.
  - ▶ But what use would it be to explain in detail what a great discrepancy there is in their morals?
- ▶ *Considerations against ancient monasticism*
  - ▶ Our hooded friends falsely claim the example of the first church in defense of their profession.
  - ▶ Meanwhile, I frankly admit that even in that ancient form with Augustine commends there is something that I do not like very much.
- ▶ *Monastic vows, especially the vow of chastity*
  - ▶ Because it is their intention to establish a new and forged worship to merit God’s favor, I conclude that whatever they vow is abominable in God’s sight.
  - ▶ Because they invent any mode of life they please that this is a rash and therefore unlawful enterprise.
  - ▶ When they bind themselves to many acts of worship at once perverted and impious they are consecrated not to God but to an evil spirit.
- ▶ *The case of the widows in I Tim. 5:12*
  - ▶ I by no means deny that the widows who pledged themselves and their services to the church took upon themselves the state of perpetual celibacy.
  - ▶ But they did so not because they regarded it as something religious of itself but because they could not carry on their function without being their own masters and free of the marriage yoke.
  - ▶ I deny that they bound themselves at all to celibacy except in so far as the necessity of their calling demanded.
  - ▶ Paul set an age which is commonly beyond danger, especially when he ordered that only those be chosen who, content with one marriage, had already given an example of continence.

- ▶ We disapprove of the vow of celibacy for no other reason than that it is wrongly considered as service of God and is rashly made by those to whom the power of continence has not been given.
- ▶ *Nuns are very different*
  - ▶ But how is it lawful to apply this passage of Paul to nuns?
  - ▶ Deaconesses were created not to appease God with songs or unintelligible mumbling.
  - ▶ They were not to live the rest of their time in idleness, but to discharge the public ministry of the church toward the poor and to strive with all zeal, constancy, and diligence in the task of love.
- ▶ *(Unlawful and superstitious vows are not binding, 20-21) Are inadmissible vows binding?*
  - ▶ All unlawful or improperly conceived vows, as they are of no value before God, should be invalid for us.
  - ▶ Assuming that a Christian man is allowed to undertake nothing without this certainty, if men have undertaken anything rashly through the fault of ignorance, why should they not desist from it when once freed of error?
  - ▶ Those vows which arise from error and superstition are of no value before God and must also be abandoned by us.
- ▶ *On the breaking of monastic vows*
  - ▶ Granted that they were bound while they were entangled in ignorance of God and in error.
  - ▶ But now, after they have been illumined by the knowledge of truth, they are free by the grace of Christ.
  - ▶ If an impossible vow is sure destruction of the soul which God wills to be saved and not lost, it follows that one must not continue in it.
- ▶ **The Sacraments (Chapter XIV)**
  - ▶ *(The word "sacrament" explained: sacraments are signs of God's covenants, 1-6) Definitio*
    - ▶ We have in the sacraments another aid to our faith related to the preaching of the Gospel.
    - ▶ It is an outward sign by which the Lord seals on our consciences the promises of his good will toward us in order to sustain the weakness of our faith.
    - ▶ It is a testimony of divine grace toward us, confirmed by an outward sign, with mutual attestation of our piety toward him.
  - ▶ *The word "sacrament"*
    - ▶ It is sufficiently known that what the latins call "sacraments" the Greeks call "mysteries".
    - ▶ From this it came to be applied to those signs which reverently represented sublime and spiritual things.
  - ▶ *Word and sign*
    - ▶ A sacrament is never without a preceding promise is joined to it as a sort of appendix.
    - ▶ By this means God provides first for our ignorance and dullness, then for our weakness.
    - ▶ Our faith is slight and feeble unless it be propped on all sides and sustained by every means.
    - ▶ The Lord so tempers himself to our capacity that, since we are creatures who always creep on the ground, cleave to the flesh, and do not think about or even conceive of anything spiritual.

- ▶ He condescends to lead us to himself even by these earthly elements, and to set before us in the flesh a mirror of spiritual blessings.
- ▶ *The word must explain the sign*
  - ▶ They spoke everything in Latin among unlearned men.
  - ▶ Superstition came to the point that they believed consecration duly performed only in a hoarse whisper which few could hear.
  - ▶ The sacrament requires preaching to beget faith.
  - ▶ God gave a sign to the holy patriarchs it was inseparably linked to doctrine, without which our senses would have been stunned in looking at the bare sign.
- ▶ *The sacraments as seals*
  - ▶ The seals which are attached to government documents and other public acts are nothing taken by themselves, for they would be attached in vain if the parchment had nothing written on it.
  - ▶ Yet, when added to the writing, they do not on that account fail to confirm and seal what is written.
  - ▶ The sacraments have this characteristic over and above the word because they represent them for us as painted in a picture from life.
- ▶ *The sacraments as signs of a covenant*
  - ▶ Yet when words precede, the laws of covenants are by such signs ratified, although they were first conceived, established, and decreed in words.
  - ▶ The sacraments, therefore, are exercises which make us more certain of the trustworthiness of God's Word.
  - ▶ We might call them mirrors in which we may contemplate the riches of God's grace.
- ▶ *(They confirm faith, not of themselves, but as agencies of the Holy Spirit and in association with the Word: and they are distinguishing marks of our profession of faith before men, 7-13)*  
*The reception of the sacraments by the wicked is no evidence against their importance*
  - ▶ The wicked do not find God more favorable but rather incur a heavier condemnation.
  - ▶ It is understood only by those who take Word and sacraments with sure faith.
- ▶ *To what extent can we speak of a confirmation of faith through the sacraments?*
  - ▶ Faith is the proper and entire work of the Holy Spirit.
  - ▶ But for one blessing of God which they proclaim, we recognize three.
    - ▶ The Lord teaches and instructs us by his Word.
    - ▶ Secondly, he confirms it by the sacraments.
    - ▶ Finally, he illumines our minds by the light of His Holy Spirit and opens our hearts for the Word and sacraments to enter in, which would otherwise only strike our ears and appear before our eyes, but not at all affect us within.
- ▶ *The Holy Spirit in the sacraments*
  - ▶ The sacraments properly fulfill their office only when the Spirit, that inward teacher, comes to them, by whose power alone hearts are penetrated and affections moved.
  - ▶ If the Spirit be lacking, the sacraments can accomplish nothing.
- ▶ *Illustration from human persuasion*

- ▶ If we ascribe to creatures either the increase or the confirmation of faith, injustice is done to the Spirit of God, who should be recognized as its sole author.
- ▶ We assert that what increases and confirms faith is precisely the preparation of our minds by his inward illumination to receive the confirmation extended by the sacraments.
- ▶ The Spirit works that the Word may not beat your ears in vain, and that the sacraments may not strike your eyes in vain.
- ▶ The Spirit shows us that in them it is God speaking to us, softening the stubbornness of our heart, and composing it to that obedience which it owes the Word of the Lord.
- ▶ The Spirit transmits those outward words and sacraments from our ears to our soul.
- ▶ *Word and sacrament work equally in the confirming of our faith*
  - ▶ The Word of God, if it falls upon any stiff-necked person, will become as barren as if it were cast upon sand.
  - ▶ If it lights upon a soul cultivated by the hand of the Heavenly Spirit, it will be most fruitful.
- ▶ *Sacramental elements have value only as God's instruments*
  - ▶ God uses means and instruments which he himself sees to be expedient, that all things may serve his glory.
  - ▶ In like manner, he nourishes faith spiritually through the sacraments, whose one function is to set his promises before our eyes to be looked upon.
  - ▶ It is our duty to put no confidence in other creatures.
  - ▶ These have been destined for our use by God's generosity and beneficence.
  - ▶ Through these, he lavishes the gifts of his bounty upon us, though we are not to admire them as the causes of our good.
- ▶ *The word sacramentum*
  - ▶ Some say it signifies the solemn oath that the soldier took to the commander when he entered military service.
  - ▶ Yet it is abundantly clear that the ancients applied the name had given no attention to the use of this word by Latin writers, but that they invented this new meaning for their own convenience.
  - ▶ The ancients had no other intention than to signify that they are signs of holy and spiritual things.
- ▶ *(They do not of themselves impart grace, but, like the Word, hold forth Christ, 14-17) The error of a magical conception of the sacraments*
  - ▶ As some weaken the force of the sacraments, there are those who err on the opposite side, attaching to the sacraments some sort of secret powers with which one nowhere reads that God has endowed them.
  - ▶ Promising a righteousness apart from faith, it hurls souls headlong to destruction.
  - ▶ It draws the cause of righteousness from the sacraments.
  - ▶ It binds men's pitiable minds in this superstition, so that they repose in the appearance of a physical thing rather than in God himself.
- ▶ *Matter and sign to be distinguished*
  - ▶ A distinction has been noted by Augustine, between a sacrament and the matter of the sacrament.

- ▶ The distinction signifies not only that the figure and the truth are contained in the sacrament, but that they are not so linked that they cannot be separated.
- ▶ *The sacraments have significance for us in faith in Christ*
  - ▶ Christ is the matter or the substance of all the sacraments.
  - ▶ For in him they have all their firmness, and they do not promise anything apart from him.
  - ▶ The sacraments have effectiveness among us in proportion as we are helped by their ministry sometimes to foster, confirm, and increase the true true knowledge of Christ in ourselves.
  - ▶ Augustine has shown in the above passages that the sacrament is a worthless thing if it be separated from its truth.
- ▶ *True office of the sacraments*
  - ▶ The sacraments have the same office as the Word of God: to offer and set forth Christ to us, and in him the treasures of heavenly grace.
  - ▶ They avail and profit nothing unless received in faith.
  - ▶ The sacraments are for us the same thing from God, as messengers of glad tidings or guarantees of the ratification of covenants are from men.
- ▶ *(Wide application of the term to Scriptural incidents and its restriction to the ordinary sacraments of the church, 18-20) Sacraments in the wider sense*
  - ▶ “Sacrament” embraces generally all those signs which God has ever enjoined upon men to render them more certain and confident of the truth of his promises.
  - ▶ He sometimes willed to present these in natural things, at other times set them forth in miracles.
- ▶ *Ordinary sacraments of the church*
  - ▶ Sacraments are ceremonies by which God wills to exercise his people, first, to foster, arouse and confirm faith within.
  - ▶ Then, they attest religion before men.
- ▶ *Christ promised in the Old Testament sacraments*
  - ▶ The ancient sacraments (e.g., circumcision, sacrifices, purifications) looked to the same purpose to which ours now tend.
  - ▶ They direct and almost lead men by the hand to Christ, or rather, as images, to represent him and show him forth to be known.
  - ▶ There is only one difference: the former foreshadowed Christ promised while he was yet awaited; the latter attest him as already given and revealed.
- ▶ *(Sacraments of the Old Testament closely related to those of the New as foreshadowing the full manifestation of Christ, 21-26) Circumcision, purifications, sacrifices, point to Christ*
  - ▶ Circumcision was the symbol by which they were admonished that whatever comes forth from man’s seed, that is, the whole nature of mankind, is corrupt and needs pruning.
  - ▶ Baptisms and purifications disclose to them their own uncleanness, foulness, and pollution.
  - ▶ Sacrifices made them aware of their unrighteousness, and at the same time, taught them that some satisfaction must be paid to God’s justice.
- ▶ *Christ more fully expressed in the Christian sacraments*

- ▶ The more fully Christ has been revealed to men, the more clearly do the sacraments present him to us.
- ▶ Baptism attests to us that we have been cleansed and washed.
- ▶ The Eucharistic Supper, that we have been redeemed.
- ▶ *Similarity and dissimilarity of the old and new sacraments*
  - ▶ We must utterly reject the Scholastic dogma which notes such a great difference between the sacraments of the old and new law.
  - ▶ Paul, that we might not boast falsely, makes them equal to us in sacraments.
- ▶ *Paul's teaching on the value of circumcision*
  - ▶ Paul [Rom 2:29] says that circumcision has no place with God, confers nothing, and is empty.
    - ▶ This does not mean that he presses circumcision beneath baptism.
    - ▶ He is showing that God cares nothing at all about the outward washing with which we are initiated into religion, unless the heart also be inwardly cleansed and persevere in purity to the end.
  - ▶ In Col. 2:11-12 Paul seems to completely despise the circumcision made by hands.
    - ▶ Its dignity is not by this reduced.
    - ▶ There Paul is disputing against those who require it as necessary although it has already been abolished.
- ▶ *New Testament disparagement of Jewish ceremonies explained*
  - ▶ Paul does not make the ceremonies shadowe because they have no reality, but because their fulfillment had been, so to speak, held in suspense until the appearance of Christ.
  - ▶ All the pomp of ceremonies which was in the law of Moses, unless it be directed to Christ, is a fleeting and worthless thing.
  - ▶ They looked to Christ in such a way that, when he was at length revealed in the flesh, they had their fulfillment.
  - ▶ It was fitting that they should be abrogated by his coming, just as shadows vanish in the clear light of the sun.
- ▶ *Similarity and difference: Augustine's distinctions*
  - ▶ They drank, as a great sacrament, water flowing from the rock.
  - ▶ If you look at the visible appearance, they drank something different; if you look at the inner signification, they drank the same spiritual drink.
- ▶ **Baptism (Chapter XV)**
  - ▶ *(Baptism a sign of our forgiveness, of our participation in Christ's death and resurrection and also in his blessings, 1-6) The meaning of baptism*
    - ▶ It is the sign of the initiation by which we are received into the society of the church in order that, engrafted in Christ we may be considered one of God's children.
      - ▶ It is to serve our faith before him.
      - ▶ It also serves as a confession before men.
    - ▶ Baptism brings three things to our faith.
      - ▶ It is a proof of our cleansing.

- ▶ It is like a sealed document to confirm to us that all our sins are so remitted that they can never come to his sight, be charged against us.
- ▶ Those who regard baptism as nothing but a token and mark by which we confess our religion before men, as soldiers bear the insignia of their commander as a mark of their profession [Zwingli?], have not weighed what was the chief point of baptism.
- ▶ It is to receive baptism with the promise that whoever believes and is baptized will be saved.
- ▶ *Its virtue not in water without the Word*
  - ▶ Our cleansing and salvation are not accomplished by water.
    - ▶ Neither does water contain within itself the power to cleanse, regenerate, or renew.
    - ▶ It is not the cause of salvation, but in this sacrament we receive the knowledge and certainty of such gifts.
  - ▶ Baptism promises us no other purification than through the sprinkling of Christ's blood.
  - ▶ The meaning of baptism draws us away, not only from the visible element which meets our eyes, but from all other means, that it may fasten our minds upon Christ alone.
- ▶ *Token of cleansing for the whole life!*
  - ▶ We are not to think that baptism was conferred upon us only for past time, so that newly committed sins must need new remedies of expiation in some other sacrament.
  - ▶ At whatever time we are baptized, we are once for all washed and purged for our whole life.
  - ▶ Therefore, as often as we fall away, we ought to recall the memory of our baptism and fortify our mind with it, that we may always be sure and confident of the forgiveness of sins.
- ▶ *True relation of baptism and repentance*
  - ▶ They err who believe that the power of the keys depends upon baptism and should not be severed from it.
  - ▶ The sinner receives forgiveness by the ministry of the church, that is, not without the preaching of the gospel.
    - ▶ But what is the nature of this preaching?
    - ▶ That we have been cleansed of our sins by Christ's blood.
  - ▶ The error of separating baptism and repentance has led to the fictitious sacrament of penance.
  - ▶ Pious folk, whenever they are troubled by a consciousness of their faults, may remind themselves of their baptism, that from it they may be confirmed in assurance of that sole and perpetual cleansing which we have in Christ's blood.
- ▶ *Baptism as token of mortification and renewal in Christ*
  - ▶ We have been baptized into his death, and raised to newness of life in him.
  - ▶ Thus, the free pardon of sins and the imputation of righteousness are first promised us, and then the grace of the Holy Spirit to reform us to newness of life.
- ▶ *Baptism as token of our union with Christ*
  - ▶ Our faith receives from baptism the advantage of its sure testimony to us that we are not only engrafted into the death and life of Christ.
  - ▶ We are so united to Christ himself that we become sharers in all his blessings.

- ▶ We obtain regeneration by Christ's death and resurrection only if we are sanctified by the Spirit and imbued with a new and spiritual nature.
- ▶ For this reason we discern that the Father is the cause, the Son is the matter, and the Spirit is the effect of our purgation and regeneration.
- ▶ *(The baptism of John not different from that of the apostles: its meaning symbolized to the Israelites in the exodus, 7-9) John's baptism and Christian baptism*
  - ▶ John's ministry was exactly the same as that afterward committed to the apostles.
    - ▶ The same doctrine is present.
    - ▶ Both baptized to repentance, both to forgiveness of sins, both into the name of Christ.
  - ▶ Let no one be troubled to attempt of ancient writers to differentiate the one thing from the other.
- ▶ *Disparity in personality, not in baptism*
  - ▶ John states that he baptizes with water but that Christ would come to baptize with the Holy Spirit and with fire.
    - ▶ He did not mean to distinguish one sort of baptism from another, but he compared his person with that of Christ.
      - ▶ He was a minister of water, but Christ was the giver of the Holy Spirit.
      - ▶ This power was declared by a visible miracle on the day when he would send the Holy Spirit to the apostles under tongues of fire.
    - ▶ Apostles are only ministers of the outward sign, but Christ is the author of inward grace.
- ▶ *Prototype of baptism in the Old Covenant*
  - ▶ Baptism was foreshadowed in the people of Israel who were said to have been "baptized in the cloud and in the sea." [I Cor. 10:2]
    - ▶ The Lord, rescuing his people from the domination and cruel bondage of Pharaoh, made a way for them through the Red Sea.
    - ▶ In the same way, he also promises us baptism and shows us by a sign given that by his power we have been led out and delivered from bondage.
  - ▶ The Lord covered his people in a cloud and gave them coolness, that they might not waken and pine away in the merciless heat of the sun.
  - ▶ Likewise, we recognize that in baptism we are covered and protected by Christ's blood, that God's severity which is truly an unbearable flame, should not assail us.
- ▶ *(We are not by the rite of baptism set free from original sin, but by it we make confession of faith before men, 10-13) Baptism, original sin, and new righteousness*
  - ▶ It is a false teaching that through baptism we are released and made exempt from original sin.
  - ▶ Even infants bear their condemnation with them from their mother's womb.
  - ▶ For, though they have not yet brought forth the fruits of their own iniquity, they have the seed enclosed within themselves.
  - ▶ Rather, through baptism, believers are assured that this condemnation has been removed and withdrawn from them.
  - ▶ Both the guilt and punishment have been removed.
- ▶ *We must strive to overcome persistent sin*

- ▶ The perversity of sin never ceases in us; traces of sin will always dwell in us.
- ▶ Lust never actually dies and is extinguished in men only once freed from the body of death.
- ▶ We do not speak thus not to encourage sinners to be untroubled by their sin, but only that those who are disturbed and pricked by their own flesh should not faint and be discouraged.
- ▶ *Paul's inner struggle [Rom., ch. 7]*
  - ▶ He knew that there is always some weakness in believers.
  - ▶ To prevent their being discouraged, he adds the consolation that they are not under the law.
  - ▶ We have been freed from the rigor of the law that we may cleave to Christ.
    - ▶ The function of the law is that, convicted of our depravity, we may confess our weakness and misery.
    - ▶ There is perpetual conflict with the vestiges of his flesh.
- ▶ *Baptism as token of confession*
  - ▶ Baptism serves as a confession before men wherein we publicly profess that we wish to be reckoned God's people.
  - ▶ not only do our hearts breathe the praise of God, but our tongues also, and all the members of our body resound his praise in every way they can.
- ▶ *(Baptism to be received with trust in the promise of which it is a sign, and not repeated, 14-18)*  
*Sign and thing*
  - ▶ Inasmuch as it is given for the arousing, nourishing, and confirming of our faith, it is to be received as from the hand of the Author himself.
  - ▶ We ought to deem it certain that it is he who speaks to us through the sign.
  - ▶ We "put on Christ."
  - ▶ These things he performs for our soul within as truly and surely as we see our body outwardly cleansed, submerged and surrounded with water.
  - ▶ The Lord was pleased to represent these things by such figures.
    - ▶ Not because such graces are bound and enclosed in the sacrament so as to be conferred upon us by its power, but only because the Lord by this token attests his will toward us.
    - ▶ And he does not feed our eyes with a mere appearance only, but leads us to the present reality and effectively performs what it symbolizes.
- ▶ *Baptism as confirming faith*
  - ▶ Baptism is not an ampler forgiveness of sins, but a surer exercise of faith.
    - ▶ It is an increase of assurance from a pledge.
    - ▶ We are said to receive, obtain, and acquire what, according as our faith is aware, is shown forth to us by the Lord, whether when he first testifies to it, or when he confirms more fully and more surely what has been attested.
  - ▶ From this sacrament we obtain only as much as we receive in faith.
  - ▶ If we lack faith, this will be evidence of our ungratefulness, which renders us chargeable before God, because we have not believed the promises given there.
- ▶ *Baptism does not depend upon the merit of him who administers it*
  - ▶ A sacrament must not be judged by the hand of the one by whom it is ministered, but as it were from the very hand of God.

- ▶ In this the Donatists erred.
- ▶ Rebaptism is a folly, since we do not think of ourselves as initiated by baptism into the name of some man, but into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- ▶ *Baptism not invalidated by the delay of repentance*
  - ▶ We indeed, being blind and unbelieving, for a long time did not grasp the promise that had been given us in baptism.
    - ▶ Yet that promise, since it was of God, ever remained fixed and firm and trustworthy.
    - ▶ Even if all men are liars and faithless, still God does not cease to be trustworthy.
  - ▶ The Jews may have violated the covenant, yet the symbol of that covenant remained ever firm and inviolable by virtue of the Lord's institution.
- ▶ *Paul did not rebaptize*
  - ▶ I prefer to understand it simply: the baptism of the Holy Spirit is the visible graces of the Spirit.
  - ▶ Given through the laying on of hands.
- ▶ *(Objections to ceremonial accretions and to baptism by women, 19-21) erroneous and correct baptismal usage*
  - ▶ A benediction or incantation was devised to defile the true consecration of the water.
  - ▶ Afterward a candle was added, with the chrism.
  - ▶ Though I am aware how ancient the origin of this alien hodgepodge is, I still have the right to reject whatever men have dared to add to Christ's institution.
  - ▶ How much better it would be to omit all theatrical pomp, which dazzles the eyes of the simple and deadens their minds.
    - ▶ Whenever anyone is to be baptized, they should be presented to the assembly of believers.
    - ▶ The whole church should be there to look on as a witness, and they should pray over the person to offer him to God.
    - ▶ All should recite the confession of faith which the catechumen should be instructed.
    - ▶ The promises of baptism should be recounted.
  - ▶ The method of baptism is unimportant.
  - ▶ Yet the word means to immerse, and that was the practice of the ancient church.
- ▶ *Against "emergency" baptism*
  - ▶ It is wrong for private individuals to assume the administration of baptism.
  - ▶ This has been a practice for many ages.
  - ▶ Yet God declares that he adopts our babies as his own before they are born, when he promises that he will be our God and the God of our descendants after us.
  - ▶ Few realize how much injury the dogma that baptism is necessary for salvation, badly expounded, has entailed.
- ▶ *Women not permitted to baptize*
  - ▶ This corrupt practice is inexcusable under any pretext.
  - ▶ This is entirely in error and an abomination.
- ▶ *Zipporah's circumcision of her son no precedent for baptism by women*

- ▶ This was something unusual which ought not to be taken as an example.
- ▶ The case of circumcision is different from that of baptism.
- ▶ Christ's words are that the same men to be both heralds of the gospel and ministers of baptism.
- ▶ This principle will easily settle the controversy: infants are not barred from the Kingdom just because they happen to depart the present life before they have been immersed in water.
- ▶ Yet we see what injustice is done to God's covenant if we do not assent to it.
- ▶ We should seek the sacraments from those only to whom the Lord has committed them.
- ▶ **Infant Baptism Best Accords with Christ's Institution and the Nature of the Sign (Chapter XVI)**
  - ▶ *(Infant baptism, considered in relation to what it typifies, corresponds to circumcision and is authorized in the covenant with Abraham, 1-6) The attack on infant baptism*
    - ▶ Frantic spirits have grievously disturbed the church over infant baptism.
    - ▶ They attack infant baptism with an argument seemingly quite plausible, by boasting that it is not founded upon any institution of God.
    - ▶ When the matter is rightly weighed, it is evident that their charge is falsely and unjustly brought against the Lord's holy ordinance.
  - ▶ *The meaning of baptism determined*
    - ▶ One should not focus upon the element and physical appearance, but upon God's promises which are there offered to us, and to the inner mysteries which are represented in it.
    - ▶ Scripture declares that baptism first points us to the cleansing of our sins, which we obtain from Christ's blood.
    - ▶ Then it points us to the mortification of our flesh, which rests upon participation in his death, through which believers are reborn into newness of life.
  - ▶ *Baptism and circumcision*
    - ▶ Before baptism was instituted God's people had circumcision instead.
    - ▶ We will show that there is an anagogic relationship.
    - ▶ We have a spiritual promise given to the patriarchs in circumcision such as is given us in baptism, since it represented for them forgiveness of sins and mortification of flesh.
    - ▶ We have taught tht Christ is the foundation of baptism, so it is also evident that he is the foundation of circumcision.
  - ▶ *The difference is in externals only*
    - ▶ God's fatherly favor, forgiveness of sins, and eternal life are the promises of both.
    - ▶ What dissimilarity remains lies in the outward ceremony, which is a very slight factor.
    - ▶ We conclude that whatever belongs to circumcision pertains likewise to baptism.
    - ▶ It appears incontrovertible that baptism has taken the place of circumcision to fulfill the same office among us.
  - ▶ *Infants are participants in the covenant*
    - ▶ If the covenant still remains firm and steadfast, it applies no less today to the children of Christians than under the Old Testament it pertained to the Jews.
    - ▶ Yet if they are participants in the thing signified, why shall they be debarred from the sign?
    - ▶ Why shall the sign, which is an appendix of the word, be denied to them?

- ▶ *Difference in the mode of confirmation only*
  - ▶ It is most evident that the covenant which the Lord once made with Abraham is no less in force today than it was of old for the Jewish people.
  - ▶ The children of Christians are considered holy and are to be considered different from the unclean seed of idolators.
  - ▶ The covenant is common, and the reason for confirming it is common.
- ▶ *(Christ invited and blessed little children: we should not exclude them from the sign, and the benefit, of baptism, 7-9) Jesus and the children*
  - ▶ Jesus showed that he came to enlarge rather than to limit the Father's mercy.
    - ▶ He tenderly embraces the infants offered to him, chiding his disciples for trying to deny them access to him.
    - ▶ He said that they were leading away those to whom the Kingdom of Heaven belonged.
  - ▶ If it is right for infants to be brought to Christ, why not also to be received into baptism, the symbol of our communion and fellowship with Christ?
  - ▶ It is unjust to drive away those whom Christ calls to himself.
- ▶ *The silence of Scripture on the practice of infant baptism*
  - ▶ Their silly objection is not plausible that there is no evidence for infant baptism among the apostles.
  - ▶ Because infants are not excluded when mention is made of a family's being baptized, who in his senses can reason from this that they were not baptized?
  - ▶ When we pay attention to the purpose for which it was instituted, we clearly see that it is just as appropriate to infants as to older persons.
  - ▶ There is no writer, however ancient, who does not regard its origin in the apostolic age as a certainty.
- ▶ *The blessing of infant baptism*
  - ▶ God's sign, communicated to a child confirms the promise given to the pious parent, and declares it to be ratified that the Lord will be God not only to him but to his seed.
  - ▶ God's boundless generosity shows itself by giving men occasion to proclaim his glory.
    - ▶ He then floods godly hearts with uncommon happiness.
    - ▶ Which quickens men to a deeper love of their kind Father as they see his concern on thier behalf for their posterity.
  - ▶ Those who embrace the promise that God's mercy is to be extended to their children deem it their duty to offer them to the church to be sealed by the symbol of mercy.
  - ▶ They thereby arouse themselves to a surer confidence, because they see with their very eyes the covenant of the Lord engraved upon the bodies of their children.
  - ▶ Being engrafted into the body of the church, they are somewhat more commended to the other members.
- ▶ *(Answer to the Anabaptist argument that baptism is not to be associated with circumcision, 10-16) Differences falsely alleged*
  - ▶ They say that these two signify different things, that the covenant in each is quite different, and the calling of children under each not the same.

- ▶ In asserting a difference between the covenants, with what barbarous boldness do they dissipate and corrupt Scripture!
  - ▶ They depict the Jews as beasts.
  - ▶ They ascribe to them a covenant which pertains only to the temporal life and physical benefits.
- ▶ *The promises were spiritual*
  - ▶ Paul says that we were circumcised in Christ not by a circumcision made with hands, when we laid aside the body of sin which dwelt in our flesh.
    - ▶ He calls this the circumcision of Christ. [Col. 2:11]
    - ▶ He adds that in baptism we were buried with Christ.
  - ▶ Thus, the fulfillment and truth of baptism are also the truth and fulfillment of circumcision, since they signify one and the same thing.
  - ▶ A sign is not merely earthly and literal when it represents nothing but what is spiritual and heavenly.
- ▶ *Physical and spiritual infancy*
  - ▶ Those who had their origin from his seed were called the children of Abraham under the Old Testament.
  - ▶ Those who imitate his faith are called by this name.
  - ▶ Indeed, we admit that the carnal seed of Abraham for a time held the place of the spiritual seed which is engrafted in him through faith.
  - ▶ We are called his children, although we have no blood relationship with him by nature.
- ▶ *Abraham was father of all who believe*
  - ▶ To prove that the Gentiles as well as the Jews were the children of Abraham, the apostle speaks in this way:
    - ▶ Abraham, he says, was in uncircumcision, the seal of the righteousness of faith, that he might be the father of all believers, both of uncircumcision and of circumcision, not of those who boast of circumcision alone.
- ▶ *Covenant with the Jews not made void*
  - ▶ There is no reason for the Jews to preen themselves and boast in the name of the covenant unless they keep the law of the covenant, that is, obey the Word.
  - ▶ Nevertheless, Paul still saw, on the other hand, that the covenant which God had made once for all with the descendants of Abraham could in no way be made void.
- ▶ *The promise to be fulfilled not allegorically but literally*
  - ▶ As Paul argues in that passage that the Jews are sanctified by their parents, so he teaches elsewhere that the children of Christians receive the same sanctification from their parents [I Cor. 7:14].
  - ▶ After Christ's resurrection also, he thinks that the promise of the covenant is to be fulfilled, not only allegory but literally.
- ▶ *Further apparent differences between baptism and circumcision*
  - ▶ The difference that they try to thrust between baptism and circumcision are not ridiculous and devoid of all semblance of reason but mutually contradictory.

- ▶ Therefore, setting aside these absurdities of theirs, let us cling to the resemblance between baptism and circumcision, which we see most completely in accord with respect to the inner mystery, the promises, the use, and the efficacy.
- ▶ *(Answer to the argument that infants are incapable of faith, 17-20) Children should also have life in Christ*
  - ▶ Our opponents therefore conclude that children are to be considered solely as children of Adam until they reach an appropriate age for the second birth.  
On the contrary, Christ commands that they be brought to him [Matt. 19:14].
  - ▶ Let us not attempt, then, to impose a law upon God to keep him from sanctifying whom he pleases.
- ▶ *Argument from the infancy of Christ*
  - ▶ Christ was sanctified from earliest infancy in order that he might sanctify in himself his elect from every age without distinction.
  - ▶ We consider it incontrovertible that no one of the elect is called from the present life before sanctified and regenerated by the Spirit of God.
- ▶ *Objection: infants cannot understand preaching*
  - ▶ These men do not perceive that when the apostle makes hearing the beginning of faith he is describing only the ordinary arrangement and dispensation of the Lord which he commonly uses in calling his people.
  - ▶ He has certainly used such another way in calling many, giving them true knowledge of himself by inward means.
    - ▶ That is, by the illumination of the Spirit.
    - ▶ And may occur apart from the medium of preaching.
  - ▶ I ask, what the danger is if infants be said to receive now some part of that grace which in a little while they shall enjoy to the full?
- ▶ *Objection: infants are capable neither of repentance nor of faith*
  - ▶ They add that baptism is a sacrament of repentance and of faith.
  - ▶ And since neither of these can come about in tender infancy, they refuse infants the fellowship of baptism.
  - ▶ For although infants, at the very moment they were circumcised, did not comprehend with their understanding what that sign meant, they were truly circumcised to the mortification of their corrupt nature.
  - ▶ This objection can be solved without difficulty: infants are baptized into future repentance and faith.
  - ▶ And even though these have not yet been formed in them, the seed of both lies hidden within them by the secret working of the Spirit.
- ▶ *(Operation of the Spirit in baptized children, 21-22) The child grows into an understanding of his baptism*
  - ▶ If those whom the Lord has deigned to elect received the sign of regeneration but depart from the present life before they grow up, he renews them by the power of his Spirit.

- ▶ If they happen to grow to an age at which they can be taught the truth of baptism, they shall be fired with greater zeal for renewal, from learning that they were given the token of it in their first infancy.
- ▶ But they repeatedly go wrong through their deluded notion that the thing ought always to precede the sign in order of time.
- ▶ *This thing is a comfort for children; hence, they must not be deprived of the sign*
  - ▶ Since we are born sinners, we need forgiveness and pardon even from the time in our mother's womb.
  - ▶ God does not cut off from childhood the hope of mercy, why should we take away the sign, much inferior to the thing itself?
- ▶ *(Infant baptism in the beginning of the church, 23-24) Scriptural statements which refer to adults should not without further evidence be applied to children*
  - ▶ They come to the practice and custom of the apostolic age, where they find that no one was admitted to baptism who had not previously professed his faith and repentance.
  - ▶ We firmly deny that such ought to be baptized unless their conversion and faith have been observed.
  - ▶ But it is perfectly clear that infants ought to be put in another category.
- ▶ *Abraham and Isaac exemplify the difference of adults and infants*
  - ▶ The Lord, when he adopts Abraham, does not begin with circumcision.
  - ▶ But in Isaac, his son, the sacrament precede all understanding?
- ▶ *(Certain passages adduced against infant baptism interpreted: those who die unbaptized not all condemned, 25-30)*
  - ▶ They bring forward the words of Christ: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God" [John 3:5].
  - ▶ They are deceived in thinking that because they hear the word "water," baptism is mentioned in this passage.
  - ▶ I therefore simply understand "water and Spirit" as "Spirit, who is water."
- ▶ *Not all the unbaptized are lost*
  - ▶ We must utterly reject the fiction of those who consign all the unbaptized to eternal death.
  - ▶ Baptism is not so necessary that one from whom the capacity to obtain it has been taken away should straightway be counted as lost.
- ▶ *Jesus' baptismal words*
  - ▶ Christ, in sending the apostles to all nations, first gives a command to teach them, then a second one to baptize them [Matt. 28:19]
  - ▶ It is more than a child's mistake to derive the first institution of baptism from those instances, which from the beginning of his preaching Christ had commanded his disciples to administer.
- ▶ *Infants not referred to in Mark 16:16*
  - ▶ Christ sends the apostles to preach the gospel to all the nations of the earth.
  - ▶ That they may by the teaching of salvation gather into his Kingdom from all places men previously lost.
- ▶ *Jesus as prototype of adult baptism*

- ▶ Christ was not baptized before his thirteenth year [Luke 3:23; Matt. 3:13] because he determined by his preaching to lay a solid foundation for baptism.
- ▶ He intended his teaching to establish baptism.
- ▶ *Baptism and Lord's Supper*
  - ▶ Our opponents object that there is no more reason to administer baptism to infants than to the Lord's Supper.
  - ▶ However, Scripture marks a wide difference in every respect.
  - ▶ Distinction is clearly shown between the sacraments in Scripture.
- ▶ *(Answers to arguments of Servetus, and conclusion, 31-32) Servetus' objections*
  - ▶ Servetus claims that as the symbols instituted by Christ are perfect, they also require perfect persons.
  - ▶ The answer is easy: it is foolish to seek in man on the first day that perfection to which baptism invites us.
- ▶ *Gratitude due for God's care of our children*
  - ▶ How sweet it is to the godly that they obtain so much favor from their Heavenly Father that their offspring are within his care.
  - ▶ here we can see how he takes on toward us the role of the most provident Father.
- ▶ **The Sacred Supper of Christ, and What it Brings to Us (Chapter XVII)**
  - ▶ *(The Lord's Supper, with the signs of bread and wine, provides spiritual food, 1-3) Sign and thing*
    - ▶ God has received us, once for all, into his family, to hold us not only as servants but as sons.
    - ▶ He undertakes to nourish us throughout the course of our life.
    - ▶ Now Christ is the only food of our soul, and therefore our Heavenly Father invites us to Christ.
    - ▶ This mystery of Christ's secret union with the devout is by nature incomprehensible.
    - ▶ Just as bread and wine sustain physical life, so our souls are fed by Christ.
  - ▶ *Union with Christ as the special fruit of the Lord's Supper*
    - ▶ In this sacrament we have a witness of our growth into one body with Christ such that whatever is his may be called ours.
    - ▶ As a consequence, we may dare assure ourselves that eternal life, of which he is the heir, is ours.
  - ▶ *The spiritual presence of Christ*
    - ▶ We have such full witness of all these things that we must certainly consider them as if Christ here present were himself set before our eyes and touched by our hands.
    - ▶ When we see wine set forth as a symbol of blood, we must reflect on the benefits which wine imparts to the body, and so realize that the same are spiritually imparted to us by Christ's blood.
  - ▶ *(The promise sealed in the Supper as we are made partakers of Christ's flesh--a mystery felt rather than explained, 4-7) The meaning of the promise of the Lord's Supper*
    - ▶ It is to seal and confirm that promise by which he testifies that his flesh is food indeed and his blood is drink which feed us unto eternal life.

- ▶ The Sacrament sends us to the cross of Christ, where that promise was indeed performed and in all respects fulfilled.
- ▶ *How we are partakers by faith*
  - ▶ He offers himself with all his benefits to us, and we receive him by faith.
  - ▶ The Sacrament does not cause Christ to begin to be the bread of life, which we continually eat, and which gives us a relish and savor of that bread, it causes us to feel the power of that bread.
  - ▶ There are some who define the eating of Christ's flesh and the drinking of his blood as nothing but to believe in Christ.
  - ▶ But it seems to me that Christ meant to teach something more definite, and more elevated, in that noble discourse in which he commends to us the eating of his flesh.
  - ▶ We admit indeed, meanwhile, that this is no other eating than that of faith, as no other can be imagined.
  - ▶ But here is the difference between my words and theirs: for them to eat is only to believe.
    - ▶ For them to eat is only to believe.
    - ▶ I say that we eat Christ's flesh in believing.
- ▶ *Augustine and Chrysostom on this*
  - ▶ Augustine did not write that we eat by believing in any other sense than to show that this eating is of faith, not of the mouth.
  - ▶ Chrysostom writes the same thing: he means that such good is not obtained from any other source than faith.
    - ▶ He means that such good is not obtained from any other source than faith.
    - ▶ But he only wishes to exclude the possibility that anyone, when he hears faith mentioned, should conceive of it as mere imagining.
- ▶ *Thought and words inadequate*
  - ▶ I am not satisfied with those persons who, recognizing that we have some communion with Christ, when they would show what it is, make us partakers of the Spirit only, omitting mention of flesh and blood.
  - ▶ I urge my readers not to confine their mental interest within these too narrow limits, but to strive to rise much higher than I can lead them.
- ▶ *(This life-giving communion is brought about by the Holy Spirit, 8-10) Christ makes his abode in our flesh*
  - ▶ We are taught from the Scriptures that Christ was from the beginning that life-giving Word of the Father, the spring and source of life, from which all things have always received their capacity to live.
  - ▶ He also quickens our very flesh in which he abides, that by partaking of him we may be fed unto immortality.
- ▶ *Sense in which Christ's body is life-giving*
  - ▶ Since it is pervaded with fullness of life to be transmitted to us, it is rightly called "life-giving"
  - ▶ Communion of Christ's flesh and blood is necessary for all those who aspire to heavenly life.

- ▶ We understand that all these things could not be brought about otherwise than by his cleaving to us wholly in spirit and body.
- ▶ *The presence of Christ's body in the Lord's Supper*
  - ▶ Our souls are fed by the flesh and blood of Christ in the same way that bread and wine keep and sustain physical life.
  - ▶ Even though it seems unbelievable that Christ's flesh, separated from us by such great distance, penetrates to us, so that it becomes our food, let us remember how far the secret power of the Holy Spirit towers above all our senses.
  - ▶ What then, our mind does not comprehend, let faith conceive: that the Spirit truly unites things separated in space.
- ▶ *(Relation of the outward sign and invisible reality variously misstated by the Schoolmen, and in the doctrine of transubstantiation, 11-15) Signification, matter, and the effect of the Sacrament*
  - ▶ The sacred mystery of the Supper consists in two things:
    - ▶ Physical signs, which, thrust before our eyes, represent to us, according to our feeble capacity, things invisible.
    - ▶ And spiritual truth, which is at the same time represented and displayed through the symbols themselves.
  - ▶ In familiar terms:
    - ▶ Signification is contained in the promises.
    - ▶ I call Christ with his death and resurrection the matter, or substance.
    - ▶ By effect I understand redemption, righteousness, sanctification, and eternal life.
- ▶ *Spatial presence of Christ's body?*
  - ▶ We must not dream of such a presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the craftsmen of the Roman court have fashioned.
  - ▶ As if the body of Christ, by a local presence, were put there to be touched by the hands, to be chewed by the teeth, and to be swallowed by the mouth.
  - ▶ We do not doubt that Christ's body is limited by the general characteristics common to all human bodies, and is contained in heaven until Christ returns in judgment.
  - ▶ So we deem it utterly unlawful to draw it back under these corruptible elements or to imagine it to be present everywhere.
  - ▶ And there is no need for us to enjoy a participation in it, since the Lord bestows this benefit upon us through his Spirit.
- ▶ *Error of the Schoolmen: bread mistaken for God*
  - ▶ They grant that Christ is not there contained in any circumscriptive or bodily fashion.
  - ▶ But they then devise a mode which they neither understand themselves nor can explain to others.
  - ▶ It boils down to this: that Christ is to be sought in what they call "species of bread".
  - ▶ But whatever words they introduce to disguise it, this is the purpose of them all: through consecration, what was previously bread is made Christ, so that thereupon Christ lies hidden under the appearance of bread.
- ▶ *Transubstantiation*

- ▶ They therefore had to take refuge in the fiction that a conversion of the bread into the body takes place.
- ▶ Not that the body is properly made from the bread, but because Christ, to hide himself under the figure, annihilates its substance.
- ▶ They lack the support of antiquity.
- ▶ Transubstantiation was devised recently.
- ▶ *The actual basis of the doctrine of transubstantiation and the arguments adduced for it*
  - ▶ The cause of such crude imagination was that among them consecration was virtually equivalent to magic incantation.
  - ▶ Since it is God's plan to lift us to himself, by appropriate means, those who call us indeed to Christ, but to Christ hidden invisibly under bread, wickedly frustrate his plan by their obstinacy.
- ▶ *(Arguments for rejection of the doctrine of the ubiquity of the body as narrowly literal, together with exposition of the spiritual view of communion with Christ in heaven, 16-31) The opposing statement*
  - ▶ Others, who see that if the analogy of sign and thing signified is swept away, the truth of the mystery will fall, confess that the bread of the Supper is truly the substance of an earthly and corruptible element, and suffers no change in itself, but holds the body of Christ enclosed underneath itself.
  - ▶ They cannot bear to conceive any other partaking of flesh and blood except that which consists in either local conjunction and contact or some gross form of enclosing.
- ▶ *The doctrine of our opponents cancels the true corporeality of Christ*
  - ▶ What sort of body did Christ give to the disciples the day before he suffered?
  - ▶ Do not the words testify that he gave them that very mortal body which a little later was to be given up?
  - ▶ They will not find a twofold body there, but the very one Christ bore, adorned with new glory.
- ▶ *The presence is known when our minds are lifted up to heaven*
  - ▶ If they wish to attach the Lord's body and blood to bread and wine, one will of necessity be torn apart from the other.
  - ▶ For through he has taken his flesh away from us, and in the body has ascended into heaven, yet he sits at the right hand of the Father--that is, he reigns in the Father's power and majesty and glory.
  - ▶ Thus Christ is not prevented from exerting his power wherever he pleases.
- ▶ *How is the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper to be thought of?*
  - ▶ We must establish such a presence of Christ in the Supper as may neither fasten him to the element of bread, nor enclose him in bread, nor circumscribe him in any way.
  - ▶ Let nothing be withdrawn from Christ's heavenly glory--as happens when he is brought under the corruptible elements of this world, or bound to any earthly creatures.
  - ▶ Let nothing inappropriate to human be ascribed to his body, as happens when it is said either to be infinite or to be put in a number of places at once.
- ▶ *The words of institution*

- ▶ If they shun every metaphor, why do they leap from Christ's simple designation to widely divergent phrases of their own?
- ▶ But it is an intolerable blasphemy to declare literally of an ephemeral and corruptible element that it is Christ.
- ▶ *The figurative interpretation of the decisive words*
  - ▶ On account of the affinity which the things signified have with their symbols, the name of the thing was given to the symbol.
  - ▶ This is figurative, indeed--but not without a most fitting analogy.
  - ▶ I say that this expression is a metonymy, a figure of speech commonly used in Scripture when mysteries are under discussion.
  - ▶ For though the symbol differs in essence from the thing signified, still, because it not only symbolizes the thing that it has been consecrated to represent as a bare and empty token, but also truly exhibits it, why may its name not rightly belong to the thing?
- ▶ *The word "is"*
  - ▶ They say that the copulative verb bears such emphasis as not to admit of a figure of speech.
  - ▶ For if they remain true to their rule, the eternal essence of the Spirit will be destroyed, as if he received his beginning from Christ's ascension.
  - ▶ There is nothing stronger to refute them than the statement of Paul that the church is Christ. [I Cor. 12:12]
  - ▶ They hatefully boast that human sense prevents us from believing what Christ uttered from his sacred lips, but how unfairly they burden us with this reproach.
  - ▶ The only question is whether it is a crime to investigate the true sense of his words.
- ▶ *The impossibility of a purely literal interpretation*
  - ▶ These good masters, that they may appear men of letters, forbid even the slightest deviation from letter.
  - ▶ Once this principle is accepted, a boundless barbarism will overwhelm the whole light of faith.
  - ▶ They cannot extricate themselves without their error dragging this absurdity with it, that the bread is blood and the wine body.
- ▶ *Defense against the reproach that our interpretation is dictated by reason*
  - ▶ They boast that we are so bound to human reason that we attribute no more to the power of God than the order of nature allows and common sense dictates.
  - ▶ I ask you whether it is from physics we have learned that Christ feeds our souls from heaven with his flesh, but our bodies are nourished by bread and wine.
  - ▶ It will be no more pleasing to human reason that Christ's flesh enters into us to be our food.
  - ▶ For here it is not a question of what God could do, but what he willed to do.
  - ▶ Madman, why do you demand that God's power make flesh to be and not to be flesh at the same time!
  - ▶ Flesh must therefore be flesh; spirit, spirit--each thing in the state and condition wherein God created it.
- ▶ *The word requires understanding and interpretation*
  - ▶ They reply that they have the word by which the will of God has been made plain.

- ▶ I admit that they have the word, but a word such as the Anthropomorphites had of old when they made God corporeal, or as Marcion and the Manichees when they devised for Christ either a heavenly or a spectral body.
- ▶ *The body of Christ is in heaven*
  - ▶ Nothing will be more effective to strengthen the faith of the pious than to have learned that the doctrine which we have put forward has been drawn from the pure Word.
  - ▶ Not Aristotle, but the Holy Spirit teaches that the body of Christ from the time of his resurrection was finite, and is contained in heaven.
  - ▶ Besides, he plainly declares that he will not always be in the world with his disciples [Matt. 26:11; John 12:8].
  - ▶ “Departing” and “ascending” do not signify giving the appearance of one ascending and departing, but actually doing what the words state.
- ▶ *The meaning of the ascension for the above-mentioned question*
  - ▶ But why do we repeat the word “ascension” so often? Does it not imply moving from one place to another?
  - ▶ They deny this: according to them, height signifies only the majesty of his rule.
  - ▶ But what is the manner of the ascension itself? Is he not lifted up on high before his disciples very eyes?
- ▶ *The witness of Augustine*
  - ▶ “Christ imparted immortality to his won flesh, but did not remove its nature from it. . . we ought to beware lest we so affirm the deity of the Man that we take away the reality of his body.”
  - ▶ When Augustine compares the presence of the flesh to the sign of the cross he sufficiently shows that he does not conceive of a Christ with two bodies, so that he who sits visible in heaven may lie hidden in secret under bread.
- ▶ *On the reality of Christ’s body*
  - ▶ They cannot show a syllable from the Scriptures by which to prove that Christ is invisible.
  - ▶ But they take what no sane man will grant them as a fact, that the body of Christ cannot be given in the Supper unless hidden under the mask of bread.
  - ▶ If Christ’s body is so multiform and varied that it shows itself in one place but is invisible in another, where is the very nature of a body, which exists in its own dimensions, and where its unity?
- ▶ *The ubiquity of Christ’s body rejected*
  - ▶ Unless the body of Christ can be everywhere at once, without limitation of place, it will not be credible that he lies hidden under the bread in the Supper.
  - ▶ To meet this necessity, they have introduced the monstrous notion of ubiquity.
  - ▶ But as we have proved firm and clear testimonies of Scripture, Christ’s body was circumscribed by the measure of a human body.
  - ▶ Again, by his ascension into heaven he made it plain that it is not in all places, but when it passes into one, it leaves the previous one.
- ▶ *Christ not brought down to us; we are lifted up to him*

- ▶ But greatly mistaken are those who conceive no presence of flesh in the Supper unless it lies in the bread.
- ▶ The question is therefore only of the manner, for they place Christ in the bread, while we do not think it lawful for us to drag him from heaven
- ▶ *(The true nature of the corporeal presence in which believers partake through the Spirit, 32-34) Involved solutions of the mystery rejected*
  - ▶ Now, if anyone should ask me how this takes place, I shall not be ashamed to confess that it is a secret too lofty for either my mind to comprehend or my words to declare.
  - ▶ Therefore, I here embrace without controversy the truth of God in which I may safely rest.
  - ▶ He declares his flesh the food of my soul, his blood its drink.
- ▶ *Spiritual and, hence actual partaking of Christ; partaking of the Lord's Supper by unbelievers*
  - ▶ They supposed that even the impious and the wicked eat Christ's body, however estranged from him they may be.
  - ▶ Yet Christ's flesh itself in the mystery of the Supper is a thing no less spiritual than our eternal salvation.
  - ▶ From this we infer that all those who are devoid of Christ's Spirit can no more eat Christ's flesh than drink wine that has no taste.
- ▶ *Partaking of the Lord's Supper by unbelievers, according to Augustine*
  - ▶ He at length concludes that the Sacrament of this thing, that is, of the reality of the body and blood of Christ, is set forth in the Lord's Supper for some to life, for others to death.
  - ▶ But the thing itself of which it is a sacrament is set forth for all to life, for no one to death-- whosoever may partake of it.
- ▶ *(Superstitious adoration of the elements excluded, 35-37) Adoration of the elements rejected*
  - ▶ If their alleged concomitance be denied them, what will they do?
  - ▶ But those who receive the Sacrament as God has commanded, without adoration, are confident that they are not turning aside from God's command.
- ▶ *Superstition and idolatry in such adoration*
  - ▶ It was established of old that before consecration the people should be told in a loud voice to lift up their hearts.
  - ▶ Therefore, those who have devised the adoration of the Sacrament have not only dreamed it by themselves apart from Scripture.
  - ▶ But also, with Scripture crying out against it, they have forsaken the living God and fashioned a God after their own desire.
- ▶ *Superstitious rites with the consecrated host*
  - ▶ They devised rites utterly alien to the institution of the Supper, with the intent of paying divine honors to the sign.
  - ▶ The only lawful adoration is that which does not rest in the sign, but is directed to Christ seated in heaven.
- ▶ *(Points of special emphasis: mutual love; the accompaniment of preaching; medicine for sick souls; worthy partaking; suitable form and the frequency of administration, 38-46) the Lord's Supper implies mutual love*

- ▶ The Lord also intended the Supper to be a kind of exhortation for us to both purity and holiness of life, and to love, peace, and concord.
- ▶ For what sharper goal could there be to arouse mutual love among us than when Christ, giving himself to us, not only invites us by his own example to pledge and give ourselves to one another, but inasmuch as he makes himself common to all, also makes all of us one in himself.
- ▶ *The Lord's Supper cannot exist apart from the Word*
  - ▶ The right administering of the Sacrament cannot stand apart from the Word.
  - ▶ Whether we are to be confirmed in faith, or exercised in confession, or aroused to duty, there is need of preaching.
  - ▶ Therefore, nothing more preposterous could happen in the Supper than for it to be turned into a silent action, as has happened under the Pope's tyranny.
- ▶ *Of unworthy partaking of the Sacrament*
  - ▶ The Sacrament is turned into a deadly poison for all those whose faith it does not nourish and strengthen, and whom it does not arouse to thanksgiving and to love.
  - ▶ This spiritual food, if it enters a soul corrupted by malice and wickedness, casts it down with a greater ruin--not by the fault of the food itself, but because to polluted and unbelieving men nothing is clean.
- ▶ *Who is "unworthy"?*
  - ▶ If it is a question of our seeking worthiness by ourselves, we are undone; only despair and deadly ruin remain to us.
  - ▶ When will it come about that anyone dare assure himself that he has done his best?
- ▶ *Faith and love requisite, but not perfection*
  - ▶ Let us remember that this sacred feast is medicine for the sick, solace for sinners, alms to the poor.
  - ▶ But this would bring no benefit to the healthy, righteous, and rich--if such could be found.
  - ▶ Therefore, this is the worthiness--the best and only kind we can bring to God--to offer our vileness and our unworthiness to him so that his mercy may make us worthy of him; to despair in ourselves so that we may be comforted in him.
- ▶ *On the proper celebration of the Lord's Supper*
  - ▶ The outward ceremony of the action makes no difference.
  - ▶ These things are indifferent, and left at the church's discretion.
  - ▶ However, it is certain that the practice of the ancient church was for all to take it with the hands.
  - ▶ Now, to get rid of this great pile of ceremonies, the Supper could have been administered most becomingly if it were set before the church very often, and at least once a week.
    - ▶ It should begin with public prayers.
    - ▶ After this a sermon should be given.
    - ▶ Then, when bread and wine have been placed on the Table, the minister should repeat the words of institution.
    - ▶ Next, he should recite the promises which were left to us in it.
    - ▶ He should excommunicate all who are debarred from it.

- ▶ He should then pray that the Lord teach and form us to receive it with faith and thankfulness of heart.
- ▶ Either psalms should be sung, or something be read, and in becoming order the believers should partake of the most holy banquet.
- ▶ When the Supper is finished, there should be an exhortation to sincere faith and confession of faith.
- ▶ At last, thanks should be given, and praises sung to God.
- ▶ *The Lord's Supper should be celebrated frequently*
  - ▶ It was not ordained to be received only once a year.
  - ▶ It was ordained to be frequently used among all Christians in order that they might frequently return in memory to Christ's passion.
  - ▶ But such remembrance to sustain and strenghten their faith, and urge themselves to sing thanksgiving to God and to proclaim his goodness.
  - ▶ Finally, by it to nourish mutual love, and among themselves give witness to this love, and discern its bond in the unity of Christ's body.
- ▶ *Augustine and Chrysostom on the duty of participation*
  - ▶ Augustine: "The Sacrament of this thing, namely, of the unity of the Lord's body, is set upon the Lord's Table and received from that Table daily in some places, no other places at certain intervals--by some men to life, by others to destruction."
  - ▶ Chrysostom: "Whoever does not partake of the mysteries is wicked and shameless to be present there. I beg of you, if anyone, invited, comes to a banquet, washes his hands, reclined at table, and seems toget ready to eat, and then tastes nothing--does he not dishonor both the banquet and the host? . . . Would it not be better for you not to have been present?"
- ▶ *Communicating only once a year condemned*
  - ▶ Plainly this custom wich enjoins us to take communion once a year is a veritable invetion of the devil, whosoever was instrumental in introducing it.
  - ▶ All, like hungry men, should flock to such a bounteous repast.
- ▶ *(Withdrawal of the cup from the lay people condemned, 47-50) Refutation of "communion in one kind"*
  - ▶ The symbol of the blood, which, denied to lay and profane person, was given as a special property to a few shaven and anointed men.
  - ▶ Therefore, though what they pretend should be true, still they defraud pious souls of the confirmation of faith which Christ gves us as something necessary.
- ▶ *False argument that the apostles only as "sacrificers" received the cup*
  - ▶ What oracle has revealed this solution to them--so foreign to God's Word?
  - ▶ Why from that better age, even to a thousand years after the apostles, did all, without exception, partake of both symbols?
- ▶ *Reception by laymen maintained to a late date*
  - ▶ This custom did not fall into disuse while one drop of integrity remained in the church.
  - ▶ It was considered not merely a custom but an inviolable law.
- ▶ *The words of Scripture plainly accord the cup to all*

- ▶ Why did Christ simply say of the bread that they should eat, but of the cup that they *all* should drink? It is as if he deliberately intended to oppose Satan's craftiness.
- ▶ If the Lord honored only "sacrificers" in his Supper, what man would ever have dared call strangers who had been excluded by the Lord to partake of it?
- ▶ Was Paul lying when he said to the Corinthians that he had received from the Lord what he delivered to them [I Cor. 11:23]?
- ▶ For afterward he declares the thing delivered to be that all indiscriminately should partake of both symbols [I Cor. 11:26].
- ▶ **The Papal Mass, a Sacrilege by Which Christ's Supper Was Not Only Profaned but Annihilated (Chapter XVIII)**
  - ▶ *(Rejection of the Mass as sacrilegious and as a nullification of the Lord's Supper, 1-7) The Romanist doctrine*
    - ▶ Satan has tried to obscure with thick darkness and to defile Christ's Sacred Supper: a most pestilential error--the belief that the Mass is a sacrifice and offering to obtain forgiveness of sins.
    - ▶ The very action itself has been so framed as to be a kind of appeasement to make satisfaction to God for the expiation of the living and the dead.
  - ▶ *The Mass as blasphemy against Christ*
    - ▶ Christ was consecrated priest and pontiff by his Father, not for a time, in the way in which we read of priests being appointed in the Old Testament.
    - ▶ But now those who sacrifice daily are required to appoint for their oblations priests whom they put in Christ's place as successors and vicars.
  - ▶ *The Mass as suppression of Christ's Passion*
    - ▶ It suppresses and buries the cross and Passion of Christ.
    - ▶ The cross of Christ is overthrown as soon as the altar is set up.
    - ▶ Therefore, we shall have to confess either that Christ's sacrifice, which he fulfilled upon the cross, lacked the power to cleanse eternally, or that Christ had carried out one sacrifice, once for all, unto all ages.
  - ▶ *The argument from Mal. 1:11*
    - ▶ They adduce here the prophecy of Malachi, by which the Lord promises that the time will come when incense and a pure offering shall be offered to his name throughout all the earth.
    - ▶ I first ask, therefore, whether they do not concede the fulfillment of this prophecy in the Kingdom of Christ.
    - ▶ Secondly, where those altars are, or when they were ever erected.
    - ▶ Thirdly, whether they think that each of these three kingdoms has a temple assigned to it, like the one at Jerusalem.
    - ▶ If they ponder these things, they will admit, I believe, that the prophet, under types suitable to his own time, prophesied concerning the spread of the spiritual worship of God throughout all the earth.
  - ▶ *The Mass brings forgetfulness of Christ's death*
    - ▶ Those who dare alter, or add anything new to, this testament deny his death and hold it of no importance.

- ▶ What is the Mass but a new and wholly different testament?
- ▶ *The Mass robs us of the benefit of Christ's death*
  - ▶ Who can think himself redeemed by Christ's death, when he has seen new redemption in the Mass?
  - ▶ This amounts to nothing else than to boast that we have been redeemed by Christ on condition that we have been redeemed by Christ on condition that we redeem ourselves.
- ▶ *The Mass as nullification of the Lord's Supper*
  - ▶ There is as much difference between this sacrifice and the sacrament the Supper as there is between giving and receiving.
  - ▶ The sacrifice of the Mass sings the far different tune that Christ ought to be sacrificed daily to be of any benefit to us.
- ▶ *(Early practice and the rise of misconceptions, 8-11) Private masses a repudiation of communion*
  - ▶ I say that private masses are diametrically opposed to Christ's institution, and are for that reason an impious profaning of Sacred Supper.
  - ▶ Is this not openly to mock God, when one person privately seizes for himself what ought to have been done only among many?
- ▶ *The Mass not Scriptural and not primitive*
  - ▶ This perversity was unknown to the purer church.
  - ▶ How they can believe that God is pleased by this way of sacrificing, for which they have no command, and which they see cannot be proved by even one syllable of Scripture.
- ▶ *Did the church fathers look upon the Mass as a sacrifice?*
  - ▶ If anyone thrusts forward detached sentences of the ancient writers from here and there, and argues from their authority that the sacrifice executed in the Supper is to be understood far otherwise than we explain it, our answer briefly is:
  - ▶ If it is a question of approving a sham sacrifice such as the papists have contrived in the Mass, the ancient writers do not support such sacrilege at all.
- ▶ *Church fathers deviate from the divine institution*
  - ▶ I observe that the ancient writers also misinterpreted this memorial in a way not consonant with the Lord's institution, because their Supper displayed some appearance of repeated or at least renewed sacrifice.
  - ▶ I do not find that they intended even in the slightest degree to detract from the Lord's unique sacrifice, I cannot bring myself to condemn them for any impiety.
  - ▶ Still, I think they cannot be excused for having sinned somewhat.
- ▶ *(The idea of sacrifice in the Eucharist, and Scriptural use of the word "sacrifice"; the Mass as a sacrilege, 12-18) The oblation of the Old Covenant and the Lord's Supper*
  - ▶ Mosaic sacrifices were carried out in order that there might be set before the people's eyes a likeness of the sacrifice that was to be offered to God in expiation.
  - ▶ But after Christ's sacrifice was accomplished, the Lord instituted another method for us, that is, to transmit to the believing folk the benefit of the sacrifice offered to himself by his Son.
- ▶ *The nature of the sacrifice*
  - ▶ Generally understood, this includes every sort of thing offered to God.

- ▶ The sacrifice of expiation is that which is intended to appease God's wrath, to satisfy his judgment, and so to wash sins and cleanse them.
- ▶ *The sale of masses*
  - ▶ It is a most wicked infamy and unbearable blasphemy, both against Christ and against the sacrifice which he made for us through his death on the cross, for anyone to suppose that by repeating the oblation he obtains pardon for sins, appeases God, and acquires righteousness.
  - ▶ We also deny that they are priests in the sense that they by such oblation intercede before God for the people and, having appeased God, obtain atonement for sins.
- ▶ *Plato's remarks on similar pretense and delusion*
  - ▶ There is a fine passage in Plato, in the second book of the *Republic*.
  - ▶ It is where he discusses the old propitiatory offerings, and ridicules the stupid confidence of depraved and wicked men who thought that their misdeeds were curtained off by these offerings so as not to be seen by the gods.
- ▶ *The "thank offering" of the Christian Church*
  - ▶ Under the second class of sacrifice, which we have called that "thanksgiving," are included all the duties of love.
  - ▶ This kind of sacrifice has nothing to do with appeasing God's wrath.
- ▶ *Scriptural phrases illustrate the sacrifices of praise.*
  - ▶ The Lord's Supper cannot be without a sacrifice of this kind, in which, while we proclaim his death and give thanks, we do nothing but offer a sacrifice of praise.
  - ▶ He is our Pontiff, who has entered the heavenly sanctuary and opens a way for us to enter.
  - ▶ He is the altar upon which we lay our gifts, that whatever we venture to do, we may undertake in him.
- ▶ *The Mass itself, apart from its profanation, is sacrilege*
  - ▶ Holiness itself of the Mass is, on account of which it has deserved for some centuries to be esteemed so respectable and venerable.
  - ▶ The Mass, from root to top, swarms with every sort of impiety, blasphemy, idolatry, and sacrilege.
- ▶ *(Conclusion of chapters 17 and 18: two Christian sacraments only, 19-20) Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the only sacraments*
  - ▶ Therefore, as there is but one God, one faith, one Christ, and one church, his body; so baptism is but one, and is not a thing oft-repeated.
  - ▶ But the Supper is repeatedly distributed.
  - ▶ Apart from these two, no other sacrament has been instituted by God, so the church of believers ought to recognize no other; for erecting and establishing new sacraments is not a matter of human choice.
- ▶ *The addition of sacraments not permitted*
  - ▶ Let the Christian church be content with two sacraments.
  - ▶ Let the church not only refuse to admit and acknowledge any third one for the present but also not desire or expect any, even to the end of the age.
- ▶ **The Five Other Ceremonies, Falsely Commonly Considered Sacraments Hitherto, They Are Proved Not to Be Such, and Their Real Nature Is Shown (Chapter XIX)**

- ▶ *(Five alleged sacraments, not authorized by God's Word or used in the early church, 1-3) It is not merely a matter of the term "sacrament"*
  - ▶ But the notion of seven sacraments, a commonplace, has taken root by its very antiquity and is still fixed in men's minds.
  - ▶ The five remaining rites, which are commonly reckoned among the true and genuine sacraments of the Lord. . . how falsely they have been reckoned as sacraments.
  - ▶ I do not undertake this contention about the name out of any desire to quarrel, but that I am led by weighty reasons to attack its misuse.
  - ▶ Let them, therefore, either change the definition of the word, or abstain from this use of it, which afterward engenders false and absurd opinions.
- ▶ *God alone can establish a sacrament*
  - ▶ We must stoutly maintain that the decision to establish a sacrament rests with God alone.
  - ▶ A sacrament ought, by God's sure promise, to encourage and comfort believers' consciences which could never receive this certainty from man.
  - ▶ Ought to be for us a testimony of God's good will toward us.
  - ▶ Man cannot establish a sacrament, because it is not in man's power to cause such great mysteries of God to be concealed under such humble things.
- ▶ *That the sacraments are seven in number was unknown in the ancient church*
  - ▶ Nowhere among ecclesiastical writers is this number "seven" found.
  - ▶ It is uncertain at what time it first crept in.
- ▶ *(Confirmation not a sacrament: early practice of reception after instruction should be restored, 4-13) Custom of the ancient church*
  - ▶ Adolescents went through catechism and the ceremony of the laying on of hands.
  - ▶ Then they were dismissed with a solemn blessing.
  - ▶ Therefore, I warmly approve such laying on of hands, which is simply done as a form of blessing, and wish that it were today restored to pure use.
- ▶ *Full development and meaning of confirmation according to Romanist teaching*
  - ▶ At a later age, having well-nigh blotted out the reality, has set up some sort of pretended confirmatio as a sacrament of God.
  - ▶ They have feigned that the power of confirmation is to confer, for the increase of grace, the Holy Spirit, who was conferred in baptism for innocence.
- ▶ *Appeal to apostolic laying on of hands is unfounded*
  - ▶ They made use of such a ceremony to signify by their gesture that they commended to God, and, as it were, offered him on whom they laid their hands.
  - ▶ But since that grace has ceased to be given, what purpose does the laying on of hands serve?
- ▶ *Anointing with oil is a counterfeit sacrament*
  - ▶ Who taught them to seek salvation in oil?
  - ▶ I boldly declare this: Those who call oil "the oil of salvation" forswear the salvation which is in Christ.
- ▶ *Confirmation as the devaluation of baptism*
  - ▶ Have not we then been buried in baptism with Christ, made partakers in his death, that we may also be sharers in his resurrection?

- ▶ In order stealthily to draw the unwary from baptism, he lies in saying that what was truly given in baptism is given in his confirmation.
- ▶ *The doctrine of the necessity of confirmation for salvation is nonsense*
  - ▶ I thought that everything pertaining to Christianity was prescribed and included in the Scriptures.
  - ▶ Now, as I see, the true form of religion is to be sought and learned elsewhere than from the Scriptures.
  - ▶ By this all the apostles and many of the martyrs are condemned, who most certainly never received the chrism.
- ▶ *The papists would put confirmation above baptism*
  - ▶ They determine that this sacred anointing ought to be held in higher veneration than baptism, because it is exclusively administered by the hands of the prelates, while baptism is commonly dispensed by all priests.
  - ▶ What can you say here by that they are plainly mad who are so fond of their own inventions that by comparison they carelessly despise God's most holy institutions?
- ▶ *Frivolous arguments for esteeming confirmation above baptism*
  - ▶ While they neglect the water and reckon it of no account, they esteem only oil in baptism!
  - ▶ We therefore say, on the contrary, that in baptism the forehead is also moistened with water.
- ▶ *Confirmation cannot be upheld by the practice of the ancient church*
  - ▶ Why do they claim antiquity, seeing that the ancient writers, when they mean to speak precisely, nowhere reckon more than two sacraments.
  - ▶ The ancients speak of the laying on of hands, but do they call it a sacrament?
- ▶ *True confirmation*
  - ▶ It is not a confirmation such as they fancy, but a catechizing.
  - ▶ Children or those near adolescence would give an account of their faith before the church.
  - ▶ But the best method of catechizing would be to have a manual drafted for this exercise, containing and summarizing in simple manner most of the articles of our religion.
- ▶ *(Penance fails to answer the definition of a sacrament, 14-17) The practice of penance in the ancient church*
  - ▶ The ancients observed this order in public repentance, that those who had discharged the satisfactions enjoined upon them were reconciled by the solemn laying on of hands.
  - ▶ As time passed, the matter deteriorated to the point that, apart from public penance, they also used this rite in private absolutions.
  - ▶ I judge the ancient observance to have been holy and wholesome for the church, and I would like to see it restored today.
  - ▶ This more recent practice, although I dare not disallow it or speak too sharply against it, I nevertheless deem less necessary.
  - ▶ However it may be, we still see that laying on of hands in penance is a ceremony ordained by men, not by God.
- ▶ *Penance is no sacrament*
  - ▶ Either outward penance is a sacrament, and if it is, ought to be regarded as a sign of inner repentance, that is, of contrition of heart.

- ▶ Or else, both together are a sacrament, not two, but one complete.
- ▶ But they say: the outward penance is only a sacrament; the inner repentance is the sacramental matter and the sacrament.
- ▶ *Why not make absolution the sacrament?*
  - ▶ If any sacrament is to be sought here, can it not be far more plausibly boasted that the priest's absolution is more of a sacrament than penance, either inward or outward?
  - ▶ For it could readily be said that it is a ceremony to confirm faith in forgiveness of sins, and has the promise of the keys.
- ▶ *Baptism the sacrament of repentance*
  - ▶ I deny that penance is rightly reckoned as a sacrament.
  - ▶ No special promise of God to this effect exists.
  - ▶ Every ceremony displayed here is a mere invention of men.
  - ▶ They have adorned this feigned sacrament with an appropriate title, "the second plank after shipwreck",
  - ▶ You will speak most aptly if you call baptism the sacrament of penance, since it has been given to those who are intent on repentance as a confirmation of grace and a seal of assurance.
- ▶ *(Extreme unction rests upon a misuse of James 5:14-15 and is no sacrament, 18-21) Alleged Scripture on extreme unction rejected*
  - ▶ The third false sacrament is extreme unction.
  - ▶ It was an instrument of healing, but only a symbol, by which the unschooled in their ignorance might be made aware of the source of such great power, that they might not give the credit for it to the apostles.
  - ▶ But the gift of healing, like the rest of the miracles, which the Lord willed to be brought forth for a time, has vanished away in order to make the new preaching of the gospel marvelous forever.
  - ▶ Therefore, even if we grant to the full that anointing was a sacrament of those powers which were then administered by the hands of the apostles, it now has nothing to do with us, to whom the administering of such powers has not been committed.
- ▶ *Extreme unction is no sacrament*
  - ▶ They make themselves ridiculous when they boast that they are endowed with the gift of healing.
  - ▶ The Lord is indeed present with his people in every age; and he heals their weaknesses as often as necessary, no less than of old.
  - ▶ Still, he does not put forth these manifest powers, nor dispense miracles through the apostles' hands.
- ▶ *Unction has no divine authorization or promise*
  - ▶ Their anointing is not a sacrament for neither is it a ceremony instituted by God, nor has it any promise.
  - ▶ For no one argues that circumcision is now a sacrament of the Christian church, even though it both was an institution of God and had a promise attached.

- ▶ The ceremony ought not to have been used except by those who had been endowed with the gift of healing, not by these butchers who are more able to slay and hack than to heal.
- ▶ *The papists do not proceed at all according to James's "words of institution"*
  - ▶ James wishes all sick persons to be anointed.
  - ▶ These fellows smear with their grease not sick but half-dead corpses when they are already drawing their last breath.
  - ▶ If in their sacrament they have a powerful medicine with which to alleviate the agony of diseases, or at least to bring some comfort to the soul, it is cruel of them never to heal in time.
- ▶ *(The alleged sacrament of holy orders complicated by the seen ranks of clergy; the ceremonies of institution and functions of these criticized, 22-33) One sacrament--or seven?*
  - ▶ The sacrament of order occupies the fourth place.
  - ▶ But it is so fruitful that it breeds of itself seven sacramentlings.
  - ▶ Since it is clear that there are different ceremonies in each.
  - ▶ They therefore make seven ecclesiastical orders, or grades which they mark with the name "sacrament."
    - ▶ Doorkeepers.
    - ▶ Readers.
    - ▶ Exorcists.
    - ▶ Acolytes.
    - ▶ Subdeacons.
    - ▶ Deacons.
    - ▶ Priests.
- ▶ *Christ must have occupied all seven offices*
  - ▶ It surpasses all folly that in each order they make Christ their companion.
  - ▶ These things cannot be heard without such laughter that I marvel at their being written without laughter, if, after all, those who wrote them were men.
- ▶ *The holders of the lower orders do not practice their office at all*
  - ▶ With great pomp and solemnity they create their readers, psalmists, doorkeepers, and acolytes, to perform those services to which they appoint either boys or at least those whom they call 'laymen'.
  - ▶ Thus all their loose talk about their petty orders is a patchwork of ignorant and unsavory falsehood.
- ▶ *The ceremonies of consecration, especially the tonsure*
  - ▶ They shave them on the top of the head, that the crown may signify royal dignity, since clerics ought to be kings, to rule themselves and others.
  - ▶ But it was a sacrilege for them to take to themselves alone what was given to the whole church, and haughtily to boast of a title that they had snatched from the believers.
  - ▶ By shaving off a few hairs the clerics signify that they have cast away abundance of temporal goods, that they have cast away abundance of temporal goods, that they contemplate God's glory, that they have mortified the lust of the ears and eyes.
  - ▶ But there is no class of men more greedy.

- ▶ *To cite the Nazarites and Paul is beside the point*
  - ▶ When they say that the clerical crown has its origin and reason from the Nazarites, what else do they claim but that their mysteries have arisen from Jewish ceremonies, or rather, are mere Judaism?
  - ▶ It is my custom to call such vows the vows of love, not of piety.
  - ▶ It is not undertaken for any worship of God, but to treat gently the ignorance of the weak.
- ▶ *Historical interpretation of the tonsure*
  - ▶ Since at that period only effeminate men and those who affected a rather unmanly sleekness and elegance let their hair grow, it seemed not to be a good example to let clerics do this.
  - ▶ The clergy were therefore ordered either to shear or shave the head, so as not to show any appearance of effeminate ornament.
  - ▶ At length, in a more corrupt age, when all former customs were either perverted or had degenerated into superstition, because they saw no reason for clerical shaving.
  - ▶ They resorted to mystery, which they now superstitiously foist upon us to approve their sacrament.
  - ▶ I call it an absurdity that Schoolmen and Canonists make these minor orders sacraments, which were unknown to the primitive church.
- ▶ *“Priest” and “presbyter”*
  - ▶ There remain the three orders which they call “major”.
  - ▶ They especially call them “holy orders” to do them honor.
  - ▶ Presbyter or priest indicate the same thing, and they so refer to those whose duty it is, they say, to perform the sacrifice of Christ’s body and blood on the altar.
  - ▶ All who call themselves priests to offer a sacrifice of expiation do wrong to Christ.
  - ▶ It was his office alone to appease God and atone for sins by his offering.
  - ▶ As far as the true office of presbyter is concerned, I willingly accord that place to it.
- ▶ *The ceremonies in ordaining priests*
  - ▶ Our Lord, when he sent forth the apostles to preach the gospel, breathed upon them.
  - ▶ But this symbol he represented the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - ▶ But the Lord did many things which he did not intend as examples for us.
- ▶ *Christ’s priesthood supersedes that of Aaron*
  - ▶ Finally, from whom have they received anointing?
  - ▶ They answer that they have received it from the sons of Aaron.
  - ▶ They do wrong to the priesthood of Christ, which alone was foreshadowed and prefigured by all the ancient priesthoods.
- ▶ *Anointing belongs with outworn ceremonies*
  - ▶ What has oil to do with the soul?
  - ▶ Obviously, they are attempting something ingenious: to shape one religion out of Christianity and Judaism and paganism by sewing patches together.
- ▶ *The deacons*
  - ▶ I would not argue over the order of the diaconate, if that ministry which existed under the apostles and in the purer church were restored to its integrity.

- ▶ But what likeness to this is there in the deacons which these men devise?
- ▶ Therefore, let them hereafter not falsely say that these are deacons, whom they have ordained only for their play acting.
- ▶ *Subdeacons*
  - ▶ For although of old they were really put in charge of caring for the poor, the papists assign to them some trifling function or other, as to bring the chalice and paten, the cruet with water, and the towel to the altar; to pour water for washing hands, etc.
  - ▶ Now in speaking of receiving and bringing in offerings, they mean those which they devour as offerings destined for anathema.
  - ▶ In this rite one finds not even one syllable of any definite promise.
  - ▶ Hence, it would be fruitless to seek a ceremony to confirm.
- ▶ *Marriage is no sacrament*
  - ▶ All men admit that it was instituted by God.
  - ▶ But no man ever saw it administered as a sacrament until the time of Gregory.
- ▶ *They misapply Eph. 5:28*
  - ▶ Paul, to show to married men with what singular love they ought to embrace their wives, sets forth Christ to them as prototype.
  - ▶ Now, to teach how Christ loved the church as himself, Paul applies to him what Moses relates that Adam said of himself.
  - ▶ He says that we are members of his body of his flesh, and of his bones, and thus one flesh with him.
- ▶ *This confusion arises from the translation 'mystery and their low view of marriage.'*
  - ▶ Paul had said "mystery."
  - ▶ The translator could have left this word, as one not unfamiliar to Latin ears, or rendered it as "secret."
  - ▶ But, having graced marriage with the title of sacrament, to call it afterward uncleanness and pollution and carnal filth.
  - ▶ How absurd it is to bar priests from this sacrament!
- ▶ *Oppressive consequences of the Roman doctrine*
  - ▶ Once they obtained marriage as a sacrament, they took over the hearing of matrimonial cases; as it was a spiritual matter.
  - ▶ Then they passed laws by which they strenghtened their tyranny, laws in part openly impious toward God, in part most unfair toward men.
    - ▶ That marriages between kinsfolk even to the seventh degree are not lawful, and if contracted must be dissolved.
    - ▶ A man who has put away an adulterous wife is not permitted to take another.
    - ▶ Godparents may not be coupled in matrimony.
    - ▶ Marriages may not be celebrated from Septuagesima to the octave of Easter, and in the three weeks before the nativity of John, and from Advent to Epiphany.
    - ▶ At length, we must extricate ourselves from their mire.
- ▶ **Civil Government (Chapter XX)**

- ▶ *(How civil and spiritual government are related, 1-2) Differences between spiritual and civil government*
  - ▶ From one side, insane and barbarous men furiously strive to overturn this divinely established order.
  - ▶ On the other side, the flatterers of princes, immoderately praising their power, do not hesitate to set them against the rule of God himself.
  - ▶ Unless both these evils are checked, purity of faith will perish.
  - ▶ Whoever knows how to distinguish between body and soul, between this present fleeting life and that future eternal life, will without difficulty know that Christ's spiritual Kingdom and the civil jurisdiction are things completely distinct.
- ▶ *The two "governments" are not antithetical*
  - ▶ This distinction does not lead us to consider the whole nature of government a thing polluted, which has nothing to do with Christian men.
  - ▶ Spiritual government, indeed, is already initiating in us upon earth certain beginnings of the Heavenly Kingdom, and in this mortal and fleeting life affords a certain forecast of an immortal and incorruptible blessedness.
  - ▶ Yet civil government has as its appointed end, so long as we live among men, to cherish and protect the outward worship of God, to defend sound doctrine of piety and the position of the church, to adjust our life to the society of men, to form our social behavior to civil righteousness, to reconcile us with one another, and to promote general peace and tranquility.
- ▶ *(Necessity and divine sanction of civil government, 3-7) The chief tasks and burdens of civil government*
  - ▶ Our adversaries claim that there ought to be such great perfection in the church of God that its government should suffice for law.
  - ▶ But they stupidly imagine such a perfection as can never be found in a community of men.
  - ▶ Let no man be disturbed that I now commit to civil government the duty of rightly establishing religion, which I seem above to have put outside of human decision.
  - ▶ For, when I approve of a civil administration that aims to prevent the true religion which is contained in God's law from being openly and with public sacrilege violated and defiled with impunity, I do not here, any more than before, allow men to make laws according to their own decision concerning religion and the worship of God.
- ▶ *The magistracy is ordained by God*
  - ▶ The Lord has not only testified that the office of magistrate is approved by and acceptable to him, but he also sets out its dignity with the most honorable titles and marvelously commends it to us.
  - ▶ It has not come about by human perversity that the authority over all things on earth is in the hands of kings and other rulers, but by divine providence and holy ordinance.
  - ▶ No one ought to doubt that civil authority is a calling, not only holy and lawful before God, but also the most sacred and by far the most honorable of all callings in the whole life to mortal men.
- ▶ *Against the "Christian" denial or rejection of the magistracy*

- ▶ Anarchists betray not only their ignorance but devilish arrogance, when they betray not only their ignorance but devilish arrogance, when they claim a perfection of which not even a hundredth part is seen in them.
- ▶ David urges all kings and rulers to kiss the Son of God, he does not bid them lay aside their authority and retire to private life [Ps. 2:12].
- ▶ Isaiah, when he promises that kings shall be foster fathers of the church, and queens its nurses, does not deprive them of their honor.
- ▶ *Magistrates should be faithful as God's deputies*
  - ▶ How will they have the brazenness to admit injustice to their judgment seat, which they are told is the throne of the living God?
  - ▶ If they remember that they are vicars of God, they should watch with all care, earnestness, and diligence, to represent in themselves to men some image of divine providence, protection, goodness, benevolence, and justice.
  - ▶ They have the means to comfort themselves greatly when they ponder in themselves that they are occupied not with profane affairs or those alien to a servant of God, but with a most holy office, since they are serving as God's deputies.
- ▶ *The coercive character of magistracy does not hinder its recognition*
  - ▶ Scripture expressly affirms that it is the providence of God's wisdom that kings reign.
  - ▶ It particularly commands us to honor the king.
- ▶ *(Forms of government, and duties of magistrates. Issues of war and taxation, 8-13) The diversity of forms of government*
  - ▶ The nature of the discussion depends largely upon the circumstances.
  - ▶ Regarding forms of government, it is not easy to distinguish which one of them excels in usefulness, for they contend on such equal terms.
  - ▶ The fall from kingdom to tyranny is easy; but it is not much more difficult to fall from the rule of the best men to the faction of the few; yet it is easiest of all to fall from popular rule to sedition.
  - ▶ I will not deny that aristocracy, or a system compounded of aristocracy and democracy, far excels all others: not of itself, but because it is very rare for kings so to control themselves that their will never disagrees with what is just and right.
  - ▶ Therefore, men's faults or failing causes it to be safer and more bearable for a number to exercise government:
    - ▶ That they may help one another, teach and admonish one another.
    - ▶ And if one asserts himself unfairly, there may be a number of censors and masters to restrain his willfulness.
    - ▶ This is both proved by experience, and also the Lord's confirmation.
  - ▶ I freely admit that no kind of government is more happy than one where freedom is regulated with becoming moderation and is properly established on a durable basis.
  - ▶ The magistrates ought to apply themselves with the highest diligence to prevent the freedom from being in any respect diminished, far less be violated.
- ▶ *Concerns for both Tables of the Law*

- ▶ If Scripture did not teach that it extends to both Tables of the Law, we could learn this from secular writers: for no one has discussed the office of the magistrates, they making of laws, and public welfare, without beginning at religion and divine worship.
- ▶ Thus no government can be happily established unless piety is the first concern.
- ▶ Holy kings are greatly praised in Scripture because they restored the worship of God when it was corrupted or destroyed, or took care of religion that under them it might flourish pure and unblemished.
- ▶ They are ordained protectors and vindicators of public innocence, modesty, decency, and tranquility.
- ▶ Their sole endeavor should be to provide for the common safety and peace of all.
- ▶ The lust of wicked men cannot be restrained except by severity and the infliction of penalties.
- ▶ *The magistrates' exercise of force is compatible with piety*
  - ▶ But here a seemingly hard and difficult question arises: if the law of God forbids all Christians to kill, and the prophet prophesies concerning god's holy mountain (the church) that in it men shall not afflict or hurt--how can magistrates be pious men and shedders of blood at the same time?
  - ▶ Yet if we understand that the magistrate in administering punishments does nothing by himself, but carries out the very judgments of God, we shall not be hampered by this scruple.
  - ▶ The law of the Lord forbids killing.
  - ▶ But, that murders may not go unpunished, the Lawgiver himself puts into the hand of his ministers a sword to be drawn against all murderers.
  - ▶ It is not for the pious to afflict and hurt.
  - ▶ Yet to avenge, at the Lord's command, the afflictions of the pious is not to hurt or to afflict.
  - ▶ I am not one either to favor undue cruelty or think that a fair judgment can be pronounced unless clemency.
  - ▶ Clemency is the best counselor of kings and surest keeper of the kingly throne.
- ▶ *On the right of the government to wage war*
  - ▶ Kings and people must sometimes take up arms to execute such public vengeance.
  - ▶ On this basis we may judge wars lawful which are so taken.
  - ▶ Indeed, if they rightly punish those robbers whose harmful acts have affected only a few, will they allow a whole country to be afflicted and devastated by robberies with impunity?
- ▶ *Restraint and humanity in war*
  - ▶ Some object against me that in the New Testament there exists no testimony or example which teaches that war is a thing lawful for Christians.
  - ▶ I answer first that the reason for waging war which existed of old still persists today.
    - ▶ There is no reason that bars magistrates from defending their subjects.
    - ▶ An express declaration of this matter is not to be sought in the writings of the apostles.
    - ▶ For their purpose is not to fashion a civil government, but to establish the spiritual Kingdom of Christ.

- ▶ It is there shown in passing that Christ by his coming has changed nothing in this respect.
- ▶ If Christian doctrine condemned all wars, the soldiers asking counsel concerning salvation should rather have been advised to cast away their weapons and withdraw completely from military service.
- ▶ In Luke 3:14 Christ taught them to be content with their wages, but did not forbid them to bear arms.
- ▶ *Concerning the right of the government to levy a tribute*
  - ▶ Tributes and taxes are the lawful revenues of princes, which they chiefly use to meet the public expenses of thier office.
  - ▶ They may similarly use them for the magnificence of their household, which is joined, so to speak, with the dignity of the authority they exercise.
  - ▶ Their imposts and levies, and other kinds of tributes are nothing but supports of public necessity.
  - ▶ But that to impose them upon the common folk without cause is tyrannical extortion.
- ▶ *(Public law and judicial procedures, as rlated to Christian duty, 14-21) Old Testament law and the laws of nations*
  - ▶ The law is a silent magistrate; the magistrate a living law.
  - ▶ There are some who deny that a commonwealth is duly framed which neglects the political system of Moses, and is ruled buy the common laws of nations.
  - ▶ Let other men consider how pperilous and seditious this notions is; it will be enough for me to have proved it false and foolish.
  - ▶ We must bear in mind that common division of the whole law into moral, ceremonial, and judicial laws.
- ▶ *Moral, ceremonial, and judicial law distinguished*
  - ▶ The moral law is contained under two heads:
    - ▶ One to worship God with pure faith and piety.
    - ▶ The other, is to embrace men with sincere affection.
  - ▶ Ceremonial law was the tutelage of the Jews, with which it seemed good to the Lord to train this people, as it were, in their childhood, until the fullnness of time should come, in order that he might fully manifest his wisdom to the nations, and show the truth of those things which then were foreshadowed in figures.
  - ▶ The judicial law for civil government, imparted certain formulas of equity and justice, by which they might live together blamelessly and peaceably.
  - ▶ As ceremonial laws could be abrogated while piety remained safe and unharmed, so too, when these judicial laws were taken away, the perpetual duties and precepts of love could still remain.
  - ▶ Every nation is left free to make such laws as it foresees to be profitable for itself.
  - ▶ Yet these must be in conformity to that perpetual rule of love.
- ▶ *Unity and diversity of laws*
  - ▶ Constitutions have certain circumstances upon which they in part depend.

- ▶ It therefore does not matter that they are different, provided all equally press toward the same goal of equity.
- ▶ The law of God which we call the moral law is nothing else than a testimony of natural law and of that conscience which God has engraved upon the minds of men.
- ▶ Consequently, the entire scheme of this equity of which we are now speaking has been prescribed in it.
- ▶ Hence, this equity alone must be the goal and rule and limit of all laws.
- ▶ Whatever laws shall be framed to that rule, directed to that goal, bound by that limit, there is no reason why we should disapprove of them, however they may differ from the Jewish law, or among themselves.
- ▶ For the statement of some, that the law of God given through Moses is dishonored when it is abrogated and new laws preferred to it, is utterly vain.
- ▶ *Christians may use the law courts, but without hatred and revenge*
  - ▶ To very many the office of magistrate seems superfluous among Christians, because they cannot piously call upon them for help, inasmuch as it is forbidden to them to take revenge, so sue before a court, or to go to law.
  - ▶ But Paul clearly testifies to the contrary that the magistrates is minister of God for our good.
- ▶ *The Christian's motives in litigation*
  - ▶ Lawsuits are permissible if rightly used.
  - ▶ There is right use, if the defendant presents himself on the appointed day and with such exception, as he can, defendant presents himself on the appointed day and with such exception, as he can, defends himself without bitterness, but only with this intent, to defend what is his by right.
  - ▶ And if on the other hand, the plaintiff, undeservedly oppressed either in his person or in his property, puts himself in the care of the magistrate, makes his complaint, and seeks what is fair and good.
  - ▶ But he should be far from all passion to harm or take revenge, far from harshness and hatred, far from burning desire for contention.
  - ▶ On the other hand, where hearts are filled with malice, corrupted by envy, inflamed with wrath, breathing revenge, finally so inflamed with desire for contention, that love is somewhat impaired, the whole court actio of even the most just cause cannot but be impious.
  - ▶ A lawsuit, however just, can never be rightly prosecuted by any man, unless he treat his adversary with the same love and good will as if the business under controversy were already amicably settled and composed.
- ▶ *Against the rejection of the judicial process*
  - ▶ Those who strictly condemn all legal contentions repudiate God.
  - ▶ All Christians are forbidden to desire revenge.
- ▶ *The Christian endures insults, but with amity and equity defends the public interest*
  - ▶ Truly, Christians ought to be a kind of men born to bear slanders and injuries, open to the malice, deceits, and mockeries of wicked men.
  - ▶ So minded, they will not seek an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, as the Pharisees taught their disciples to desire revenge.

- ▶ But, as we are instructed by Christ, they will so suffer their body to be maimed, and their possessions to be maliciously seized, that they will forgive and voluntarily pardon those wrongs as soon as they have been inflicted upon them.
- ▶ Yet this equity and moderateness of their minds will not prevent them from using the help of the magistrate in preserving their own possessions, while maintaining friendliness toward their enemies.
- ▶ *Paul condemns a litigious spirit, but not all litigation*
  - ▶ The usual objection--that Paul has condemned lawsuits altogether--is also false. It can easily be understood from his words that there was an immoderate rage for litigation in the church of the Corinthians.
  - ▶ He rebuked them also for contending in this way among themselves, brethren with brethren.
  - ▶ But when any man sees that without loss of love he can defend his won property, the loss of which would be a heavy expense to him, he does not offend against this statement of Paul, if he has recourse to law.
- ▶ *(Obedience, with reverence, due even unjust rulers, 22-29) Deference*
  - ▶ The first duty of subjects toward their magistrates is to think most honorably of their office.
  - ▶ Subjects should be led not by fear alone princes and rulers to remain in subjection under them.
  - ▶ But because they are showing obedience to God himself when they give it to them; since the rulers' power is from God.
- ▶ *Obedience*
  - ▶ With hearts inclined to reverence their rulers, the subjects should prove their obedience toward them.
  - ▶ This may be by obeying their proclamations, or by paying taxes, or by undertaking public offices and burdens which pertain to the common defense, or by executing any other commands of theirs.
- ▶ *Obedience is also due the unjust magistrate*
  - ▶ But it is the example of nearly all ages that some princes are careless about all those things to which they ought to have given heed.
  - ▶ Others, intent upon their own business, put up for sale laws, privileges, judgments, and letters of favor.
  - ▶ This inborn feeling has always been in the minds of men to hate and curse tyrants as much as to love and venerate lawful kings.
- ▶ *The wicked ruler a judgment of God*
  - ▶ We are not only subject to the authority of princes who perform their office toward us uprightly and faithfully as they ought, but also to the authority of all who, by whatever means, have got control of affairs.
  - ▶ They who rule unjustly and incompetently have been raised up by him to punish the wickedness of the people.
- ▶ *Obedience to bad kings required in Scripture*

- ▶ I should like my readers to note and carefully observe that providence of God, which the Scriptures with good reason so often recall to us, and its special operation in distributing kingdoms and appointing what kings he pleases.
- ▶ The willfulness of kings will run to excess, but it will not be your part to restrain it; you will have only this left to you: to obey their commands and hearken to their word.
- ▶ *The case of Nebuchadnezzar in Jer., ch. 27*
  - ▶ We see how much obedience the Lord willed to be paid to that abominable and cruel tyrant for no other reason than that he possessed the kingship.
  - ▶ If we have continually present to our minds and before our eyes the fact that even the most worthless kings are appointed by the same decree by which the authority of all kings is established, those seditious thoughts will never enter our minds that a king should be treated according to his merits.
- ▶ *General testimonies of Scripture on the sanctity of the royal person*
  - ▶ It is vain for anyone to object that that command was peculiar to the Israelites.
  - ▶ Let us not doubt that we ought to serve him to whom it is evident that the kingdom has been given.
- ▶ *It is not the part of subjects but of God to vindicate the right*
  - ▶ We should learn not to examine the men themselves, but take it as enough that they bear, by the Lord's will, a character upon which he imprinted and engraved an inviolable majesty.
  - ▶ It is not for us to remedy such evils; that only this remains, to implore the Lord's help, in whose hand are the hearts of kings, and the changing of kingdoms.
- ▶ *(Constitutional magistrates, however, ought to check the tyranny of kings; obedience to God comes first, 30-31) When God intervenes, it is sometimes by unwitting agents*
  - ▶ Sometimes he raises up open avengers from among his servants, and arms them with his command to punish the wicked government and deliver his people, oppressed in unjust ways from miserable calamity.
  - ▶ Thus he delivered the people of Israel from the tyranny of Pharaoh Syria, through Othniel; and from other servitudes through other kings or judges.
- ▶ *Constitutional defenders of the people's freedom*
  - ▶ But however these deeds of men are judged in themselves, still the Lord accomplished his work through them alike when broke the bloody scepters of arrogant kings and when he overturned intolerable governments.
  - ▶ Let the princes hear and be afraid.
  - ▶ For, if the correction of unbridled despotism is the Lord's to avenge, let us not at once think that it is entrusted to us, to whom no command has been given except to obey and suffer.
  - ▶ I am speaking all the while of private individuals.
  - ▶ For if there are now any magistrates of the people, appointed to restrain the willfulness of kings.
  - ▶ I am so far from forbidding them to withstand, in accordance with their duty, the fierce licentiousness of kings.
- ▶ *Obedience to man must not become disobedience to God*

- ▶ In that obedience which we have shown to be due the authority of rulers, we are always to make this exception, indeed, to observe it as primary, that such obedience is never to lead us away from obedience to him.
- ▶ If they command anything against, let it go unesteemed.