

THEOLOGICAL AXIOMS I

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*Translated from the German
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Editor's Preface

As part of our Walther Bicentennial observance we are publishing what we believe to be the first English translation of Walther's *Theological Axioms*. As we were preparing this translation, we learned that a translation of the Latin text of the axioms is being prepared for Concordia Publishing House. We hope the two projects will complement each other. Our translation is primarily from the German, which is often not an exact translation of the Latin, since the German sometimes includes Walther's interpretations and comments.

These axioms were not written by Walther but were collected by him as part of his preparation for teaching his dogmatics class, which he taught in Latin on the basis of a Latin text. These axioms therefore provide insight into Walther's teaching methodology and into the points which he emphasized in his class.

This collection of axioms reminds the reader of the book of Proverbs. The axioms are best taken in small doses. Readers might want to read and ponder only one section of axioms at a sitting. Each saying is thought-provoking. The student must chew on them and digest them. Each statement presents only one side of a complex question. Statements are often supplemented by their neighbors.

The axioms are intended to lead readers into Scripture. They do not have independent validity. They flow from a study of Scripture. A correct understanding of the axioms depends on a knowledge of Scripture, not vice versa.

The axioms may form a basis for theological reflection and for discussion by pastors' study groups. As Walther concludes, "We leave it up to the readers themselves to weigh their rich and important meanings in their minds." (And, we would add, also their limitations.)

Walther's Preface

In the writings of the theologians, there is a multitude of constantly recurring statements, which comprise a complete summary of important truths in a few concise words and bear the name "theologi-

cal axioms.” To know these and, so to speak, always keep them in view, is of high importance for a theologian. They gather together the analogy of faith. Likewise, they form an excellent starting point for theological inquiry, safely regulating it. Also, to the less instructed they are a good touchstone of pure and false doctrine. They are a guide to keep one from going in circles, lost in the jungle of manifold error. They shine a bright light on every part of the theologian’s game. Yes, when compiled together, they could well be called a *theologia in nuce*.¹

They are often the result of hundreds of years of theological labor. They are the sound, adequate expression of truths that thousands had on the tip of their tongues. They are statements rich with meaning, which have withstood the most severe acid test. The great cloud of God’s orthodox teachers of the past have unreservedly placed the seal of their unanimous agreement under them. Originally spoken by only one theologian, each statement fell like a fire-kindling lightning bolt upon the hearts of all who read it and all responded with their own Yes and Amen.

To be sure, people commonly classify as theological axioms also certain paradoxes, which at first glance seem to be anything but settled truths and rather seem much more to be risky hypotheses, if not even self-contradictions. Nevertheless, there really are paradoxes like this that contain irrefutable truths and are just dressed up in the costume of a paradox in order to get you to think about them more, to help you remember them through the way in which they are expressed, and so to impress their truths more deeply and permanently upon your spirit.

According to that fundamental statement, “All things are yours,” even secular proverbs are at times used by theologians as theological axioms, reinterpreted and imputed with a higher meaning. Martin Chemnitz writes about this in his *Loci theologici*: “Summing up doctrine in brief statements and rules is useful for propping up memory and making things clear. For example: ‘God is not the author of sin’ or ‘The gospel does not annul the ordinances of worldly government.’ And you must pay careful attention to these rules (you may now call them axioms or theorems; the ancients called them canons) in every individual locus (point of doctrine). So then they govern one’s judgment of the doctrine of the entire locus.”²

Johann Gerhard writes further about this in his *Loci theologici*: “If some Scripture passages are obscure, taken by themselves and out of

¹“Theology in a nutshell.”

²Loc. th. fol.15. b.

context, it is either because of their topic or because of their words. If the obscurity is caused by the topic, the Holy Spirit will give enlightenment in response to earnest prayer. Alongside that help, it is useful to have at your fingertips certain and sure axioms concerning every point of Christian doctrine. These should serve like a guiding star and yardstick, with which your handling of such Scripture passages must line up. Such axioms can be called *Catechetica* or *Elementaria*. They are usually called theological rules. A faithful and hardworking expositor of Scripture could compile and order them according to theological *Loci* (points of doctrine).³

Up until now we have made our own private use of a list of such axioms in connection with our theological lectures. But we shared information about them with a brother, telling of their manifold appealing uses, and at the most recent general pastoral conference he made a motion calling for our list to be published in print. Since that is what happened, we are carrying out that request. Here is the result, and we hope that even our compilation, which is still very incomplete—taken from Luther, Chemnitz, Gerhard, Kromayer, Dannhauer, Calov, Quenstedt, Balduin, Scherzer, Hülsemann, Conr. Dietrich, Aug. Pfeiffer, et. al., as well as from the symbolical books and the church fathers—may be of some use to those much less knowledgeable than these men were.

We have followed the order which Johann Gerhard used to set up his *Loci*.

As for the selection, we hope nobody will wonder why so many of the axioms state truths that are so self-evident. For the mistake of the new theologians is not that they don't know the theological axioms, but that they don't heed them. Therefore it is necessary not just to read them once, but to have them constantly in front of your eyes.

Most of the axioms were originally written in Latin or even Greek. Very often they contain lovely wordplays, rich in sense, but only in their original dialect. So we also give them to you in their own languages, but then right underneath each one we put the German translation for the sake of those readers who have not mastered the Latin and Greek languages.⁴

Later we intend to give some tips as to the origin, correct understanding, and correct use of several of them. Until then, we leave it up

³Loc. th. de interp. S. S. §190

⁴The Latin and German texts were published in *Lehre und Wehre* between 1861 and 1864. For those who want to check the Latin and German texts a pdf file of the texts has been placed in the online essay file of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary under the headings Walther and *Theological Axioms*.

to the readers themselves to weigh their rich and important meanings in their minds.

I. About Theology

1. God's gift of theology is imparted by the Holy Spirit through the word and consists of a knack for putting one's understanding of the Bible to good use.⁵
2. Prayer, meditation, and tribulation make a theologian.
3. Understanding comes from believing, not believing from understanding.
4. Faith precedes understanding.
5. Theology is nothing other than a grammar for the words of the Holy Spirit.
6. It is unworthy of the sublimity of theology to share her house with foreign maidens.
7. He who invents new words at the same time also begets new articles of faith.
8. It is the manner of a modest spirit not only to believe what the church believes but also to speak the way the church speaks.
9. Bold faith will make you certain of what you don't grasp and of what you don't see.
10. The man of geometry has no business here.
11. The articles of faith you need to know for salvation are always the same.
12. Just as in philosophy, when you make a small mistake at the beginning, you end up with a very great and excessive error, so it goes in theology too, where a little error corrupts and adulterates the entire Christian doctrine.
13. Doctrine should be like a fine, unbroken gold ring which has no flaw or break in it, but as soon as a ring like that has one flaw or break, it is no longer unbroken.
14. Cursed to the depths of hell be that love which moves a person to accept harm and loss to the doctrines of the faith, for the sake of which everything else must be cast aside, be it love, an apostle, an angel from heaven, or whatever it may be.
15. When you deny God in one article of the faith, then you have certainly denied him in all of them.

⁵[Translator] Word for word (WFW): Theology is a God-given through-the-word imparted-by-the-Holy-Spirit readiness of understanding.

16. One word of God is all of God's word and in turn all of God's word is one. All the articles of our Christian faith are one and again one article is all of them, so it is certain that when one of them falls to the ground, they all fall, for they all depend on each other and belong together.

II. About the Holy Scripture, the Guiding Rule of Theology

1. Nothing except Scripture.
2. What we believe, we owe to authority; what we observe, to reason.
3. God's word makes articles of faith, and nobody else does, not even an angel.
4. Scripture is a stream an elephant can swim in and a lamb can wade across.
5. Every little pen-stroke in Scripture holds up mountains of doctrine.
6. Many things are in Scripture that are not stated in so many words.
7. What is clear gives nourishment; what is obscure, exercise; the former staves off hunger; the latter, boredom.
8. The church fathers were lights, not gods.
9. The church errs when it denies that the church can err.
10. The councils err when they deny that the councils can err.
11. The Hebrew student drinks from the source, the Greek student from the streams, the Latin student from the swamp.
12. The prophetic and apostolic Scriptures are the one rule and plumb line of the faith.
13. The highest judge in all controversies is the Spirit of God speaking with us through the Word.
14. The dogma of the canon is, strictly speaking, no article of faith.
15. Heretics quote the apostles' words, but not the way the apostles understood them.
16. Heresy is what you mean, not what you say.
17. When two people say the same thing, that doesn't make it the same thing.
18. When errorists have the majority, this does not justify their error.
19. Arrogance is the mother of heresy.
20. I can err, but that does not make me a heretic.
21. The philosophers are the ancestors of the heretic.

22. Nothing is more useful than reason, when she is a maidservant, or more dangerous, when she is mistress of the house; nothing is more beautiful when it follows or more harmful when it takes the lead.
23. You must throw away all the paraphernalia of papistic traditions.
24. I do not believe it, because I do not read it.
25. The spoken word passes away, the written letter lasts.
26. My highest principle is not, "Reason has spoken," but, "He has spoken."

III. About the Interpretation of Holy Scripture

1. In everything that is necessary for salvation, Scripture is plain and clear.
2. The general aim of all Scripture is Christ.
3. The literal is the true meaning of every Bible passage.
4. The literal meaning is what the writer meant.
5. Each individual passage has only one literal meaning.
6. The meaning that the letters spell out is not always the literal meaning.⁶
7. Only the literal meaning can be used to prove a point.
8. You should not set aside the meaning that the letters spell out unless you are forced to.
9. Scripture is its own interpreter.
10. You should set aside the meaning that the letters spell out when a clear parallel passage requires you to adopt a figurative meaning.
11. Every interpretation of Scripture must match with the Christian faith.
12. You should set aside the meaning that the letters spell out when the analogy of faith requires you to adopt a figurative meaning.
13. No Bible passage contradicts another.
14. You should set aside the meaning that the letters spell out when the subject matter requires you to adopt a figurative meaning.
15. When you take everything in context you will see that there are no contradictions in Scripture.

⁶WFW: The sense of the letters is not always the literal.—[Translator] That phrase "sense of the letters" comes up again in axioms 10, 12, 14, and 18. Each time I have translated it "the meaning that the letters spell out."

16. Every article of faith is stated somewhere in Scripture in literal and plain words.
17. What is to be believed about each doctrine is that which is said about it where it has its seat in Scripture.
18. You should especially not set aside the meaning the letters spell out in a passage that touches the heart of a topic, where an article of faith is treated in what is properly called its seat.
19. It is scrupulous to stay with what the letters spell out wherever the purpose of the passage is to put forward an article of faith.
20. Scripture cannot be understood theologically before it is understood grammatically.
21. The (alleged) mystical meaning (that is, the allegorical, typical, or parabolic meaning) is either the literal meaning of the scriptural words or it is not their meaning at all.
22. The allegorical, typical, and parabolic meaning cannot be used to prove a point unless the Holy Spirit himself has revealed that meaning.
23. All similar things are dissimilar to one another.
24. Do not stretch a comparison beyond the point the comparison was meant to make.
25. Be careful not to put meaning in, but to get it out.
26. In interpreting Scripture it is not enough to teach what the meaning could be, but what the meaning must be.
27. What is more obscure and brief should be explained by what is more lucid and thorough.
28. You must cling to the portions of Scripture that are free from obscurity and use them to unveil whatever is obscure.
29. It is not easy to bring anything to light from the obscure passages that is not found revealed in perfectly clear words in other passages.
30. It is doubtless true that some Scripture passages are obscure, but they don't tell you anything different from what is in other places in clear and candid passages.
31. Just be certain, without a doubt, that there is nothing brighter than the sun, that is, the Scriptures. If, however, a cloud passes in front of it, there is still nothing behind that cloud but the same bright sun. And so, in an obscure passage of Scripture do not doubt that behind it stands the same truth that in other places is clear. Whoever cannot understand the cloudy passages should stay in the sunny ones.

32. Heretics arise when men take hold of the obscure passages according to their own understanding and use them to fight against the clear passages and the first principles of the faith.
33. When Scripture describes God in human terms, it must be understood in a way that is worthy of God.
34. In the Old Testament you can find the New, but all locked up; in the New Testament you find the Old all unlocked.
35. The Old Testament is the foundation for the New, the New the fulfillment of the Old.
36. Moses is the ocean all the other prophets drew from. All the other prophets are sermons on his five books, and the New Testament is the fulfillment of the Old.
37. The letters on the page will not deceive you. Glistening glosses have deceived many. Put your weight on God's word and your path will be safe. Slippery reason turns its head to see every possible meaning, but you, Christian, read the words the way your Bible has them and you will make your heart firm and certain.
38. When Paul explains a Psalm as being about Christ, then no other interpretation is to be admitted, not even if given by an angel.
39. Often when the prophets talk about the future, they use the terminology of their own time.
40. Much has been prophesied that undoubtedly has already been fulfilled, although neither sacred nor secular history report how and when it was fulfilled.
41. An interpreter will find no better guide than Christ and his unerring disciples, who interpret in the New Testament very many prophecies of the Old Testament in the way that the Holy Spirit intended for them, and thereby they offer the keys to the correct understanding of so many other passages that you cannot count them.
42. Subjects can belong only to the species permitted by their predicates, yes, dictated by them.
43. Just as the shadow is in the Old Testament, so you should look for what the shadow signified in the New, not just for another symbol.

IV. About God

1. Every blade of grass reveals that God is present.
2. Stop wondering why nobody can see God without God's help; who can see the sun without the sun's help?
3. It is an obvious proof of unbelief when a person won't stop asking "How?" when it comes to God.

4. Reason knows there is one God, but doesn't know he is my God.
5. It is right to want to thoroughly investigate Scripture; it is wrong to want to thoroughly investigate God.
6. As the heathen did with their hands, heretics fabricate idols with their words.
7. Things do not happen because God foreknows them; rather, because the things will happen he foreknows them.
8. God's will is always done, either by us or against us.
9. Wherever God is present he is fully present, and there is not more of him in the biggest place or less of him in the smallest place.
10. God is inside all creatures but is certainly not encompassed by them, and he is outside all creatures but certainly not excluded.
11. God is a circle the center of which is everywhere; the circumference is nowhere.
12. God is his own place.
13. Nothing is in God that is not God.
14. When Scripture says God experienced emotions, you should understand that as saying that men began to experience the results of God's emotions.⁷
15. The attributes of the divine essence are the essence of God itself.
16. What it is to be begotten, what it is to proceed, I admit I don't know.
17. The Father always begets and the Son is always begotten. The Father and the Son always send out the Spirit and he always proceeds from them.
18. If one Person of the Trinity is spoken of as the greatest to the exclusion of all others, that only means to the exclusion of created things and made-up gods.
19. Lucifer's downfall is wanting to lay hold of God as a spirit without the clothing in which he has clothed himself, that is, apart from Christ's humanity and apart from the outward signs of baptism and the Holy Supper.
20. The works God does internally are divided, the works he does externally, are undivided.
21. In the Trinity there is someone and someone else, and the Persons must not be confused, but there is not something and something else, because according to their divine nature the three are one and the same.

⁷FWF: The emotions which are attributed to God in Scripture, are understood from results.

V. About Christ

1. With every name given to Christ in Scripture is given another divine and infallible testimony of his kind deeds.
2. Take the illnesses and take the wounds away and then there is no need for medicine.
3. If man had not fallen, then the Son of Man would not have come.
4. Christ is greater than himself and less than himself.
5. The divine nature has taken up; the human nature has been taken up.
6. The person of the Word has not taken up the person of a man, but rather the nature of a man.
7. In Christ there is something and something else, but not someone and someone else; in the divine essence there is someone and someone else, but not something and something else.
8. We do not say that a man has become a god, but that God has become a man.
9. You must not believe that after the incarnation happened the person of the Logos is ever separate from the flesh nor that the flesh is separate from the person of the Logos.
10. As soon as the flesh (of Christ) came into being it was the flesh of the divine Logos (the personal Word).
11. The divine nature was what made the human nature the Anointed One.
12. In Christ the natures are united, but not naturally; there is a personal union, but not a union of persons.
13. The union is real, but involves no change of essences.
14. What is said about Christ's person is exceptional (can be said of nothing else).
15. The union is not two-way, but the communication is.
16. The person has the attributes of each nature.
17. You must recognize that all that is said to have been given to Christ in time, has been given to him according to his human nature.
18. Whatever Christ has not taken up he has not redeemed.
19. The humiliation didn't take away what he possessed but what he used, and the exaltation did not mean he possessed more but used more.
20. He who is already the most exalted cannot be exalted further.

21. Not the Exalted One, but the flesh of the Exalted One, is exalted.
22. The exaltation does not pertain to that which took up, but to that which was taken up.
23. Acts and sufferings are things the whole person does.
24. God did not suffer according to the attributes of the divine nature, but according to the unity of the person.
25. In the work of the Mediator, each of the two natures was acting in communion with the other.
26. The payment Christ made was powerful for salvation even before he made it.
27. Whatever Christ has merited, he merited for us, not for himself.
28. In Christ's blood we are all blood relatives.
29. O happy guilt that required such and so great a Redeemer!
30. We have received more through Christ than we lost through Adam.
31. Christ was indeed a teacher of the law, but not a lawgiver.

VI. About Creation and the Angels

1. God is not made greater by our praises, but rather reveals himself by his works.
2. The universe is its Creator's mask.
3. Everything is made for humankind, and humankind is made for God.
4. A human being is a microcosm.
5. Before the first human being there were no human beings.
6. You want me to be specific about its nature? It is a spirit. You want me to be specific about its office? It is an angel [messenger].

VII. About Providence

1. Providence is the same miracle as creation all over again.⁸
2. If your heart were not full of foolishness, you wouldn't be a fatalist.
3. Man decides, God guides.
4. Divine might plays with men as with children.
5. Those over whom God speaks blessings are blessed.
6. It does not hurt us not to know where our souls come from so long as we are told how they are redeemed.

⁸Literally, "a second creation."

7. God is neither the author nor the cause of sin.
8. God would never allow a sin unless he knew his allowing it would produce some good result.
9. God punishes sins with sins.

VIII. About Predestination

1. God does nothing unless in eternity he resolved to do it, and there is nothing God resolved in eternity to do that he does not do.
2. What God does in time reveals what God resolved in eternity to do.
3. Predestination causes many to stand up, but no one to fall.
4. A sober consideration of predestination starts at the wounds of Christ.
5. Through the Son's wounds we see into the Father's heart.
6. God is not torn between two conflicting wills.
7. God wills nothing contrary to his revealed will or aside from his good pleasure.
8. God deserts no man who has not previously deserted him.
9. God hardens when he doesn't soften; he blinds when he doesn't enlighten.
10. Predestination is not a reward for works foreseen by God, but one given freely to those God chose in his grace.
11. Not because of our faith but through faith are we elected to eternal salvation.
12. To be sure, God has elected only those who will believe, but not because they will believe.
13. God has been moved by no human merit, by no worthiness of the human race, not even by foreseen works or foreseen faith, to elect people to eternal life; rather, this is exclusively to be ascribed to his unmerited and immeasurable grace alone.
14. The elect can indeed lose their faith completely, but not permanently.
15. Those elected fall forwards, those rejected backwards.
16. Don't look at a Christian's start, but at his finish.
17. God doesn't make the objects of his wrath, but finds them; he doesn't find the objects of his grace, but makes them.
18. God draws people to himself, but with the net of his Word.
19. Don't try to figure out what has not been assigned to you.

20. The teaching which changes comfort into wormwood is not from God.⁹
21. The will of God according to which he earnestly desires to convert and save all people has been testified to by Scripture with words, by Christ with tears, and by God himself with a sworn oath.

IX. About the Image of God in the State of Innocence

1. There is no such creature as a human being who is neither good nor evil; that is idle fancy.
2. Renewal gives us nothing but what had been lost in the first place.
3. Everything created is subject to change.
4. Man's condition at creation was that he could sin or not sin, after the fall he can do nothing but sin, and in perfection he will not be able to sin.
5. The first man's immortality was being able to avoid dying; the immortality of the elect is not being able to die.
6. What is co-created with man is something natural to him.
7. The man before the fall had knowledge and experience of present good; of absent evil no doubt he had knowledge but not experience.
8. They thought they had to cover nothing, because they felt nothing that had to be reined in.

X. About Original Sin

1. The stain begins sooner than the life.
2. The entire human being is the Decalogue inverted.
3. To have errors is human, and to confess your errors is wise.
4. We are not born Christians, but made into Christians.
5. It would be a malevolent benevolence for someone to wish a person misery in order to be able to have mercy on him.
6. Adam was, and in him we all were; Adam fell, and in him we all fell.
7. Where the law did not discriminate, we also may not discriminate.
8. Original guilt is someone else's, because we all sinned in Adam without knowing it; it is ours because, although we sinned in someone else, we ourselves surely sinned; and by God's judgment we are rightly charged with it, although this is inscrutable to us.

⁹The word is "Wermuth," which could be wormwood or vermouth: the point is, it's bitter.

9. Because the human race has a dried up root in its first father, all its twigs are dried up too.
10. Where an exception is made, the rule is confirmed for every case that was not excepted.

XI. About Actual Sins

1. Sin is a lack or an inclination or an action which conflicts with God's law and makes the creature deserving of eternal wrath unless forgiveness is given on account of a mediator.
2. The seriousness of a sin is estimated in relation to the object that is sinned against.
3. Sin is an infinite affront to an infinite good.
4. No sin is venial in itself and by nature.
5. There is a difference between considering sin in relation to the law and in relation to the gospel.
6. Mortal sin and sin unto death are different: the former merits death, the latter actually and inescapably brings death on.
7. Every sin of the unregenerate, even the smallest sin, is actually mortal, that is, a mortal sin.
8. For anyone who does not believe in Christ, not only all of that person's sins are mortal, but all his good works are too.
9. The righteous sin in every good work.
10. All sins, even the smallest and those that stay in the heart, even those found in the regenerate, are by nature and in themselves mortal sins, when considered in relation to the law.
11. Therefore it is an injurious error of the Sophists to distinguish between sins *secundum substantiam facti*, that is, depending on what the sin is in and of itself, instead of depending on whether the person is a believer or an unbeliever. The believer has just as big sins as an unbeliever. With the believer they are surely forgiven and not counted against him. But with the unbeliever they are retained and counted against him. So then what is a forgivable sin for the believer is a mortal sin for the unbeliever, not that there is a distinction on account of the sin itself and the believer's sin is smaller and less serious than the unbeliever's; rather, there is a distinction between the persons. For through faith the believer is certain that his sin is forgiven on account of Christ, since Christ sacrificed himself for that sin. Therefore, although he has sinned, he remains a man blessed by God. In contrast, the unbeliever remains godless.

12. For us who believe, not only the misfortune we suffer and the mistreatment from others, but also the evil we ourselves do, has to work out for good.
13. Sin is something that happens in and with a person's will, even if it does not always happen willingly.
14. Not all sins are alike.
15. To sin for pleasure is a graver offense than to sin out of need.
16. No matter what the sin is, it is all the more deserving of punishment the higher the standing is of the person who sins.
17. The outcry for these sins reaches heaven: spilt blood, that of the Sodomites, and when the oppressed are not paid for their work.
18. No sin is unforgivable because of the kind of sin it is or how God views it, but because of the person who commits it.
19. The sin against the Holy Spirit is unforgivable not so much in respect to the person of the Holy Spirit himself, but in respect to his office and his gracious work.
20. You should not thoughtlessly say that anyone has committed the sin against the Holy Spirit; you can only make that judgment after the fact, namely when the person's impenitence lasted to the end.
21. Many things are sins in themselves; many on account of other circumstances that come up.
22. Sin reproduces; once it starts it doesn't stop.
23. Whatever you have someone else do for you, you better believe that you yourself are the one who did it.
24. The following are the ways you take part in someone else's sin: when you advise it, command it, give your assent to it, provoke it, praise it, do not reveal a crime, do not punish it, do not rebuke it, or justify it instead of resisting it.
25. Every sin wants to be boss.¹⁰
26. Whoever acts contrary to an erring conscience does what is right, but does not act rightly.

XII. About Free Will

1. The will as such acts freely.
2. To say that the will is not free is just as if someone tried to say that warmth is not warm.

¹⁰WFW: As many sins, so many masters.

3. If you are considering freedom from compulsion, then human beings have always had a free will, even after the fall; if you are considering freedom from necessity, then human beings have never had free will, not even before the fall, nor have the angels either.
4. After the fall human beings have not been robbed of understanding, but of the light by which things are understood, nor of the will, but of the soundness of the will.
5. True freedom is to be a slave to righteousness.
6. The will acts freely after the fall, not by compulsion.
7. Toward God or in things that pertain to salvation and damnation, human beings have no free will, but are prisoners: subjects and slaves either to the will of God or to the will of the devil.
8. After the fall, free will is an empty title.
9. After sin, free will is something that exists in name only; and when it does all it can, it sins mortally.
10. The will acts in such a way that it can neither avoid necessity nor use it as an excuse, for it is, so to speak, a voluntary necessity.
11. The evil I have is completely evil and it is mine, but the good I have is neither completely good nor mine.
12. Without God's light there is nothing (good) in a human being.
13. From the fact that human beings are obliged to do something, it cannot be concluded that they are in any condition to do it.
14. From the fact that human beings are commanded to do something, the conclusion can not be drawn that they can do what is commanded.
15. When human beings refused service to God the Creator, they lost their dominion over creation.

To Be Continued
