

Apology Article II (I): Of Original Sin.

1] The Second Article, *Of Original Sin*, the adversaries approve, but in such a way that they, nevertheless, censure the definition of original sin, which we incidentally gave. ...

2] ... **“It is further taught that since the Fall of Adam all men who are naturally born are conceived and born in sin, *i.e.*, that they all, from their mother’s womb, are full of evil desire and inclination, and can have by nature no true fear of God, no true faith in God.”**

3] This passage testifies that we deny to those propagated according to carnal nature not only the acts, but also the power or gifts of producing fear and trust in God. For we say that those thus born have concupiscence, and cannot produce true fear and trust in God....

5] For some contend that original sin is not a depravity or corruption in the nature of man, but only servitude, or a condition of mortality [not an innate evil nature, but only a blemish or imposed load, or burden], which those propagated from Adam bear because of the guilt of another [namely, Adam’s sin], and without any depravity of their own. ... 6] To show that this impious opinion is displeasing to us, we made mention of “*concupiscence*,” and, with the best intention, have termed and explained it as “*diseases*,” that “*the nature of men is born corrupt and full of faults*” [not a part of man, but the entire person with its entire nature is born in sin as with a hereditary disease]

7] Nor, indeed, have we only made use of the term concupiscence, but we have also said that “*the fear of God and faith are wanting*.” This we have added with the following design: **The scholastic teachers also, not sufficiently understanding the definition of original sin, which they have received from the Fathers, extenuate the sin of origin. They contend concerning the *fomes* [or evil inclination] that it is a quality of [blemish in the] body,** and, with their usual folly, ask whether this quality be derived from the contagion of the apple or from the breath of the serpent, and whether it be increased by remedies. With such questions they have suppressed the main point. 8] Therefore, when they speak of the sin of origin, they do not mention the more serious faults of human nature, to wit, **ignorance of God, contempt for God, being destitute of fear and confidence in God, hatred of God’s judgment, flight from God [as from a tyrant] when He judges, anger toward God, despair of grace, putting one’s trust in present things [money, property, friends], etc.** These diseases, which are in the highest degree contrary to the Law of God, **the scholastics do not notice; yea, to human nature they meanwhile ascribe unimpaired strength for loving God above all things, and for fulfilling God’s commandments according to the substance of the acts,** nor do they see 9] that they are saying things that are contradictory to one another. For what else is the being able in one’s own strength to love God above all things, and to fulfil His commandments, than to have original righteousness [to be a new creature in Paradise, entirely pure and holy]? 10] **But if human nature have such strength as to be able of itself to love God above all things as the scholastics confidently affirm,** what will *original sin* be? For what will there be need of the grace of Christ if we can be justified by our own righteousness [powers]? For what will there be need of the Holy Ghost if human strength can by itself 11] love God above all things, and fulfil God’s commandments? Who does not see what preposterous thoughts our adversaries entertain? The lighter diseases in the nature of man they acknowledge, the more severe they do not acknowledge; and yet of these, Scripture everywhere admonishes us, and the prophets constantly complain [as the 13th Psalm, and some other psalms say, Ps. 14, 1–3; 5, 9; 140, 3; 36, 1], namely, of carnal security, of the contempt of God, of hatred toward God, and of similar faults born with us. [For Scripture clearly says that all these things are not blown at us, but born with us.] 12] **But after the scholastics mingled with Christian doctrine philosophy concerning the**

perfection of nature [light of reason], and ascribed to the free will and the acts springing therefrom more than was sufficient, and taught that men are justified before God by philosophic or civil righteousness (which we also confess to be subject to reason, and, in a measure, within our power), they could not see the inner 13] uncleanness of the nature of men. For this cannot be judged except from the Word of God, of which the scholastics, in their discussions, do not frequently treat....

23] Therefore the ancient definition, when it says that sin is the lack of righteousness, not only denies obedience with respect to man's lower powers [that man is not only corrupt in his body and its meanest and lowest faculties], but also denies the knowledge of God, confidence in God, the fear and love of God or certainly the power to produce these affections [the light in the heart which creates a love and desire for these matters]....

43] ... But in the schools they transferred hither from philosophy notions entirely different, that, because of passions, we are neither good nor evil, we are neither deserving of praise nor blame. Likewise, that nothing is sin, unless it be voluntary [inner desires and thoughts are not sins, if I do not altogether consent thereto]. These notions were expressed among philosophers with respect to civil righteousness, and not with respect to God's judgment. [For there it is true, as the jurists say, *L. cogitationis*, thoughts are exempt from custom and punishment. But God searches the hearts; in God's court and judgment it is different.] With no greater prudence they add also other notions, such as, that [God's creature and] nature is not [cannot in itself be] evil. In its proper place we do not censure this; but it is not right to twist it into an extenuation of original sin. And, nevertheless, these notions are read in the works of scholastics, who inappropriately mingle philosophy or civil doctrine concerning ethics with the Gospel. 44] Nor were these matters only disputed in the schools, but, as is usually the case, were carried from the schools to the people. And these persuasions [godless, erroneous, dangerous, harmful teachings] prevailed, and nourished confidence in human strength, and suppressed the knowledge of Christ's grace. 45] Therefore, Luther wishing to declare the magnitude of original sin and of human infirmity [what a grievous mortal guilt original sin is in the sight of God], taught that these remnants of original sin [after Baptism] are not, by their own nature, adiaphora in man, but that, for their non-imputation, they need the grace of Christ and, likewise for their mortification, the Holy Ghost.

46] Although the scholastics extenuate both sin and punishment when they teach that man, by his own strength, can fulfil the commandments of God; in Genesis the punishment, imposed on account of original sin, is described otherwise. For there human nature is subjected not only to death and other bodily evils, but also to the kingdom of the devil. For there, Gen. 3, 15, this fearful sentence is proclaimed: *I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed.* 47] The defects and the concupiscence are punishments and sins. Death and other bodily evils, and the dominion of the devil, are properly punishments. For human nature has been delivered into slavery and is held captive by the devil, who infatuates it with wicked opinions and errors, and 48] impels it to sins of every kind. But just as the devil cannot be conquered except by the aid of Christ, so by our own strength we cannot free ourselves 49] from this slavery.

Apology IV. (II.) of the Augsburg Confession: Justification

Augsburg Confession, IV. [Justification]

¹ It is also taught among us that we cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions, but that we receive forgiveness of sin and become righteous before God by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, ² when we believe that Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us. ³ For God will regard and reckon this faith as righteousness, as Paul says in Romans 3:21-26 and 4:5.

Righteousness through Faith in Christ

Romans 3:21-26 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, ²²even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; ²³for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, ²⁴being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, ²⁵whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, ²⁶to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Romans 4:5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

The Apology to the Augsburg Confession: Article IV: Of Justification.

1] In the Fourth, Fifth, Sixth, and, below, in the Twentieth Article, **they condemn us, for teaching that men obtain remission of sins not because of their own merits, but freely for Christ's sake, through faith in Christ.** [They reject quite stubbornly both these statements.] For they condemn us both for denying that men obtain remission of sins because of their own merits, and for affirming that, through faith, men obtain remission of sins, and through faith in Christ 2] are justified. But since in this controversy **the chief topic of Christian doctrine is treated**, which, **understood aright, illumines and amplifies the honor of Christ [which is of especial service for the clear, correct understanding of the entire Holy Scriptures, and alone shows the way to the unspeakable treasure and right knowledge of Christ, and alone opens the door to the entire Bible], and brings necessary and most abundant consolation to devout consciences**, we ask His Imperial Majesty to hear us with forbearance in regard to matters of such importance. 3] For since the adversaries understand neither what the remission of sins, nor what faith, nor what grace, nor what righteousness is, they sadly corrupt this topic, and obscure the glory and benefits of Christ, and rob devout consciences of the consolations offered in Christ....

5] **All Scripture ought to be distributed into these two principal topics, the Law and the promises.** For in some places it presents the Law, and in others the promise concerning Christ, namely, either when [in the Old Testament] it promises that Christ will come, and offers, for His sake, the remission of sins justification, and life eternal, or when, in the Gospel [in the New Testament], Christ Himself, since He has appeared, promises the remission of sins, justification, and life eternal. 6] Moreover, in this discussion, by Law we designate the Ten Commandments, wherever they are read in the Scriptures. Of the ceremonies and judicial laws of Moses we say nothing at present.

The Apology, Article IV, 53-56

53] As often, therefore, as we speak of justifying faith, we must keep in mind that **these three objects** concur:

- (A) the *promise*, and that, too, *gratuitous*,
- (B) and the *merits of Christ, as the price and propitiation*.
- (C) The promise is received by faith;

- (A) the “gratuitous” excludes our merits, and signifies that the benefit is offered only through mercy;
- (B) the merits of Christ are the price, because there must be a certain propitiation for our sins. 54] Scripture frequently implores mercy; and the holy Fathers often say that we 55] are saved by mercy. As often, therefore, as mention is made of mercy,
- (C) we must keep in mind that faith is there required, which receives the promise of mercy. And, again, as often as we speak of faith, we wish an object to be understood, namely, the promised mercy. 56] For faith justifies and saves, not on the ground that it is a work in itself worthy, but only because it receives the promised mercy.

40] ... **the promise of the remission of sins and of justification has been given us for Christ's sake**, who was given for us in order that He might make satisfaction for the sins of the world, and has been appointed as the [only] 41] Mediator and Propitiator. And this promise has **not the condition of our merits** [it does not read thus: Through Christ you have grace, salvation etc., if you merit it], but **freely offers the remission of sins and justification** as Paul says Rom. 11, 6: *If it be of works, then is it no more grace.*

...(A) by grace, (B) for Christ's sake, (C) through faith...

The Roman Confutation IV.¹

In the fourth article the condemnation of the Pelagians², who thought that man can merit eternal life by his own powers **without the grace of God**, is accepted as Catholic and in accordance with the ancient canons, for the Holy Scriptures expressly testify to this.... 3. For if anyone would intend to disapprove of **the merits that men acquire by the assistance of divine grace**, he would agree with the Manichaeans³ rather than with the Catholic Church. For it is entirely contrary to Holy Scripture to deny that **our works are meritorious**.... 4.For where there are wages there is merit.... 6. Nevertheless, all Catholics confess that our works of themselves have **no merit, but that God's grace makes them worthy of eternal life**....

¹ *The Confutatio Pontificia*: edited by J.M. Reu. Published in The Augsburg Confession, A Collection of Sources. (Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press), pp. 349-383.

² Article II of Augsburg Confession, “They condemn the Pelagians and others who deny that original depravity is sin, and who, to obscure the glory of Christ's merit and benefits, argue that man can be justified before God by his own strength and reason.”

³ Apology of AC, XVIII, Free Will, 67-69, “They add also a declamation that neither, with the Pelagians, is too much to be granted to the free will, nor, with the Manicheans, is all freedom to be denied it. Very well; but **what difference is there between the Pelagians and our adversaries**, since both hold that **without the Holy Ghost men can love God and perform God's commandments with respect to the substance of the acts, and can merit grace and justification by works** which reason performs by itself, without the Holy Ghost? How many absurdities follow from these Pelagian opinions, which are taught with great authority in the schools!”

The Roman Confutation V.

...The mention, however, that they here make of faith is approved **so far as not Faith alone, which some incorrectly teach, but faith which worketh by love, is understood**, as the apostle teaches aright in Gal 5:3. **For in baptism there is an infusion, not of faith alone, but also, at the same time, of hope and love**, as Pope Alexander declares in the canon Majores concerning baptism and its effect; which John the Baptist also taught long before, saying, Luke 3:16: “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire.”

The Roman Confutation VI.

Their Confession in the sixth article that faith should bring forth good fruits is acceptable and valid since “faith without works is dead,” James 2:17..., and all Scripture invites us to works....

But in the same article **their ascription of justification to faith alone is diametrically opposite the truth of the Gospel by which works are not excluded**; because glory, honor and peace to every man that worketh good,” Rom. 2:10.

On this account their frequent ascription of justification to faith is not admitted since it pertains to grace and love. For St. Paul says: “Though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains and have not charity, I am nothing.” 1 Cor. 13:2. Here St. Paul certifies to the princes and the entire Church that **faith alone does not justify. Accordingly he teaches that love is the chief virtue**, Col. 3:14: “Above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness.”

Neither are they supported by the word of Christ: “When ye shall have done all these things, say We are unprofitable servants,” Luke 17:10. For if the doors ought to be called unprofitable, how much more fitting is it to say to those who only believe, When ye shall have believed all things say, We are unprofitable servants! **This word of Christ, therefore, does not extol faith without works, but teaches that our works bring no profit to God; that no one can be puffed up by our works; that, when contrasted with the divine reward, our works are of no account and nothing.** Thus St. Paul says: “I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared to the glory which shall be revealed in us,” Rom. 8:18. **For faith and good works are gifts of God, whereby, through God’s mercy, eternal life is given....**

The Roman Confutation XX.

¹ In the twentieth article, which does not contain so much the confession of the princes and cities as the defense of the preachers, there is only one thing that pertains to the princes and cities – viz. **concerning good works, that they do not merit the remission of sins, which, as it has been rejected and disapproved before, is also rejected and disapproved now. ...**

Nor by this do we reject Christ’s merit but we know that our works are nothing and of no merit unless by virtue of Christ’s passion. We know that Christ is “the way, the truth and the life,”. John 14:6. But Christ, as the Good Shepherd, who “began to do and teach,” Acts 1:1, has given us an example that as he has done we also should do, John 13:15. He also went through the desert by the way of good works, which all Christians ought to pursue, and according to his command bear the cross and follow him. Matt. 10:38; 16:24. He who bears not the cross, neither is nor can be Christ’s disciple. That also is true which John says: “He that saith he abideth in him ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked,” 1 John 2:6. **Moreover, this opinion concerning good works was condemned and rejected more than a thousand years ago in the time of Augustine.**

	Scriptural	Roman
Original Sin		
Gospel Promise		
Grace Mercifully		
Initial Grace		
Merits of Christ		
Remission of Sins (Justification)		
My Merits Congruity		
Condignity		
Other Rewards		
Faith History		
Justifying		
Working Through Love		
Righteousness Civil (Of Reason)		
Of Justification		
Of Sanctification		
Love (Works) After forgiveness		
Before forgiveness		