

## Article XIX: Of the Cause of Sin.

77] The Nineteenth Article the adversaries receive, in which we confess that, although God only and alone has framed all nature, and preserves all things which exist, yet (He is not the cause of sin, but]

**the cause of sin is**

**A. the will in the devil and**

**B. men turning itself away from God,** according to the saying of Christ concerning the devil, John 8, 44: *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.*

### **Roman Confutation,** to Article XIX

The nineteenth article is likewise approved and accepted. For God, the supremely good, is not the author of evils, but the rational and defectable will is the cause of sin; Wherefore let no one impute his misdeeds and crimes to God, but to himself, according to Jer. 2 [19]: "Thine own wickedness shall correct thee, and thy backslidings shall reprove thee;" and Hos. 13 [9]; "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself; but in me is thy help." And David in the spirit acknowledged that God is not one that hath pleasure in wickedness, Ps. 5 [4].

### **Apology** of the Augsburg Confession, Article XIX

77] The Nineteenth Article the adversaries receive, in which we confess that, although God only and alone has framed all nature, and preserves all things which exist, yet (He is not the cause of sin, but] the cause of sin is the will in the devil and men turning itself away from God, according to the saying of Christ concerning the devil, John 8, 44: *When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own.*

### **The Cause of Sin is**

#### **1. The devil.**

John 8:44, "You are of *your* father the devil, and the desires of your father you want to do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and *does not* stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own *resources*, for he is a liar and the father of it.

2 Corinthians 11:3, "But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ.

Matthew 16:23, "But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men.'"

John 13:2, "And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him...."

#### **2. Man himself**

Matthew 15:19, "For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies."

Matthew 18:7, "Woe to the world because of offenses! For offenses must come, but woe to that man by whom the offense comes!"

1 John 3:7-8, "Little children, let no one deceive you. He who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous. 8He who sins is of the devil, for the devil has sinned from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that He might destroy the works of the devil."

2 Thessalonians 2:9-12, “The coming of the *lawless one* is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders,<sup>10</sup> and with all unrighteous deception among those who perish, because they did not receive the love of the truth, that they might be saved.<sup>11</sup> And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie,<sup>12</sup> that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.”

**Although we are held responsible, we try to blame God or the devil.**

Genesis 3:12-13, “Then the man said, ‘The woman whom You gave *to be* with me, she gave me of the tree, and I ate.’<sup>13</sup> And the LORD God said to the woman, ‘What *is* this you have done?’ The woman said, ‘The serpent deceived me, and I ate.’”

Genesis 3:16-18, *Though seduced by the devil, Adam and Eve are held responsible and punished for their sin.*

Acts 1:18, “Now this man {Judas} purchased a field with the wages of iniquity; and falling headlong, he burst open in the middle and all his entrails gushed out.”

**“Hence man remains, as the dogmaticians express it, the *subiectum quod peccati*, active and responsible,** even though he was originally seduced by Satan and is today (as long as he is without faith in Christ) wholly ruled by Satan (Col 1:13) and cannot refrain from sinning (Rom 8:7)” (*Christian Dogmatics*, I, p.534).

**Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, Article XI. Of God’s Eternal Foreknowledge [Predestination] and Election**

**78]** But the reason why not all who hear it believe, and some are therefore condemned the more deeply [eternally to severer punishments], is not because God had begrudged them their salvation; but it is their own fault, as they have heard the Word in such a manner as not to learn, but only to despise, blaspheme, and disgrace it, and have resisted the Holy Ghost, who through the Word wished to work in them, as was the case at the time of Christ with the Pharisees and their adherents. **79]** Hence the apostle distinguishes with especial care the work of God, who alone makes vessels of honor, and the work of the devil and of man, who by the instigation of the devil, and not of God, has made himself a vessel of dishonor. For thus it is written, Rom. 9, 22f : *God endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had afore prepared unto glory.*

**80]** Here, then, the apostle clearly says that God *endured* with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, but does not say that He *made* them vessels of wrath; for if this had been His will, He would not have required any great long-suffering for it. The fault, however, that they are fitted for destruction belongs to the devil and to men themselves, and not to God.

**81]** For all preparation for condemnation is by the devil and man, through sin, and in no respect by God, who does not wish that any man be damned; how, then, should He Himself prepare any man for condemnation? For as God is not a cause of sins, so, too, He is no cause of punishment, of damnation; but the only cause of damnation is sin; for *the wages of sin is death*, Rom. 6, 23. And as God does not will sin, and has no pleasure in sin, so He does not wish *the death of the sinner either*, Ezek. 33, 11, nor has He pleasure in his condemnation. For He is not willing *that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance*, 2 Pet. 3, 9. So, too, it is

written in Ezek. 18, 23; 33, 11: *As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.* **82]** And St. Paul testifies in clear words that from vessels of dishonor vessels of honor may be made by God's power and working, when he writes thus, 2 Tim. 2, 21: *If a man, therefore, purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work.* For he who is to purge himself must first have been unclean, and hence a vessel of dishonor. But concerning the vessels of mercy he says clearly that the Lord Himself has prepared them for glory, which he does not say concerning the damned, who themselves, and not God, have prepared themselves as vessels of damnation.

**83]** Moreover, it is to be diligently considered that when God punishes sin with sins, that is, when He afterwards punishes with obduracy and blindness those who had been converted, because of their subsequent security, impenitence, and wilful sins, this should not be interpreted to mean that it never had been God's good pleasure that such persons should come to the knowledge of the truth and be saved. For both these facts are God's revealed will:

First, that God will receive into grace all who repent and believe in Christ.

Secondly, that He also will punish those who willfully turn away from the holy commandment, and again entangle themselves in the filth of the world, 2 Pet. 2, 20, and garnish their hearts for Satan, Luke 11, 25f, and do despite unto the Spirit of God, Heb. 10, 29, and that they shall be hardened, blinded, and eternally condemned if they persist therein.