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# A COMPEND OF LUTHER'S THEOLOGY

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*Man*



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# Man



## I. WHAT IS MAN?

**M**AN has a twofold nature, a spiritual and a bodily. According to the spiritual nature, which men call the soul, he is called a spiritual, or inner, or new man; according to the bodily nature, which men call the flesh, he is called a carnal, or outward, or old man, of whom the Apostle writes, in II Cor. iv, "Though our outward man is corrupted, yet the inward man is renewed day by day." Because of this diversity of nature the Scriptures assert contradictory things of the same man, since these two men in the same man contradict each other, since the flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh (Gal. v).

— "*A Treatise on Christian Liberty*," Works of Martin Luther, Vol. II, p. 313.

The Scriptures assign three parts to man, as St. Paul says in I Thessalonians v, "The God of peace sanctify you wholly, that your whole spirit, and soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (There is yet another division of each of these three, and the whole of man, into two parts, which are called spirit and flesh. This is a division not of the nature of man, but of his qualities. The nature of man consists of

the three parts — spirit, soul and body; and all of these may be good or evil, that is, they may be spirit or flesh. But we are not now dealing with this division.)

The first part, the spirit, is the highest, deepest and noblest part of man. By it he is enabled to lay hold on things incomprehensible, invisible, and eternal. It is, in brief, the dwelling-place of faith and the Word of God. Of it David speaks in Psalm li, "Lord, create in my inward parts a right spirit" — that is, a straight and upright faith. But of the unbelieving he says, in Psalm lxxviii, "Their heart was not right with God, nor was their spirit faithful to him."

The second part, or the soul, is this same spirit, so far as its nature is concerned, but viewed as performing a different function, namely, giving life to the body and working through the body. In the Scriptures it is frequently put for the life; for the soul may live without the body, but the body has no life apart from the soul. Even in sleep the soul lives and works without ceasing. It is its nature to comprehend not incomprehensible things, but such things as the reason can know and understand. Indeed, reason is the light in this dwelling, and unless the spirit, which is lighted with the brighter light of faith, controls this light of reason, it cannot but be in error. For it is too feeble to deal with things divine. To these two parts of man the Scriptures ascribe many things, such as wisdom and knowledge — wisdom to the spirit, knowledge to the soul; likewise hatred and love, delight and horror, and the like.

The third part is the body with its members. Its work is but to carry out and apply that which the soul knows and the spirit believes.

Let us take an illustration of this from Holy Scripture. In the tabernacle fashioned by Moses there were three separate compartments. The first was called the holy of holies: here was God's dwelling-place, and in it there was no light. The second was called the holy place: here stood a candlestick with seven arms and seven lamps. The third was called the outer court: this lay under the open sky and in the full light of the sun. In this tabernacle we have a figure of the Christian man. His spirit is the holy of holies, where God dwells in the darkness of faith, where no light is; for he believes that which he neither sees nor feels nor comprehends.

His soul is the holy place, with its seven lamps, that is, all manner of reason, discrimination, knowledge and understanding of visible and bodily things. His body is the forecourt, open to all, so that men may see his works and manner of life.

— "*The Magnificat*," Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. III*, pp. 132 f.

The mere corporeal or animal life of man was designed to resemble, in a great measure, the life of the beasts of the creation. Because, as beasts require food, drink and sleep for the refreshment and restoration of their bodies; so Adam was designed also to use these things, even in his state of innocence. But that which Moses moreover affirms, — that man was so created unto this animal life that he was also "*made*" in the "*image*" and "*after the likeness*" of God, — this is a manifest indication of a life different from, and far above, a mere animal life.

Adam was endowed therefore with a twofold life; an animal, and an immortal life. The latter however was not as yet plainly revealed, but held in hope. Had he not fallen by sin therefore, he would have eaten and drunk, and worked, and generated, in all innocence, sinlessness, and happiness.

— Commentary on Genesis, pp. 83 f.

## 2. THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN

There is here agitated a whole sea of questions; — as to what that "*image*" of God was in which Moses here says that man was formed. Augustine has dwelt largely on the explanation of this passage, in his book "*On the Trinity*." Those divines in general, who retain the *division* and *definition* of Aristotle, follow Augustine. They consider the image of God to be those powers of soul, — memory, mind, or intellect, and will. They affirm, that the image of God consists in these *three* qualities: which image (they say) is found in all men. And their argument is, that as, in divine things, the Word is begotten of the substance of the Father; and as the Holy Spirit is the complacency or good pleasure of the Father; so, in man, from the memory proceeds the word of the heart; which is the mind of the man: which word being uttered, there is devel-



oped the will; which will the mind beholds, and with which it is delighted.

These divines affirm, moreover, that "the similitude," after which man was formed, stands in gratuitous gifts. For as a similitude is a certain perfectness of an image; so (they say) the created nature of man is perfected by grace. According to their views, therefore, the "similitude" of God, in man, consists in his memory being adorned with hope, his intellect with faith, and his will with love. It is in this manner (they assert) that man is created in the image of God; — that man has a mind, a memory, and a will. Again, they state the sacred matter thus; — Man is created after the "similitude" of God; that is, his intellect is illuminated by faith, his memory is confirmed by hope and constancy, and his will is adorned with love. . . .

Divines make also other divisions and definitions of the qualities of this "image" of God, in which man was originally created. They hold that memory is the image of the power of God, mind the image of His wisdom, and will the image of His justice. It was after this manner that Augustine, and after him others, bent their minds on the discovery of certain *trinities* of natural qualities or endowments, in man. For they thought that, by this mode of explanation, the image of God in man would be the more clearly seen. These not unpleasing speculations do, indeed, argue deep employment and great acuteness of mental ability, but they by no means aid the right explanation of this "image" of God. . . .

I fear, however, that since this "image of God" has been lost by sin, we can never fully attain to the knowledge of what it was. Memory, mind, and will, we do most certainly possess; but wholly corrupted, and most miserably weakened; nay, (that I may speak with greater plainness,) utterly leprous, and unclean. If these natural endowments therefore constitute the image of God, it will inevitably follow, that Satan also was created in the image of God; for he possesses all these natural qualities; and, to an extent and strength, far beyond our own. For he has a memory and intellect the most powerful, and a will the most obstinate.

The image of God therefore is something far different from all this. It is a peculiar work of God. If there be those however who are yet disposed to contend, that the above natural endowments

and powers do constitute the image of God; they must of necessity confess, that they are all leprous and unclean. Even as we still call a leprous man a man, though all the parts of his leprous flesh be stupefied and dead, as it were, with disease, except that his whole nature is vehemently excited to lust.

Wherefore that image of God in which Adam was created was a workmanship the most beautiful, the most excellent, and the most noble, while as yet no leprosy of sin adhered either to his reason or to his will. Then all his senses, both internal and external, were the most perfect and the most pure. His intellect was most clear, his memory most complete, and his will the most sincere, and accompanied with the most charming security, without any fear of death and without any care or anxiety whatsoever. To these internal perfections of Adam was added a power of body, and of all his limbs, so beautiful and so excellent, that therein he surpassed all other animate natural creatures. For I fully believe that, before his sin, the eyes of Adam were so clear and their sight so acute, that his powers of vision exceeded those of the lynx. Adam, I believe, being stronger than they, handled lions and bears, whose strength is so great, as we handle the young of any animal. I believe also that to Adam the sweetness and the virtue of the fruits which he ate were far beyond our enjoyment of them now.

After the fall, however, death crept in, like a leprosy, over all the senses. So that now, we cannot reach the comprehension of this image of God by our intellect, nor even in thought. Adam, moreover, in his innocency, could not have known his wife Eve, but with the most pure and confident mind towards God; with a will the most obedient to God, and with a soul the most free from all impurity of thought. But now, since the sin of the fall, all know how great is the excitement of the flesh; which is not only furious in concupiscence, but also in disgust, after it has satisfied its desire. In neither case, therefore, is either the reason, or the will, sound or whole. Both are fallen and corrupt. And the fury of the desire is more brutish than human. Is not this our leprosy, then, grievous and destructive? But of all this Adam knew nothing, before the sin of his fall. His only peculiarity then was, that he had greater powers, and more acute and exquisite senses, than any other living creature. But now, how far does the wild boar exceed



man, in the sense of hearing! the eagle, in sight! and the lion, in strength! No one, therefore, can now conceive, even in thought, how far the excellency of man, when first created, surpasses what he is now.

Wherefore I, for my part, understand the image of God to be this; — that Adam possessed it in its moral substance, or nature; — that he not only knew God, and believed Him to be good, but that he lived also a life truly divine; that is, free from the fear of death and of all dangers, and happy in the favour of God. This is apparent in Eve, who, we find, talks with the serpent, devoid of all fear; just as we do with a lamb or a dog. And therefore it is, that God sets before Adam and Eve this, as a punishment, if they should transgress His command; — “In the day that thou eatest of this tree, thou shalt surely die the death.” As if He had said, “Adam and Eve, Ye now live in all security. Ye neither see nor fear death. This is My image in which ye now live. Ye live as God lives. But if ye sin ye shall lose this image: Ye shall die.”

Hence it is that we see and feel the mighty perils in which we now live; — how many forms and threatenings of death this miserable nature of ours is doomed to experience and endure; in addition to that unclean concupiscence, and those other ragings of sin, and those inordinate emotions and affections, which are engendered in the minds of all men. We are never confident and happy in God: fear and dread in the highest are perpetually trying us. These and like evils are the image of the devil, who has impressed that image upon us. But Adam lived in the highest pleasure, and in the most peaceful security. He feared not fire nor water: nor dreaded any of those other evils with which this life is filled, and which we dread too much continually.

Let them who are disposed to do so, therefore, extenuate *original sin*. It plainly appears, and with awful certainty, both in sins and in the punishment of them, that original sin is great and terrible indeed. Look only at lust. Is it not most mighty, both in concupiscence and in disgust? And what shall we farther say of hatred towards God, and blasphemies of all kinds? These are those sad evidences of the fall, which do indeed prove, that the image of God in us is lost.

Wherefore, when we now attempt to speak of that image, we

speak of a thing unknown; an image which we not only have never experienced, but the contrary to which we have experienced all our lives, and experience still. Of this image therefore all we now possess are the mere terms, — “*the image of God!*” These naked words, are all we now hear, and all we know. . . .

Now the very intent of the Gospel is to restore this image of God. Man's intellect and will have indeed remained; but wholly corrupted. And the divine object of the Gospel is, that we might be restored to that original, and indeed to a better and higher, image; an image, in which we are born again unto eternal life, or rather, unto the hope of eternal life, by faith; in order that we might live in God, and with God, and might be “one” with Him, as Christ so beautifully and largely setteth it forth, in the seventeenth chapter of Saint John.

Nor are we born again unto *life* only, but unto *righteousness* also: because faith layeth hold of the merit of Christ, and sets us free, through the death of Christ. Hence arises another righteousness in us; namely, that “newness of life,” in which we study to obey God as taught by the Word, and helped by the Holy Spirit. This righteousness however *begins* only, in this life, nor ever can be perfected in this flesh. Nevertheless, this newness of righteousness pleaseth God: not as being perfect in itself, nor as being any price for our sins: but because it proceedeth from the heart; and because it rests on a confidence in the mercy of God, through Christ. And farther; through the gospel there comes unto us this other blessing also; — through it, is conferred upon us the Holy Spirit; who resists in us unbelief, envy, and other sins and corruptions; to the intent that we may solemnly desire to adorn the name of the Lord and His holy Word.

In this manner does the image of God *begin* to be restored in us, through the Gospel, by this new creation, in this life. But in this life it is not perfected. When however it is perfected, in the kingdom of the Father, then will our will be truly free and good, our mind truly illuminated, and our memory constant and perfect. Then will it come to pass also that all creatures shall be more subject unto us, than ever they were unto Adam in paradise.

— Commentary on Genesis, pp. 87-93.



## 3. SIN AND ITS FORGIVENESS

We must confess, as Paul says in Rom. 5:11, that sin originated from one man Adam, by whose disobedience all men were made sinners, and subject to death and the devil. This is called original or capital sin. The fruits of this sin are afterwards the evil deeds which are forbidden in the Ten Commandments, such as unbelief, false faith, idolatry, to be without the fear of God, arrogance, blindness, and, to speak briefly, not to know or regard God; secondly, to lie, to swear by God's name, not to pray, not to call upon God, not to regard God's Word, to be disobedient to parents, to murder, to be unchaste, to steal, to deceive, etc. This hereditary sin is so deep a corruption of nature, that no reason can understand it, but it must be believed from the revelation of Scriptures, Ps. 51:5; Rom. 5:12 sqq.; Ex. 33:3; Gen. 3:7 sqq. Wherefore the dogmas of the scholastic doctors are pure errors and obscurations contrary to this article, for by them it is taught: That since the fall of Adam the natural powers of man have remained entire and incorrupt, and that man by nature has right reason and a good will, as the philosophers teach. And that man has a free will to do good and omit evil, and, again, to omit good and do evil. Also that man by his natural powers can observe and do all the commands of God. And that, by his natural powers, he can love God above all things, and his neighbor as himself. Also if a man do as much as is in him, God certainly grants to him his grace. And if he wish to come to the sacrament, there is no need of a good intention to do good, but it is sufficient if he have not a wicked purpose to commit sin; so entirely good is his nature and so efficacious the sacrament. Also that it is not founded upon Scripture that, for a good work, the Holy Ghost with his grace is necessary. Such and many similar things have arisen from want of understanding and learning concerning both sins and Christ our Saviour, and they are truly heathen dogmas which we cannot endure. For if these dogmas would be right, Christ has died in vain, since there is in man no sin and misery for which he should have died; or he would have died only for the body, not for the soul, inasmuch as the soul is entirely sound, and the body only is subject to death.

— "*Smalcald Articles*," Part Three, Sec. I, Book of Concord, Vol. I, pp. 321 f.

Isaiah lxiv says, "We are all of us unclean, and all our righteousness is as a filthy stinking rag." Observe that the prophet excepts nobody, but says, "we are all of us unclean," and yet he was a holy prophet. Again, if our righteousness is unclean and a stench in God's nostrils, what will unrighteousness be? Moreover, he says "all righteousness," none excepted. So, then, if there is such a thing as a good work without sin, this prophet lies, which God forbid! Is not this passage of Isaiah clear enough?

— "*An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull*," Works of Martin Luther, Vol. III, p. 99.

What do we read in the lives of all the saints? What is it that they confess and prove with all their works, prayers, fastings, labors and manifold exercises, except that by these things they are striving against their own flesh, to chastise it, make it subject to the spirit and quench its evil lusts and desires? So St. Paul writes to the Colossians, "Slay your members which are on the earth, unchastity, uncleanness, evil desire, covetousness"; and again in Romans viii, "If ye through the spirit do slay the deeds of the flesh, ye shall live before God; but if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die," and to the Philippians, "I chastise my body and compel it to service, that I may not preach to others and myself be cast away." And so I might go on. Who of the saints does not sigh, groan, lament and cry out about his own flesh and his evil desires?

How often does St. Jerome lament that evil desire rages in his flesh, not only after baptism, but even when he has fasted, watched and labored unto weariness, and is most a saint! St. Cyprian, in a sermon on the deadly pestilence, comforts himself by thinking of his sins, and says: "Ceaselessly, and with care and sorrow, we must fight against carnal desires, against the allurements of the world. The spirit of man is compassed about and besieged by the assaults of the devil and can hardly meet, hardly withstand them all. If avarice is overthrown, lust rises; if lust is put down, ambition takes its place; if ambition is despised, then anger grows bitter, pride puffs itself up, drunkenness assails, hatred breaks the bonds of concord, envy destroys friendship. You must curse, though God has forbidden it; you must swear, though it is wrong. So many persecutions must the spirit of man endure, so many perils



must the heart expect; and shall we still be glad to abide here long among the devil's swords? We should far rather long and pray that sudden death may help us haste to Christ." . . .

The lives and confessions of these and all the other saints prove the saying of St. Paul in Romans vii, "I delight in the law of God after my spirit, yet find in my members a contrary law of sin," so that no one can deny that sin is still present in all the baptised and holy men on earth, and that they must fight against it.

— "An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull," Works of Martin Luther, Vol. III, pp. 27-29.

As to myself, I must confess, I am more than astonished, that, when Paul so often uses those universally applying words "all," "none," "not," "not one," "without," thus, "they are all gone out of the way, there is none that doeth good, no not one;" all are sinners and condemned by the one sin of Adam; we are justified by faith "without" the law; "without" the works of the law; so that, if any one wished to speak otherwise so as to be more intelligible, he could not speak in words more clear and more plain; — I am more than astonished, I say, how it is, that words and sentences, contrary and contradictory to these universally applying words and sentences, have gained so much ground; which say, — Some are not gone out of the way, are not unrighteous, are not evil, are not sinners, are not condemned: there is something in man which is good and which endeavours after good: as though that man, whoever he be, who endeavours after good, were not comprehended in this one word "all," or "none," or "not."

— Bondage of the Will, #CLIII, pp. 361 f.

God forgives sins merely out of grace for Christ's sake; but we must not abuse the grace of God. God has given signs and tokens enough, that our sins shall be forgiven; namely, the preaching of the gospel, baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Holy Ghost in our hearts.

Now it is also needful we testify in our works that we have received the forgiveness of sins, by each forgiving the faults of his brother. There is no comparison between God's remitting of sins

and ours. For what are one hundred pence, in comparison with ten thousand pounds? as Christ says, naught. And although we deserve nothing by our forgiving, yet we must forgive that thereby we may prove and give testimony that we from God have received forgiveness of our sins.

The forgiveness of sins is declared only in God's Word, and there we must seek it; for it is grounded on God's promises. God forgives thee thy sins, not because thou feelest them and art sorry, for this sin itself produces, without deserving, but he forgives thy sins because he is merciful, and because he has promised to forgive for Christ's sake.

— Table-Talk, #CCLI.

Original sin, after regeneration, is like a wound that begins to heal; though it be a wound, yet it is in course of healing, though it still runs and is sore.

So original sin remains in Christians until they die, yet itself is mortified and continually dying. Its head is crushed in pieces, so that it cannot condemn us.

— Table-Talk, #CCLVI.

We teach and comfort the afflicted sinner after this manner: Brother, it is not possible for thee to become so righteous in this life, that thou shouldest feel no sin at all, that thy body should be clear like the sun, without spot or blemish: but thou hast as yet wrinkles and spots, and yet art thou holy notwithstanding. But thou wilt say: How can I be holy, when I have and feel sin in me? I answer: In that thou dost feel and acknowledge thy sin, it is a good token: give thanks unto God, and despair not. It is one step of health, when the sick man doth acknowledge and confess his infirmity. But how shall I be delivered from sin? Run to Christ, the physician, which healeth them that are broken in heart, and saveth sinners. Follow not the judgment of reason, which telleth thee, that he is angry with sinners: but kill reason, and believe in Christ. If thou believe, thou art righteous, because thou givest glory unto God, that he is almighty, merciful, true, etc. thou justifiest and praisest God. To be brief, thou yieldest unto him his divinity, and whatsoever else belongeth unto him: and the sin which remaineth



in thee, is not laid to thy charge, but is pardoned for Christ's sake, in whom thou believest, who is perfectly just: whose righteousness is thy righteousness, and thy sin is his sin.

— Commentary on Galatians, *pp. 174 f.*

#### 4. THE BONDAGE OF THE WILL

Free-will is plainly a divine term, and can be applicable to none but the divine Majesty only: for He alone "doth, (as the Psalm sings) what He will in Heaven and earth." (Ps. cxxxv. 6.) Whereas, if it be ascribed unto men, it is not more properly ascribed, than the divinity of God Himself would be ascribed unto them: which would be the greatest of all sacrilege. Wherefore, it becomes Theologians to refrain from the use of this term altogether, whenever they wish to speak of human ability, and leave it to be applied to God only. And moreover, to take this same term out of the mouths and speech of men; and thus to assert, as it were, for their God, that which belongs to His own sacred and holy Name. . . .

But, if we do not like to leave out this term altogether, (which would be most safe, and also most religious) we may, nevertheless, with a good conscience teach, that it be used so far as to allow man a "Free-will," not in respect of those which are above him, but in respect only of those things which are below him: that is, he may be allowed to know, that he has, as to his goods and possessions, the right of using, acting, and omitting, according to his "Free-will;" although, at the same time, that same "Free-will" is overruled by the Free-will of God alone, just as He pleases: but that, God-ward, or in things which pertain unto salvation or damnation, he has no "Free-will," but is a captive, slave, and servant, either to the will of God, or to the will of Satan.

— Bondage of the Will, #XXVI, *pp. 76-79.*

A man void of the Spirit of God, does not evil against his will as by violence, or as if he were taken by the neck and forced to it, in the same way as a thief or cut-throat is dragged to punishment against his will; but he does it spontaneously, and with a desirous willingness. And this willingness and desire of doing evil he can-

not, by his own power, leave off, restrain, or change; but it goes on still desiring and craving. And even if he should be compelled by force to do any thing *outwardly* to the contrary, yet the craving will *within* remains averse to, and rises in indignation against that which forces or resists it. But it would not rise in indignation, if it were changed, and made willing to yield to a constraining power. This is what we mean by the necessity of immutability: — that the will cannot change itself, nor give itself another bent; but rather the more it is resisted, the more it is irritated to crave; as is manifest from its indignation. This would not be the case if it were free, or had a "Free-will." Ask experience, how hardened against all persuasion they are, whose inclinations are fixed upon any one thing. For if they yield at all they yield through force, or through something attended with greater advantage; they never yield willingly. And if their inclinations be not thus fixed, they let all things pass and go on just as they will.

But again, on the other hand, when God works in us, the *will*, being changed and sweetly breathed on by the Spirit of God, desires and acts, not from *compulsion*, but *responsively*, from pure willingness, inclination, and accord; so that it cannot be turned another way by any thing contrary, nor be compelled or overcome even by the gates of hell; but it still goes on to desire, crave after, and love that which is good; even as before, it desired, craved after, and loved that which was evil. This, again, experience proves. How invincible and unshaken are holy men, when, by violence and other oppressions, they are only compelled and irritated the more to crave after good! Even as fire, is rather fanned into flames than extinguished, by the wind. So that neither is there here any willingness, or "Free-will," to turn itself into another direction, or to desire any thing else, while the influence of the Spirit and grace of God remain in the man.

In a word, if we be under the god of this world, without the operation and Spirit of God, we are led captives by him at his will, as Paul saith. (2 Tim. ii. 26.) So that, we cannot will any thing but that which he wills. For he is that "strong man armed," who so keepeth his palace, that those whom he holds captive are kept in peace, that they might not cause any motion or feeling against him; otherwise, the kingdom of Satan, being divided against it-



self, could not stand; whereas, Christ affirms it does stand. And all this we do willingly and desiringly, according to the nature of *will*: for if it were forced, it would be no longer *will*. For compulsion is (so to speak) *unwillingness*. But if the "stronger than he" come and overcome him, and take us as His spoils, then, through the Spirit, we are His servants and captives (which is the royal liberty) that we may desire and do, willingly, what He wills.

Thus the human will is, as it were, a beast between the two. If God sit thereon, it wills and goes where God will: as the Psalm saith, "I am become as it were a beast before thee, and I am continually with thee." (Ps. lxxiii. 22-23.) If Satan sit thereon, it wills and goes as Satan will. Nor is it in the power of its own will to choose, to which rider it will run, nor which it will seek; but the riders themselves contend, which shall have and hold it.

— Bondage of the Will, #XXV, pp. 72-74.

Paul says, in II Timothy ii, "Instruct those that oppose the truth; peradventure God will give them repentance, that they acknowledge the truth, and return from the snares of the devil, by whom they are taken captive at his will." Where is the free will here when the captive is of the devil, not indeed unable to do anything, but able to do only what the devil wills? Is that freedom, to be captive at the devil's will, so that there is no help unless God grant repentance and improvement? So also says John viii, When the Jews said they were free, Christ said, "Verily I say unto you, all they who sin are servants or possessions of sin; if the son make you free, ye shall be free indeed." So St. Augustine changes the term "free will," in his work *Against Julian*, book ii, and calls it *servum arbitrium*, "a will in bondage."

— "An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull," Works of Martin Luther, Vol. III, pp. 108 f.

This is my absolute opinion: he that will maintain that man's free-will is able to do or work anything in spiritual cases be they never so small, denies Christ. This I have always maintained in my writings, especially in those against Erasmus, one of the learnedest men in the whole world, and thereby will I remain, for I know it to

be the truth, though all the world should be against it; yea, the decree of Divine Majesty must stand fast against the gates of hell.

— Table-Talk, #CCLXII.

I wish that the word "free will" had never been invented. It is not in the Scriptures, and it were better to call it "self-will," which profiteth not. Or, if anyone wishes to retain it, he ought to apply it to the new-created man, so as to understand by it the man who is without sin. He is assuredly free, as was Adam in Paradise, and it is of him that the Scriptures speak when they touch upon our freedom; but they who lie in sins are unfree and prisoners of the devil; yet because they can become free through grace, you can call them men of free will, just as you might call a man rich, although he is a beggar, because he can become rich. But it is neither right nor good thus to juggle with words in matters of such great seriousness.

— "An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull," Works of Martin Luther, Vol. III, pp. 110 f.

Dear Christians, one and all rejoice,  
With exultation springing,  
And with united heart and voice  
And holy rapture singing,  
Proclaim the wonders God hath done,  
How his right arm the victory won;  
Right dearly it hath cost him.

Fast bound in Satan's chains I lay,  
Death brooded darkly o'er me;  
Sin was my torment night and day,  
Therein my mother bore me,  
Deeper and deeper still I fell,  
Life was become a living hell,  
So firmly sin possessed me.

My good works could avail me naught,  
For they with sin were stained;  
Free-will against God's judgment fought,  
And dead to good remained.

Grief drove me to despair, and I  
 Had nothing left me but to die,  
 To hell I fast was sinking.

God saw, in his eternal grace,  
 My sorrow out of measure;  
 He thought upon his tenderness —  
 To save was his good pleasure.  
 He turned to me a Father's heart —  
 Not small the cost — to heal my smart  
 He gave his best and dearest.

He spake to his beloved Son:  
 'Tis time to take compassion;  
 Then go, bright jewel of my crown,  
 And bring to man salvation;  
 From sin and sorrow set him free,  
 Slay bitter death for him, that he  
 May live with thee forever.

— Luther's Hymns, p. 75.

## VI

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### *The Christian Life*



1. REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION
2. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH
3. PRAYER
4. LIVING THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

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# The Christian Life



## 1. REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

OUR Lord and Master Jesus Christ, when He said *Poenitentiam agite*,<sup>1</sup> willed that the whole life of believers should be repentance.

This word cannot be understood to mean sacramental penance, i.e., confession and satisfaction, which is administered by the priests.

Yet it means not inward repentance only; nay, there is no inward repentance which does not outwardly work divers mortifications of the flesh.

— “*Disputation on Indulgences*,” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. I*, p. 29.

I learned that this word is in Greek *metanoia* and is derived from *meta* and *noun*, i.e., *post* and *mentem*,<sup>2</sup> so that *poenitentia* or *metanoia* is a “coming to one’s senses,” and is a knowledge of one’s own evil, gained after punishment has been accepted and error ac-

<sup>1</sup> Matt. 4:17. Greek, *μετανοεῖτε*; English, “repent”; German, *Busse tun*. The Latin and German versions may also be rendered, “Do penance”; the Greek, on the other hand, can only mean “Repent.” [This explanatory note and the ones that follow are from the Philadelphia edition of the *Works of Martin Luther*. Ed.]

<sup>2</sup> Gr., *μετά*, Lat., *post*, Eng., “after”; Gr. *νοῦς*, Lat., *mens*, Eng., “mind.”



knowledged; and this cannot possibly happen without a change in our heart and our love. All this answers so aptly to the theology of Paul, that nothing, at least in my judgment, can so aptly illustrate St. Paul.

Then I went on and saw that *metanoia* can be derived, though not without violence, not only from *post* and *mentem*, but also from *trans* and *mentem*,<sup>3</sup> so that *metanoia* signifies a changing<sup>4</sup> of the mind and heart, because it seemed to indicate not only a change of the heart, but also a manner of changing it, i.e., the grace of God.

— “*Disputation on Indulgences*,” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. I*, pp. 40 f.

A contrite heart is a rare thing and a great grace, and is not attained by thinking of sin and hell, but only by receiving the impoured Holy Spirit. Otherwise Judas would have had the very best contrition, for he thought of his sin with great sorrow. On the other hand, a forced and feigned contrition is a common thing, as experience shows, for many confessions are made in Lent and yet there is little improvement in men's lives.

— “*An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull*,” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. III*, p. 44.

To teach that repentance is to be reached by merely meditating upon sin and its consequences, is lying, stinking, seducing hypocrisy. We ought, first of all, to look into the wounds of Christ, and see in them His love toward us and our ingratitude toward Him, and thus, with heartfelt affection to Christ and detestation of self, to meditate upon our sin. That is a true contrition and a fruitful repentance. For contrition must precede meditation upon sin. Such meditation must flow out of contrition and be its work, not vice versa. There must be contrition before there can be any meditation upon sin, just as there must be love and desire before there

<sup>3</sup> The Greek *μερῶ* can also be translated by the Latin *trans*, which, in compounds, denotes movement from one place, or thing, or condition to another.

<sup>4</sup> Lat. *transmutatio*, “the act or process of changing,” not simply “a change” (*mutatio*).

can be any good works or any meditation upon them. Meditation is a fruit of contrition; contrition is the tree. In our country fruit grows on trees and out of trees, and meditation upon sin grows out of contrition; but in the holy land of pope and papists trees may grow on the fruits, contrition out of sins; the people walk on their ears, no doubt, and do everything upside down.

— “*An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull*,” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. III*, p. 47.

There is no doubt that confession is necessary and commanded by God. Thus we read in Matthew iii: “They were baptised of John in Jordan, confessing their sins.” And in I John i: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” If the saints may not deny their sin, how much more ought those who are guilty of open and great sins to make confession! But most effectively of all does Matthew xviii prove the institution of confession, in which passage Christ teaches that a sinning brother should be rebuked, haled before the Church, accused and, if he will not hear, excommunicated. But he hears when, heeding the rebuke, he acknowledges and confesses his sin.

Of private confession, which is now observed, I am heartily in favor, even though it cannot be proved from the Scriptures; it is useful and necessary, nor would I have it abolished — nay, I rejoice that it exists in the Church of Christ, for it is a cure without an equal for distressed consciences. For when we have laid bare our conscience to our brother and privately made known to him the evil that lurked within, we receive from our brother's lips the word of comfort spoken by God Himself; and, if we accept it in faith, we find peace in the mercy of God speaking to us through our brother.

— “*The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*,” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. II*, pp. 249 f.

In this our age, the consciences of almost all have been led astray by human doctrines into a false trust in their own righteousness and their own works, and knowledge about faith and trust in God.



has almost ceased. Therefore, for him who is about to go to confession, it is before all things necessary that he should not place his trust in his confession — either the confession which he is about to make or the confession which he has made — but that, with complete fulness of faith, he put his trust only in the most gracious promise of God; to wit, he must be altogether certain that He, Who has promised pardon to the man who shall confess his sins, will most faithfully fulfil His promise. For we are to glory, not because we confess, but because He has promised pardon to those who do confess; that is, not because of the worthiness or sufficiency of our confession (for there is no such worthiness or sufficiency), but because of the truth and certitude of His promise, as says the xxiv. Psalm: "For Thy Name's sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity." It does not say, "for my sake," or "for my worthiness' sake," or "for my name's sake," but "for Thy Name's sake."

— "*Discussion of Confession*," Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. I*, p. 81.

Whether the hidden sins of the heart, which are known only to God and the man who commits them, belong to sacramental confession or not, is more than I can say. I should prefer to say that they do not. For the need of confessing these sins can in no way be proved, either by reason or by Scripture, and I have often suspected that it was all an invention of avaricious or curious or tyrannical prelates, who took this way of bringing the people of Christ to fear them. This is, in my opinion, laying hands on the judgment of God and is a violation of the rights of God, especially if men are forced to it.

— "*Discussion of Confession*," Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. I*, p. 86.

## 2. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH

A contrite heart is a precious thing, but it is found only where there is a lively faith in the promises and the threats of God. Such faith, intent on the immutable truth of God, startles and terrifies the conscience and thus renders it contrite, and afterwards, when it is contrite, raises it up, consoles and preserves it; so that the truth of God's threatening is the cause of contrition, and the truth

of His promise the cause of consolation, if it be believed. By such faith a man merits the forgiveness of sins. Therefore faith should be taught and aroused before all else; and when faith is obtained, contrition and consolation will follow inevitably and of themselves. . . .

Beware, then, of putting your trust in your own contrition and of ascribing the forgiveness of sins to your own sorrow. God does not have respect to you because of that, but because of the faith by which you have believed His threatenings and promises, and which wrought such sorrow within you. Thus we owe whatever of good there may be in our penance, not to our scrupulous enumeration of sins, but to the truth of God and to our faith. All other things are the works and fruits of this, which follow of their own accord, and do not make a man good, but are done by a man already made good through faith in the truth of God.

— "*The Babylonian Captivity of the Church*," Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. II*, pp. 248 f.

When we are dealing with words and promises, there must be faith, even between men here on earth. No business and no community could long exist if no one was willing to take another's word or signature on faith. Now, as we plainly see, God deals with us in no other way than by His holy Word and the sacraments, which are like signs or seals of His Word. The very first thing necessary, then, is faith in these words and signs; for when God speaks and gives signs man must firmly and whole-heartedly believe that what He says and signifies is true, so that we do not consider Him a liar or a trickster, but hold Him to be faithful and true. This faith pleases God above all things, and does Him the highest honor, because it believes Him to be true, and a righteous God. Therefore He, in turn, counts this faith to us as righteousness good and sufficient unto salvation.

— "*An Argument in Defense of All the Articles of Dr. Martin Luther Wrongly Condemned in the Roman Bull*," Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. III*, pp. 20 f.

All depends on faith. He who does not believe is like one who must cross the sea, but is so timid that he does not trust the ship;



and so he must remain and never be saved, because he does not embark and cross over.

— “*A Treatise Concerning the Blessed Sacrament and Concerning the Brotherhoods,*” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. II, p. 25.*

Nothing makes a man good except faith, nor evil except unbelief.

It is indeed true that in the sight of men a man is made good or evil by his works, but this being made good or evil is no more than that he who is good or evil is pointed out and known as such; as Christ says, in Matthew vii, “By their fruits ye shall know them.” But all this remains on the surface, and very many have been deceived by this outward appearance and have presumed to write and teach concerning good works by which we may be justified, without even mentioning faith; they go their way, always being deceived and deceiving, advancing, indeed, but into a worse state, blind leaders of the blind, wearying themselves with many works, and yet never attaining to true righteousness. Of such Paul says, in II Timothy iii, “Having the form of godliness, but denying its power, always learning and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth.”

He, therefore, who does not wish to go astray with those blind men, must look beyond works, and laws and doctrines about works; nay, turning his eyes from works, he must look upon the person, and ask how that is justified. For the person is justified and saved not by works nor by laws, but by the Word of God, that is, by the promise of His grace, and by faith, that the glory may remain God's, Who saved us not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy by the word of His grace, when we believed.

— “*A Treatise on Christian Liberty,*” Works of Martin Luther, *Vol. II, pp. 332 f.*

In Romans iii, I know right well that the word *solum* was not in the Greek or Latin text. . . . It is a fact that these four letters *s-o-l-a*<sup>5</sup> are not there. . . . At the same time . . . the sense of them is there and . . . the word belongs there if the translation is

<sup>5</sup> The point of the criticism is that Luther has inserted the word “only,” which does not appear in the original text.

to be clear and strong. I wanted to speak German, not Latin or Greek, since I had undertaken to speak German in the translation. But it is the nature of our German language that in speaking of two things, one of which is admitted and the other denied, we use the word “only” along with the word “not” or “no.” So we say, “The farmer brings *only* grain and no money”; “No, I have no money now, but *only* grain”; “I have *only* eaten and not drunk”; “Did you *only* write it, and not read it over?” There are innumerable cases of this kind in daily use.

In all these phrases it is the German usage, even though it is not the Latin or Greek usage, and it is the way of the German language to add the word “only,” in order that the word “not” or “no” may be more complete and clearer. To be sure, I can also say, “The farmer brings grain and no money,” but the words “no money” do not sound as full and clear as if I were to say, “The farmer brings *only* grain and no money.” Here the word “only” helps the word “no” so much that it becomes a complete, clear, German phrase. . . .

I was not only relying on the nature of the languages and following that when, in Romans iii, I inserted the word *solum*, “only,” but the text itself and the sense of St. Paul demanded it and forced it upon me. He is dealing, in that passage, with the main point of Christian doctrine, viz., that we are justified by faith in Christ, without any works of the law, and he cuts away all works so completely, as even to say that the works of the law, though it is God's law and His Word, do not help us to righteousness. He cites Abraham as an example and says that he was justified so entirely without works, that even the highest work, which had then been newly commanded by God, before and above all other works, namely circumcision, did not help him to righteousness, but he was justified by faith, without circumcision and without any works at all. So he says, in Chapter iv, “If Abraham was justified by works, he may glory, but not before God.” But when works are so completely cut away, the meaning of it must be that faith alone justifies, and one who would speak plainly and clearly about this cutting away of all works, must say, “Faith alone justifies us, and not works.” The matter itself, and not the nature of the language only, compels this translation. . . .



I am not the only one or the first to say that faith alone justifies. Ambrose said it before me, and Augustine and many others; and if a man is going to read St. Paul and understand him, he will have to say the same thing and can say nothing else. Paul's words are too strong; they endure no works, none at all; and if it is not a work, it must be faith alone. How could it be such a fine, improving inoffensive doctrine, if people were taught that they might become righteous by works, beside faith? That would be as much as to say that it was not Christ's death alone that takes away our sins, but that our works, too, did something toward it; and it would be a fine honoring of Christ's death to say that our works helped it and could do that which He does, and that we were good and strong like Him. This is of the devil, who cannot leave the blood of Christ without abuse!

— "On Translating: An Open Letter," Works of Martin Luther, Vol. V, pp. 15–22.

What then mean all those Scriptures which promise a kingdom and threaten hell? Why is the word reward so often repeated in the Scriptures; as, "Thou hast thy reward," "I am thy exceeding great reward?" Again, "Who rendereth unto every man according to his work;" and Paul, Rom. ii. 6, "Who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for eternal life," and many of the same kind?

It is answered: By all these passages, the *consequence of reward* is proved and nothing else, but by no means the *worthiness of merit*: seeing that, those who do good, do it not from a servile and mercenary principle in order to obtain eternal life, but they seek eternal life, that is, they are in that way, in which they shall come unto and find eternal life. So that seeking, is striving with desire, and pursuing with ardent diligence, that, which always leads unto eternal life. And the reason why it is declared in the Scriptures, that those things shall follow and take place after a good or bad life, is, that men might be instructed, admonished, awakened, and terrified. For as "by the law is the knowledge of sin" (Rom. iii. 20,) and an admonition of our impotency, and as from that, it cannot be inferred that we can do any thing ourselves; so, by these

promises and threats, there is conveyed an admonition, by which we are taught, what will follow sin and that impotency made known by the law; but there is not, by them, any thing of worthiness ascribed unto our merit.

Wherefore, as the words of the law are for instruction and illumination, to teach us what we ought to do, and also what we are not able to do; so the words of reward, while they signify what will be hereafter, are for exhortation and threatening, by which the just are animated, comforted, and raised up to go forward, to persevere, and to conquer; that they might not be wearied or disheartened either in doing good or in enduring evil; as Paul exhorts his Corinthians, saying, "Be ye steadfast, knowing that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.) So also God supports Abraham, saying "I am thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. xv. 1.) Just in the same manner as you would console any one, by signifying to him, that his works certainly pleased God, which kind of consolation the Scripture frequently uses; nor is it a small consolation for any one to know, that he so pleases God, that nothing but a good consequence can follow, even though it seem to him impossible.

— Bondage of the Will, #LXXI, pp. 191–193.

Our faith in Christ does not free us from works, but from false opinions concerning works, that is, from the foolish presumption that justification is acquired by works. For faith redeems, corrects and preserves our consciences, so that we know that righteousness does not consist in works, although works neither can nor ought to be wanting; just as we cannot be without food and drink and all the works of this mortal body, yet our righteousness is not in them, but in faith; and yet those works of the body are not to be despised or neglected on that account. In this world we are bound by the needs of our bodily life, but we are not righteous because of them. "My kingdom is not of this world," says Christ, but He does not say, "My kingdom is not here, that is, in this world." And Paul says, "Though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh," and in Galatians ii, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live in the faith of the Son of God." Thus what we do, live, and are in



works and in ceremonies, we do because of the necessities of this life and of the effort to rule our body; nevertheless we are righteous not in these, but in the faith of the Son of God.

— “*A Treatise on Christian Liberty*,” Works of Martin Luther, Vol. II, p. 344.

We conclude therefore with Paul, “that we are justified by faith only in Christ, without the law.” Now after that a man is once justified, and possesseth Christ by faith, and knoweth that he is his righteousness and life, doubtless he will not be idle, but as a good tree he will bring forth good fruits. For the believing man hath the Holy Ghost, and where the Holy Ghost dwelleth, he will not suffer a man to be idle, but stirreth him up to all exercises of piety and godliness, and of true religion, to the love of God, to the patient suffering of afflictions, to prayer, to thanksgiving, to the exercise of charity towards all men.

— Commentary on Galatians, p. 114.

The true way to Christianity is this, that a man do first acknowledge himself by the law, to be a sinner, and that it is impossible for him to do any good work. For the law saith, “thou art an evil tree, and therefore all that thou thinkest, speakest, or dost, is against God,” (Matt. vii. 7). Thou canst not therefore deserve grace by thy works: which if thou go about to do, thou doublest thy offence: for since thou art an evil tree, thou canst not but bring forth evil fruits, that is to say, sins. “For whatsoever is not of faith, is sin,” (Rom. xiv. 23). Wherefore he that would deserve grace by works going before faith, goeth about to please God with sins, which is nothing else but to heap sin upon sin, to mock God, and to provoke his wrath. When a man is thus taught and instructed by the law, then is he terrified and humbled, then he seeth indeed the greatness of his sin, and cannot find in himself one spark of the love of God: therefore he justifieth God in his word, and confesseth that he is guilty of death and eternal damnation. The first part then of Christianity is the preaching of repentance, and the knowledge of ourselves.

The second part is: if thou wilt be saved, thou mayest not seek salvation by works: “for God hath sent his only begotten Son into

the world, that we might live through him. He was crucified and died for thee, and offered up thy sins in his own body.” Here is no congruence or work done before grace, but wrath, sin, terror and death. Wherefore the law doth nothing else but utter sin, terrify and humble, and by this means prepareth us to justification, and driveth us to Christ. For God hath revealed unto us by his word, that he will be unto us a merciful father, and without our deserts (seeing we can deserve nothing) will freely give unto us remission of sins, righteousness, and life everlasting for Christ his Son's sake.

— Commentary on Galatians, p. 92.

You ask, how shall we begin to be godly and what shall we do that God may begin his work in us? Answer: Do you not understand, it is not for you to work or to begin to be godly, as little as it is to further and complete it. Everything that you begin is in and remains sin, though it shines ever so brightly; you cannot do anything but sin, do what you will. Hence, the teaching of all the schools and monasteries is misleading, when they teach man to begin to pray and do good works, to found something, to give, to sing, to become spiritual and thereby to seek God's grace.

You say, however: Then I must sin from necessity, if by my free will I work and live without God? and I could not avoid sin, no matter what I would do? Answer: Truly, it is so, that you must remain in sin, do what you will, and that everything is sin you do alone out of your own free will. For if out of your own free will you might avoid sin and do that which pleases God; what need would you have of Christ? He would be a fool to shed his blood for your sin, if you yourself were so free and able to do aught that is not sin. From this you learn how the universities and monasteries with their teachings of free will and good works, do nothing else but darken the truth of God so that we know not what Christ is, what we are and what our condition is. They lead the whole world with them into the abyss of hell, and it is indeed time that we eradicate from the earth all chapters and monasteries.

Learn then . . . what takes place when God begins to make us godly, and what the first step is in becoming godly. There is no other beginning than that your king comes to you and begins to



work in you. . . . This is what is meant by "Thy king cometh," (Matt. 21:5). You do not seek him, but he seeks you. You do not find him, he finds you. For the preachers come from him, not from you; their sermons come from him, not from you; your faith comes from him, not from you; everything that faith works in you comes from him, not from you; and where he does not come, you remain outside; and where there is no Gospel there is no God, but only sin and damnation, free will may do, suffer, work and live as it may and can. Therefore you should not ask, where to begin to be godly; there is no beginning, except where the king enters and is proclaimed.

— *Gospel Sermon, First Sunday in Advent* (Lenker Edition, Vol. X, #21-25).

### 3. PRAYER

By "prayer" we understand simply formal words or expressions — as, for instance, the Lord's Prayer and the psalms — which sometimes express more than our request. In "supplication" we strengthen prayer and make it effective by a certain form of persuasion; for instance, we may entreat one to grant a request for the sake of a father, or of something dearly loved or highly prized. We entreat God by his Son, his saints, his promises, his name. Thus Solomon says (Ps. 132:1), "Jehovah, remember for David all his affliction." And Paul urges (Rom. 12:1), "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God"; and again (II Cor. 10:1), "I . . . entreat you by the meekness and gentleness of Christ." "Petitioning" is stating what we have at heart, naming the desire we express in prayer and supplication. In the Lord's Prayer are seven petitions, beside prayer proper. Christ says (Mt. 7:7-8): "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." In "thanksgiving" we recount blessings received and thus strengthen our confidence and enable ourselves to wait trustingly for what we pray.

Prayer is made vigorous by petitioning; urgent by supplication; by thanksgiving, pleasing and acceptable. Strength and acceptability combine to prevail and secure the petition. This, we see, is

the manner of prayer practiced by the Church; and the holy fathers in the Old Testament always offered supplication and thanks in their prayers. The Lord's Prayer opens with praise and thanksgiving and the acknowledgment of God as a Father; it earnestly presses toward him through filial love and a recognition of fatherly tenderness. For supplication, this prayer is unequalled. Hence it is the sublimest and the noblest prayer ever uttered.

— *Epistle Sermon, Fourth Sunday in Advent* (Lenker Edition, Vol. VII, #31-32).

We should pray, not as the custom is, counting many pages or beads, but fixing our mind upon some pressing need, desire it with all earnestness, and exercise faith and confidence toward God in the matter, in such wise that we do not doubt that we shall be heard. So St. Bernard instructs his brethren and says: "Dear brethren, you shall by no means despise your prayer, as if it were in vain, for I tell you of a truth that, before you have uttered the words, the prayer is already recorded in heaven; and you shall confidently expect from God one of two things: either that your prayer will be granted, or that, if it will not be granted, the granting of it would not be good for you."

Prayer is, therefore, a special exercise of faith, and faith makes the prayer so acceptable that either it will surely be granted, or something better than we ask will be given in its stead. So also says St. James: "Let him who asketh of God not waver in faith; for if he wavers, let not that man think that he shall receive any thing of the Lord." This is a clear statement, which says directly: he who does not trust, receives nothing, neither that which he asks, nor anything better.

And to call forth such faith, Christ Himself has said, Mark xi: "Therefore I say unto you, What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall surely have them." And Luke xi: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you; for every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened. Or what father is there of you, who, if his son shall ask bread, will he give him a stone? or if he ask a fish, will he give him a serpent? or if he ask an egg, will he give