

### First Thesis

#### *Concerning the true Foundation of Knowledge*

The height of all happiness is in the true knowledge of God (“This is eternal life, to know the true God and Jesus Christ whom you have sent”<sup>1</sup>), the true and right understanding of this foundation and ground of knowledge is what is most necessary to be known and believed in the first place.

### Second Thesis

#### *Concerning Inner\* and Immediate<sup>2</sup> Revelation*

Since “no one knows the Father but the Son and those to whom the Son reveals him”;<sup>3</sup> and since the revelation of the Son is in and by the Spirit; therefore the testimony of the Spirit is the only means by which the true knowledge of God has been, is, and can be revealed. By the moving of his own Spirit, he converted the chaos of this world into that wonderful order that was in the beginning, and he created man as a living soul to rule and govern the world. By the revelation of the same Spirit he has revealed himself all along to the children of men, including patriarchs, prophets, and apostles. These revelations of God by the Spirit, whether by outward voices and appearances or dreams, or by the inward subjective<sup>4</sup> revelations in the heart, were in ancient

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<sup>1</sup> John 17:3 RB.

<sup>2</sup> Latin: *immediata*, “not mediated” This meaning of the word “immediate” —direct, without intermediary— is no longer common in English but it is the most frequent meaning in Barclay’s usage.

<sup>3</sup> Matthew 11:27 RB.

<sup>4</sup> The word Barclay uses is “objective” but since the time when he wrote the meaning of this word has changed so that nowadays it is equivalent to “subjective.”

times and still are the formal object of their faith;<sup>5</sup> for the object of the saints'<sup>6</sup> faith is the same in all ages, though expressed under various dispensations.<sup>7</sup> We believe that these divine inward revelations are absolutely necessary for developing true faith, and that they neither do nor can ever contradict the outward testimony of the Scriptures, or right and sound reason. Nevertheless, that does not mean that these divine revelations are to be subjected to tests based on the outward testimony of the Scriptures, or on the natural reason of man, as if those were a more noble or certain rule or touchstone. This divine revelation, and inward illumination, is clear and evident in itself, by its own evidence and clearness it forces the well-disposed intellect\* to a natural assent.

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<sup>5</sup> In Thomas Aquinas' theology, the words "material," "substantial" and "formal" have specific meanings which are very different from the meanings in modern English. Aquinas distinguishes between the formal object of faith and the material object. The material object of faith is the substance which is known or believed, while the formal object is the form or means by which it comes to be known or believed. In this case, Barclay says that the formal object of faith is direct inward revelation. See *Summa Theologiae*, Part II-II Article 1: "The object of every cognitive habit includes two things: first, that which is known materially, and is the material object, so to speak, and secondly, that whereby it is known, which is the formal aspect of the object. Thus in the science of geometry, the conclusions are what is known materially, while the formal aspect of the science is the means of demonstration, through which the conclusions are known."

<sup>6</sup> Barclay is not referring only to the saints canonized by the Roman Catholic Church, but rather to the faithful members of the people of Christ. This usage was common in his time.

<sup>7</sup> In seventeenth-century Protestant theology, the covenant which God made with humanity is always the same; but God expresses or administers it in different ways, or dispensations, according to the condition of the era. For example, it was thought that before Christ the Jews lived under the dispensation of the Law; when Jesus Christ came that dispensation ended and the dispensation of Grace began. Another new dispensation was expected with the second coming of Christ.

For example, that the whole is greater than its part; that two contradictory statements cannot both be true, or both false. [The fact that this inward revelation is evident and clear in itself can also be shown according to the principle of our adversaries. If they admitted that inward divine revelation can exist, they would also agree with us that neither Scripture nor sound reason would contradict it, and yet they would never admit that Scripture or sound reason should be subjected to the test of the divine revelation in the heart.]<sup>8</sup>

### **Third Thesis**

#### *Concerning the Scriptures*

The Scriptures of Truth have come from these revelations of the Spirit of God to the saints. They contain:

1. A faithful historical account of the actions of God's people in various eras, with many singular and remarkable divine interventions for them.
2. A prophetic account of several things, some of which are already past and others yet to come.
3. A full and ample account of all the chief principles of the doctrine of Christ, expressed in various precious declarations, exhortations and sentences, which were spoken and written by the moving of God's spirit at various times and directed to some churches and their pastors.

Nevertheless, because they are only a declaration of the fountain, and not the fountain itself, therefore the Scriptures should not be considered the principal basis of all Truth and knowledge, nor even the "adequate primary rule of faith and behavior."

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<sup>8</sup> The last two sentences [in brackets] appear in the version of the thesis printed in the initial list of the fifteen theses, but they do not appear in the thesis when it is printed as a heading to the second proposition, nor do they appear in either place in the Latin text.

Still, since they give a true and faithful testimony of the first foundation, they are and may be considered *a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit*, from which they receive all their excellence and certainty.<sup>9</sup> We only truly know them by the inward testimony of the Spirit, and they testify that the Spirit is the guide by which the saints are led into all Truth.<sup>10</sup> Therefore, according to the Scriptures, the Spirit is the first and principal guide. Since we therefore receive and believe the Scriptures because they came from the Spirit, therefore the Spirit is more originally and principally the rule, according to the scholastic maxim, *Propter quod unumquodque est tale, illud ipsum est magis tale*. In English: “The thing because of which something is a certain way, that thing itself is more that way.”

#### Fourth Thesis

##### *Concerning the Condition of Man in the Fall*

All Adam’s posterity (i.e. humankind), both Jews and Gentiles, respecting the first Adam, the earthly man, is fallen,<sup>11</sup> degenerated, and dead, deprived of the feeling of this inward testimony or seed of God, and is subject to the power, nature, and seed of the serpent,<sup>12</sup> which the serpent sows in human hearts while they remain in this

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<sup>9</sup> In this sentence there is a phrase in Latin (indicated in bold) which is not present in the English and which changes the meaning in an important way:

Latin: *licet cū dent verum & fidele testimonium primæ originis, sint, & possint existimari regula secundaria, subordinata Spiritui, à quo, **quam habent**, excellentiam & certitudinem derivant.*

“But since they give a true and faithful testimony of the first source, they are, and may be considered, a secondary rule, subordinate to the Spirit, from which they derive all their excellence and certainty, **when they have them.**”

<sup>10</sup> John 16:13; Romans 8:14 RB

<sup>11</sup> Romans 5:12, 15 RB

<sup>12</sup> Latin: *Satanæ*, “of Satan”

natural and corrupted state. This is why not only their words and deeds, but all their thoughts are always evil in the sight of God, since they come from this depraved and wicked seed. Therefore while he is in this condition man can not know anything correctly; indeed his thoughts and conceptions concerning God and spiritual things are of no use<sup>13</sup> both to himself and others, until he is separated from this evil seed and united to the *divine Light*. For this reason we reject the Socinian<sup>14</sup> and Pelagian<sup>15</sup> errors, which exalt a natural light; and also the errors of the Papists and most Protestants, who say that a man who is without the true grace of God may be a true minister of the Gospel.<sup>16</sup> Nevertheless, this evil seed is not attributed to children,<sup>17</sup> until by transgression they actually join themselves to it; for they are by nature the “children of wrath” who walk according to the “power of the prince of the air, [the spirit that is now working in the children of disobedience,” who behave themselves according to the immoderate desires of the flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind.]<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Latin: *omnino inútiles*, “of no use at all.”

<sup>14</sup> Radical seventeenth-century theology based on the teachings of Socinius (1539-1604) which denied the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and original sin.

<sup>15</sup> The teaching of Pelagius (c. 383-401) who advocated a doctrine of free will in contrast to the doctrines of Augustin (354-430) which emphasized original sin and predestination.

<sup>16</sup> Latin: *posse hominem, absque verâ Dei gratiâ, esse Evangelii ministrum, & animabus prodesse*, “a man can, without the true grace of God, be a minister of the Gospel and be useful to souls.”

<sup>17</sup> In Barclay’s time the original word “infants” referred to children up to age 7.

<sup>18</sup> Ephesians 2:2-3 RB.

In the first English edition this part only appears in the repetition of the thesis at the head of Proposition 4, but not in the list of theses at the beginning of the book. In the Latin version this part occurs in both places.

## **Fifth and Sixth Theses**

*Concerning the Universal Redemption by Christ  
and also the Saving and Spiritual Light which enlightens  
every one*

### **Fifth Thesis**

Out of his infinite love,<sup>19</sup> God, who does not delight in the death of the sinner, but wants all to live and be saved, has so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, a Light,<sup>20</sup> so that whoever believes in Him should be saved. This Light enlightens every one that comes into the world, and makes plain everything that is reproved,<sup>21</sup> and teaches “temperance, righteousness, and godliness; this Light enlightens the hearts of all people in a day<sup>22</sup> for their salvation. [This is what reproveth the sin of all individuals, and would work out the salvation of all]<sup>23</sup> if they did not resist. It is not less universal than the seed of sin, because it was purchased by the death of the one who tasted death for every man: for as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Latin: *infinia sua bonitate*, “his infinite goodness.”

<sup>20</sup> In both English and in Latin, Barclay uses “Light” as an appositive to “Son,” implying that the Son is the Light; it is especially clear in the Latin: *ut filium suum unigenitum, Lumen dederit*, “that he gave his only begotten son, a Light.”

<sup>21</sup> Ezekiel 18:23, Isaiah 49:6, John 3:16 & 1:9, Titus 2:11, Ephesians 5:13 RB

Barclay’s note does not make clear which citation refers to specific phrases.

<sup>22</sup> Latin: *pro tempore*, “for a time” We think this refers to the day of visitation (see Fifth and Sixth Proposition, §xii).

<sup>23</sup> The bracketed phrase is omitted in the list of the fifteen theses at the beginning of the book, but is included in the repetition of the fifth thesis at the beginning of the Fifth and Sixth Proposition. In the Latin version it appears in both places.

<sup>24</sup> I Corinthians 15:22 RB.

### Sixth Thesis

This principle (or proposition) easily solves all the objections against the universality of Christ's death. It is not necessary to resort to the ministry of angels and other miraculous means<sup>25</sup> which, they say, God uses to communicate the doctrine and history of Christ passion to people who have made good use of the first or common grace, but life in those places in the world where the outward preaching of the Gospel is unknown. According to this principle, just as some of the old philosophers might have been saved, so also nowadays some people (whom providence has placed in those remote parts of the world<sup>26</sup> where there is no knowledge of the history) may be allowed to partake of the divine mystery, if they receive and do not resist that grace "of which a manifestation is given to every man for his benefit."<sup>27</sup> If one accepts this most\* certain doctrine that there is an evangelical and saving Light and Grace in everyone, then against all the objections of those who want to deny it, we have established and confirmed the universality of the love and mercy of God towards humanity, both in the death of his beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the manifestation of the Light in the heart.

Therefore, "Christ has tasted death for every man"<sup>28</sup>; not only for "all kinds of men" as some foolishly\* say, but for every one, of all kinds. The benefit of Christ's offering<sup>29</sup> is not only extended to those who have the

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<sup>25</sup> Latin: *prodigiosos illos modos*, "those prodigious or monstrous means"

<sup>26</sup> Latin: *quos nativitatis fors posuit in remotis mundi partibus*, "whom the accident of birth placed in remote parts of the world."

<sup>27</sup> I Corinthians 12:7 RB.

<sup>28</sup> Hebrews 2:9 RB

<sup>29</sup> Latin: *cujus oblationis & victimæ beneficium*, The benefit of the offering and sacrifice of Christ"

distinct outward knowledge of his death and sufferings as they are declared in the Scriptures, but also to those who are necessarily excluded from the benefit of this knowledge by some unavoidable circumstance. We confess that this knowledge is very beneficial and comforting, but it is not absolutely necessary for those from whom God himself has withheld it.<sup>30</sup> They may still become partakers in the mystery of his death (though they are ignorant of the history) if they allow his Seed and Light to take root, enlightening their hearts. In this Light communion with the Father and Son is experienced with delight.<sup>31</sup> In this way wicked people become holy, and become lovers of that power whose inward and secret<sup>32</sup> touches have turned them from evil to good, by which they learn to do to others as they would be done by.<sup>33</sup> Christ himself affirms that this includes it all.<sup>34</sup>

Those who have denied that Christ died for all people have taught falsely and erroneously.<sup>35</sup> Others have not taught the Truth sufficiently when they affirm that he died for all, but add the absolute necessity of the outward knowledge in order to obtain its saving effect. The Remonstrants<sup>36</sup> of Holland have fallen short, along

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<sup>30</sup> Latin: *impossibilem fecit*, “made impossible”

<sup>31</sup> Latin: *si scilicet obtemperent semini et lumini ejus, illucenti cordibus suis, in quo lumine communio habetur cum Patre et Filio*, “That is to say, if they submit themselves to his seed and light, which enlightens their hearts; in that light one has communion with the Father and the Son.”

<sup>32</sup> The word “secret” does not mean “clandestine” but rather “intimate.”

<sup>33</sup> In Latin this is expressed in the negative form: *quod sibi fieri nolunt, alteri non facere*, “not to do to others what they don’t want done to themselves.”

<sup>34</sup> Matthew 7:12

<sup>35</sup> Latin: *hæreticè*, “heretically”

<sup>36</sup> The Remonstrants (also called Arminians) protested various aspects of Calvin’s theology of predestination; they affirmed that the saving work of Christ was for everyone.



with many others who assert universal redemption, in that they do not attribute the extent of this salvation to the divine and evangelical principle of Light and Life with which Christ has enlightened every one that comes into the world. This is excellently and evidently declared in these scriptures: Genesis 6:3, Deuteronomy 30:14, Psalm 50:1,\* Job 28:28,\* John 1:7-9, John 1:16,\* Romans 10:8, Titus 2:11.

### **Seventh Thesis**

#### *Concerning Justification*

In everyone who receives<sup>37</sup> this Light and does not resist it, it becomes in them a holy, pure, spiritual birth, which brings forth holiness, righteousness, purity, and all the other blessed fruits<sup>38</sup> which are acceptable to God. By this holy birth, which is *Jesus Christ formed within us* and working his works *in us*, we are sanctified and also justified in the sight of God, according to the Apostle's words: "But you are washed, you are sanctified, you are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God."<sup>39</sup> It is not because of our own actions done in our own will, nor because of any good works in and of themselves; rather it is *Christ*, who is both the *gift* and the *giver*, and the cause of these effects *in us*. Just as he has reconciled us while we were enemies, in his wisdom Christ saves us and justifies us in this way, as the same apostle says elsewhere: "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing<sup>40</sup> of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit."<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> Latin: *religiosè eam recipiunt*, "receives it reverently."

<sup>38</sup> Latin: *præclaros illos fructus*, "noble fruits."

<sup>39</sup> I Corinthians 6:11 RB

<sup>40</sup> Latin: *lavacrum*, in ecclesiastical Latin it also means "water of baptism."

<sup>41</sup> Titus 3:5 RB

## **Eighth Thesis**

*Concerning Perfection*<sup>42</sup>

*Concerning the possibility of not sinning*<sup>43</sup>

In the people in whom this holy and pure birth is fully brought forth, the body of death and sin is crucified and removed, and their hearts are united to the Truth and submissive to it, so that they don't obey any suggestion or temptation of the evil one; they are free from actual sinning and transgression of the law of God, and in that respect they are made\* perfect.<sup>44</sup> Yet this perfection still has room for growth, and there always remains some possibility of sinning, when the mind doesn't wait on the Lord most diligently and watchfully.<sup>45</sup>

## **Ninth Thesis**

*Concerning Perseverance, and the Possibility of Falling from Grace*<sup>46</sup>

This gift and inward grace of God is sufficient to work out salvation,<sup>47</sup> but when people resist it, it can and does become their condemnation. Moreover, after it has done part of its work in their hearts<sup>48</sup> to purify them and sanctify them toward further perfection, people may still fall from grace through disobedience, turn it into reckless desires<sup>49</sup> and "make a shipwreck of faith,"<sup>50</sup> and

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<sup>42</sup> title of Proposition VIII in English

<sup>43</sup> title of Proposition VIII in Latin, *De possibilitate non peccandi.0*

<sup>44</sup> In Latin: *perfecti fiunt*, "they are made perfect."

<sup>45</sup> Romans 6:14, 8:13, 6:2 & 18, I John 3:6 RB

<sup>46</sup> Latin: *amittendi gratia*, "rejecting grace" "losing grace" "letting grace go"

<sup>47</sup> Latin: *ad perficiendam salutem*, "perfecting salvation" "accomplishing salvation"

<sup>48</sup> Latin: *in quorum cordibus nonnihil operata est* "has done some work in their hearts"

<sup>49</sup> Latin: *in concupiscentiam reverti*, "turn back into inordinate desire"

<sup>50</sup> I Timothy 1:19 RB

“after having tasted the heavenly gift, and having been made partakers of the Holy Ghost, again fall away.”<sup>51</sup> Nevertheless, in this life one may attain a level of growth and stability in the Truth, from which there cannot be a total apostasy.<sup>52</sup>

### **Tenth Thesis**

*Concerning the ministry*<sup>53</sup>

*Concerning the ministers and pastors of the church*<sup>54</sup>

All true knowledge in things spiritual is received and revealed by the gift of God, the Light or grace\*; by this knowledge, manifested and received in the innermost\* heart, every true minister of the Gospel is ordained, prepared and supplied in the work of the ministry. By the leading, pulling, and moving of such knowledge every evangelist and Christian pastor should be led and commanded\* in his work for the Gospel, as to the place where, the persons to whom, and the time when he is to minister.

Moreover, those who have this authority may and ought to preach the Gospel, whether or not they have human commission or literature.<sup>55</sup> On the other hand, those who do not have the authority of this divine gift,

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<sup>51</sup> Hebrews 6:4-6 RB

<sup>52</sup> The influence of the Calvinist doctrine of perseverance is reflected in an anecdote about Oliver Cromwell on his deathbed. He asked a minister if it is possible to fall from grace; the minister answered that it is not possible. Then Cromwell said, “Then I am safe, because I know that I was once in grace.” *History of Oliver Cromwell and the English Commonwealth: From the Execution of Charles the First to the Death of Cromwell*, M. Guizot, (London: Richard Bentley, 1854) Vol. 2 pp. 401-402

<sup>53</sup> Title in English

<sup>54</sup> Title in latin: De Ministris & Pastoribus Ecclesiae

<sup>55</sup> Latin: *licet humanis mandatis carentes, & humanæ literaturæ ignari*, “although they lack human authority, and don’t know the human literature.”

no matter how learned nor how authorized by the commissions of human beings and churches, should be considered deceivers and not true ministers of the Gospel.<sup>56</sup>

Also, those who have received this holy and immaculate\* gift, as they have freely received it so are they freely to give it,<sup>57</sup> without wages or bargaining, and much less use it as a job to earn money. Nevertheless, if God has called any person from their trade or job by which they earn their living,<sup>58</sup> it may be lawful (according to the liberty which they feel is given to them in the Lord) for them to receive temporal things — what they need for food and clothing — which are given to them freely and from the heart by those to whom they have given spiritual things.

### **Eleventh Thesis** *Concerning Worship*

All true and acceptable worship of God is offered through the inward and direct moving and drawing<sup>59</sup> of his own Spirit, which is not limited to prescribed\* places, times, or persons. We are to worship him always, and continually fear before him, but still in regard to the outward expression of worship in prayers, praises or

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<sup>56</sup> Latin: *qui hujus divini doni autoritate carent, quanquam eruditione & scientia praediti, & ecclesiarum mandatis & hominum autoritate ut plurimum pollentes, impostores tantum & fraudatores, non veri Evangelii ministri seu praedicatores habendi sunt*, “those who do not have the authority of this divine gift, although gifted with erudition and knowledge, although very powerful by the mandates of churches and by human authority, should be considered imposters and frauds, not true ministers or preachers of the Gospel.

<sup>57</sup> Matthew 10:8 RB

<sup>58</sup> Latin: *sibi & familiæ comparare panem*, “get bread for themselves and their family.”

<sup>59</sup> “Draw” here means “pull, lead, attract.” The word in Latin is *ducente* (from *duco, ducere*): “pull, drag, lead attract, move.”

preachings, we should not do it in our own will, where and when we want, but rather where and when the impulses and secret inspiration of the Spirit of God in our hearts moves us to do it. God hears and accepts these expressions, and is always ready to move us to worship\* when it is needed, and God himself is the only proper judge of that. All other worship, both praises, prayers and preachings, which man decides to do in his own will and at his own time, which he can begin and end when he pleases, do or leave undone as he thinks best, whether they be a prescribed form like a liturgy, etc., or prayers conceived at the moment by the natural strength and faculty of the mind — all these are only superstitions, will-worship,<sup>60</sup> and abominable idolatry in the sight of God. We must now deny and reject and separate ourselves from such things in this day of God's spiritual arising. However, since God "winked at the times of ignorance"<sup>61</sup> because of the simplicity and integrity of some people and because of his own innocent Seed, which lay buried (so to speak) in human hearts under that mass of superstition, it might have pleased him to "blow upon the dead and dry bones,"<sup>62</sup> and to raise some breathings of his own to answer them, until the day dawned and shone forth more clearly.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> The Latin has here the Greek word *ἐθελοθρησκεία*, translated as "will-worship" in Colossians 2:23 (King James Version), and defined (Thayer's Greek Lexicon) as "worship which one prescribes and devises for himself."

<sup>61</sup> Acts 17:30

<sup>62</sup> Ezekiel 37

<sup>63</sup> Ezekiel 13; Matthew 10:20; Acts 2:4 & 18:5; John 3:6 & 4:21; Judges 19; Acts 17:23 RB

## **Twelfth Thesis**

### *Concerning Baptism*

As there is “one Lord” and “one faith,” so there is “one baptism which is not the act of removing the dirt of the flesh but rather the answer of a good conscience before God,<sup>64</sup> by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”<sup>65</sup> This baptism is a pure and spiritual thing, the baptism of the Spirit and fire, by which we are buried with Christ\* so that, being washed and purged from our sins we may “walk in newness of life.” The baptism of John was a type<sup>66</sup> of this baptism, commanded for a time and not to continue forever. Regarding the baptism of infants, it is a mere human tradition for which neither precept nor practice is found in all the Scripture.

## **Thirteenth Thesis**

### *Concerning the Communion,*

#### *or participation in the Body and Blood of Christ*

Communion of the body and blood of Christ is inward and spiritual,<sup>67</sup> which is the participation in his flesh and blood by which the inward man is daily nourished in the hearts of those in whom Christ dwells. Christ’s breaking of bread with his disciples was a *type*. Those who had received the substance continued practicing the type in the church for a time, for the sake of the weak. They also

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<sup>64</sup> 1 Peter 3:21. In the Latin text, Barclay departs from the Vulgate, *stipulatio bonæ conscientiae*, “covenant of a good conscience.”

<sup>65</sup> Ephesians 4:5; 1 Peter 3:21; Romans 6:4, Galatians 3:27; Collosians 2:12; John 3:30; 1 Corinthians 1:17 RB

<sup>66</sup> type or figure: In one style of biblical interpretation, various individuals and events in the Old Testament are interpreted as symbols or “types” of individuals or events in the New Testament. It is believed that the types of the Old prefigure the deeper reality of the New. For example, the time which Jonah spent in the belly of the big fish can be considered a type of the time which Jesus Christ spent in the tomb.

<sup>67</sup> 1 Corinthians 10:16-17; John 6:32-33, 55; 1 Corinthians 5:8 RB.

practiced “abstaining from things strangled, and from blood;” washing each other’s feet, and “anointing the sick with oil,” all of which are commanded with no less authority and solemnity than the former. But since they are only the *shadows* of better things, they cease in those who have obtained the substance.<sup>68</sup>

#### **Fourteenth Thesis**

*Concerning the power of the Civil Magistrate, in matters purely religious, and pertaining to the conscience*

God has claimed\* for himself the power and rule over the conscience, and only he can rightly instruct and govern it. Therefore it is not lawful for anyone to force the consciences of other people, by virtue of any authority or sovereignty they may hold in the government of this world. All executions, banishments, fines, imprisonments, and other similar things which are inflicted only because of the exercise of the conscience or difference in opinion or form of worship, come from the spirit of Cain the murderer and are contrary to the Truth. At the same time no one may endanger his neighbor in his life or property, or do anything destructive to, or inconsistent with human society, using conscience as a pretext. In such cases, the law is for the transgressor, and justice should be administered to everyone without respect of persons.<sup>69</sup>

#### **Fifteenth Thesis**

*Concerning Salutations and Recreations, &c.<sup>70</sup>*

The chief purpose of all religion is to redeem us from the spirit and vain society of this world<sup>71</sup> and to lead us

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<sup>68</sup> Acts 15:20; John 13:14; James 5:14 RB.

<sup>69</sup> Luke 9:55-56; Matthew 7:12,29; Titus 3:10 RB.

<sup>70</sup> Latin: *idque genus aliis*, “and other things of this kind.”

<sup>71</sup> Latin: *à spiritu vano & hujus seculi consortio*, “from the vain spirit and society of this age.”

into inward communion with God; if we fear before him we are considered happy. Therefore all the vain customs and habits of the world, both in word and deed, must be rejected and abandoned by those who come to this fear: taking off the hat to a man, bowing and cringing of the body, and other salutations of that kind, with all the foolish and superstitious formalities which accompany them;<sup>72</sup> and all the things which man has invented in his degenerate state to feed his pride in the vain pomp and glory of this world; also the games and plays that have no benefit, frivolous recreations and nonsense,\* and gambling. All these things are invented to pass away the precious time and divert the mind from the witness of God in the heart<sup>73</sup> and from the living sense of the fear of God. They separate us from that evangelical Spirit with which Christians ought to be leavened,<sup>74</sup> which leads into sobriety, gravity, and godly fear.<sup>75</sup> When we dwell in this Spirit we feel that the blessing of the Lord is with us in those actions<sup>76</sup> which we must engage in, in order to sustain the outward man.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> The Latin adds: *y que malo usu in nimis multis gentibus inveteratae*, “and which are ingrained in many nations by bad customs”

<sup>73</sup> Latin: *teste Deo in corde*, “the witness of God in the heart.” Latin has two words which are translated in English as “witness” one is *testis* which means the person who sees and speaks, and the other is *testimonium* which is the testimony, what the witness says. The English word “witness” can mean both and so the phrase is ambiguous in English. The Latin text clarifies the ambiguity, since it can only mean “the witness of God (who sees and speaks) in the heart.”

<sup>74</sup> Latin: *quo debent Christiani cæmentari*, “by which Christians should be strengthened.”

<sup>75</sup> Latin: *sincerum Dei timorem*, “sincere fear of God.”

<sup>76</sup> Latin: *in quo dum ambulamus, benediction Dei adest nobiscum in actionibus istis*, “While we walk in this Spirit, the blessing of God is with us in those actions.”

<sup>77</sup> Ephesians 5:11; 1 Peter 1:14; John 5:44; Jeremiah 10:3; Acts 10:26; Matthew 15:13; Colossians 2:8 RB.



Sources: Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity* (Glenside PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002) pp. 9-18 and Roberti Barclaii, *Teologiae verè Christianae apologia*, facsimile (Amsterdam: Jacob Claus, 1676).