

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,¹ 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,² which the serpent sows in human hearts while they remain in this 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 use³ 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 Socinian⁴ and Pelagian⁵ 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.⁶ Nevertheless, this evil seed is not attributed to children,⁷ until by transgression they

¹ Romans 5:12, 15 RB

² Latin: *Satanæ*, "of Satan"

³ Latin: *omninò inútiles*, "of no use at all."

⁴ Radical seventeenth-century theology based on the teachings of Socinius (1539-1604) which denied the Trinity, the divinity of Christ, and original sin.

⁵ 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.

⁶ 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."

⁷ In Barclay's time the original word "infants" referred to children up to age 7.

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.]⁸

Sources: Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, Thesis IV (Glenside PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002) pp. 84-85 and Roberti Barclaii, *Teologiæ verè Christianæ apologia*, facsimile (Amsterdam: Jacob Claus, 1676) p. 53

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⁸ 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.