

§ i. The first sentence of the Ninth Thesis has already been discussed in the Fifth and Sixth Proposition, where it was proved that the *Light* which is given for life and salvation becomes the condemnation of people who refuse it. There we showed the possibility of a man resisting the divine grace and Spirit.¹ This is so apparent in the Scriptures that it cannot be denied by anyone who only considers these passages seriously: Proverbs 1:24-26; John 3:18-19; II Thessalonians 2:11-12; Acts 7:51 and 13:46; Romans 1:18. As for the other part of the thesis, which says that people in whom this grace has already worked in a good measure to purify and sanctify them, leading to further perfection, such people may afterwards fall away through disobedience, etc. — the testimonies of the Scripture included in the thesis itself are sufficient to prove it to people who are not already biased. Because on this point we agree with many other Protestants, I shall discuss it only briefly. I don't want to do again what has already been done, nor do I desire to appear wise because I write a lot. My purpose is simply to present to the Christian* world a faithful account of our principles, and to briefly let them understand what we have to say for ourselves.

§ ii. Based on the scriptures included in the thesis (not to mention many more which might be cited) I argue thus:

¹ Here the translation follows the Latin, *ibique etiam ostendimus possibilitatem hominis resistendi divinæ gratiæ & Spiritui*, because the English is obscure: "and therefore is already proved in those places where did demonstrate the possibility of man's resisting the Grace and Spirit of God."

Argument 1: If people can turn the grace of God into reckless desires,² then they must once have had that grace.

The first is true, therefore also the second.

Argument 2: If people can make shipwreck of faith,³ they must once have had faith; neither could they ever have had true faith without the grace of God.

The first is true, therefore also the last.

Argument 3: If people can have tasted of the heavenly gift and have been made partakers of the Holy Spirit,⁴ and afterwards fall away, they must have known in some measure the operation of God's saving Grace and Spirit, without which no one could taste the heavenly gift, nor partake of the Holy Spirit.

The first is true, therefore also the last.

Secondly, the contrary doctrine⁵ is built on the false hypothesis that grace is only given to save a certain elect number of people who cannot lose it, and that all the rest of humankind is excluded from grace and salvation by an absolute decree. Since that hypothesis has been destroyed, this other doctrine falls to the ground. That doctrine of theirs is wholly inconsistent with their daily practice, because they exhort people to believe and be saved, but in the meantime, if their hearers belong to the "decree of reprobation,"⁶ it is simply impossible for them to believe and be saved, and if they belong to the "decree of election,"⁷ it isn't necessary to preach that⁸ because it is impossible for

² Jude 1:4

³ I Timothy 1:19

⁴ Hebrews 6:4-6

⁵ The Calvinist doctrine of the "perseverance of the saints" says that the elect are eternally secure in Christ and cannot lose their salvation.

⁶ That is, the group of people God has excluded from salvation by divine decree.

⁷ The group of people who will be saved.

⁸ Latin: *si ad decretum electionis, prædicatio frivola est & inutilis*, "if to the decree of election, that preaching is frivolous and useless."

them to go wrong,* as I have proved earlier. In the same way, in this matter of perseverance, the practice and principle of such preachers is equally inconsistent and contradictory. They daily exhort people to be faithful to the end, telling them that if they don't continue they shall be cut off, and lose the reward. That is very true, but it is also inconsistent with their doctrine which affirms that there is no danger because there is no possibility of departing from the least measure of true Grace. If that doctrine were true, there would be no use in urging people to stand when God has made it impossible for them to fall.⁹

Source: Robert Barclay, *Apology for the True Christian Divinity*, Proposition IX § i, ii (Glenside PA: Quaker Heritage Press, 2002) pp. 224-225; y Roberti Barclaii, *Teologiae verè Christianae apologia*, facsimile (Amsterdam: Jacob Claus, 1676) pp. 166-168.

⁹ Latin: *quid opus hortandi eos perseverare, quos decrevit Deus, ut persistent, & quibus impossibile fecit no perseverare?* "What need is there to urge people to persevere since God has decreed that they will persist and made it impossible for them not to persevere?"