

ADIAPHORISTIC COLLEGE – THIRD
DISPUTATION
CONCERNING IMAGES AND THEIR
LAWFUL USE AMONG CHRISTIANS;

Which,

God bountifully granting grace from on high,

under the presidency of

Balthasar Meisner, Doctor of Sacred Theology,

and Public Professor in the most celebrated University of Wittenberg,

Jacob Rungius of Wolgaſt, a Pomeranian,

will undertake to defend to the best of his ability.

It will be held on March 17, at the usual hours and place.

At Wittenberg

by the press of John Gormann

in the year 1616

To the Reverend, Most Noble, Most Illustrious, and Most Excellent men, Doctors of Sacred Theology:

Bartholomew Krakevitz, *General Superintendent of Hither Pomerania*, and also Public and Ordinary Professor in the renowned University of Greifswald.

Bartholomew Battus, *Public and Ordinary Professor in the renowned University of Greifswald*, and also most watchful Pastor in the church of St. James.

Daniel Cramer, at Stettin in Pomerania, most meritorious *Pastor at the church of the Blessed Virgin*, and Professor of Sacred Theology in the distinguished Gymnasium there.

Frederick Faber, at Stettin, most worthy *Pastor at St. Nicholas*.

*To his teachers, promoters, patrons, kinsman by marriage and by blood, for the sake of honor and respect,
he gives and dedicates,*

Jacob Rungius, respondent.



DISPUTATION 3 – CONCERNING IMAGES

Thesis...

I. After the division of the Decalogue there follows an appendix to the first commandment (which the Calvinists constitute as the second precept of the Decalogue), in which God forbids images, saying: “You shall not make for yourself a graven thing, nor any likeness that is in heaven above, nor that is on the earth beneath, nor that is in the waters under the earth. You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them,” Exodus 20:4-5. By which words certainly, if we look more closely into them, GOD wished to cut off from his people every occasion of idolatry, lest, while they were procuring images for themselves, overwhelmed by their multitude, they should at length begin, after the manner of the Gentiles, to worship them, thereby drawing down God’s most just wrath and their own destruction.

WHETHER IT IS LICIT TO HAVE IMAGES

II. Since in these words the whole controversy about images has its foundation, and they are not understood by all in the aforesaid sense, it will be worth the effort now to take this controversy in hand and to see whether images, which by these words seem altogether to be prohibited, can be tolerated among Christians. In this matter not all agree. For some sin by excess, as the Papists; the rest sin by defect.

THIS QUESTION IS NOT SO RECENT

III. Nor indeed is it only in our time that there are dissenting opinions on this matter, but formerly also in the Church this was agitated, and this controversy stirred up many troubles for the Church. For we read that Leo the Isaurian, the Emperor, in the ninth year of his reign, in the year of Christ 725, removed all images from the temples, and that indeed with good cause and good intention; for they had begun to be worshiped; and therefore, lest the Saracens (by whom in the Koran images are prohibited) should in any way be able to accuse Christians of idolatry, he ordered images to be taken away. But because at that time Gregory III, the Pontiff, with some bishops of the East, opposed him,

afterwards in the year 730 he convened a synod at Constantinople, in which he condemned not only the worship and adoration of images (which indeed he did not without cause), but also publicly burned the images themselves in the forum. And his son Constantine Copronymus followed him, who, a synod having been convened at Constantinople at which 338 bishops were present, so plainly condemned images that, besides that they were not to be adored, it was also decreed that they were not “to be made nor to be had,” as the words of the decree sound: “Whoever from this day shall have dared to procure an image for himself, or to adore it, or to set it up in a church or in a private house, or to have it secretly, if he be a bishop or a deacon, is deposed; but if a monk or a layman, he is smitten with anathema, and is subjected to the imperial constitutions, as one who resists the divine decree and does not observe the dogmas.” But the Pontiff also opposed this synod, since, though invited, he neither came himself nor sent legates or provincial letters. From this it already appears how many quarrels about images there formerly were in the Church.

IV. In our time also we have a dispute with two kinds of men on this matter, of whom the former are the Papiſts, who not only set up and tolerate images in the temples, but also honor and adore them; but the latter are the Calvinists, who not only do not adore them, but also drive them out, throw them down, and burn them as idols. Between whom it seems to us safest and trueſt to walk a middle path. But dismissing those men (perhaps for another time) we now turn to these, and we will defend images against them to the best of our ability, yet not unto superstition.

V. For while we contend about images, we are not so much concerned about them as about Christian liberty, which the Apostle Paul bids us maintain, Galatians 4:31 and 5:1, and not to yield even for a moment, Galatians 2:5; wherefore, by yielding to the adversaries (and removing images for their sake) it would for the most part be undermined.

THE DISTINCTION OF IMAGES

VI. But before we bring forward the arguments themselves that confirm our position, a certain distinction of images must be premised, lest we seem to defend all images without discrimination. Now images made by art (for natural ones have nothing to do with the present matter) are either fashioned,

molten, or carved, that is, which is the same thing, pictures or statues (of which latter our adversaries are especially hateful). And all these differ by material, form, and end. We leave the material to craftsmen and painters, as something irrelevant to the purpose, but we take up the end and, in part, the form.

Images, in respect of end, are either decent or indecent. The former again are typical, historical, or κοσμικα [ornamental], which are made for the sake of adornment. But the latter are either idolatrous (to which also belong astrological ones, fashioned or carved under certain constellations, to which certain powers are attributed), which are made for the sake of worship, or they are of other filthy things; of which Ambrosius Catharinus makes mention, that in the lofty temples and chapels of Italy there are shown pictures of such wantonness that whatever Nature has hidden as shameful may there be beheld, to arouse not devotion but the lust of any dead flesh.

WE DEFEND AND APPROVE ONLY HONEST IMAGES, THAT IT IS PERMISSIBLE TO MAKE AND HAVE THEM, BECAUSE GOD HAS NOT FORBIDDEN THIS ITSELF BY A MORAL PRECEPT.

VII. We dismiss all these, and undertake to defend only the decent ones, for the making and use of which by Christians as lawful we will now put forward some arguments, of which the first is this: *Whatever is prohibited by no moral precept, that a Christian is permitted to have. But images are prohibited by no moral precept. Therefore it is permitted Christians to have images.*

The major of this syllogism is certain and of unshaken truth, inasmuch as it can rightly be denied by no one. For the moral Law is the fixed, immutable, and eternal rule of the divine will, by which whatever he once prohibited in the Old Testament is also even now prohibited and remains so in the New Testament, so that whatever has ever been committed against that law, or is committed in any way, has always displeased God and still displeases him; wherefore it binds and constrains Christians of the New Testament equally still as it did the Israelites in the Old Testament, and therefore whatever was prohibited to them, it is permitted to no mortal to attempt; but whatever is not prohibited remains indifferent.

BARE EIKONOΠΟΓΙΑ [IMAGE-MAKING] IS NOT PROHIBITED BY A MORAL PRECEPT:

1) BECAUSE GOD HIMSELF MADE IMAGES.

II. Now as for the minor, we can strengthen it by many arguments, and indeed, by such a one: *Whatever was at some time done by God himself, that he did not morally prohibit, and consequently that will be ἀδιάφορον [indifferent]. But images were at some time made by God himself. Therefore they are not morally prohibited by him, and consequently they will be things indifferent.*

The major proposition of this prosyllogism again is indubitable; for God does not do such things as are contrary to himself or to his own law. But the minor is made clear by examples. To this may be referred all likenesses that God ever made, of which 1. the first, although it seems not much to the point, was nevertheless a certain εἰκονομοία [image-making] of God, by which he, the first of all, formed an image, not of some created thing, but a living exemplar and exact likeness of himself, namely man, as Moses testifies in Genesis 1:27 and Genesis 5:1. 2. Then he also made many other images, among the number of which is also that which represented the tabernacle to be made on Mount Sinai, which he showed to Moses, Exodus 25:40. To this, 3., belong also those images which that same God sometimes showed to the Prophets, Kings, and Apostles, signifying future events. And, fourth, φάσεις [appearances], which he often showed in the air, preachers of repentance and the like.

2) BECAUSE GOD WILLS IMAGES TO BE MADE IN HIS HONOR

IX. The minor of the general syllogism in VII is also confirmed by this argument: *Whatever has been sanctioned by God for his own honor is not prohibited by any moral precept, but is plainly ἀδιάφορον [indifferent]. But God sanctioned images for his own honor. Therefore images are not prohibited by any moral precept, but are ἀδιάφοραι [indifferent].*

The major proposition of this prosyllogism is true and certain; otherwise the moral and ceremonial law would conflict ἀντιφατικῶς [contradictorily], which is most absurd. Further, the minor is proved again by examples. For God commanded to be made, 1. on the hem of the robe, or ephod, of

Aaron, pomegranates of hyacinth and purple and scarlet yarn, which certainly were likenesses of real pomegranates, Exodus 28:33. Then, **2.** Cherubim both by the weaving art on the curtains and by the casting art of gold over the ark of the covenant, from Exodus 25:18, which represented the appearance of winged youths looking at each other. Add to these, **3.** if you will, the bronze serpent, which God commanded to be made, that those bitten by the fiery serpents, looking at it, might be saved, Numbers 21:18. And, **4.** if you please, add all the other types of the Old Testament, such as the Paschal lamb, the sacrifices, and likewise the ark of the covenant, the mercy-seat, etc.; for all are images of things to come.

3) BECAUSE GOD GAVE THE HOLY SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO MADE IMAGES.

X. We establish the same minor proposition of our general syllogism by this third argument: *What God has bestowed the Holy Spirit to accomplish is not prohibited by any moral precept. But for making images God has bestowed the Holy Spirit. Therefore he has not prohibited images by any moral precept.*

Again, the major of this syllogism is certain and of indubitable truth; for God does not bestow his Spirit for accomplishing what is contrary to himself; indeed the Holy Spirit, who is Jehovah himself, how could he promote what he has prohibited by his law, and what, if it be done, he punishes? But the minor first is evident from the chapters Exodus 31:1-2 and 35:30-35, where in the former place it is read thus: “And Jehovah spoke to Moses, saying, Behold, I have called by name Bezalel, the son of Uri, the son of Hur, of the tribe of Judah, and I have filled him with the Spirit of God in wisdom and understanding and in knowledge and in all craftsmanship, to devise, to work in gold, in silver, and in bronze, and in stone-cutting, etc.,” which words are repeated in chapter 35. Whence it is clear that *εἰκονοποιᾶν* [image-making] does not in every way displease God. Secondly, if you please, add what Philo says in the book *On Dreams*, where, about to commend the art of painting, he takes an argument from the creator:

“Some” (he says) “so neglect and think vile the art of painting that they relegate it to weavers; but I even admire its very name, especially when I look upon the segments of earth, the celestial circles, the differences of animals and plants, and this multiform texture of the world. This

admiration compels me to believe that the maker of this work discovered the art of variegation, and thus I both venerate the inventor and honor his invention, and I am astonished at the spectacle of the work itself.”

4) BECAUSE GOD MIRACULOUSLY APPROVED IMAGES THAT HAD BEEN MADE.

XI. For the proof of the minor of the general syllogism previously adduced we also bring this argument: *Whatever, made by others, has been miraculously approved by God, is not prohibited by a moral precept. But images made by others have been miraculously approved by God. Therefore God has not prohibited them by any moral precept. Consequently therefore they are adiaphora.*

The major of this prosyllogism is again ἀξιόπιστος [worthy of credence]. For God not only does not approve what he has prohibited by the moral law, but hates and punishes it. “Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all the words of the law,” Deuteronomy 26:26; Galatians 3:10. But the minor must again be confirmed by examples, of which

1. Let the first be Solomon’s Temple, most richly furnished with images, in which he made Cherubim in the Holy of Holies, 1 Kings 6:23-28; and he carved all the walls of the Temple round about with various carvings, and he made on them palm trees, Cherubim, etc., v. 29, and likewise on the veil, on the doors, etc., and everywhere, as one may read in 1 Kings 6 and 7 and also 2 Chronicles 3 and 4. Yet all and each of these images God not only did not oppose, but approved by his gracious presence in the temple where they were. “And it came to pass, when the priests came out of the Holy Place, a cloud filled the house of the Lord, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the Lord had filled the house of the Lord,” 1 Kings 8:10-11.

2. The images of Christ and of the woman with an issue of blood, about which Eusebius relates certain things: that at Caesarea there was an image of the woman with an issue of blood who was healed by the Lord, in whose face (says Eusebius) he recognized the form of the woman prostrating at the feet of the Lord and praying with uplifted hands; and that there was joined to her the image of a man clothed with a long robe and stretching out his right hand to the supplicating woman, and they handed down that the statue was shaped to the likeness of the face of Jesus, which remained down to

our own times, as we ourselves inspected with our own eyes. He also records that at the base of that statue a plant sprang up, which, when it had touched the fringe of the Lord's garment, was useful and salutary for driving away whatever diseases. See Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History, bk. 7, ch. 12; Nicephorus, bk. 6, ch. 26; Theophylact on Matthew 9. And Sozomen adds that it had been set up by the woman herself in the garden at her house in Paneas; but that it had been taken by Christian men and received into the church, where in his time it was thus seen; that this one had been [unclear] and so shattered that part lies buried, part remains set in the place, and a dreadful example of impiety is shown to posterity.

To these, 3. if you please, may be added the bronze serpent, of which above, and the image of the cross, near which it is certain many miracles happened, as Jerome reports happened at Epidaurum: where, when the sea burst beyond its bounds and threatened great calamity, Hilarion fashioned three crosses on the shore, beyond which the sea could not advance, but, swelling like a wall, stood still on high with a roar.

1. THE FOREGOING REASONS PROVE THAT IMAGES ARE LAWFUL EVEN IN TEMPLES.

XII. These things being thus seen, it shines more clearly than the noonday light that it is not prohibited for a Christian man to fashion and to have images. And when the adversaries see that they cannot deny this, they say that this is not their opinion, as though it were not lawful to have images, but only that they are prohibited in temples. But certainly the same reasons prove that images are equally lawful in temples as in private houses, as the examples brought forward in the previous thesis clearly demonstrate, where God in his temple also approved images by his gracious presence.

1) BECAUSE TO THE PURE THEY ARE PURE.

XIII. Nor are there lacking more reasons by which the placing of images in temples can further be defended. For, *Whatever is pure to the pure is pure; that can be tolerated in the temples of Christians. But images are pure to the pure. Therefore images can be tolerated in the temples of Christians.*

The basis of the major is manifest, for everything that is impure becomes impure through the abuse of those who themselves are impure, to whom nothing is pure, but their mind and conscience are defiled, Titus 1:15. The minor is, **1.** from the Apostle himself in the same place: “All things are pure to the pure”; therefore without doubt images will be pure to the pure.

XIV. 2. Next, if images were impure, they would be impure either by the moral law or by the ceremonial law; but by neither are they so. Therefore. That by the moral law they are not impure we showed above; but that by the ceremonial law they cannot be impure for us is clear enough, since from that we have been set free by Christ in the New Testament. For granted that to the Jews in the Old Testament it was plainly prohibited by the ceremonial law to have images, it does not straightway follow that we in the New Testament are still bound by the same law.

XV. 3. If foods forbidden in the Old Testament by the ceremonial law are no longer impure, then neither will images prohibited by the same law be any longer impure. But foods forbidden in the Old Testament are no longer impure. Therefore neither are images. This reasoning is plain enough, so that it can hardly be denied by anyone. For by the same law images were prohibited by which foods were; but that foods then impure are now pure is clear enough from Acts 10:13-15.

2) IN THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH IMAGES WERE FREELY EMPLOYED, AS EXAMPLES TESTIFY.

XVI. We propose such an argument. *Whatever in the primitive Church was lawful and permitted in temples is altogether lawful for us now also. But to have images in temples in the primitive Church was lawful and permitted. Therefore now also.*

The basis of the major is indubitable, for by the same law we are in this part constrained. The truth of the minor is proved by examples. For **1.** the image of Christ was in common use, which is clear from the example brought above concerning the image of Christ and the woman with an issue of blood; then Tertullian also records that the image of Christ with the lost sheep, carried back by him on his shoulders, was so common on cups that an argument was taken from it to prove that in the Church penitence even for grave offenses is granted.

XVII. 2. The images of Mary the Virgin, θεοτόκος [God-bearer]. See Theodore the Reader, bk. 1 of the Collectanea; Nicephorus, Ecclesiastical History, bk. 4, ch. 2; Simeon Metaphrastes in the Life of St. Luke. Such an image Pulcheria Augusta placed in the temple which she had built, which Eudocia had sent to her from Jerusalem.

3. The images also of the Apostles were had among the ancients, about which Eusebius, bk. 7, ch. 14; and Augustine, On the Harmony of the Gospels, bk. 1, ch. 10. And the Venerable Bede records that in the Church of Jerusalem there was preserved a certain cloth most aptly composed, on which the images of the Apostles, taken from their living appearance, had been painted.

And **4.** the images of the Martyrs. Prudentius sings of the image of St. Cassian in a Hymn; likewise of the image of Hippolytus; Evodius writes of the image of St. Stephen the Martyr in bk. 2, etc.

5. Thus concerning the image of Meletius, Chrysostom writes in Meletius: “On rings, on cups, on walls, and everywhere they painted images of St. Meletius, so that they might not only hear that holy name, but also, beholding everywhere the form of his body, might have a double consolation of pilgrimage,” etc. Whence it is clear that even images of holy Doctors were formerly in use.

XVIII. 6. That the image of the cross is most ancient is evident from the testimonies of the ancients, Justin, Tertullian, Origen, Chrysostom, Socrates, Sozomen, Augustine, Cyril, and many others. Very old also is that custom to trace with the bare stroke of the fingers the image of the cross on the forehead, in the air, or elsewhere, of which many Fathers likewise make mention, such as Lactantius, Basil, Nazianzen, Athanasius, and many more of the rest.

7. Historical images, such as of the sacrifice of Isaac and of the Lord’s Passion: of the former Gregory of Nyssa writes, “I have often seen the image of the narrative, and I could not pass by without tears, since the painting so effectively set the history before the eyes. For Isaac lies prostrate before the altar,” etc. And of the latter the same: “I have not infrequently seen the figure of the Passion, nor passed by such a writing without tears,” etc. And indeed that these images were found in temples also is attested by the fact that that Gregory of Nyssa likened the temple to a flowery and pleasant meadow, in

which the labors and contests of the Martyrs are seen as flowers, skillfully painted in colors, as in the Oration on Theodorus, etc.

3) IMAGES ARE USEFUL IN TEMPLES.

1. TO TEACH

XIX. For tolerating images in temples we also bring this argument: *Whatever has in temples a utility not to be condemned can be had and tolerated in them. But images obtain some utility in temples not to be despised. Therefore images can be tolerated in temples.*

The major is without doubt manifest, since all things ought to be done for edification. But the minor must be proved to some extent. And the case stands well.

Images avail, **1.** for teaching; which if anyone perchance should deny, we reply to him with the example of the Egyptians, who used images in place of letters, which they called hieroglyphics; see Pierius Valerianus, who composed an entire volume on them. If, therefore, someone shall have conceded that letters avail for teaching, and that books are mute or dead teachers, he must also grant that images (which in this respect are equivalent to letters) are also such mute teachers and can teach.

2. TO HELP THE MEMORY OF PAST EVENTS

XX. They recall past things to memory, as Basil testifies. For what the discourse of history presents through hearing (he says), painting afresh shows by imitation. And Gregory to the same effect: For this reason the Gospel histories are painted in the Church, that to illiterate men they may recall to memory what the conversation of Christ in the flesh was. And Cyril against Julian: Do you wish that we cast away the wood (he thinks the image of the Holy Cross), which leads us to the remembrance of every virtue, and rather have the picture of Ganymede or of Danaë? And concerning the image of the Savior sent to Secundinus Gregory, bk. 7, ep. 13, wrote thus:

“I know that you do not seek the images of the Savior in order to worship them as God, but for the remembrance of the Son of God, that you may grow warm again in his love, whose image you desire to see.”

Nay, the thing itself speaks, and experience testifies, that sacred images of histories, when looked upon by the pious, often stir pious remembrance of past things; therefore let us forbear more testimonies.

OBJECTIONS OF THE CALVINISTS

XXI. These things therefore being considered in this manner, it becomes manifest that images in the temples of Christians are altogether lawful. But against this our assertion the Calvinists are accustomed to object certain things, which must be weighed before an end is made. And first indeed they carry about as on a banner, and set in the forefront, that saying in Exodus 20:4: “You shall not make for yourself a graven thing, nor any likeness that is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters under the earth,” etc., by which words they are confident they can easily prove that images are morally prohibited.

XXII. But an answer can be given in various ways, for **1.** it has been proved above more than enough that images are in no way morally prohibited. **2.** If images were morally prohibited in this place, many absurdities would certainly follow. For all images whatsoever that represent at least something, or signify in any other way, would have to be removed without distinction: such are astronomical and geographical images by which the terrestrial globe is represented, geometrical, optical, and especially zoographical, anatomical, surgical, botanographical, etc. And above all the *εἰκονοποιητικαὶ* [image-making] arts would have to be removed, such as painting, sculpture, casting, and other suchlike. It would also not be permitted to have seals or insignia. Signboards ought not to be set up before inns, of which we see some bear pressed frames, some a bear, and other things of that sort. The coins of princes ought not to be marked with images, although Christ himself could tolerate this being done by Caesar; and the Sicilian coin of the Hebrews bore on one side the image of Aaron’s rod, on the other of a censor, which nevertheless God did not reprove.

XXIII. 3. Nay, not only these absurdities follow, but all our cognition would also have to be taken away; for whatever we know, we know through the impression of species upon our mind; and whatever we see, we see through optical species emanating from the body and imprinted on the eyes; and all our phantasy and imaginative power is occupied with mere images of things, etc. Dreams also,

what are they but images through which things are represented to the phantasy, etc.? All which would have to be removed, if images were morally prohibited. Wherefore, if we do not wish to fall into these absurdities, we must distinguish εἰκονοποιᾶν [image-making in general] from εἰδωλοποιᾶ [idol-making], and, removing the latter as morally prohibited, retain the former.

THE CALVINISTS OBJECT AGAIN

XXIV. But without doubt here they will say that they are not so demented as to slip into these absurdities; that they do not decree that such images are to be removed as are of decent use, much less such natural images in the imaginative faculty of the mind, of which we have just spoken. Besides, the images which are in the Phantasy are ἄνυλοι [immaterial]. And therefore, not falling under sight, they cannot supply a cause of idolatry.

XXV. But we reply, if the aforesaid words of Exodus are to be understood simply, the aforesaid absurdities also follow simply. Nor does it in any way stand in the way that the aforesaid images of the mind are ἄνυλοι [immaterial], since **1.** the *quod quid est* [what it is] of the image does not consist in the material, but in the representation of forms, which is perhaps greater in them than in material ones, because the image which the painter paints is at least an effigy of that which he bears in his mind. **2.** Because idolatry itself is first done in the mind and imagination before it bursts forth outwardly into act.

THE CALVINISTS OBJECT OTHERWISE, REPLYING TO THE STATEMENT IN EXODUS 20:4

XXVI. But the adversaries do not yet wish to seem to remove the decent use of images. For Ursinus himself proposes to himself the words of the aforesaid Scripture, Exodus 20:4, in the general Question 97, and under this special Question 1, page to me 598. And he answers to them: that God there forbids abuse. And that that is, he says, **1.** if we wish to carve God; **2.** if we bind the worship of God to statues.

XXIX. But to the former member of Ursinus’s reply we answer: **1.** God is Spirit, John 4:24; wherefore his essence cannot by any means be painted, and besides the enormous crime of impiety which one would incur who wished to paint the essence of God, it is extreme madness and stupidity to wish to express a spiritual essence by painting. **2.** We answer: Those manifestations by which the most holy Trinity revealed itself may be painted, if the history be depicted, how God the Father revealed himself, Daniel 7:13; God the Son, 1 Timothy 3:16; God the Holy Spirit, Matthew 3:16; and other things of that kind. Peter Martyr himself also grants that the Son of God, inasmuch as he assumed human nature, can be painted.

THAT IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THE FORMS IN WHICH GOD AT TIMES MANIFESTED HIMSELF MAY BE DRAGGED INTO IDOLATRY IS PROVED AGAINST URSINUS, WHO DENIES IT.

XXIX. Further Ursinus speaks thus: “God indeed certainly did that for reasons,” (namely, manifested himself in this manner) “but he forbade us the imitation of that thing.” But in what place? or where is this read, “You shall not depict my manifestations historically”? He goes on: “It is permitted to no creature to represent God by a sign by which he himself has not commanded him to be represented.” But again, if he has not commanded, has he therefore prohibited? I do not think so. He proceeds further: “Those appearances remained only so long as God wished to use them for the manifestation of himself, and therefore they could not be carried off into idolatry.”

Answer: On the contrary, they very much could have been carried off into idolatry, as Moses himself testifies, Deuteronomy 4:15-18, etc.: “You saw,” he says, “no likeness on the day when the Lord spoke to you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire,” v. 16, “lest perhaps, being deceived, you should make for yourselves a carved likeness of any beasts that are on the earth, or of birds that fly under heaven,” v. 18, “or of creeping things that move on the earth, or of fish,” etc. Which words clearly testify that Ursinus’s assertion can by no means stand, but that it was possible, or at least could have been possible, for the appearances of God in an assumed form to be carried off into idolatry.

LET THE REST BE REFUTED, WHICH URSINUS RESPONDS TO OUR ASSERTIONS.

XXX. Against what we also assert, that images can be tolerated in temples, Ursinus in special Question 3 under the general Question 99 adduces eight reasons why images ought to be removed from the temples of Christians, of which the first is: **1.** that it is against the express command of God to set images in temples. **2.** That God is not to have images made by which he is represented, or **3.** before which he is worshiped. Answer: **1.** This command is restricted; for after those words, “You shall not make for yourself,” etc., God immediately subjoins for what end images are not to be made; for he says, “You shall not worship, you shall not serve, you shall not bow yourself down to them,” etc. **2.** Nor do we think that we can paint or represent God, nor do we have images for that end, that we should represent God by them. **3.** And we ourselves most strongly urge, by the force of the divine precept, that no form of worship at all is to be assigned to images.

XXXI. The second reason: Because they were instruments of horrible idolatry in the Papacy. Answer: Either they were this *per se*, or *per accidens*. They could not be so *per se*; otherwise all images everywhere and always would be a cause of idolatry. Therefore they were so *per accidens* by reason of men abusing them. For to the impure, whose mind and conscience are defiled, nothing is pure; but to the pure all things are pure, Titus 1:15.

XXXII. The third reason coincides with the first; therefore there is no need to reply here at length, provided it be noted that he ineptly confuses idols here with images, which he also does in the following two reasons, the fourth namely and the fifth. But we, with the author of the books which are called the Carolingians, do not call images set in basilicas idols, but refuse to worship them lest they become idols.

XXXIII. Sixth: “For the avoiding,” he says, “of scandal,” (namely, images are to be abolished) “lest through statues a danger be created for the Church and for the rude people,” etc. Answer: But what danger? We ourselves reply the same which he himself warns in special Question 4: “that doctrine must be premised, and idols will of themselves fall.” If they fall of themselves, no danger any longer

threatens from them. For the word of God alone is the only remedy against idolatry, which, when it firmly cleaves to the minds and hearts of hearers, there is nothing further that we need fear from painted statues.

XXXIV. The seventh reason which he asserts is: “Lest the enemies of the Church by this spectacle, having a great appearance of idolatry, be more alienated from the Church and treat the divine truth with contumely, etc.” Answer: **1.** This is not the place to dispute what the cause is why unbelievers are not converted to the Christian faith, but we will ask this from the adversary, whether images are the cause of that thing? We reply to him again with that place of the Apostle, Titus 1:15, that to the impure nothing is pure, which also comes into use for the enemies of the Church.

2. The testimony which he adduces does not fit here; for from it there would follow that Christians, seeing the idols of the heathen and idolatrous rites, are straightway scandalized, which once happened to the sons of Israel, and which today by the grace of God we see does not so happen.

3. As to what he asserts concerning the Jews, to that we answer again: that it is not inherent in images per se, but that it happens by the fault of the Jews themselves, witness again the Apostle Paul in the place cited before. But the cause which he asserts in the eighth place coincides with the second; therefore let us forbear a fuller reply here.

XXXV. To the example of the Temple of Solomon he answers in this manner: **1.** That those images leaned upon the express command of God, etc. Answer: If God had simply and morally prohibited images in temples, certainly he would in no way have tolerated them in Solomon’s temple, much less would he himself have made images or taken care that they be made, as was shown above. **2.** “The statues of Solomon,” he says, “were such as could not easily be drawn into superstitious use.” Answer: Let the adversary set before his eyes the example of the bronze serpent, which, although it had been made by Moses by the special command of God, nevertheless afforded occasion for idolatry, as we read in 2 Kings 18:4: Hezekiah removed the bronze serpent that Moses had made, because to those days the sons of Israel were burning incense to it. Why should it not by equal reason have been possible that the images in the temple of Solomon should be a cause of idolatry per accidens?

XXXVI. 1. Further, Ursinus objects to himself that images obtain some utility in temples, saying: “The books of the laity in temples are useful and to be retained,” etc. And he replies: that those books of the laity are useful which have been delivered to them by God, but images are prohibited. **2.** He adduces testimonies of Scripture. **3.** “God,” he says, “wills the Church to be taught not through mute images, but through the living preaching of his word; for faith is not from the sight of statues, but from the hearing of the word.”

We on the contrary answer to 1 and 3: Our opinion is not that we wish to instruct the laity from the mere sight of images (which he falsely wishes to ascribe to us), or that images are such books from which faith can be learned; but only that they are conducive to recalling to the laity those things to memory which previously they have been taught from books. **2.** To the sayings of Scripture we answer that they have nothing to do with the purpose; for the Prophets teach that the Israelites were deceived by idols and by the worshipers of idols, which we readily grant to the adversary.

CONCLUSION

XXXVII. Finally, when we say that images can be retained in temples for the sake of adornment, he replies to that: The true ornament of temples is the word of God purely and sincerely preached and the true use of the Sacraments. But we answer: *The true and only ornament of the Church of God is the true preaching of the word of God and the lawful use of the Sacraments, not of the Temple.* He therefore takes the name of temple for the Church and shamefully confuses these things with each other. For if the word of God be taught in the temple in the highest degree, and the Church be absent, the word of God will in no way adorn the temple. But the vanity of the rest which Ursinus there asserts can easily be judged from the preceding: For the most part he confounds idols and images with each other, or simply attributes the cause of idolatry to images, which ought rather to be attributed to men abusing them.

XXXVIII. These, therefore, are the things which Ursinus and the rest of the Calvinists with him are accustomed to object to us against the decent and historical use of images in temples, from which, since we have thus sufficiently freed ourselves, we now conclude, and humbly pray God the

most gracious Father through Christ his beloved Son, that he would be willing to bestow upon us his Holy Spirit abundantly, whereby he may preserve us in the true faith of Christ to the end of life, direct our hearts and all our actions through our whole life, and most mercifully preserve our minds from every idolatry. But to this our glorious God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be praise, honor, and glory unto everlasting ages, Amen.

FOR THE FILLING UP OF A LITTLE BLANK PAGE IT HAS PLEASED TO ADD THE FOLLOWING PROBLEMS.

1. Whether it is lawful to worship before images under the pretext that the worship is terminated in the prototype, not in the type, under the image. We deny it against the Romaniſts, because by the same reasoning they try to excuse their idolatry by which once the Israelites excused themselves, who pretended that they were not worshiping the calves, but God under them. But God does not wish to be worshiped in a manner other than he himself has instituted; wherefore that Romaniſt evasion is molten and useless. Nay, it is manifest that they think otherwise from this, that Gregory of Valentia, tom. Disputation 6, question 11, p. 6, says:

“Images are not honored by the same manner by which the prototype is honored; yet they are honored nevertheless in their own way, namely in that way in which those things are thought to be honored which are honored only on account of another.”

Likewise:

“Images ought to be honored with the same honor as the prototype, in that their own manner by which they ought to be honored, namely insofar as they are images; and consequently, the images of Christ ought to be worshiped.”

2. Whether the image of Christ, especially crucified, is a thing altogether impious. We deny it. The Calvinists affirm it on the ground that only the human nature of Christ can be painted, which itself seems to establish the Arian and Nestorian heresy, as if Christ were not God but only man, etc.; whereas we have the image of Christ not for the purpose of expressing the divine nature of Christ, but for the sake of adornment, or also of remembrance alone.

THE END