

Third and Fourth Heads of Doctrine (The Corruption of Man, His Conversion to God, and the Manner Thereof)

LORD'S DAY #34

REJECTION OF ERRORS

The true doctrine having been explained, the Synod rejects the errors of those:

Paragraph 3

Leader: Who teach: That in spiritual death the spiritual gifts are not separate from the will of man, since the will in itself has never been corrupted, but only hindered through the darkness of the understanding and the irregularity of the affections; and that, these hindrances having been removed, the will can then bring into operation its native powers, that is, that the will of itself is able to will and to choose, or not to will and not to choose, all manner of good which may be presented to it.

People: **This is an innovation and an error, and tends to elevate the powers of the free will, contrary to the declaration of the prophet: *The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt*; and of the apostle: *Among whom* (sons of disobedience) *we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind.***

Paragraph 4

Leader: Who teach: That the unregenerate man is not really nor utterly dead in sin, nor destitute of all powers unto spiritual good, but that he can yet hunger and thirst after righteousness and life, and offer the sacrifice of a contrite and broken spirit, which is pleasing to God.

People: **For these things are contrary to the express testimony of Scripture: *Ye were dead through your trespasses and sins. And: Every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. Moreover, to hunger and thirst after deliverance from misery and after life, and to offer unto God the sacrifice of a broken spirit, is peculiar to the regenerate and those that are called blessed (Ps. 51:17; Matt. 5:6).***

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