

PREFACE

100 THESES BY F.W.SCHWARTZ

When the Church of Jesus Christ will again be Apostolic – and she will be – then she has to return to the apostolic faith and to the foundation given by Jesus to his Church.

The next pages are the fruits of a during many years, impartial, unprejudiced and praying examination of the New Testament, also in the original languages.

I am not going further than the New Testament. Therefore it does not completely link with the existing confession writings. In general the Authorized Version of the Bible is followed; in some places the Lutheran version when it was more clear. If so it is indicated.

Some of the theses have further been amplified and explained in notes.

May the Lord of the Church gives His blessings to this work, for the love of Him, and if possible, carried out for the honor of His beyond praised Name.

The Author

THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AS IT WAS IN THE FIRST CENTURY OF THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST AND WILL BECOME AGAIN

The EXISTANCE OF A GOD

Thesis 1

The nature, the all people innate sentiment and conscience teach us that there has to be a sovereign creature or God Who is almighty, wise and good.

Romans 1:19-21; 2:14,15.

NOTE

The inorganic substances in nature, metals, stones, air, water etc. cannot have been from eternity, because they have been subjected to transformation. Only what is immutable can be eternally.

They also cannot have created themselves, because they are inanimate. Also the forces and firm laws which rule the nature, must owe their origin to a much higher power and almighty law-giver. Now laws, without Law-Giver.

Equally as the inorganic, the organic substances, the plants, animals, human beings can have created themselves because the very first created ones ought to have done this, before they themselves existed yet, which is impossible.

The structure of the plants and that of the animal or human body bear testimony of such an inconceivable wisdom and inscrutable intellect that this all can impossibly have been originated of itself from a single original cell.

And where does this marvelous cell come from in this case?

It namely cannot have created itself when it still did not exist.

Everything hollow words from human wisdom, pride and own opinion.

The first origin of all things can never be demonstrated through human wisdom. One always has to return to an almighty Creator.

Also the human intellect cannot be originated from the dust or have become of itself but has to have its origin from a still infinite higher intellectual creature, too exalted, then that we could understand or fathom it with our finite intellect.

A wise, Almighty Supreme Being Who we name God, must therefore once have generated this all from nothing. Genesis 1; John 1:1-3.

Thesis 2

From nature, from our intellect or from our conscience we are unable to get to know this God in all His perfections and attributes, and even less still His will.

Romans 2:14a; The Acts 17:23,24,30.

THE REVELATION OF THAT GOD

Thesis 3

For that this God had to reveal Himself to mankind and let know them His will.

Romans 3:1,2.

Thesis 4

God has done this, both single persons and an entire nation, for instance Adam, Noah, Abraham, Elijah, The nation of Israel in the old Covenant.

But also in the New Covenant, for instance to the disciples of Jesus.

Matthew 17:5,6. To Paul; The Acts 9:3-6; 16:6,7; and to the parish, The Acts 13:2; 20:23; etc.

This knowledge of God is called: the revealed Religion.

THE WORD OF GOD, THE BIBLE

Thesis 5

What has still remained preserved for us from past times of those revelations through the forethought of God, is noted down in the book of the books, the Bible, the Holy Scripture, or the Word of God. Luke 4:4, 21

Thesis 6

In order to get to know God, to know how we have to act according to the will of God, in what way we can be blessed in our life and saved after the death, we have to read the Bible seriously and with respect.

John 5:39; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 Timothy 4:8; 6:6.

GODS BEING AND HIS ATTRIBUTES

Thesis 7

We learn from this Bible that there is only one God.

Deuteronomy 6:4,5; Mark 12:29,30; John 17:3; Romans 3:30.

Thesis 8

God is spirit. John 4:24; omniscient, Jeremiah 17:10; always omnipresent in the infinite universe, Psalm 139:10.

The real being of God nobody can understand or imagine.

NOTE

The perceptible imagination of God, drilled into us in our first youth, as an old man with a white beard and a grave face, sitting on the clouds and derived from Daniel 7:9,13,22, usually remains with us up to our age, but is entirely in contradiction with the omnipresent, immaterial Spirit as Jesus teaches us to know God, and by that an obstacle for a more sublime, real conception and belief of God.

Thesis 9

God is everlasting, Isaiah 40:28; Psalm 90:2; Holy, Leviticus 11:44; 19:2; 1 Peter 1:15,16; Immutable, James 1:17; Righteous, Exodus 20:5,6; but also merciful and gracious, Exodus 20:6; 34:6; Deuteronomy 4:31; 2 Chronicles 30:9; Psalm 86:15; Luke 6:36.

THE TRINITY OF GOD

Thesis 10

The Holy Scripture teaches us that the Divine Supreme Being has revealed Himself to mankind as threefold in His Being, and still one in his Being, whilst there is only one God (Deuteronomy 6:4).

The Holy Scripture nowhere speaks of a trinity or the three Gods, but only of God, as Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and these three are one God (notice the Apostolic Confession of Faith; not that from Nicea or Athanasius which date from the period of decay of the Church). Matthew 3:16,17; 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:13; Mark 12:29,32; James 2:19; Joh. 1:1-3,14.

NOTE

The word 'trinity' does not occur in the Holy Scripture.

The text of 1 John 5:7 is unauthentic and occurs in a manuscript of the New Covenant not earlier than from the eight century, added to it by a monk.

With that concurs that in the Arian quarrels of the fourth and fifth century about the Deity of Christ, this text has never been quoted as a defense of it which would have been obvious in the first place.

Indeed! Was this text authentic and was this contained in the fourth century in the New Testament Scriptures, then this quarrel could not have arisen then at that time.

The doctrine of the trinity of God, usually presented in such an incomprehensible way, is however very clear, if the word 'persons' is only avoided with it.

Certainly in Dutch one understands entirely wrong under 'a person' and individual man. But three men can impossibly be one man.

By this the doctrine becomes incomprehensible.

The word 'person' is Latin and means: the mask that the actors wore on stage, and that in his features marked the character of the man whom they represented. Hence the role which they performed was also named 'persona'.

THE CREATION BY GOD

Thesis 11

God has created everything what exists from nothing, Genesis 1:1; Psalm 33:6,9; Isaiah 40:26,28; John 1:3; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:10; 11:3.

All notice the note with thesis 1.

THE ANGELS OF GOD

Thesis 12

God also created a very large number of Angels (Messengers), Luke 2:13; Matthew 26:53; Colossians 1:16a; Hebrews 1:6,7,14; Revelation 5:11.

Those Angels praise the Lord, Psalm 103:20; Isaiah 6:3; 148:2.

Thesis 13

They are His messengers on earth, Hebrews 1:7; Luke 2:10-14; Daniel 8:16-19. They carry out the will of the Lord, serve Him and protect the children of God on earth, Genesis 19:15; 24:7,40; 48:16; Daniel 3:24,25,28; 6:23; Psalm 91:11; 34:8; Matthew 18:10; Hebrews 1:14. It is however, not allowed to worship them, Revelation 19:10; 22:8,9.

THE FALLEN ANGELS

Thesis 14

Many Angels many have deserted God, John 8:44; Mark 5:9; 2 Peter 3 2:4; Jude 6.

Thesis 15

As impure spirits they try to seduce the people to sin, Luke 11:14; 1 Peter 5:8; Genesis 2:16,17; 3:4,5.

PROVIDENCE OF GOD

Thesis 16

The providence of God maintains His Creation, Psalm 119:90; and his creatures, Psalm 36:7,8; Matthew 5:45; The Acts 17:27,28.

THE CREATION OF MAN

Thesis 17

God also created man with a body, soul and everlasting spirit, Genesis 2:7,21,22 Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28.

Thesis 18

Man was good in his original state, sincere, without sin (therefore immortal) and created according to the image of God, Genesis 1:26,27; 5:1,2; Ecclesiastes 7:29.

Thesis 19

This likeness to the image of God was not in material, outward form, but in spiritual perfection, consisting in sanctity, Ephesians 4:24; knowledge of God, Colossians 3:10; power over the other creatures on earth, Genesis 1:26; and in immortality Genesis 2:7,17.

THE FALL OF MAN

Thesis 20

Man however, has not remained in that state of perfection, but has lost for himself and his descendants the image of God, Genesis 3:17-19; Romans 5:12.

Thesis 21

That fall of man happened through the disobedience of the commandment of God, Genesis 2:16,17; 3:1-12; Hosea 6:7.

THE ORIGINAL SIN**Thesis 22**

All men have become sinners after and through the fall of Adam and Eve, Romans 3:10-23; 5:12,18,19.

NOTE

A naturally consequence of the fall. How could from impure people again be born pure people? The image of God, however, had gone lost in man.

Thesis 23

Through the sin we are subjected to the wrath/ire of God, Romans 1:18; and to the death, Romans 5:12; 6:23.

NOTE

How could from actually become mortal people again be born immortal ones?

THE SIN**Thesis 24**

All what is injustice and contrary to the commandments of God, is sin, 1 John 3:4,8.

Thesis 25

We inwardly sin with our thoughts, Matthew 15:19; outwardly with words, Matthew 12:36,37; James 3:2, 6-10; and works, John 3:19; Colossians 1:21; 3:9.

Thesis 26

We also sin by omitting the good things, James 4:17; Romans 7:18; and by giving to others a bad example , by seducing them to sin, or not to exhort them to the good things, 1 Timothy 5:22.

Thesis 27

Sin is being committed in two kinds of way: from weakness or from godlessness. From weakness the believers sin: firstly, from ignorance, Psalm 19:13; secondly, from precipitation, Galatians 6:1.

Thesis 28

From godlessness the unbelievers sin with knowing, willing and intention. Matthew 26:14-16.

Thesis 29

Not all the sins are equally large and heavy, John 19:11.

The heaviest are:

Firstly, the aloud to heaven crying sins which call to God for revenge, such as murder, Genesis 4:10; withholding the wages from the workers, James 5:4.

Secondly, the apostasy from the Christian faith when this occurs with knowledge Hebrews 6:4-6.

Thirdly, the heaviest sin which is never forgiven, is the malicious slander/blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, Matthew 12:31,32; Mark 3:28,29; Luke 12:10.

NOTE

Many of a Christian has made himself alarmed that he could have committed the sin against the Holy Ghost.

To his relieve it can be said that he has not been in the position to do so, because that sin could not have been committed during sixteen centuries.

For we notice from Matthew 12:24 and Mark 3:22,30 that the sin against the Holy Ghost consist there in, that one observes a healing and exorcizing of devils, done through the power of the Holy Ghost, and attributes this to the power of the Superior of the devils who expels the inferior one.

With that the Holy Ghost is considered to be Beelzebub.

This power of exorcizing devils is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost and that of the powers (notice, later, about that in thesis 78).

Since the fourth century those gifts of the Holy Ghost are, however, not anymore present in the Christian Church, and therefore nobody had been in the position of committing the sin against the Holy Ghost during the sixteen centuries, past since then. Grieving the Holy Ghost is entirely something else: this frequently happens by unbelief and unholy behavior, but is being forgiven after penance and repentance, Matthew 12:31; Mark 3:28; Ephesians 4:30.

THE DEATH

Thesis 30

The punishment of the sin is the death, Genesis 2:17; Romans 6:23.

Thesis 31

There are three kinds of death:

Firstly, the corporal of temporary death, Genesis 3:17-19.

Secondly, the spiritual death, Ephesians 4:18; Revelation 3:1.

Thirdly, the everlasting death, Matthew 10:28 (instead of the everlasting life).

THE LAW OF THE LORD OR THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

Thesis 32

In order to learn to know our sins, we have to test our conduct to the Law of the Lord, the Ten Commandments, Romans 3:20; Exodus 20:1-17.

Thesis 33

This Law of the Lord has maintained its full power for us and fully corresponds with the precepts of the Christian faith, Matthew 5:17-19; Romans 3:31.

Thesis 34

The entire contents of these commandments of the Lord consist therein: To love God above all and his fellow-man like himself, Matthew 22:37-40; Mark 12:29-31.

THE FORETHOUGHT OF GOD**Thesis 35**

Although all men are sinners and nobody fulfils the Law of the Lord, God however, takes still care of the people, both the evil ones and the good ones, Job 14:1-5; Psalm 36:7,8; The Acts 17:26-28; Matthew 5:45.

Thesis 36

The goodness of the Lord for the evil ones serves to convert them, Romans 2:4.

Thesis 37

Those who fear God may hope for His goodness, Psalm 145:18-20; Luke 12:6,7, 22-31; 1 Peter 5:7.

THE SALVATION**Thesis 38**

When the Law of the Lord (notice thesis 32) has taught us to know our sins, it points us to the Savior, Romans 3:20-24; Galatians 3: 21-26.

Thesis 39

God, the Lord, already knew that man would fall, but also had the intention to give him again the possibility to be saved, 2 Timothy 1:9,10; Titus 1:2.

Thesis 40

For this purpose God has already given in the Paradise the promise for a Redeemer and a Savior, Genesis 3:15.

Thesis 41

During the period of the Old Testament God has again and again renewed and further explained the promise of a coming Redeemer, Genesis 22:18; 49:10; Deuteronomy 18:15,18,19; Psalm 2:6-8, 12; Isaiah 11:1,2; Jeremiah 23:5,6; Daniel 9:24-27; Micah 5:1; Haggai 2: 7-10.

Thesis 42

God did send that Redeemer at the fixed time and place, Galatians 4:4-6, prophesied ages in advance, Daniel 9:24-27; Micah 5:1.

NOTE

The place where the Savior or promised Messiah would be born, had been prophesied by Micah (5:1). Seven centuries before his birth. The time, when, was predicted by Daniel (9:24-27) 580 years before it happened. The 70 year weeks, each 7 years, make 490 years. In the year of 458 BC, king Arthasastha (Darius) gave order to Ezra to return to Jerusalem, with everybody who wanted to go along to found again the Jewish State (Ezra 7:13 etc.). Thus Daniel starts from this year. Count hereby the 30 years before Jesus acted openly (Luke 3:23) as the Messiah; this makes 488 years or the 7 and the 62, therefore 69 (year) weeks of Daniel. Hereby still the last one week or 7 years makes 495 years. However, we have here 5 too much. But it is generally known that Jesus has been born 4 years earlier than our Christian chronological timing starts. According to the Jewish timing which already starts the New Year in September, this is thus the fifth year (Matthew 12:40). The order to Ezra has therefore not been given 458, but 453 years before the birth of Christ. Hereby the 30 years for His acting and the 7 years still thereafter, or 453 and 30 and 7, makes 490 or 70 times 7 years.

Herewith the prophecy of the time of acting of the Messiah is complete and being fulfilled. In the middle of those last 7 years He would let stop, by giving Himself as a sacrifice, the Old-Testamentic peace-offering.

Daniel was the superior of the Wise Men in Babylon (Daniel 2:48).

The Wise Men of the East, thus from Babylon, Matthew 2:1,2, were certainly acquainted with the prophecy of Daniel.

From this they were able to calculate the time of the birth of Christ.

They had, according to Numbers 4:3, to deduct from the 69 (year) weeks or 483 years, 30 years, then 453 years after the given order to return to Jerusalem the promised Messiah had to be born.

That expectation of a great King of the Jews was as a matter of fact rather generally spread in the entire known East of those days. These Babylonian Wise Men were not acquainted with the earlier prophecy of Micah 5:1 in Judah. Hence their question in Jerusalem: "Where has been born the King of the Jews?", Matthew 2:2.

The Jewish Scribes were acquainted with it far better, verse 5,6.

These two prophecies whose antiquity and authenticity is unimpeachable, are brilliant evidences for the truth of the revealed Christian Religion.

JESUS THE SAVIOUR

Thesis 43

The only foundation on which we can build our hope of salvation, the only way on which we can find the everlasting life, is this promised Savior, our blessed Redeemer and Lord Jesus Christ, Luke 9:56; John 3:15-18, 36; The Acts 2:21; 4:12; 1 John 4:9,10,14.

THE PERSON JESUS

Thesis 44

This Jesus was not only a true, but holy human being, but also truly, as the Son of God, identical to the Father and true God, Matthew 8:20; John 1:1-3, 14,18; The Acts 1:3; Romans 5:15; 9:5; Philippians 2:6,7,10,11; 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 1:8-10; 2:17; 4:15; 5:7; 7:26; 1 John 5:20; Psalm 45:8.

Thesis 45

He, however, did not consist of two persons, but in Jesus, the Christ, the God-man, the Deity, and the human nature were united in one person, Colossians 2:9; 1 John 4:9,14; 1 Timothy 3:16.

Thesis 46

God the Son, came as Jesus, born from the virgin Mary in the flesh on earth in order to pay the debt of mankind and to save sinners, Luke 1:35; 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Peter 3:18; Matthew 18:11.

Thesis 47

That Savior had to be truly human being to be able to suffer and die as a human being, Colossians 1:22; 1 Peter 2:24; Hebrews 5:7,8; Romans 5:15-19.

Thesis 48

But He had also to be truly God in order to be able to fulfil the sins of all the people who have ever lived and will still live, Psalm 49:8,9; Hebrews 1:3.

NOTE

Jesus was, as from the virgin Mary born in the flesh, entirely and completely human being in the body, soul and spirit.

This was His human nature and in this He was the Son of men from Mary, His mother in the flesh.

But according to His human nature, without the will of a man, through the creating will of God, emanated from the virgin remained Mary, God was His Father, also already according to His human nature, and He was, also according to the flesh, the Son of God, however, through that completely free from the original sin of Adam.

For the rest He was as human being in everything identical to us, except in the sin, Hebrews 2:17,18; 4:15.

However, God is a Spirit. In the spirit of Jesus thus lies His Deity, because the spiritual being of God united itself with the human spirit of Jesus, and thus he was, not only in the flesh, but also to the spirit descended from God, the Son of God and God Himself from eternity, God revealed in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16; the God-man Jesus Christ. He is named the Word of God, as that second form of revelation of the Divine Supreme Being (note Thesis 10) in which He let Himself know for the outside world; reveals Himself to mankind and speaks to them; the Jehovah of the Old Testament, John 1:1-3; Psalm 33:6,9; passages from the Scriptures such as Psalm 2:7; 45:7; etc. have to be understood prophetically.

Thesis 49

This Redeemer had firstly to be humbled deeply and thereafter to be heightened infinitely, Psalm 22; Isaiah 53; Ephesians 1:20-22; Philippians 2:5-11; Hebrews 2:5-9.

HIS PASSION AND DYING

Thesis 50

The passion and dying of Christ is the reconciliation of our sins, Matthew 20:28; John 3:14-18; Romans 5:6,18,19; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Galatians 3:13; 1 John 2:2.

Thesis 51

The death of Christ is a remission of our sins, John 3:16,17; Romans 3:23-25; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 1 John 1:7.

HIS DESCENT IN THE REALM OF THE DEAD

THESES 52

Jesus has descended after His death in the realm of the dead (Hades) in order to preach at that place the Gospel to the deceased, 1 Peter 3:19,20; 4:6; Ephesians 4:9; John 5:25.

NOTE

In the first five centuries of the Church the belief in a realm of the dead existed where the souls of the deceased wait till the great Day of Judgment in order to receive that judgment.

There even exists a not as authentic acknowledged 'Gospel of Nicodemus', from the first or at least from the second century, of which the second part consists of the descent of Jesus in the Hades.

The Roman Catholic Church has deformed this doctrine which also appears in the Apostolic Confession of Faith, to the Purgatory from where the priests were able to save the deceased.

The Reformers from whom this Roman Catholic doctrine was a horror, have unjustly neglected the doctrine of the realm of the dead, and considered the deceased to go immediately after the death to heaven or hell. But what becomes then of the great day of judgment? Matt. 16:27; 25:31-46 etc.

The apostle John is shown at the end of the first century in a vision from the Holy Ghost, in the fifth seal, the souls of the martyrs, still resting under the altar (therefore at the time not yet in heaven), Revelation 6:9-11.

They receive the order to rest somewhat longer, until etc. verse 11.

The fulfilment of verse 9 falls in the church-history in the 13th century.

Thus they were then also not yet in heaven, no more than now.

They rest at that place till the return of Christ, Hebrews 11:39,40.

Hades has wrongly been translated by hell. It means: realm of the dead.

Just as wrong has been written in 1 Peter 3:19: in prison; the word means 'waiting place'. In the realm of the dead the waiting place appears to be the

residence of those to whom Jesus went to preach the Gospel, 1 Peter 3:19,20; 4:6; the Paradise the residence of the faithful deceased, Luke 23:43; 2 Corinthians 12:4; and under the altar the residence of the martyrs of Jesus, Revelation 6:9. The Paradise is, at the same time, the second heaven, 2 Corinthians 12:4. The third heaven is the residence of the later blessed ones, verse 2, the first heaven is the Kingdom of God on earth. Therefore Jesus speaks of the Kingdom of Heavens. Also the Jews believed in the realm of the dead (Scheol) which they called in the beginning of our era 'Paradise'.

THE RESURRECTION AND GLORYFICATION

Thesis 53

Jesus has risen from the death, Matthew 28:5-7; Romans 4:24,25; Acts 10:39-41; 1 Peter 1:21; Psalm 16:10.

Thesis 54

Thereafter He has ascended to heaven, to God the Father, Acts 1:9-11; Mark 16:19; 1 Peter 3:22; Psalm 68:19; Psalm 110:1.

Thesis 55

God, the Father, has subjected everything to His, now in heaven glorified Son, Matthew 11:27, 28:18; 1 Corinthians 15:25,27,28; Ephesians 1:20-22; 1 Peter 3:22.

Thesis 56

Our glorified Redeemer remains in heaven our Mediator and Advocate, Romans 8:34; 1 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:1,2; Hebrews 4:14-16, 7:25-27.

THE HOLY GHOST

Thesis 57

The salvation which Jesus Christ has acquired for sinners, imparts us to the Holy Ghost, John 14:26; 16:7-15.

Thesis 58

The Holy Ghost is the third revelation of the Divine Supreme Being, and thus true God, Matthew 28:19; Acts 5:3,4; 1 Corinthians 2:10-12; 3:16,17.

Thesis 59

As God He has the same attributes with the Father and the Son. He is omniscient, almighty, omnipresent etc. 1 Corinthians 2:10,11; 12:11 (also notice thesis 8 and 9).

THE VOCATION TO SALVATION

Thesis 60

God calls all people to the salvation through the Word of His Son and through the testimony of the Holy Ghost to their heart, Matthew 11:28,29; Mark 16:15,16; John 3:16; 6:38,40; 1 Timothy 2:3,4; 1 Thessalonians 2:12,13; 2 Peter 3:9.

Thesis 61

By hardening of the heart we can oppose willfully this voice of God, Matthew 23:37; Acts 7:51.

Thesis 62

When we have learnt to know through the Law (notice thesis 32 and 38) our sins and through the enlightenment of the Holy Ghost and the preaching of the Gospel the mercy of God in Christ, we have to come to penitence, confession and faith, Mark 1:15; 16:16; Romans 10:14, 17; Ephesians 5:14.

PENITENCE

Thesis 63

The penitence not only consists in the knowledge and recognition of our sins, but also in the serious, holy, intention to fight against the sin, John 5:14; Ephesians 4:17-22; 25-29; 5:3-7; Titus 2:11-14.

CONVERSION

Thesis 64

The conversion consists in doing that resolute choice between God and the sin, whereby our intellect, our sense, our will and our behavior are changed in such a way that we do not want any more to serve the world and the sin, but God alone and to live with and for Him in holy conduct, Ephesians 1:16-19; 4:23,24; 5:8; Acts 26:18.

FAITH

Thesis 65

The faith is the action of the Holy Ghost in our heart by which we obtain the security that Christ through His passion and death has also fulfilled for us, entirely and completely.

The faith is also the acceptance as an unquestionable truth that God the Father through the merits on the cross of His Son Jesus, accepts us, poor, lost sinners again as His children and gives us the salvation out of mercy, Acts 16:31; John 1:12,13; 3:16-18, 36; John 6:47; Romans 3:23,24,28; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Galatians 2:20.

Thesis 66

Through this faith we receive out of mercy the remission of our sins, the acceptance again as children of God and the everlasting salvation, Hebrews 11:1,6; Romans 3:24; 4:3-8; 5:1,2; 8:1,9, 11, 13-17, 24, 29-39; Galatians 2:16.

Thesis 67

This faith has always to be sincerely, although it can be weak in those of weak faith, Romans 14:1, 15:1; 1 Corinthians 11:19; Philipians 1:10; 2:15.

Thesis 68

The sincerity of the faith is known from its fruits, Matthew 7:16-21; James 2:26.

SANCTIFICATION

Thesis 69

The fruits of a sincere faith are:

Firstly, love to God and our fellow-man, Romans 5:2,5; 2 Corinthians 5:14,15.

Secondly, all the good works, 2 Peter 1 3-9; Titus 2:11-14.

Thirdly, the sanctification, Romans 6:22; 2 Corinthians 6:14,15;

1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:15,16.

Fourthly, a godly life, 1 Timothy 4:7,8; Romans 12:1,2, 9-21.

Thesis 70

All these fruits of faith are not our own good works, but Christ works these in us through the Holy Ghost, Galatians 2:20; 5:5,6, 16-18, 22,25.

MEANS OF GRACE

Thesis 71

Man is not able to achieve himself such a sincere faith which is fruitful in good works. Therefore Christ has granted to His Church as means of grace:

Firstly: the preaching of the Word of God,

Matthew 28:19,20; Acts 7:11; Romans 10:14-17; 2 Timothy 3:15-17.

Secondly: the seals of the covenant or Sacraments, namely the Holy Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

Thesis 72

The Word of God is contained in the Holy Scripture, John 5:39, 2 Timothy 3:16. This consist of Old and New Testament or the Law and the Gospel.

SACRAMENTS OR SEALS OF THE COVENANT

Thesis 73

The sacraments or seals of the covenant are visible earthly matters and actions in which and by which God imparts us invisible heavenly goods.

The seals of the covenant under the Oldtestamentic covenant were the circumcision, (Genesis 17:10-14; Romans 4:11) and eating the Paschal Lamb (Exodus 12:3-14; Hebrews 11:18).

Under the Newtestamentic covenant the Holy Baptism has replaced the circumcision Colossians 2:11-14; and the Lord's Supper the Paschal Lamb, 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Peter 1:18,19.

THE BAPTISM WITH WATER

Thesis 74

Through the Holy Baptism the hereditary debt which clings to us from Adam, is washed off and we are transferred into the Kingdom of grace of God, Galatians 3:26,27; Titus 3:5; 1 Corinthians 6:11.

Thesis 75

Through the Holy Baptism we participate in the power of the death and resurrection of Christ, Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:12:

Firstly, through the remission of our sins, Acts 2:38; Ephesians 5:26,27.

Secondly, through the security that God wishes our salvation, Mark 16:16; Titus 3:5-7; 1 Peter 3:21.

Theses 76

The Baptism instituted by Christ, may be administered not to adults alone, but also to children, Mark 10:13-16; Acts 2:38,39.

Thesis 77

John the Baptist only baptized with water the baptism to remission of the sin, Matthew 3:6; Luke 3:3.

THE BAPTISM WITH THE HOLY GHOST

Thesis 78

Jesus, the Christ, would not only baptize with the water of the ablution of debt, but also with the fire of the Holy Ghost, Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 2:2-4; 14-18.

Thesis 79

This fire of the Holy Ghost consists of the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, 1 Corinthians 12:1,4-7,11.

Firstly: the gift of wisdom and knowledge of God, 1 Cor.12:8.

Secondly: the gift of faith, 1 Cor. 12:9a.

Thirdly: the gift of healing, 1 Cor. 12:9b.

Fourthly: the gift of the working of miracles, 1Cor.12:10a; Acts 3:6,7; 13:9-12.

Fifthly: the gift of prophecy, 1 Cor. 12:10b.

Sixthly: the gift of discerning of spirits, 1 Cor. 12:10c; Acts 16:18.

Seventhly: the gift of divers kinds of language/tongues and interpretation of language/tongues, 1 Cor. 12:10d; Acts 2:4.

Thesis 80

The baptism as it has been instituted by Christ in the Christian Church, therefore consisted in the first centuries of baptism with water and with this inherent baptism with the Holy Ghost; this last one was called: sealing. Hebrews 6:2a (notice the plural 'baptisms') ; Acts 10:44-48; 2 Corinthians 1:21,22; Ephesians 1:13,14; 4:30.

NOTE

Why was our Lord, the God-man Jesus Christ, baptized Himself?

Firstly, not to obtain ablution of debt or remission of sins.

He, born without hereditary debt, Who had lived in His thirty years' life up to His baptism also just blameless and without sinning (Hebrews 4:15) but according to His true human nature, to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven as the First-Born, and as the first human being to become a child of God and to become the Son of God (Matthew 3:2,16,17; Mark 1:9,10; Luke 3:21,22;) like He has entered into Heaven later on through His Rise and Ascension as the First-Born from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:20,23).

He, therefore, wished to be baptized in order to 'fulfil all justice', Matthew 3:3-15. Secondly, but also to receive likewise, according to His true human nature, the Holy Ghost, that is to be sealed, not by people, but by His Father, Matthew 3:16; Mark.1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32; Acts 10:38; John 6:27 (Lutheran Translation).

THE OFFICES

Thesis 81

The Lord had instituted, when His church had been arranged completely, four offices over which He Himself was the living Head.

Firstly, the office of apostles;

Secondly, the office of prophets;

Thirdly, the office of evangelists;

Fourthly, the office of pastors who are the same time were the teachers in the parish. Ephesians 4:11-13.

They were called, in so far as more than one of these offices had been put with a parish, elders or bishops, Acts 1:20,25; 20:17 (Lutheran Translation); Philippians 1:1; where still only one of these offices had been put with a parish, he of course was the bishop.

NOTE

There is not a trace to be found of the separate given office of bishop in the New Testament. In 1 Timothy 3:1,2 the word 'office of a bishop' is used in general sense, like in Acts 1:20 and Philippians 1:1 as: one of the elders or servants of the parish.

Otherwise, all the same instead of ONE had to be spoken in 1 Timothy 3:1 of: THE OFFICE OF THE BISHOP. Notice translation by Luther.

Indeed those four offices had all the authority to preach and to baptize. Acts 16:33; 1 Timothy 2:7; 2 Timothy 1:11; 1 Corinthians 1:14-17, but in the usual order each one had therewith still his special authority. Thus the prophets spoke the words of the Lord to the parish. Acts 11,27,28; 13:1,2; 15:27,28,32; 20:28; 21:10,11; Ephesians 3:5; the pastors were the teachers of the parishes. Ephesians 4:11; Acts 20:28; which were brought together by the evangelists out of the Pagans, reason why the baptism with water happened principally by the evangelists, Acts 8:5,12,16; 10:23,47,48; 1 Corinthians 1:14,16,17 and the sealing with the Holy Ghost by the apostles, by means of prayer and imposition of hands, Acts 8:14-19; 19:1-6.

In special case the Lord even deviated from this rule. For Himself stands above the rule given by Him to mankind and is Himself not bound to it. Thus, Paul was baptized by the young Ananias with water and with the Holy Ghost, Acts 9:10,17,18; the eunuch by the evangelist Philip, Acts 8:38, and the centurion Cornelius with his family by the Lord Himself with the Holy Ghost, Acts 10:44-46.

These four offices were not given in order to rule over the parish, but to serve her in the place of Christ, 2 Corinthians 4:5.

Other spiritual offices than these cannot be traced; yes, assistants, 1 Corinthians 12:28 (Lutheran Translation), probably therefore necessary for each of these offices.

After the death of the last apostles and the later apostolic fathers, this sealing has got lost for the believers with the third century, at least the privileges originated from this, the receipt of the gifts of the Holy Ghost.

The outward form, however, has been preserved, without the inward power, in the three direct descendants of the original Church, namely the Roman Catholic Church, in the Greek Church and with the Albigenses.

In the Roman Catholic Church that form has been preserved in the confirmation as a 'supplement and sanction of the baptism', and this is administered in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost 'in order that you are full of this same Holy Ghost'.

In the Greek Church follows on the baptism with water the anointing with the Holy anointing-oil, as the 'seal of the gift of the Holy Ghost'.

The Albigenses, still baptized in the tenth century 'with the Holy Ghost' by imposition of hands.

THE CONSEQUENCES OF THE HOLY BAPTISM

Thesis 82

The Holy Baptism lays the obligation on us to live gratefully and religious, Romans 6:3,4; Colossians 2:11,12.

Thesis 83

The privileges granted to us in the Holy Baptism, we can lose again by unbelief and apostasy from God, Matthew 13:12; 2 Timothy 4:10,14,15; Hebrews 6:4-6; 2 Peter 2:1,2,20,21.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Thesis 84

In order to protect us for this, our Lord Jesus has instituted for our consolation and strengthening in the faith His Holy Supper, Matthew 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19,20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-25.

NOTE

That John does not mention the institution of the Lord's Supper, is explained that he wrote his Gospel last, as a supplement of the first three identical (synopsis) Gospel writers, and at that time the Lord's Supper was already generally celebrated in the parishes. On the other hand John sums amply up the words, spoken by Jesus which the others had not mentioned and form the most glorious pages of the Holy Scripture.

Thesis 85

In the Lord's Supper we do not only receive natural bread and wine, no more than we only receive water in the Holy Baptism.

They are of course, the natural means in which and by which the Lord imparts us supernatural that is heavenly blessings; but as soon as the blessing has been pronounced over bread and wine, they are not anymore natural and insignificant matters alone. Paul teaches this expressly in 1 Corinthians 10:16; 11:27-29.

As we hold communion (1 Corinthians 10:6) with Christ's body and blood after His death, rise and ascension, by eating and drinking bread and wine, we receive in the Lord's Supper not the earlier earthly and natural body and blood of our Lord Jesus, but the glorified and heavenly and this as an assurance and guarantee that our sins have been forgiven through his death on the cross, Matthew 26:28.

NOTE

When, according to the doctrine of the Zwinglian memorial meal, only is received bread and wine, then by eating and drinking this unworthy, one can be guilty of bread and wine, but impossibly of the body and the blood of the Lord.

And still Paul teaches this so seriously, 1 Corinthians 11:27,28.

But then there has to be in the Lord's Supper also more than bread and wine alone, and when this was not the case, how could we then have communion with the body and blood of Christ by bread and wine?

That this is not to understand for the natural intellect, proves John 6:52, 60-66.

Jesus was not able to give the disciples yet with the Supper His body and blood for food and drink, because He was still alive and sitting at the table with them.

It was thus the last Jewish Passover which He celebrated with them Matthew 26:18, but herewith He instituted the Lord's Supper to be celebrated from this day forward after His death, as the New Testamentic Passover (1 Corinthians 5:7), as a continuous assurance that our sins have been forgiven by His sacrifice and we have in Him the everlasting life. John 6:50-58.

Thesis 86

For a dignified enjoyment of the Lord's Supper we only need from our side the sincere confession of our sins for God, the sincere belief that Jesus has paid for us

through His life and death, the serious wish and intention to walk holy and sure and certain belief that we also receive the assurance of the remission of our sins, with the glorified body and blood of Jesus in the blessed bread and the blessed wine, Matthew 26:28; 1 Corinthians 11:28,29.

NOTE

We do not receive, like the Roman Catholic Mass teaches us, by making use of the Lord's Supper, the remission of our sins, but the assurance that they have been forgiven. Therefore we also do not bring, like the Roman Catholic Mass, in the Lord's Supper and offertory for the sins, because Christ being once sacrificed, has nullified through the sacrifice of Himself, forever the sins of the believers, Hebrews 9:26-28; 10:14; by which all sacrifices, also from ourselves, had to cease forever, Daniel 9:27; Hebrews 10:17,18.

ACQUITTAL OF SINS

These 87

Jesus Christ has for our consolation, after the confession of our sins, also instituted the acquittal of that through His servants, Matthew 16:19; 18:18; John 20:23; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:12.

THE PRAYER

Thesis 88

For our daily consolation and strengthening in faith also the prayer has been given to us, that is the personal speech to God, Psalm 19:15; Luke 18:1.

In the prayer one has to:

Firstly, do confession of guilt for God, Psalm 32:5.

Secondly, worship Him and glorify Him, Matthew 4:10; John 4:24.

Thirdly, lawful things may be asked from Him, which is pray for these, Matthew 7:7-11; Romans 12:12; Philippians 4:6; 1 Thessalonians 5:17 (especially remission of sins).

Fourthly, thank and praise God for what is received, Deuteronomy 8:10;

Psalm 69:31, 103:1,2; Philippians 4:6; Colossians 2:7, 4:2;

1 Thessalonians 5:18; 1 Timothy 4:4.

Thesis 89

Our prayer has according to Jesus' instruction only to be directed to God the Father, in the name of Jesus, Revelation 19:10; John 16:23,24;

The Lord's Prayer is the most perfect prayer, Matthew 6:9-13.

Thesis 90

We have to pray for everything what we need for this and for the eternal life, Luke 11:5-13; Philippians 4:6; and that not only for ourselves, but also for our fellow-man Matthew 5:44; Luke 23:34; 1 Timothy 2:1.

Thesis 91

Our prayer has to be sincere, Matthew 6:5-8; humble, Genesis 18:27; faithful, James 1:6,7; constant, Luke 18:1-8; 1 Thessalonians 5:17; and with submission to God's will, Matthew 26:39,42; 2 Corinthians 12:8,9.

Thesis 92

Such a prayer to the will of the Lord has great promises, Matthew 21:22; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:9,10; John 15:7,16; 16:24; 1 John 5:14,15.

PERSEVERANCE IN THE FAITH

Thesis 93

He who remains united in the faith with Christ till the end of his life, will be saved, Matthew 10:22; 24:13; John 15:4-6; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 3:7-12; 1:21; 1 Timothy 4:8; 1 John 2:24,25,28; Revelation 2:10.

Thesis 94

In that belief in Christ we have to fulfil the heavy fight against the sin, the injustice and the world with his lusts till the end, Matthew 16:24; Luke 13:23,24; Romans 6:12,13; 12:1,2; Galatians 5:24,25; 1 Timothy 6:6-12; 2 Timothy 2:5; 1 John 2:12-17; 5:4,11,13.

THE CHURCH MILITANT

Thesis 95

All the believers who have ever lived, still live or will still live in this fight, form together the church militant on earth, John 16:33; Ephesians 2:1-10; 6:10-18.

Thesis 96

However, there are more glorious times upcoming for the Church of Christ. The church militant will become the church triumphant, when at the return of the Lord, till the foundation of the Empire of Glory, the earth will be full of knowledge of the Lord, Matthew 26:29; Mark 14:25; Luke 22:18; John 14:3,18; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Revelations 21:1-5; Isaiah 11:9.

THE GREAT OPPRESSION

Thesis 97

Before this return of the Lord the last greatest oppression, the persecution by the anti-christianity, will come upon the believers, Matthew 24:21,22; Mark 13:19,20; Daniel 12.

THE SEALING

Thesis 98

The Lord will offer beforehand in the Sealing (notice thesis 80) the means of His chosen people to be saved from that great oppression, Revelation 3:10; 7:2-4; 14:1-5.

Those who accept this offer of the Lord, will be taken up to heaven alive before that oppression and be glorified, Luke 18:7,8; 21:36; Revelation 11:12.

Those of the sealed ones who already have died and those from the first period of the Church (notice thesis 78) will be raised and glorified, Daniel 12:2; 1 Corinthians 15:20-24; in order to be both together with Christ as Kings and Priest in the Millennium, Revelation 20:4-6; this is the first Resurrection.

THE SECOND RESURRECTION

Thesis 99

There will, however, be two resurrections.

The first one is the already mentioned one of the chosen, still before the Empire of Glory, Revelation 20:4,6; 1 Corinthians 15:22,23; and after the end of this 1000 years later, follows the second one, the resurrection of all other deceased in the general day of judgment, 1 Corinthians 15:24; Revelation 20:5; 11:13.

THE LAST JUDGMENT

Thesis 100

In that day of the Lord everybody who has ever lived, receives from the Lord up to the measure of his belief and works, shown by him during his life on earth, Matthew 25:14-46; John 5:22-29; Acts 10:42; 17:30,31; Revelation 20:12, 13. 22:12.