

Disputation on the Divinity and Humanity of Christ

by Martin Luther

Martin Luther's sermon defends the dual nature of Christ, emphasizing the unity of his divinity and humanity against heretical interpretations.

Scripture: John 1:14, John 14:9, Philippians 2:6, Colossians 1:15, Colossians 2:9, 1 Timothy 3:16, Hebrews 2:14, 1 Peter 3:18

Topics: "Christology", "Divine Nature"

Description

Martin Luther engages in a theological disputation on the divinity and humanity of Christ, emphasizing the unity of the two natures in one person. He addresses various arguments and contradictions, highlighting the importance of using appropriate language and following the guidance of the Holy Spirit in theological discussions. Luther refutes misconceptions about Christ being solely a creature or not suffering due to his divinity, emphasizing the communication of attributes and the unity of the person in Christ.

Transcript

The Theses

Theological Disputation

1. This is the catholic faith, that we confess one Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man. 2. From this truth of the double substance and the unity of the person follows the communication of attributes [communicatio idiomatum], as it is called. 3. So that those things which pertain to man are rightly said of God, and, on the other hand, those things which pertain to God are said of man. 4. It is true to say: This man created the world, and this God suffered, died, was buried, etc. 5.

But these are not correct in the abstract (as it is said) of human nature [in abstractis humanae naturae]. 6. For it cannot be said, Christ is thirsty, a servant, dead; therefore he is thirst, servitude, death. 7. Wherefore this [statement] too is condemned: Christ is humanity, even though it is said: Christ is divinity. 8. Even though man and humanity are otherwise synonyms, as are God and divinity. 9. In the divine predicates or attributes there is not a difference of this kind between the concrete and the abstract. 10.

Even though both the scriptures and many fathers do not distinguish between the concrete and the abstract in many predicates of human nature. 11. The Symbol [the *Te Deum*] proclaims, "When thou

tookest man upon thee to deliver him" [Tu ad liberandum suscepturus hominem], and Augustine often does the same. 12. Although the normal way of speaking (as it seems) would be: "When thou tookest humanity, or human nature upon thee to deliver it." 13. Thus some are not afraid to say: Christ is a creature, since a errantly it is said that Christ was created. 14.

And John 1 says: "The Word was made flesh," when in our judgment it would have been better said, "The Word was incarnate," or "made fleshly." 15. It is rightly taught, that in this matter the manner of speaking preserved in the scriptures and in the orthodox fathers should prevail. 16. Or rather, many things are allowed even to the fathers who are agreed to be orthodox, which we should not imitate. 17. Wherefore in this matter we should beware of etymology, analogy, [logical] consequence, and examples. 18.

Just as in grammar certain heteroclite nouns and irregular verbs are not subject to etymology, analogy, or example. 19. And generally, in every sort of subject and art, practice often dictates against the rule. 20. Nonetheless it is certain that with regard to Christ [in Christo] all words receive a new signification, though the thing signified is the same [in eadem re significata]. 21. For "creature" in the old usage of language [veteris linguae usu] and in other subjects signifies a thing separated from divinity by infinite degrees [in finitis modis]. 22.

In the new use of language it signifies a thing inseparably joined with divinity in the same person in an ineffable way [ineffabilibus modis]. 23. Thus it must be that the words man, humanity, suffered, etc., and everything that is said of Christ, are new words. 24. Not that it signifies a new or different thing, but that it signifies in a new and different way [nove et aliter], unless you want to call this too a new thing. 25. Schwenkfeld and his frog-and-mouse warriors [batarchomyomachis] foolishly scoff [when we say] that Christ according to his humanity is called a creature. 26.

A man without learning [or] training, and moreover without common sense, does not know how to distinguish between words with more than one meaning [vocabula aequivoca]. 27. For those who say that Christ is a creature according to the old use of language, that is, by himself [separatam], were never Christians. 28. But rather everyone vehemently denies that Christ is a creature in this way, which the Arians taught. 29. It is clear, therefore, that Schwenkfeld is barking into an empty darkness [in vacuum chaos] against his own dreams of the creature in Christ. 30.

And forgetting himself, the man concedes that God was made flesh, though he has not yet dared to deny that flesh is a creature. 31. But Eutyches dwells hidden in such heretics, ready someday to deny that the Word was made flesh. 32. They make a show of conceding that the Word was made flesh, ready someday to deny it, when the theater is darkened, after it is denied that there is a creature in Christ. 33. In these ineffable matters, therefore, this [rule] must be kept, that we interpret the teachings of the fathers (as is necessary) in a suitable way [commode]. 34.

It is wicked, when you know that the sense of someone's teaching is Christian [pium] and sound, to make up an error out of words ineptly spoken. 35. For there were never any fathers or doctors who never spoke in an improper way, if you want to scoff at their teachings. 36. [Coelius] Sedulius, the very Christian poet, writes: "The blessed author of the world / Put on a lowly servant's form" [Beatus auctor seculi servile corpus induit], and so through the entire church. 37. Although nothing more heretical could be said than that human nature is the clothing of divinity. 38.

For clothing and a body do not constitute one person, as God and man constitute one person. 39. And yet Sedulius' thought was very Christian [piissime], as his other hymns abundantly prove. 40. For the same

reason that common saying would be heretical: The whole Trinity worked the incarnation of the Son, as two girls dress a third, while she at the same time dresses herself. 41. Thus certain scholastics, who think that the union [habitudinem] of divinity and humanity is like the union [unioni] of form with matter, could not be defended. 42.

Others on the other hand [who think that] the union [habitudinem] is similar to [the union of] matter to form, speak much more ineptly, if they are strictly judged. 43. Nor could that [image] be maintained, in which the divinity is compared to fire and the humanity to iron, even though it is a very beautiful image. 44. Nor could that [image] be tolerated which Athanasius puts forward: "As the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ." 45. For all deny that Christ is "composed" [of two natures] though they affirm that he is "constituted." 46.

But none have spoken more awkwardly [insulsius] than the Nominalists [Moderni], as they are called, who of all men wish to seem to speak most subtly and properly. 47. These say that the human nature was sustained or "supposited" by the divine nature, or by a divine supposite. 48. This is said monstrously and nearly forces God as it were to carry or bear the humanity. 49. But all of them think [sapiunt] in a correct and catholic way, so that they are to be pardoned their inept way of speaking. 50.

For they wished to utter something ineffable, and then every image limps and never (as they say) runs on all four feet. 51. If [anyone] is not pleased by this or does not understand it, that Christ according as he is a man is a creature [Christus secundum quod homo est creatura], the grammarian consoles him. 52. Let him who has learned to discuss the same matter in various ways be commanded to speak as simply as possible. 53. As the Ethiopian is white according to [secundum] his teeth, the grammarian could speak otherwise thus: The Ethiopian is white with respect to his teeth [albus dentibus], or "white of tooth" [alborum dentium]. 54.

But if this is displeasing, let him say: The Ethiopian has white teeth, or the teeth in the Ethiopian are white, or, most simply, the Ethiopian's teeth are white. 55. Since in all these forms of speech the author wishes to signify the same thing, it is useless to seek an argument over words. 56. Thus since these forms of speech--Christ according as he is a man [secundum quod homo], or according to his humanity [secundum humanitatem], or with respect to his humanity [humanitate], or by his humanity [per humanitatem], or in his humanity [in humanitate]--mean nothing else than that he has a creature or has assumed a human creature, or, what is simplest, the humanity of Christ is a creature, the false logicians [pravilogicales] are to be condemned, who give different meanings to different grammatical forms of expression of the same matter. 57.

Therefore heresy lies in meaning [sensu], and not in words, as St. Jerome rightly said when he was provoked by his calumniators. 58. Otherwise Moses would be the greatest of heretics, for he recounts the Decalogue itself in different forms in Exodus 20 and Deuteronomy 5. 59. On the other hand, anyone with a wicked meaning, even if he shall speak aptly and brandish the Scripture itself, is not to be tolerated. 60. For Christ did not permit the demons to speak when they testified that he was the Son of God, as if they were transfiguring themselves into angels of light. 61.

Such is the simplicity and the goodness of the Holy Spirit, that his agents [homines sui], when they speak falsely according to grammar, speak the truth according to the sense. 62. Such is the craftiness and the wickedness of Satan, that his agents [homines sui], while they speak truly according to grammar, that is, as to the words, speak lies according to theology, that is, according to the sense. 63. Here it may be said:

If you are lying, even in what you say truly, you lie; on the other hand, if you are speaking the truth, even in what you say falsely, you speak the truth. 64. This is what it means to be a heretic: one who understands the Scriptures otherwise than the Holy Spirit demands.

The Disputation

Disputation of the Reverend Father Herr Doctor Martin Luther concerning the divinity and humanity of Christ. In the year 1540, the 28th day of February.

Preface

The reason for this disputation is this, that I desired you should be supplied and fortified against the future snares of the devil, for a certain man has put forth a mockery against the Church. I am not so much troubled that an unlearned, unskilled, and altogether ignorant man seeks praise and a name for himself, as that the men of Lower Germany are troubled by his inept, foolish, ignorant, unlearned, and ridiculous mocking. May you preserve this article in its simplicity, that in Christ there is a divine and a human nature, and these two natures in one person, so that they are joined together like no other thing, and yet so that the humanity is not divinity, nor the divinity humanity, because that distinction in no way hinders but rather confirms the union!

That article of faith shall remain, that Christ is true God and true man, and thus you shall be safe from all heretics, and even from Schwenkfeld, who says that Christ is [not] a creature, and that others teach falsely, though he does not name those who teach wrongly. This is the malice of the devil: he implicates us as well as the papists, but he names no one. If he were to say such things to me, I would answer: You are lying, [when you imply that] we say that Christ is not the Lord God.

For our writings cry out in answer [to your charge]. That wicked man perceives that he cannot survive if he comes into the light, therefore he works secretly among women under secret names [tectis nominibus]. But I am not troubled that he thus seeks to make a name for himself and works secretly, but more by the fact that better theologians are not moved by these frivolous calumnies to say to him: "You, wicked man, are a liar! We do not say that Christ is merely a creature, but that he is God and man in one person.

The natures are joined personally in the unity of the person. There are not two sons, not two judges, not two persons, not two Jesuses, but because of the undivided union [unitam coniunctionem] and the unity of the two natures there is a communication of attributes, so that, what is attributed to one nature is attributed to the other as well, because they are one person." If these [articles] are held fast, Arius falls along with all heretics, but Schwenkfeld works secretly like the tooth of the serpent, who bites secretly so that he cannot be accused.

Therefore we are now holding this disputation so that you may learn the substance and manner of speaking [res et phrases] of Scripture and the Fathers. It is an incomprehensible thing, such as not even the angels can grasp and comprehend, that two natures should be united in one person. Therefore, so that we may grasp this in some small measure, God has given us patterns of speech [formulas loquendi]: that Christ is God and man in one person, and there are not two persons, but two natures are united in one person, so that what is done by the human nature is said also to be done by the divine nature, and vice versa.

Thus the Son of God died and was buried in the dust like everyone else, and the son of Mary ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, etc. We are content with these models [formulis]. Finally, we must observe the manner of speaking [phrases] of the holy Fathers. But if they have sometimes spoken ineptly [incommodely], it is to be rightly interpreted, not abused, as the papists do, who, having twisted the words of the Fathers, abuse and allege them in defense of their idolatries, purgatory, and good works, whereas [the Fathers] thought correctly concerning these things, as many of their sayings testify with clearer and more apt expression.

St. Augustine indeed teaches much concerning good works in many places and praises both good works and those who perform them. But in his Commentary on the Psalms, he says, "Have mercy on me; that is, 'I shall be troubled, but not troubled greatly, for I have trusted in the Lord.'" Here he pleads none of those good works before God. And again in another place he says, "Woe to man, however praiseworthy he may be, etc." Such is the sinful and sacrilegious man who twists the correct sayings of the Fathers.

But we learn to agree with the sayings of the Fathers; or if we cannot agree with them, we forgive them, for no man can be so wise that he does not sometimes stumble and fall, especially in speaking, where it is easy to slip. Schwenkfeld does not see this, and so when he hears the Fathers say that Christ according to his humanity is a creature, at once he seizes on the saying and twists it and abuses it for his own purposes. Even if the Fathers say that Christ according to his humanity is a creature, this could in any event be tolerated; but Schwenkfeld wickedly twists it: "Therefore Christ is simply a creature."

Why, wicked man, do you not add that Christ according to his divinity is the Creator? Therefore he was created! But he does not add this, because he says, "I can let my conscience be deluded in this way. Therefore I have omitted it"--that is, I have done wickedly! He employs a fallacy of composition and division. This is the hidden tooth of the serpent and the true sacrifice of the devil among the papists as well. For they too work secretly, twist the words of the Fathers, and omit those things which seem to weaken their own cause, as Schwenkfeld also does.

Before the learned he deals deceitfully and seeks glory, but among his own he says: "Oh, what wickedness of the papists, what blasphemies of the Lutherans! They say that Christ is a creature, even though he was not created." This is [sheer] wickedness rather than force or power [of argument]. He should have added, that we say that Christ is a creature according to his humanity, and the creator according to his divinity.

Schwenkfeld is to be refuted thus: Humanity is a creature.

Therefore Christ is a man and a creature. And then he says that the redeemer of the human race cannot be a creature, sit at the right hand of the Father, etc., be the seed of Abraham; but the consequence is to be denied.

Disputation

of Dr. Martin Luther against Schwenkfeld

I.

Argument: A human person is one thing, a divine person another. But in

Christ there are both divinity and humanity. Therefore there are two persons in Christ.

Response: This is the fallacy of composition and division. In the major premise you divide the human nature and the divine; in the minor premise you join them. This is a philosophical solution; but we are speaking theologically. I deny the consequence, for this reason, that in Christ the humanity and the divinity constitute one person. But these two natures are distinct in theology, with respect, that is, to the natures, but not with respect to [secundum] the person. For then they are undivided [indistinctae], but two distinct natures, yet belonging to an undivided person [indistinctae personae]. There are not two distinct persons, but what is distinct is undivided [sed sunt distinctae indistinctae], that is, there are distinct natures, but an undivided person.

II.

Argument: Christ was not a man before the creation of the world. Therefore it is not rightly said that the man Christ created the world. Or thus: When the world was created, Christ did not create it as a man [tamquam homo]. Therefore it is not rightly said that a man created the world.

Response: There is the communication of attributes; and moreover [this is] a philosophical argument. This stands: The natures are distinct, but after that communication, there is a union, that is, there is one person, not two persons. But that person is God and man, one and the same person, who was before the creation of the world; even though he was not man born of the Virgin Mary before the world, nonetheless he was the Son of God, who is now man. Thus, for example, when I see a king in purple and crowned on his throne, I say, "This king was born of a woman, naked and without a crown." How can this be, and yet he sits on a great throne crowned and clothed in

purple? But these things he put on after he was made king, and yet nonetheless he is one and the same person; and so too here in Christ God and man are joined in one person and must not be distinguished. But it is true that Christ created the world before he was made man, and yet such a strict unity exists that it is impossible to say different things [of the divinity and the humanity]. Therefore whatever I say of Christ as man, I also say rightly of God, that he suffered, was crucified.

Objection: But God cannot be crucified or suffer.

Response: This is true, when he was not yet man. From eternity he has not suffered; but when he was made man, he was passible. From eternity he was not man; but now being conceived by the Holy Ghost, that is, born of the Virgin, God and man are made one person, and the same things are truly said of God and man [sunt eadem praedicata Dei et hominis]. Here the personal union is accomplished. Here the humanity and divinity are joined [Da gehet's ineinander humanitas et divinitas]. The union holds everything together [Die unitas, die helt's]. I confess that there are two natures, but they cannot be separated. This is accomplished by the union [unitas], which is a greater and stronger union [coniunctio] than that of soul and body, because soul and body are separated, but never the immortal and divine nature and the mortal human nature [in Christ], but they are united in one person. That is to say, Christ, the impassible Son of God, God and man, was crucified under Pontius Pilate.

Objection: Again, what is immortal cannot become mortal. God is immortal. Therefore he cannot become mortal.

Response: In philosophy, this is true.

III.

Argument: God knows all things. Christ does not know all things. Therefore

Christ is not God.

I prove the minor premise from Mark, where Christ says that he does not know the last day.

Response: The solution is that Christ there speaks after a human manner, as he also says: "All things have been given to me by the Father." Often he speaks of himself as if simply of God, sometimes simply as of man. The Father does not will that the human nature should have to bear divine epithets [ut humana natura debeat gerere dicta divina], despite the union, and yet sometimes [Christ] speaks of himself as of God, when he says, "The Son of Man will be crucified." To be crucified is a property of the human nature, but because there are two natures united in one person, it is attributed to both natures. Again, "Whoever believes in the Son has eternal life." There he speaks of the divine nature. Or again, "They crucified the Lord of glory," where he speaks of the property of the humanity.

IV.

Argument: A word is not a person. Christ is the Word. Therefore Christ is not a person.

I prove the major premise, that a word and a person are different.

Response: This is a new expression, which was formerly unheard of in the world. Christ is not a mathematical or physical word, but a divine and uncreated word, which signifies a substance and a person, because the divine Word is the divinity. Christ is the divine Word. Therefore he is the divinity, that is, a substantial person [ipsa substantia et persona].

Philosophically, "word" means a sound or an utterance, but speaking theologically, "Word" signifies the Son of God. This, Aristotle would not admit, that "Word" signifies true God [plenum Deum].

V.

Argument: Christ beseeches the Father to hear him. Therefore he is not God.

I prove the consequence, for he who seeks to be heard, seeks the honor of one who is superior.

Response: This is done because of the property of the human nature.

Question: It is asked, whether this proposition is true: The Son of God, the creator of heaven and earth, the eternal Word, cries out from the Cross and is a man?

Response: This is true, because what the man cries, God also cries out, and to crucify the Lord of glory is impossible according to the divinity, but it is possible according to the humanity; but because of the unity of the person, this being crucified is attributed to the divinity as well.

V [b].

Argument: If Christ were true God, of the same essence with the Father, the Scripture would not teach that he received all things from the Father. But Scripture so says. Therefore he is not true God.

I respond to the minor premise: This [pertains to] his ministry and humanity. For in divinity he is equal in power with the Father.

VI.

Argument: Everything that is born begins to be, or, everything that is born has a beginning. Christ was born. Therefore he began to be. He is a creature, and is not from eternity.

Response: I concede this, with a distinction. In philosophy this is true, but not in theology. The Son is born eternal from eternity; this is something incomprehensible. [But] this belongs to theology. For the Holy Spirit has prescribed models for us; let us walk in that cloud.

VII.

Argument: When we must speak carefully, there is most need of grammar. In

theology, we must speak carefully. Therefore the Holy Spirit has his own grammar.

Response: The Holy Spirit has his own grammar. Grammar is useful everywhere, but when the subject is greater than can be comprehended by the rules of grammar and philosophy, it must be left behind. In grammar, analogy works very well: Christ is created. Therefore Christ is a creature. But in theology, nothing is more useless. Wherefore our eloquence must be restrained, and we must remain content with the patterns prescribed by the Holy Spirit. We do not depart [from grammar] without necessity, for the subject is ineffable and incomprehensible. A creature, in the old use of language, is that which the creator has created and distinguished from himself, but this meaning has no place in Christ the creature. There the creator and the creature are one and the same. Because there is an ambiguity in the term and men hearing it immediately think of a creature separate from the creator, they therefore fear to use it, but it may be sparingly used as a new term, as once Augustine spoke, moved by the greatest joy: "Is this not a marvelous mystery? He who is the Creator, wished to be a creature." This is to be forgiven the holy Father, who was moved by surpassing joy to speak thus. He speaks, however, of the unity, not of a separation, as the grammar implies, and yet, as I have said, this kind of speech is to be used sparingly, and our joy must be restrained, lest it give birth to errors. And the Fathers are to be forgiven, because they spoke thus because of surpassing joy, wondering that the Creator was a creature. It is not permissible to use such words among the weak, because they are easily offended, but among the learned and those firmly rooted in this article, it does not matter how you speak, and I am not harmed if you say: Christ is thirst, humanity, captivity, creature.

VIII.

Argument: Your fourteenth and eighteenth propositions are contradictory.

Therefore they are not to be approved.

Response: Such contradictions do not take place between equivocal terms, but between terms of the same meaning. But "creature" has a double signification.

IX.

Argument: No creature ought to be worshipped [adoranda]. Christ ought to be worshipped. Therefore Christ is not a creature.

Response: Thus Schwenkfeld argues. This is indeed one of his absurdities, and he errs with respect to the communication of attributes. The humanity joined with the divinity is worshipped; the humanity of Christ is worshipped, and not falsely, for it is inseparable from the divinity and the addition of this possessive, "of Christ," answers the objection. Thus Christ speaks in John 14. Philip asks Christ to show him the Father, because with the eyes of the flesh he sees nothing but flesh, and Christ then responds: "Have I been with you so long, etc.? He who sees me, sees the Father." Christ says that [Philip] sees the Father, when he sees [Christ], because he sees the humanity and the divinity united in one person. Therefore he says, "Do you not know, that the Father is in me and I in the Father?" Therefore it is said that he who touches the Son of God, touches the divine nature itself. The old theologians went to astounding lengths [mirabiliter se cruciarunt] in answering this question of whether the humanity is to be worshipped, and they established three ways [species] in which the humanity may be adored: Dulia, when Peter and Paul and all the other saints are adored; hyperdulia, when the Virgin Mary is adored, and here they included the humanity of Christ, and called [this worship] hyperdulia as well; and latria, when Christ is

worshipped with regard to his divinity [cum relatione et divinitate]. Christ clearly dissolves [the distinction, for] whoever worships the humanity of Christ here no longer adores a creature (for this is what is meant by the union of natures), but the Creator himself, for the unity is what is fundamental [quia fundamentum est in unitate].

X.

Argument: Every man is corrupted by original sin and has concupiscence.

Christ had neither concupiscence nor original sin. Therefore he is not a man.

Response: I make a distinction with regard to the major premise. Every man is corrupted by original sin, with the exception of Christ. Every man who is not a divine Person [personaliter Deus], as is Christ, has concupiscence, but the man Christ has none, because he is a divine Person, and in conception the flesh and blood of Mary were entirely purged, so that nothing of sin remained. Therefore Isaiah says rightly, "There was no guile found in his mouth"; otherwise, every seed except for Mary's was corrupted.

XI.

Argument: If Christ is a creature only according to his humanity, and is not called a creature *_simpliciter_*, then it follows that something remains which is not united in Christ by nature [manere quod non uniat in Christo natura], and that there is in Christ something which is not divine.

Response: There is an equivocation in the term "*_simpliciter_*." It is impossible that Christ is merely a creature according to his humanity, for this destroys the divinity. This is Schwenkfeld's objection. Christ is not a creature *_simpliciter_*. Christians indeed say that Christ according to his humanity is a creature, but they immediately add that Christ according to his divinity is the Creator, etc. Therefore the human nature is not to be spoken

of apart from the divinity. The humanity is not a person, but a nature.

XI [a].

Argument: No one can dispute that flesh is a creature. Christ was made flesh. Therefore he is a creature.

Response: With respect to his humanity [ad humanitatem] Christ was made flesh.

XI [b].

Argument: Whatever is subject to death, is not God. Christ was subjected to death. Therefore he is not God.

Response: Because of the communication of attributes, this thing which is proper to the human nature is shared [commune] with the divine.

XII.

Argument: "Man" and "humanity" have the same meaning. Therefore it is rightly said that Christ is humanity.

Response: This is not conceded, but rather that Christ is man, because this is a concrete term with personal signification, whereas an abstract signifies the mode of nature, or naturally, so that therefore it is false that Christ is human nature, that is, humanity, or that Christ is humanity. Aristotle says that abstract terms refer to nature, and concrete terms to a person.

XII [a].

Argument: Whatever belongs [inest] to something, can be predicated of it. Humanity belongs to Christ. Therefore Christ is humanity.

Response: To "belong" is to inhere to a subject. Whiteness inheres to John. Therefore John is whiteness. But this does not follow in the abstract. But I concede it in the concrete: Whiteness inheres to John, therefore he is white. Humanity belongs to Christ, therefore he is a man.

XIII.

Argument: Paul says: Christ was made a curse. Therefore by the same principle it could be said: Christ was made humanity.

Response: Rather than analogy, we must follow the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and as he himself prescribes, so we must speak. That Christ was made a curse for us, there signifies something truly concrete, that is, Christ was made a sacrifice, a victim for us.

XIV.

Argument: The manner of speaking [idioma] used by Holy Scripture must be used by us rather than any other. Scripture never says: This man created the world; God suffered. Therefore we ought not to speak thus.

Response: The question is whether certain forms of speech [formae] of the Fathers are to be retained apart from Scripture. I answer, that it is permissible to use them, when they do not disagree with Holy Scripture in meaning. For error lies not in the will, but in the meaning. When there are words which produce error, they must be avoided; but if they give no occasion for error, it does not matter if you say "a man created the world," if only the meaning is sound.

XV.

Argument: Moses says, "The Lord your God is one God." Therefore Christ cannot be true God.

Response: What Moses says, that God is one, in no way contradicts us. For we too say that there is one God, and not many, but that unity of substance and essence has three distinct persons, as the nature[s] of Christ are united in one person. When therefore it is said that "the divinity died," then it is implied that the Father too and the Holy Spirit have died. But this is not true, for only one person of the divinity, the Son, is born, dies, and suffers, etc. Therefore the divine nature, when it is taken for a person, was

born, suffered, died, etc., and this is true. We must therefore make a distinction. If you understand by "divine nature" the whole divinity or the unity, then the assertion is false, because Christ alone is not the whole Trinity, but only one person of the Trinity. Therefore there is only one God. Here we preach, insofar as it is possible, that these three persons are one God and one essence. But we believe that these things are incomprehensible; if they could be comprehended, there would be no need to believe them.

XVI.

Argument: Whatever consists of soul and flesh is a creature. Christ consists of a soul and flesh. Therefore he is a creature.

I prove the major premise from the Athanasian Creed.

Response: Christ does not consist of a soul and flesh, but of humanity and divinity. He assumed human nature, which consists of soul and flesh, and in the Creed, man must be construed with rational soul.

XVII.

Argument: There is nothing accidental in God. To assume humanity is an accident. Therefore Christ is not God.

Response: In philosophy this is true; but in theology we have our own rules.

When we portray the union so that the divinity in Christ is as it were a substance, but his humanity as it were an accidental quality, like whiteness or blackness, this is not said properly or aptly, but we speak thus so that it can be understood in some way. But that unity of the two natures in one person is the greatest possible, so that they are equally predicated, and communicate their properties to the person, as if he were solely God or solely man.

XVIII.

Argument: Only God is good. Christ does not wish to be called good.

Therefore Christ is not God.

I prove the minor premise from Matthew 19: "Why do you call me good?"

No one is good, but. . .," etc.

Response: Christ speaks there according to the capacity of the man asking the question: "You say that I am good, and yet you do not believe that I am God. Therefore you do not rightly call me good." Or thus: Christ wished to speak according to his humanity.

XIX.

Argument: Propositions 15 and 16 are contradictory. Therefore they cannot be true.

Response: The Fathers sometimes erred [labantur] in judgment, and sometimes speak correctly. Therefore we must not change them everywhere. Thus Bernard sometimes spoke very ineptly and improperly, as if he were a heretic. But when a serious matter was at stake, and he was speaking with God, then [as if] he were Peter or Paul himself. Therefore the Fathers are to be imitated where they have spoken and thought rightly, but where they have spoken or even thought improperly, they are to be tolerated and properly interpreted, as the papists do who force even [the Fathers] to come to their opinion.

XX.

Argument: The same thing cannot be predicated of God and man. Therefore, etc.

Response: This is a philosophical argument. There is no relation between the creature and the Creator, between the finite and the infinite. But we not only establish a relation, but a union of the finite and the infinite.

Aristotle, if he had heard or read this, would never have been made a Christian, for he would not have conceded this proposition, that the same

relation belongs to the finite and the infinite.

XXI.

Argument: If it is rightly said that Christ is thirsty and dead, it is also rightly said that he is thirst and death, for it is said in the Psalm itself:

"I am a worm, and scorn, and despise," and not "I am scorned." Therefore by the same principle, it seems that it should be said that Christ is death and thirst.

Response: Analogy or etymology does not hold here. And as I have said, we must retain the patterns prescribed by the Holy Spirit, especially among the weak; among strong Christians, it does not matter how you speak, as before me, since I am not still being taught such things, being already acquainted with them. [But] among those who are to be taught, we must refrain. As long as the heart does not err, the tongue will not err; our stammering has been approved by the Holy Spirit. But among those who are to be taught, we must speak modestly, properly, and aptly.

XXII.

Argument: If that which is worse is said of Christ, so too must that which is better be said. Death is better than sin. Therefore if Christ is called sin, he is even better called death.

Response: The analogy does not hold. Those who teach are given the task of teaching aptly, properly, and clearly, so that they may capture their hearers, who are otherwise offended. He who knew no sin was made sin, that is, captivity, damnation.

XXIII.

Argument: The Nicene Creed is undoubtedly [maxime] catholic. The opinion of Schwenkfeld agrees with the Nicene Creed. Therefore it is true.

I prove the minor premise, because it is said [in the Creed] that

Christ is begotten, not made. But every creature is made. Therefore Christ is not a creature.

Response: "Begotten" refers to the divinity, but Schwenkfeld confounds the two natures.

XXIV.

Argument: Paul says that Christ was found in condition [habitu] as a man.

Therefore the humanity in Christ is an accident; that is, Christ is man accidentally, and not by virtue of substance.

Response: The Greek term is *_schema_*, that is, figure, form, or bearing, that is, "condition" signifies that he walked and lay down like any other man. Paul wishes to demonstrate that he was a true man, who suffered and spoke as a man. Propositions concerning the accidents of man and God in Christ are immodest [non sunt castae], therefore they are to be spoken of sparingly, and we must take our stand on the unity. This is so closely joined that in the whole nature of things no similar example can be given. The closest similarity is the nature of man. For as this consists of two distinct parts, that is, soul and flesh, thus the person of Christ consists of two natures united, although the soul is at last separated from the flesh when man dies.

XXV.

Argument: (M. Vitus Amerbach) I ask the reason why Christ is man and not humanity.

Response: Because "man" includes the person, and "humanity" does not.

I now argue the point thus: Man is humanity; either they are synonyms or they are not. If they are synonyms, the seventh proposition is false, whence the proposition that Christ is humanity is condemned, even though it is said that Christ is divinity.

[Again:] If it is not false, then the eighth proposition is invalid:

"Though otherwise man and humanity are synonyms, like God and divinity."

Response: Synonyms are predicated interchangeably of the same substance, for such is the nature of synonyms. If they are synonyms, they must be predicated of the same subject. They are called synonyms because they signify the same thing *_simpliciter_* in all respects. Thus man and humanity are synonyms *_simpliciter_* in philosophy, but in theology they are not.

Against the solution: Synonyms are of the same nature and signification.

Man and humanity are not of the same nature. Therefore they are not synonyms. You [vos] have said that humanity signifies only a form in matter, not joined with a subject. But man is a subject. Therefore they are different.

Response: In philosophy they are synonyms *_simpliciter_*, having the same signification, but not in theology, for here is one man to whom no one is similar. Here man in the concrete signifies human nature, because he is a person, but humanity does not signify a person. Therefore [these terms] differ in theology and philosophy. If it were said that the divine person assumed a man, that is, a human person, it would follow that there were two persons, but this is intolerable. Therefore it is rightly said that the Word assumed human nature.

[Again:] "Thou tookest man upon thee to deliver him."

Response: Man is taken in an abstract sense. "Man," when it is said of Christ, is a personal name, now that the person has assumed the person.

XXVI.

Argument: I ask whether a holy thing and holiness, or a good thing and goodness, are the same?

Response: There is a great difference between concrete terms and abstract

ones, as between a white thing and whiteness, between substance and accident.

These are not synonyms, for an accident can either be present or absent.

On the contrary: Both a good thing and goodness are accidents, as are a man and humanity.

Response: As far as accidents are concerned, they are not synonymous.

XXVII. Against [propositions] 11 and 12.

"Thou tookest man upon thee to deliver him." But strictly speaking [proprie], God either assumed human nature or humanity or man. But strictly speaking he did not assume humanity or human nature. Therefore he assumed a man, because humanity is an abstract and signifies only a form, but human nature signifies matter, that is, flesh and soul. But God strictly speaking did not assume flesh and a soul, nor flesh alone or a soul alone, but a man, which is the general and most appropriate term in this matter. Therefore I say that he assumed a whole man [integrum hominem], not simply humanity or a part thereof.

Response: When humanity is used, as above, as a philosophical term, it is the same as man, but in theology it does not signify a person, as "man" signifies a person, that is, a particular person, [if we were to say] that the Son of God assumed a man. If it were said that the divine person assumed a human nature, that is, a person, then there would be two persons, which we do not concede. For there are not two substances, etc.

"Thou tookest man upon thee to deliver him." Here everyone answers that man is here taken abstractly, that is, as "humanity," which is not subsistent, but assumed. "Man," however, does not signify something assumed, but an existing person. Therefore "man" has a different signification with regard to Christ. Christ is a man, that is, the divine person which assumed human nature, for the person did not assume a person. In philosophy there is

no difference between man and the union of a soul and flesh, but in theology there is a great difference. For in Christ, humanity signifies the assumed, not subsistent, human nature. But "man" signifies a subsistent person.

XXVIII.

Argument: Just as it is rightly said that Christ is created, so too it is rightly said that Christ is a creature. "Creature" [creatura] does not signify an action, but a thing produced by a creator, but it is nevertheless an abstract term.

Response: We concede to the Fathers, after their fashion, that Christ is called a creature; but because among the untrained "creature" always signifies something separated from the Creator, this is not well done. But when we call Christ a creature, we understand the divine person which assumed human nature. Nor is the creature in Christ the subject [suppositum], not even according to philosophy, but something assumed. Christ, being created, is not separated from God. Therefore he is not a creature in the old sense of the word.

XXIX.

Argument: Two contraries cannot exist in the same subject [duo disparata non possunt esse in eodem]. God and man are contraries. Therefore they cannot exist in the same subject.

Response: Christ was corruptible and mortal, because he died, but not according to his birth [secundum generationem]. Aristotle did not understand the corruption of human nature, wherefore he attributed our corruption to the elements, as in other created things. But the fall of Adam is the cause of death. For Adam was composed of the elements, [and yet] intended [conditus] for eternal life. If he had not fallen, there would have been a perpetual harmony of the elements and no corruption.

XXX.

Argument: Athanasius says: Such as is the Father, such is the Son.

Therefore Christ is not created.

Response: He speaks of the divinity of Christ, [but] the Word, which is God, became incarnate.

XXX [a].

Again: Contraries must be eliminated [contraria sunt e medio tollenda].

Your third and sixth propositions are clearly contrary. The third states that those things which pertain to man are rightly said of God, and those things which pertain to God, of man. The sixth, that it is not permissible to say that since Christ is thirsty, a slave, dead, therefore he is thirst, slavery, death. Therefore these propositions must be eliminated.

Response: In the third proposition we are speaking in the concrete, but in the sixth in the abstract.

Again: This is the catholic faith, that we confess one Lord Jesus Christ, true God and man. Therefore, neither God the Father nor the Holy Spirit, since "one" excludes both God the Father and the Holy Spirit.

Response: One God, and threefold [trinum] in Trinity, nor do we deny the Trinity. For there is one God, but three persons, nor yet are they separated from each other.

Again: The Word was made flesh. But flesh is a creature. Therefore the Word, that is, God, was made a creature.

Response: John says concerning Christ that he was made flesh, that is, that he assumed human nature, while otherwise he remained God.

Again: They think rightly who say that Christ is [not] a creature according to his humanity, as Schwenkfeld.

Response: They are all wrong who call Christ a creature *_simpliciter_*.

XXXI.

Argument: God is a spirit. Christ is not a spirit. Therefore, etc.

Response: In Christ there are two natures: the divine, which is spirit, and the human, which has flesh and bones. Christ according to his humanity is a creature, and Christ according to his divinity is God, so closely joined together [coniunctissime etiam] that the two natures are one person.

XXXII.

Argument: He who makes something cannot be the same as the thing which he makes. Christ is the Creator. Therefore he cannot be a creature.

Response: We join the Creator and the creature in the unity of the person.

The worthless Schwenkfeld [reproaches] us for teaching that Christ is only a creature. He wants to be holy when he stirs up that sect and says that Christ in glory is not a man. Therefore neither will he be God or worthy of worship. He means a pure creature apart from the divinity. He reproaches good men without naming them. None say, as you claim, that Christ is purely a creature, but a serpent is easily hidden.

XXXIII.

Argument: The divinity in Christ felt no pain. God is divinity. Therefore he did not feel pain on the Cross, and consequently he did not suffer.

Response: [Because of] the communication of attributes, those things which Christ suffered are attributed also to God, because they are one. Our adversaries want to divide the unity of the person, but we will [not] concede. We join or unite the distinct natures in one person.

XXXIII [a].

Argument: Whatever is subject to death, is not God. Christ was subjected to death. Therefore Christ is not God.

Response: [First,] there is the communication of attributes, and the

argument is a philosophical one.

[Again:] Scripture does not say: "This man created the world; God suffered." Therefore these expressions are not to be used.

Response: Error resides not in words, but in the sense; although Scripture does not put forward these words, it nevertheless has the same sense.

XXXIII [b].

Argument: No creature creates. Christ is a creature.

Response: [This is true] understanding creature in a philosophical way. But creature is said of Christ theologically. Christ is the Creator.

Again: Paul [writes] to the Galatians: God sent his Son, born of a woman.

Therefore God is a creature.

Response: The argument is true according to the humanity.

End [of the Disputation on the Divinity and Humanity of Christ]

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