

4. and also by some of Luther's own followers, who wanted to interpret this proposition as follows: Although we require works as necessary to salvation, we do not teach people to trust in works.

For these reasons, it is right for this matter to remain settled in our churches. The ways of speaking just mentioned should not be taught, defended, or excused. Instead, they should be thrown out of our churches and rejected as false and incorrect. These are expressions that were renewed because of the Interim. They originated from it and were again drawn into discussion in times of persecution. This happened when there was special need for a clear, correct confession against all sorts of corruptions and adulterations of the article of justification.

God's eternal election does not just foresee and foreknow the salvation of the elect. From God's gracious will and pleasure in Christ Jesus, election is a cause that gains, works, helps, and promotes our salvation and what belongs to it. Our salvation is so founded on [God's eternal election] that "the gates of hell shall not prevail against it" (Matthew 16:18), as is written in John 10:28, "no one will snatch [My sheep] out of My hand." And again, "and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed" (Acts 13:48).

Second, when it is taught that good works are necessary, it must also be explained why they are necessary. These reasons are listed in the *Augsburg Confession* and *Apology*.

We must be on our guard well to make sure that works are not brought in and mixed into the article of justification and salvation. Therefore, the following propositions are justly rejected: "good works are necessary for believers to be saved; therefore, it is impossible to be saved without good works". This is directly contrary to the doctrine about the exclusive terms in the article of justification and salvation. In other words, these positions conflict with the words St. Paul uses to exclude entirely our works and merits from the article of justification and salvation and to credit everything to God's grace and Christ's merit alone, as explained in the preceding article. These propositions take the comfort of the Gospel away from afflicted, troubled consciences. They give reason to doubt, and are dangerous in many ways. They strengthen assumptions about one's own righteousness and increase confidence in one's own works. Besides, they are accepted by the papists, and are used in their interest against the pure doctrine of the alone-saving faith. Furthermore, they are contrary to the form of sound words. For it is written, "David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works" (Romans 4:6). Likewise, in Article VI of the *Augsburg Confession* it is written that we are saved "without works, through faith alone." So Dr. Luther, too, rejected and condemned these propositions when they were used

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2. by the papists, in very many places;
3. by the Anabaptists, when they present this interpretation: We should not rest faith on the merit of works, but we must still have works as necessary for salvation;

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