

The *Apology* provides an excellent model that shows how and when exhortations to good works can be made without darkening the doctrine of faith and of the article of justification. In Article XX, on the passage 2 Peter 1:10, “Be all the more diligent to make your calling and election sure,” it says:

Peter speaks of works following the forgiveness of sins and teaches why they should be done. They should be done so that the calling may be sure, that is, should they fall from their calling if they sin again. Do good works in order that you may persevere in your calling, in order that you do not lose the gifts of your calling. They were given to you before, and not because of works that follow; and which now are kept through faith. Faith does not remain in those who lose the Holy Spirit and reject repentance.

On the other hand, this does not mean that faith lays hold of righteousness and salvation only in the beginning and then resigns its office to works as though they had to sustain faith, the righteousness received, and salvation. It means that the promise, not only of receiving, but also of retaining righteousness and salvation, is firm and sure to us. St. Paul (Romans 5:2) ascribes to faith not only the entrance to grace, but says that we stand in grace and boast of the future glory. In other words, he credits the beginning, middle, and end to faith alone.

They were broken off because of their unbelief, but you stand fast through faith. (Romans 11:20)

[He will] present you holy and blameless and above reproach before Him, if indeed you continue in the faith.

By God’s power [you] are being guarded through faith for a salvation. (1 Peter 1:5)

Obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. [1 Peter 1:9]

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Solid Declaration 1v.33-34; Concordia : *The Lutheran Confessions : A Reader’s Edition of the Book of Concord* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2006).

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