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## LEADING A NEW LIFE

Anyone who is not like the *Christian holy people* described in the last chapter should not claim to be a Christian. Such a person should also not be comforted as if he were a Christian. This is what the Antinomians do when they preach solely the forgiveness of sins and grace in Christ!

The Antinomians, who do not understand the Ten Commandments and so reject them, preach constantly about the grace of Christ. But by doing so, they strengthen and comfort those who remain in sin. “Since all sins are forgiven in Christ,” they say, “no one should be terrified of sins.” Consequently they ignore those who continue in open

and public sin without any renewal or improvement of life.

The Antinomians even go so far as to assert that it should never be said: “Listen! You can’t be a Christian and at the same time *want to be* an adulterer, chase after prostitutes, be a gluttonous pig, be arrogant, greedy, a usurer, envious,

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vindictive and malicious.” Instead, this is how the Antinomians speak: “Listen! You *are* an adulterer, a fornicator, or routinely pursue knowingly sinful activity! If only you believe you are saved! Do not

worry about the law! Christ has fulfilled it all.”

Such a way of speaking destroys Christ while preaching him most beautifully! It answers “Yes” and “No” to the same question! The death of Christ was not for sinners who, having received the forgiveness of sins, do not seek to avoid sin and lead a new life.

The Antinomians truly are fine Easter preachers! But terrible Pentecost preachers! They preach nothing concerning the sanctifying and enlivening Holy Spirit. They are not concerned with being made holy by the Holy Spirit!

Antinomians preach only redemption. But Christ redeems from sin and death *in order that* the Holy Spirit might create the New Man within us out of the Old Adam. In other words: That we might be dead to sin but alive to righteousness, as St. Paul teaches (Rom. 6:2ff.).

This holy life begins and increases here on earth. It is completed, however, in heaven. For Christ has earned for us not only grace, but also the gift of the Holy Spirit. Why? So that along with the forgiveness of sin, we might also

stop sinning.

Whoever does not keep from sinning, but remains in his former evil manner of life, has received some sort of different Christ from the Antinomians. Such a person does not have the true Christ. Even if all the angels would cry “Christ, Christ!” such a person must be condemned along with such a Christ.

So see how ignorant we are of the things that are above us, in which we do not have any experience. We simultaneously affirm and deny the same thing!

In contrast, in simple things we are very good thinkers. No matter how uneducated a person may be, he quickly realizes: “The person who gives me a penny has not given me a dollar.” It is obvious! And he sees it!

Yet our Antinomians do not see that they preach Christ *without* and *against* the Holy Spirit. Even though it is evident that a Christian should have the Holy Spirit and lead a new life (or else know that he has no Christ) the Antinomians want to leave people in their old way of life while declaring them to be saved.

Well, all this has been said about a Christian holiness which the pope also does not want. He has a special holiness apparently that is much holier, namely, a life of chasubles, tonsures,<sup>1</sup> cowls, vestments, food, festivals, monks, nuns, masses, saints and countless other things that have to do

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<sup>1</sup>The practice of cutting the hair from the scalp, leaving hair on the head that looks somewhat like a halo.

with external, bodily, perishable matters.

This special holiness makes a person holier than Christian holiness itself! It works even without faith, the fear of God, hope, love and the other things the Holy Spirit truly does work according to the First Table of the law. Such a special holiness also is achieved even if there is false belief, uncertainty in the heart, doubt and anger and impatience toward God. And it certainly is not hindered by the idolatry which is a false trust in works!

Instead of trusting in the grace and merit of Christ, the pope's special holiness occurs by desiring to make satisfaction for sins through good works. It even goes so far as to sell extra good works to others! And of course, even if everyone else's possessions and money is acquired in the process of pursuing such a holiness, this does not prevent a person from being holier than Christian holiness itself.

Such a special holiness as the pope's is also acquired without the Second Table of the law. It is apparently not harmful at all that disobedience toward parents and other authorities is encouraged, murder is committed, war is waged and the innocent are hunted down. It also is of no consequence if a Christian is envious, hateful, vengeful,

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unchaste, lies, steals, practices usury, deceives and practices all malice in the extreme. According to the Roman church's holiness, simply become a monk or nun and you are holy! There you can be saved

without Christian holiness.

But we want to leave these filthy people alone. The ef-

fort we make to change them is in vain. In the end, God's wrath will come upon them, as St. Paul says (1 Thess. 2:16).

Let us instead discuss the church among ourselves. The Apostles' creed teaches us that a *Christian holy people* exists on earth and will remain here until Christ's visible return. It is an article of faith which cannot cease until what is believed occurs, as Christ promises (Matth. 28:20): "I am with you until the end of the world."

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1. What do the Antinomians do?
2. How do the Antinomians destroy Christ while preaching him beautifully?
3. About what do the Antinomians preach nothing?
4. What has Christ earned for us besides grace?
5. How do the Antinomians preach without and against the Holy Spirit?