



## “THE SPIRIT BREATHES WHERE HE DESIRES”

### ARTICLE 13 - REGENERATION IS INCOMPREHENSIBLE

*“In this life believers cannot fully understand the way in which God does this work. Meanwhile, however, it is enough for them to know and experience that by this grace of God they believe with the heart (Ro. 10:9-10) and love their Savior.”*

23. Read John 3:8. Why is the concept of being “incomprehensible” an accurate description?

### ARTICLE 14 - HOW FAITH IS A GIFT OF GOD

*“Faith is therefore a gift of God (Eph. 2:8), not because it is merely offered by God to the free will of man, but because it is actually conferred on man, instilled and infused into him. Nor is it a gift in the sense that God confers only the power to believe and then awaits from man’s free will the consent to believe or the act of believing. It is, however, a gift in the sense that He who works both to will and to work (Phil. 2:13), ...brings about in man both the will to believe and the act of believing.”*

24. Many in the church cannot dispute that faith is a gift of God. Why does it appear to be difficult for many to acknowledge that this gift includes both the will to believe and the act of believing?

### ARTICLE 15 - THE PROPER ATTITUDE WITH RESPECT TO GOD’S UNDESERVED

**GRACE** *“This grace God owes to no one. For what could He owe to man? Who has given Him first that he might be repaid (Rom. 11:35)? What could God owe to one who has nothing of his own but sin and falsehood? He, therefore, who receives this grace owes and renders eternal thanks to God alone. He who does not receive this grace, however, either does not care at all for these spiritual things and is pleased with what he has, or in false security vainly boasts that he has what he does not have (Jer. 7:4; Amos 6:1). Further, about those who outwardly profess their faith and amend their lives we are to judge and speak in the most favorable way, according to the example of the apostles, for the inner recesses of the heart are unknown to us. As for those who have not yet been called, it is our duty to pray for them to God, who calls into existence the things that do not exist. But we must by no means act haughtily, as if we had distinguished ourselves from them.”*

25. The church includes those who have inwardly received God’s grace and those who have outwardly professed their faith but the inner recesses of the heart are still unknown. Why must the issue of “speaking in a favorable way” be addressed with *all those* within the church? Rom. 14:10-13; I Cor. 4:7

### ARTICLE 16 - MAN’S WILL NOT TAKEN AWAY BUT MADE ALIVE

*“Man through his fall did not cease to be man, endowed with intellect and will; and sin...did not deprive man of his human nature, but brought upon him depravity and spiritual death. So also this divine grace of regeneration does not act upon men as if they were blocks and stones and does not take away the will and its properties, or violently coerce it, but makes the will spiritually alive (Eph. 2:1), heals it, corrects it, pleasantly and at the same time powerfully bends it (Phil. 2:13). As a result, where formerly rebellion and resistance of the flesh fully dominated, now a prompt and sincere obedience of the Spirit begins to prevail, in which the true, spiritual renewal and freedom of our will consists. And if the wonderful Maker of all good did not deal with us in this way, man would have no hope of rising from his fall through this free will, by which he, when he was still standing, plunged himself into ruin.”*

26. Psalm 51 clearly demonstrates the life of one who has been regenerated. Why is the description of the “breaking of bones” (vs.8) so appropriate?

### ARTICLE 17 - THE USE OF THE MEANS

*“The almighty working of God whereby He brings forth and sustains our natural life does not exclude but requires the use of means, by which He according to His infinite wisdom and goodness has willed to exercise His Power. This supernatural working of God, whereby He regenerates His people, in no way excludes or cancels the use of the gospel, which God has ordained to be the seed of regeneration and the food of the soul (Is. 55:10-11; Jas. 1:18; I Pet. 1:23). For this reason the apostles and the teachers who succeeded them, reverently instructed the people concerning this grace of God, to His glory and to the abasement of all pride (I Cor. 1:21). However, they did not neglect to keep them, by the holy admonitions of the gospel, under the administration of the Word, the sacraments, and discipline (Rom. 10:14-17, II Tim. 4:2-3). So today those who give or receive instruction in the church should not dare to tempt God by separating what He in His good pleasure has willed to be closely joined together. For grace is conferred through admonitions, and the more readily we do our duty, the more this favor of God, who works in us, usually manifests itself in its luster, and so His work best proceeds. To God alone, both for the means and for their saving fruit and efficacy, all glory is due throughout eternity. Amen. (Jude 22-25)*

“THE SPIRIT BREATHES WHERE HE DESIRES. AND THE VOICE OF HIM YOU HEAR. BUT YOU KNOW NOT WHERE HE COMES AND WHERE HE GOES: SO IS EVERYONE HAVING RECEIVING BIRTH FROM THE SPIRIT.” - JN. 3:8 (GR. INTERLINEAR)

“IRRESISTIBLE GRACE DOES NOT TEACH THAT MEN ARE FORCED TO CHRIST, BUT THOSE MEN, WHEN GIVEN A NEW NATURE AND FREED FROM THEIR SINFUL BONDAGE, WILL WILLINGLY COME TO CHRIST.”



Not what my hands have done  
can save my guilty soul:  
Not what my toiling flesh hath  
borne can make my spirit whole.  
Not what I feel or do  
can give me peace with God:  
Not all my prayers and sighs and  
tears can bear my awful load.  
Thy grace alone, O God,  
to me can pardon speak:  
Thy power alone, O Son of God,  
can this sore bondage break.  
No other work save Thine,  
no other blood will do:  
no strength save that which is  
divine can bear me safely through.