

SECTION II

PAUL'S GOSPEL EXPOSED AND DEFENDED

1. A Retrospect

Before entering on our study of Seripando's exposition and defence of the Pauline Gospel, let us cast a second glance on Seripando's history. We have seen the young precocious child of Naples, who had won the admiration of all his teachers, in a short time, declining his brilliant prospects, in the world and shutting himself up within an Augustinian monastery. The corruption of the 15th century Italy, could easily lead thinkers, like Machiavelli, to a pessimistic view of human nature. The young Seripando's eyes too fell on the same corruption that had been reigning, both within and without the church. His own Order stood badly in need of a reform.

St. Augustine the father of Seripando's Order, the Augustinian thinkers from the 11th to the 16th centuries, like Hugh of St. Victor, Peter Lombard, St. Bernard, Gregory of Rimini, Gerson, Augustine Favorini and John Driedo, and the Augustinian theologians who actually surrounded him, were far from being optimistic in their view of the fallen nature of man. Egidius of Viterbo, the General of Seripando's Order and his esteemed professor, was himself a through Augustinian and a Platonist to the core. When Seripando was in Rome, as a student of Egidius, in 1510, Martin Luther, the young Augustinian professor, came there from Germany, to visit his famous General. Talks with Luther, if at all he had any, could not throw any brighter light on the sad story of the fallen man.

When he was ordained priest, Seripando became the eagerly sought preacher, in the principal centres of Italy. His counsel was sought by humanists, like Flaminio, and reform leaders, like Giberti. It was at a period when Seripando's fame was diffusing itself far and wide, that the new Gospel of Luther began to spread with alarming rapidity. The young Augustinian preacher set on reflecting on the serious problems of the day. To be just in his judgment on the preachers of the new Gospel, he sought permission from Clement VII to read their books. He looked on Carafa and Cajetan as luminaries of the Church and willingly sought the acquaintance of these reform leaders.

To add to the seriousness of the situation, the tremendous responsibility of the Generalship of his Order was placed on Seripando's shoulders, in 1539. The office of the General meant the

reforming of the longstanding disorders in the houses of the Order, dispersed all over Europe, and the purging of the Order from connections with Lutheranism. Seripando had to be a strict judge and, at the same time, a kind father to the members of his Order who were suspected of Lutheran ideas.

Another serious responsibility was placed on Seripando, by Paul III, who ordered him to study minutely all the works of the heretics, in order to help the projected Council of Trent, in dealing with the Reformers' suspected doctrines. The souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, were waiting, at the door, for a clear knowledge of the science of salvation, in its original purity and simplicity. This was the thought that was foremost in the mind of Seripando, as we have it from him. And how was he to satisfy those souls?

He must, first of all, carefully avoid all the useless questions and intruding vocabulary, the arguments of human wisdom and the Aristotelian dialectics, and then, present the doctrine of salvation in a language that savoured of Apostolic simplicity. He would willingly call it the Gospel, rather than style it by the name "theology." It may seem to lack in philosophic precision and may be, as such, unacceptable to those who have not studied the science of the Holy Spirit and to those who always want to argue under the guidance of human reason.

He must not, moreover, condemn a doctrine simply because it is taught by the heretics. He must plead for those whose seemingly erroneous adherence to Pauline terminology calls upon them suspicion and hasty condemnation. Naturally, Seripando buries himself up in the study of St. Paul and he chooses for his guide, St. Augustine, not because Augustine was infallible, and could be blindly copied always, but because, he seemed to follow Paul everywhere and to excel all others, in the science of the Holy Spirit.

In handling the words of the Apostle, Seripando would be careful to avoid all the circumstances that might lead him away from the scope of the Apostle. He would, likewise, assume all the means that would help to stick to the Apostle's mind. This is Seripando and his conception of Biblical theology. It remains to us to examine how, in fact, Seripando exposes and defends the Gospel of Paul.

2. The Gospel of Paul

In his Q. 5, Seripando gives us a description of the Gospel of Paul: "*Evangelium Pauli illud fuit quod suis omnibus epistolis*

illustrat ac celebrat: gratiam Christi ad quam gratis et sine operibus legis perducimur ad salutem et vitam aeternam nanciscendam, abunde sufficere.” The main points implied in this Gospel are: (1) Man's helpless state, and (2) The sufficiency of the Grace of Christ to save him. We will see how Seripando evolves the doctrine of the Apostle, on these points. However, for the sake of brevity, we will pass over those points, on which Seripando agrees with the common Catholic doctrine, and concentrate our attention on these points, where he seeks to say something new.

CHAPTER 1

MAN'S HELPLESS STATE

Paul's concept of human misery is closely connected with Adam, sin and death; the Law, the flesh and the Spirit.

1. Adam, Sin and Death

The source of all miseries, is touched upon by Paul, in Rom. 5, while he places before us the picture of Him who is the source of all our happiness: “*Propterea sicut per unum hominem peccatum in hunc mundum intravit et per peccatum mors et ita in omnes homines mors pertransiit, in quo omnes peccaverunt*” (Rom. 5, 12). The Greek phrase, ἐφ' ᾧ πάντες ἥμαρτον has made it possible for exegetes, to view the text in two different ways.

The Latin Fathers, above all St. Augustine, translated the phrase into: “*in quo omnes peccaverunt,*” thus forming an adjectival clause referring to Adam (*‘unum hominem’*) or *‘peccatum’*. Having known, at a later date, *‘peccatum’* in Greek, to be of the feminine gender, St. Augustine, referred the clause, thereafter, exclusively to Adam. In this, he was followed by Sedulius, Fulgentius, Walfreid Strabo, Alexander Hales, and Saint Bonaventure. This interpretation, which shows that the whole mankind become subject to death, because of its having participated in the sin of Adam, sees an explicit reference to original sin made by the Apostle, in this text. It appears in the decree of the Council of Trent which was inspired by the Council of Orange.¹

The Greek Fathers, on the other hand, used to understand ἐφ' ᾧ in the sense of ‘because’. Interpreted in this sense, the passage in question does not necessarily refer to original sin (‘because all sinned’). It directly refers to personal sins. In fact, the true

¹Cfr. Tixeront: *Histoire des dogmes dans l'antiquité Chrétienne* I, p. 407 f., 432; II, p. 277-280, 440 f. 465-482; III, p. 293, 300, 307. J Freunderfer: *Erbsuende und Erbtod beim Apostel Paulus. Eine religionsgeschichte und exegetische Untersuchung ueber Roemerbrief 5, 12-21*, Munster 1 W, 1927; pp 129-156. *Council of Trent*, Sess. V, Can. 2; 4 (Dn 789, 791); *Council of Orange* Can. 5 (Dn 175); *Council of Carthage* Can. 2 (Dn 102). Joseph Bonsirven: *L'Évangile de Paul*, Paris 1948, pp. 111f.

signification of ἐφ' ὧ is 'because'. Many modern occidental scholars too, admit that "in quo" can equally signify "because."²

Seripando, both a Greek scholar and a close follower of Augustine, followed the Latin tradition, in translating ἐφ' ὧ into: "in quo". However, in giving his explanation of the passage, he rendered the phrase, also by "because," like the Greeks. But the word, 'because' did not change his interpretation. He faithfully adhered to his "parent" Augustine, in understanding this passage as explicitly referring to original sin.

"The benefits we have received from Christ", says Seripando, explaining this passage, "correspond to the miseries of sin and death which pervaded the whole world, by the temerity and crime of the first men constituted by God".³ Of these, sin imports the guilt, and death the punishment. The reason why death entered the whole human race, is indicated by the phrase "*propterea quia omnes peccaverunt,*" because all sinned (in Adam). Unless they had sinned, they could not be subjects to the punishment due to sin, namely death.⁴

Seripando considers next, the exact nature of this all-pervading sin. Concretely speaking, this mysterious sin is nothing but what the Apostle calls concupiscence. It is not concupiscence, considered in its deliberate movements, external or internal, but concupiscence considered in its spontaneous, indeliberate or first movements, as we call them. We quote here, Seripando's own words:

Diligenter autem est animadvertendum peccatum de que hoc loco disputat Paulus et cujus omne hominum genus reum facit, non esse externum aliquid maleficium quam semper et ubique tam humani atque docti quam immanes atque barbari homines rationis ductu peccatum esse cognoverunt, et reliqua id genus crassa facinora quae humanae quoque leges insectantur atque ulciscuntur, sed est naturale illud, domesticum et intimum vitium repugnantias carnis adversus Spiritum

²Cfr. *Tixeront*: *Historie*, I, p. 260, 288, 312 f., 493; II, p. 137-144, 205, 213; III, p. 208-212, 494. *Freundorfer*: *Erbsuende und Erbtod*, p. 107-129. *Prat.*: *Theology of St. Paul*, London, 1945, I, pp. 213-217.

³Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 5, 12 p. 83 f.

⁴Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 5, 12. Seripando does not understand by the term "*peccaverunt,*" personal sins, but the sin committed in Adam.

quae est non aperta quidem et manifesta verum obscura et occulta hominis a Deo defectio. Eam Graeci επιθυμίαν, nos vel libidinem vel trito jam et usitato verbo concupiscentiam appellamus."⁵

The nature and working of this "burden that bends man down"⁶ is the principle theme of Rom. 7, which the Apostle concludes with the exclamation: "*Infelix ego homo* etc." Wherever, in his Commentaries, he refers us to Rom. 7.⁷ This fundamental chapter which Seripando wishes to "be read attentively" by us,⁸ has been studied by himself, with great care. When he wrote the '*Glossa*', he seems to have considered himself incompetent to handle this complicated subject.⁹ In the commentary, however he takes it up, and handles it with a mastery which is born of long and deep study.

Here too, Seripando distinguishes the external acts of concupiscence from its internal movements, and, in the internal movements themselves, he distinguishes the voluntary from the involuntary. He shows that even the pagan philosophers like Cicero, who were ignorant of the positive precept given to the Israelites ("non concupiscence") knew the existence of this vice and accused its voluntary movements, external as well as internal as sinful. No one, however, ventured to accuse the involuntary or the first internal movements of concupiscence as sinful, since they were thought to be inborn in the nature of man.¹⁰ Seripando continues:

But the divine Law which teaches that it was once in the power of man to pass over or to avoid this greatest of evils, rather this head and fountain of all evils, forbids, condemns and interdicts it, as something which sprung up not from nature but from the contumacy of Adam the old parent of the whole human race, so that

⁵Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 5, 13 p. 83.

⁶Ms. Nap. VII A. 36; 2 Cor. V n. VI (2 Cor. 5, 6).

⁷Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 5, 13; 2 Cor. 3, 6; 2 Cor. 12, 2; Gal. 2, 19; 3, 19; 4, 9; 5, 17.

⁸Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: Gal. 5, 17.

⁹Seripando has not written the "*Glossa*" on this Chapter. Immediately after Chapter 6, he passes on to Ch. 8. Cfr. *Cod. Triv.* 378.

¹⁰Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 7, pp. 108 f.

we may acknowledge not only that it is sin, but also that it is forgiven exclusively by the merit of God and our Jesus Christ.¹¹

The majority of the fathers at the Council of Trent held that concupiscence was indifferent natural force that existed in man. Seripando considered this view to flow from an ignorance of the science of the Holy Ghost. In fact, he himself, with all the philosophers, would have thought it to be so. But divine revelation has definitely pointed it out, as originating from the sin of Adam. It is useless to discuss with those who consider concupiscence as an indifferent natural force in man, "because we disagree in principles."¹²

The science of the Holy Spirit or a real knowledge of Holy Scripture is what Seripando appeals to, where reason is not able to penetrate into the nature of certain truths revealed by God. We have another instance of this kind, in Seripando's exegesis on Rom. 10, 10, where he says that all who are well-versed in the scriptures, acknowledge the relation of cause and effect existing among faith, justice, confession and salvation.¹³ An appeal to the wisdom of the Spirit appears again, in his excursus on the conciliation of Predestination with human liberty. We would vainly seek, he says, a link between the eternal and immutable decree of Predestination and that kind of liberty of which the philosophers speak. Let us learn the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and approach to solve the problem. The free will that comes in question, in the mystery of Predestination, is that free will helped by Grace – the free will which is "freed by the Son of God."¹⁴ In a particular Congregation at the Council of Trent, while discussing the problem of abuses in Scripture, Seripando expressed his opinion in the following words: "*qui igitur docere vult Sacras litteras, bene eas prius discat ut et bene docere possit. Non discant scientiam speculativam sed reales litteras Sacras et doceant pueros doctrinam non ex philosophia excerptam sed ex Sacris litteris*

¹¹Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 7, pp. 108 f.

¹²C. T. XII, 551.

¹³Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 10, 10.

¹⁴Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: p. 204: At the end of Rom. 11 where Seripando first quotes the opinion of Cajetan and then gives his own.

interpretentur Scripturas secundum Pauli ad Timotheum C.1, et Augustinum ejusdem Pauli interpretem."¹⁵

In this case, Seripando wants his adversaries to look upon concupiscence, in the light of the revealed doctrine. Revelation tells us that man was, in fact, created without the concupiscence and that he became obnoxious to it because of the sin of Adam. So, even in the baptized, it goes on narrating silently, the story of its origin and carries with it, a special tendency to evil. Because of this tendency, Seripando calls it sin, or something displeasing to God. He sees this truth asserted by Paul himself and St. Augustine. The latter's words are, in fact, used by the Council of Trent, in describing the nature of the concupiscence that remains in the regenerated. It is sometimes called sin "*quia ex peccato est et ad peccatum inclinatur.*"¹⁶

1.1. Concupiscence in the Just

According to Seripando, concupiscence in the just is sin, but only in the improper sense of the word. It is this fact that prevents Seripando from agreeing with those who call concupiscence an indifferent force in man. The movements of concupiscence are equally felt by the regenerated and the non-regenerated. However, in the regenerated, the involuntary movements are not imputed to condemnation. Hence they are not sins.

*Cur relinquitur concupiscentia post baptismum? Relinquitur ut homo semper cogitet, qualis ex se sit qualis Dei gratia per Jesum Christum. Ex se ad omne malum pronus. Quae pronitas nisi remaneret in homine, homo se ex se et in se justum esse putaret. Dei autem gratia malum illud habet ad damnationem non imputatam propter Christum; eadem quoque gratia fit ut non regnet per consensum neque membris uti posit tanquam armis ad iniquitatem.*¹⁷

The word "*imputari*" used by Seripando has brought on him, the accusation of having taught the Lutheran doctrine. A. Gaudel wrote, in 1933, that Seripando, with the General of the Servites and the Bishop of Cova, taught that the effect of baptism was but a "covering

¹⁵C. T. I 505, 40 ff.

¹⁶Dn 792.

¹⁷C. T. XII, 552, 48-52.

up of sin.”¹⁸ More recently (1935), Henninger wrote his judgement on the doctrine of Seripando with the impression that Seripando used and understood the word “*imputari*” in the sense of mere “covering up.” Recapitulating the doctrine of Seripando, he uses the following words to show the mind of Seripando, regarding concupiscence existing in the regenerated:

*In renatis non est peccatum primo, quia non imputantur motus exorientes citra consensum, secundo quia renati habent vires sufficientes ad denegandum consensum ita ut illud peccatum non regnet, ideoque non habeat totam et plenam peccati rationem. Est tamen peccatum etiam in ipsis, quia legi Dei repugnant quae non solum consensum, sed etiam ipsos motus concupiscentiae prohibet. Sub gravi vel sub lavi – ad hanc quaestionem frustra responsum quaeremus apud Seripandum, qui etiam alibi ratio indistincte loquacitur de peccatis mortalibus et venialibus.*¹⁹

A little farther, examining the doctrine of St. Augustine, Henninger, says that Seripando who understood concupiscence existing in the regenerated as sin. “*Sensu proprio sed diminuto*,” practically fell into Luther’s doctrine of merely external non-imputation of guilt, and differed from St. Augustine who understood the same as sin, “*sensu improprio tantum*.”²⁰

Henniger cannot deny that St. Augustine himself uses the terms: ‘*imputari*’, ‘*tegi*’ and the like, as regards concupiscence.²¹

¹⁸D.T.C. vol. XII art. Péché original by A. Gaudel Col. 515 # 3. “*le general des augustins, celui des servites, avec san Felice, évêque de Cava tout en conversant que le péché, mais qu’il éteint ce qui fait le fond du péché, tout en condamnant l’eretur luthérienne voluaient cependant qu’on ne condamnat pas l’école augustinienne: ils paraissaient admettre que la concupiscence elle-meme considéré isolément, a quelque chose qui tient du peché, qui ne s’impute plus d’ailleurs après le baptême; ils admettaient qu’on l’appelait d’une certain facon “péché.” Tel est le sens exact des déclarations de Seripandi*”.

¹⁹J. Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina de duplici Justitia*, p. 18 # 1.

²⁰J. Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p. 94 # 1. Cfr. also p. 90 where Henninger speaks of the “*non imputation extrinseca*”, according to the old Protestants.

²¹J. Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p. 90, cfr. P. L. 44, col. 430, 434, 471.

But, he says that St. Augustine makes it clear, in other places, that what he means by these terms, is not an external non-imputation or a shaving off, of the sins, but a real deletion of it: “*Dicimus ergo Baptisma dare omnium indulgentiam peccatorum et auferre crimina, non radere (al. rarare) nec ut omium peccatorum radices in mala carne teneantur quasi rasorum in capite capillorum, unde crescant iterum resecanda peccata.*”²²

We agree with Henninger, in this conclusion, and wish to point out, further, that a study of Seripando’s exegetical works would make one reach the same conclusion regarding Seripando too.²³ For, Seripando too, explicitly shows that he understands the terms “*imputari*” and “*non imputari*” in a different way from that of Luther, and similar to that of Augustine.

We have but to turn over the pages of Seripando’s Commentaries on Rom. 4., where the word “*imputari*” occurs often. While explaining Rom. 4, 8 Seripando warns the reader to note well, what Paul means by the word “*imputari*” lest he should be “mised by the treacheries and fallacies of the heretics.”²⁴ Then he says: “*Imputare est homini ascribere quod humanae naturae vi neque habet neque habere potest... Non imputare autem est homini non attribuere quod et naturae vitio habet et naturae viribus carere non potest, ut peccatum, de quo dixit: “beatus vir cui non imputavit Dominus peccatum.”*²⁵ This word is assumed by Paul, from the O.T., in order to show the complete gratuitous nature of the divine gift:

Hac itaque voce quam ex vetere Scriptura Paulus usurpavit, illud potissimum declaratur: in quaerenda justitia, ad fidem primas esse deferendas, quae cum Dei praecipuum sit et singulare munus, imputatur credenti ut per eam justitiam consequatur. At vero, operibus secundum carnem scilicet quae fidem antecedunt, in hac de qua loquimur justitia, nihil omnio loci

²²J. Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, pp. 90 f. P. L. 44, col. 562 f. Cfr. also P. L. Col. 434, 763.

²³Henninger thinks that Seripando made changes in the Commentaries on Rom. And Gal., after the sessions on Justification. J. Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p. 9. But we think that Seripando’s opinion before and after the Council remained the same, for the reasons we adduce below.

²⁴Seripando: *Commentaria: Rom. 4, 8*, p. 64.

²⁵Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria: Rom. 4, 8*, pp. 64 f.

*relinquitur, quibus nihil imputatur, sed debita merces redditur.*²⁶

Hence Seripando understands: “*imputari*” as a term opposed to “*reddi propter meritum*.” The distinguishing mark is, *not the manner of the act but the motive force of the act*: “*imputari*” is a giving which is not called for, by the merit of the receiver, while “*reddi propter meritum*” is a giving which is called for by the merit of the receiver.

That Seripando finds no difference at all, *in the manner of giving*, in the one case and in the other, is clear from his use of the words: “*Ascribere*” and “*dare*,” indiscriminately, while explaining the meaning of “*imputare*.” Thus, explaining Rom. 4, 4f, Seripando writes:

*Fides quam ille sequitur, qui non operatur, sed credit in Deum, a quo tanquam fonte et capite in impios justitia fluit, proprie imputari dicitur, quia non pro laboribus rependitur, sed benigne ac liberalitate datur, non mercedis sed gratuiti muneris rationem habet, non pro meritis refertur sed gratis ascribitur.*²⁷

It will be, therefore, far from the truth, if we say that, by the word “*imputare*,” Seripando meant a merely external attribution.

“*Non imputare*,” is the contrary term of “*imputare*”; “*imputare*” is “a giving,” “*non imputare*” is a “taking away.” “*Eadem enim secundum rem esse dicimus, et sola cogitatione distingui, non imputare peccatum et imputare fidem, ad primam hanc justitiae partem nanecendam, quae in peccatorum venia posita est.*”²⁸

That, “*imputare fidem*” is “*dare fidem*,” we know for certain, from Seripando’s explanation of the word. Is “*non imputare*” a simple negation of giving or a simple forgiving of sins, which act remains only in the mind of God? Does not that act imply a positive “taking away” or “destroying” of the sins that are in the soul of man? Seripando leaves no doubt on this matter, because, while he comments on Rom. 3, 28, he explicitly states that, by faith, (see just above: imputation of faith and non-imputation of sins are, ‘*a parte*

²⁶Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 4, 8, p. 65.

²⁷Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 4, 8, p. 65.

²⁸Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 4, 8, p. 64.

rei’, one and the same thing) the sins are destroyed: “*Fide quam nulla quae bona et justa dici possunt, antecedunt opera, peccata delentur.*”²⁹

One may object, saying that this realistic idea of “*imputare*,” found in the Commentaries, was not Seripando’s, own, in or before the Council. The Commentaries were ready for publication, only after the sessions of the Council on Original sin and concupiscence. Hence Seripando could have made the necessary changes to conform it to the mind of the Council. Such a conclusion may seem plausible; but we have exactly the same idea, briefly expressed by Seripando, in his *Glossa* on the Romans (cod. Trivulz. 387), which was certainly a finished work, before the Council. This passage, which we quote below, does not contain any after-additions or corrections. It shows that, even before the council, “*imputare*” meant, for Seripando, an absolutely gratuitous donation of a thing: Rom. 4, 5: “*ei vero qui non operatur, credenti autem in eum qui justificat impium, reputatur fides ejus ad justitiam (non jam ex debito sed) secundum propositum gratiae Dei (qui donare multos homines hoc praeclaro munere voluit sua benignitate et bonitate).*”³⁰

Hence, when Seripando says, commenting on Rom. 8 that concupiscence which remains in the just, is not imputed to condemnation, he does not mean a simple non- imputation which remains in the mind of God, but a corresponding effect in the regenerated, namely the removal of all that may cause condemnation, namely of all guilt from concupiscence. This is what we have to understand, when we read the words of Seripando’s conciliar treatise, which Henninger quotes: “*non est peccatum quia non imputatur. Non est cum reatu conjunctum, quia remissum, quia si sibi non consentiatur, manet ut superatum et peremptum.*”³¹

It follows that, according to Seripando too, concupiscence remaining in the regenerated is no sin, according to the proper sense of the word. There is no wonder, therefore, if, in spite of all his researches, Henninger could not find a single instance where Seripando treats of its gravity.

²⁹Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 3, 28, p. 60 # 1.

³⁰Cod. Trivulz. 378 f.

³¹J. Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p 14. Cfr. C. T. XII 545, 39-41.

Luther's doctrine on the contrary, was that all the movements of concupiscence were sins.³² In the just, this corruption of nature which is, in it self, mortal, becomes venial.³³ Later, however, Luther seems to have maintained that, in the just, God did not impute anything to sin (either mortal or venial). By the year 1537, he had evolved that idea to such an extent, that he began to laugh at the doctrine of purgatory.³⁴ Still, Luther's "*non imputari*" was an act in the mind of God, and hence, according to him, man remained a sinner, in the proper sense of the word.³⁵

If Seripando, as shown above, conceived the nature of concupiscence remaining in the just, as sin, only in the 'improper sense', why should he have said that it was hateful to God? Heninger rightly observes that Seripando raised an objection against the formula of the decree on original sin: '*In illis (renatis) enim nihil odit Deus*': arguing in the following manner: "*ex concupiscentia oritur peccatum: peccatum odit Deus, ergo et concupiscentiam a qua peccatum descendit, ergo aliquid remanet in baptizatis, quod odit Deus. Ergo illa verba non bene posita in decreto.*"³⁶

The terminology used by Seripando is, indeed, dangerous and misleading; but what he really meant by it, was not against the mind of the Council or against the mind of Paul. According to Seripando's interpretation, Paul says in Rom. 7, 15 that he, the Apostle of Christ, already regenerated in Christ, hates the first indeliberate movements of concupiscence, in as much as they propelled him to evil: "*Quod odi malum illud facio.*" He seems to have argued like this: If the just Apostle hated the first movements of concupiscence, over which he had no power, and which, he knew, were devoid of any guilt before God, for the simple reason that they caused in him an inclination to sin, we can say that God also hates them, in that sense. The word "hate" would be so exaggerated an expression to use in this connection: but if it be understood in this sense, it is neither against Paul nor against the Council, which latter explicitly admits that the

³²Ficker: II p. 212.

³³Ficker: pp. 123, 332.

³⁴Muller Kolde: *Die symbolischen Bueher*, 12th ed. 1912, p. 303.

³⁵Ficker: II p. 104 # 2.

³⁶J. Heninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p. 15. C. T. V 203, 18-20.

concupiscence existing in the regenerated induces us to sin ("*quia ex peccato est et ad peccatum inclinat*").

1.2. Paul's Terminology Misapplied!

Could Seripando rightly say that the word "hate" was used by Paul in connection with the indeliberate movements of concupiscence, which exist in the just! This is a question which has perplexed many an exegete. What is the real import of the words of Paul in Rom. 7, 7-25? Luther and Seripando took these words, as coming from Paul, who spoke in the person of every man, and hence, in the name of the just man too. Understood in this sense, many dangerous conclusions could be drawn from this passage. The terrible battle between the flesh and the Spirit, described by Paul, in these lines, was not more terrible than the one experienced by St. Augustine, even after his conversion. In fact, it is St. Augustine who began among the Latin fathers, to apply these words of Paul to the regenerated. Before him, all the Greek Fathers except St. Methodius, and all the Latin Fathers had applied these words to the non-baptized. Augustine himself, first followed the others, in applying them to the non-baptized; but, in his last days, he thought it better to apply them to the regenerated: *Retract.* II, 1 "*Verba Apostoli quibus caro adversus Spiritum conflagere ostenditur (7,14) eo modo exposui (in divers. Quaest. ad Simplic. 1, 1) tanquam homo describatur nondum sub gratia constitutus; longe enim postea, etiam spiritualis hominis – et hoc probabilius – esse posse illa verba cognovi.*"³⁷

1.3. The Augustinian Heritage

The authority of St. Augustine (354-430) had its influence on the later Latin Fathers and the theologians of the middle ages. Even St. Thomas, following Augustine, preferred the more dangerous way.

The strong expressions of Rom. 7, 25, understood in this background, made the Augustinians identify original sin with concupiscence. St. Augustine himself did so, many a time, till the end of 397. But, he also categorically stated that original sin was completely destroyed by baptism (in 420). He affirms, all the same, that, even after baptism, concupiscence continues to exist in us. In the regenerated, however, it does not exist as a stain, but only as a

³⁷Cfr. Cornely: *Ad Romanos*: pp. 356f. P. L. 32. Col. 629.

fact with its relation to the sin of Adam (in 421).³⁸ But these expressions were obscure and sometimes, even audacious, so that many theologians after him, thought that he had identified original sin with concupiscence.

In the eleventh century, Hugh of St. Victor (+1141), taught that original sin was a corruption or a vice (which we carry with us, from nativity, in the form of ignorance in the spirit and concupiscence in the flesh).³⁹ He used indiscriminately the terms 'original sin', and 'concupiscence'.⁴⁰ In the *Quaestiones et decisiones in Epistolas B. Pauli*, attributed to Hugh, we are told that concupiscence remains in the baptized, and that, hence, it is impossible for man to observe perfectly the commandment to love God with one's whole heart. God, however, gives man faith out of His bounty. He considers man as if he had perfect justice.⁴¹ Jesus Christ supplies what is wanting to us and answers for us.⁴²

As Paquier says, Peter Lombard (+1160) appears, in many respects, a disciple of Hugh of St. Victor. For him too, original sin is concupiscence. It remains in us after baptism, but is no more imputed to sin. Even the involuntary movements of concupiscence are culpable. These first movements are invincible. It is impossible for us to accomplish the Law and, hence, to possess perfect justice. The concupiscence permeates through all our good works. We are, therefore, at the same time, saints and sinners. The Law has been abolished by the Gospel. It is faith that justifies us.⁴³

ST. ANSELM (1033-1109) intervened with his genius and distinguished the essential element in original sin, from concupiscence. It is "the privation of justice, which every man ought to possess."⁴⁴ Thus concupiscence was thrown to the background. All the same, St. Anselm retained many of the ideas and

³⁸Cfr. Cornely: *Ad Romanos*: pp. 356f. P. L. 44. Col. 563, 858.

³⁹Cfr. Cornely: *Ad Romanos*: pp. 356f. P. L. 176. Col. 299-302.

⁴⁰Cfr. Cornely: *Ad Romanos*: pp. 356f. P. L. 176. Col. 107.

⁴¹Cfr. Cornely: *Ad Romanos*: pp. 356f. P. L. 175. Col. 459 c.

⁴²Cfr. Cornely: *Ad Romanos*: pp. 356f. P. L. 175 col. 477 f. Col.

⁴³J. Paquier: Luther in D. T. C. Vol. IX, col. 1192 #2. Cfr. P. L. 191 col. 317, 318, 652, 1260, 1365, 1368, 1369, 1398, 1401; P. L. 192, col. 84, 115, 722, 726.

⁴⁴P. L. 158 col. 461 f.

terminologies proper to the Augustinians. For him too, all the movements of concupiscence in the non-baptized were sins – mortal sins. The first man never felt those movements. They are the consequence of original sin.⁴⁵ Hence the non-baptized could not but sin.⁴⁶ Anselm even seems, to say that God does not give His grace to all.

ST. BERNARD (1090-1153) was rather a spiritual and mystic writer, than a theologian. But his concept of spiritual life necessarily implies a theology. According to him, concupiscence starting from an evil, viz., from original sin, is itself an evil.⁴⁷ This evil remains in us; one can subdue it, but it is impossible to exterminate it.⁴⁸ It prevents us considerably, from attaining from the greatest degree of love of God. Asking the impossible from us, God wishes us to remain humble.⁴⁹ Let us, therefore, be on our guard, not to count upon anything, in our justification.⁵⁰ Even all our works taken together, will be insufficient to lead us to heaven. They must be supplied by the passion of Jesus Christ.⁵¹

GREGORY OF RIMINI (+1358) too, identifies original sin with concupiscence. Concupiscence is a morbid quality, remaining in the soul.⁵² Baptism takes away the responsibility from original sin but not its essence.⁵³ Gregory seems to affirm that free will remains in the fallen man.⁵⁴ Without grace; however, we are not capable of doing any good act.⁵⁵

⁴⁵Cfr. P. L. 158 col. 529 f.

⁴⁶Cfr. P. L. 158 col. 504, 524 c.

⁴⁷P. L. 183 col. 948.

⁴⁸P. L. 183 col. 1175 f., 1059.

⁴⁹P. L. 183 col. 1021.

⁵⁰P. L. 183 col. 1107.

⁵¹P. L. 183 col. 882 A.

⁵²In *Ium Sent.* dist XXX-XXXIII c. 1 art. 2 Venice 1503; fol. 101v quoted by Paquier.

⁵³In *Ium Sent.* dist XXX-XXXIII c. 1 art. 4 Venice 1503; fol. 102r.

⁵⁴In *Ium Sent.* dist. XXXVIII q. 1 a 3 fol. 136r col.1.

⁵⁵In *Ium Sent.* dist. XXVI-XXVIII q. 1 a 2 fol. 84r. 94; dist. XXIX q. 1 a 2, fol. 96v.

GERSON (1363-1419) was a spiritual writer with Augustinian ideas. Meditation on the mystery of Predestination, may lead one to despair, said Gerson; but, if we think of it, with humility, it will turn out to us a source of consolations. We should not place any confidence, in ourselves or in our merits, but must abandon ourselves to God and hope everything from Him.⁵⁶

AUGUSTINE FAVORINI (+1443) a renowned Augustinian theologian and General of the Augustinian order, in the 15th century, has left, in his works, some ideas, typically Augustinian. Here below, it is impossible for man, to attain perfect justice. The Law is not meant for the good, but for the wicked. Our justice does not consist in any habit infused into us, but it is God himself who is our formal justice. God predestines some to heaven and others to hell.⁵⁷

JOHN DRIEDO (1480-1535), who received great applause from Seripando, as a good theologian, was a professor of Louvain. He had been educated by the Augustinians, in his views. In his treatise on Grace and free will, he speaks of concupiscence and original sin. Original sin, according to him, consists of two elements: the lack of original justice and an inclination to covet according to the flesh.⁵⁸ Even after baptism, sin resides in our flesh.⁵⁹ It is a typically Augustinian interpretation of Rom. 7, 20. Driedo calls concupiscence an evil.⁶⁰ Sometimes, Driedo too, substitutes the word 'original sin' by 'concupiscence'.⁶¹

Behold the Augustinian heritage, born of years of speculation on Rom. 7, 7-25, in a line suggested by Augustine. Luther assuredly saw, in Rom. 7, 7-25, a narration of the Apostle's own inner experience. He added to it, his own experience, and that of the people around him. Hugh and Lombard, Anselm and Bernard, Rimini and Gerson had left, in writing, some suggestions which

⁵⁶Opera, 1606 vol. III pp. 6-69, especially 14-22.

⁵⁷Cfr. A. V. Muller: *Agostino Favorini e la Teologia di Lutero in Bilychnis*, Rome, June 1914.

⁵⁸Opera, Louvain, 152 vol. III fol. 118 v. D.

⁵⁹Opera, Louvain, 152 vol. II fol. 30 v. D.

⁶⁰Opera, Louvain, 152 vol. II fol. 125r., 161 r., 165 v.

⁶¹Opera, Louvain, 152 vol. II fol. 119r. A. Cfr. R. Seeberg: "Der Augustinismus des Johannes Driedo," in *Geschichtliche Studien*, Albert Hanck 1916, pp. 210, 219.

pleased him. Their influence is evident in the writings of Luther.⁶² It is easy to find out the fruit born of such influences, in a soul as impulsive as that of Luther. First, Luther too thought that original sin was the privation of original justice.⁶³ But, in his commentary on Rom., he brings forward his theory of the total corruption of man:

What is original sin? According to the subtleties of the scholastic theologians, it is the privation or the lack of original justice.... But according to the Apostles and the simplicity of the Christian sense, it is the entire and universal privation of rectitude and power (for good) in all the energies of both body and soul, in the entire man, in the interior man and in the exterior man.⁶⁴

Luther identifies original sin with concupiscence. Hence our justice cannot be our own (i.e. interiorly possessed by us) but 'imputed' or existing in the mind of God.⁶⁵ Although we are justified, we remain sinners.⁶⁶ All the movements of concupiscence are sins. Without grace, man can do nothing but sin.⁶⁷ In the just, the corruption of nature, which is in itself mortal, becomes venial. This idea Luther changed afterwards, as we have said above.⁶⁸

In consequence, Luther concluded the impossibility of accomplishing the Law and of attaining perfect justice in this world. It is impossible for us, to love God "with all our strength."⁶⁹ Finally, Luther asserts that concupiscence is invincible: "Where is now our

⁶²Paquier in his learned article on Luther, (D. T. C.) indicates the places where this influence is felt, Hugh is quoted in Luther's Commentaries on Romans: Ficker: II, pp. 312, 21. (P.L. col. 893 A.); Cfr. also L. W. 9/107, 36 (P. L. 176 col. 796 D). Influence of Anselm: L. W. 9/112, 18 (P. L. 158 col. 530 B). Influence of Bernard. Ficker I, p. 73. II p. 197 (Enders. I p. 260). Peter Lombard's influence: Ficker II p. 97, 306, L. W. 5/110, 37 (P. L. 191 col. 86 c). Gerson's influence L. W. 43/651, 29 (Gerson Opera: II p. 468-495).

⁶³L. W. 9/73, 23; 75, 11.

⁶⁴Ficker II, pp. 143 f.

⁶⁵Ficker II, pp. 1, 2.

⁶⁶Ficker II, pp. 106-108.

⁶⁷Ficker II, p. 212.

⁶⁸Ficker II, p. 234.

⁶⁹Ficker II, pp. 110, 124, 127.

free will?" he asks.⁷⁰ "By ourselves, it is absolutely impossible to accomplish the Law. Freedom for good is nothing but a title without reality."⁷¹

Seripando, too had the same heritage as Luther. He too followed Augustine's "more probable" way, in interpreting Rom. 7, 7-25. Both Luther and Seripando, consequently, reached the conclusion, that according to Paul, "sin" resided even in the just, that, hence, there was, in the just, "something which God hated," that the just still remained "slaves to sin" and that, consequently, it was impossible for man, in this world, to observe, with perfection, the commandments of God.

Luther allowed his impulsive nature to work further upon these conclusions and drive to them their extremes. Seripando took another course. He saw that the Pauline terminology which expressed the universal experience in all its nudity, was, all the same, misleading if left without sufficient explanation. What then are we to do, in proposing the Pauline teaching to the souls who wait for the science of salvation? To strip it of Pauline terminology, and vest it in the language of philosophers? No. Pauline terminology must, by all means, be retained, and necessary explanations must be added to make clear the exact tenor of that terminology.

Thus, we see Seripando insisting, in the Council of Trent, on allowing preachers to speak of concupiscence as "sin" and instructing them to add, immediately, an explanation to show in what sense concupiscence was sin. Those preachers who did not want to use this less exact terminology should also adhere to the same rule.⁷² Seripando was accused of Lutheranism, on account of this bold stand he took in the Council on June 5, 1546. All the same, Seripando continued his efforts to get the biblical terminology retained as far as possible.

Against the clause: "*In illis enim nihil odit Deus*" of the draft read in the general Congregation on June 8, Seripando expressed his opinion, giving at once the explanation, which made it clear that his

⁷⁰Ficker II, pp. 183, 14.

⁷¹L. W. 1/354 Thesis 13. Cfr. J. Koestlin: *Luthers Theologie* I, p. 215; II, p. 124.

⁷²C. T. V. 247 f. Cfr. Jedin: *Papal Legate*, p. 321 # 3.

intention was not to introduce a new theology, but to keep intact the Pauline terminology.⁷³

He wanted, by all means, to speak as Paul (Rom. 7, 25), that the just man remained 'a slave to sin'. But he added an explanation which contained the true meaning of the exaggerated terminology:

*Sed vide mihi quaeso et attente considera non esse hanc libertatem a servitute legis peccati, sive propensionis ad peccandum, cui quamdiu vitam hanc vivimus, quantumvis justi simus et sancti, per legem in membris, cupiditatem videlicet addicti sumus, qua ratione, quamquam dixisset: "Ego ipse mene servio legi Dei," mox adjecit: "carne autem legi peccati."*⁷⁴

What Seripando meant by saying that it was impossible for man to observe perfectly the Law of God, in this world, will be clear from a resume of what he gathers from the Apostle's words, regarding the Law, the flesh and the Spirit.

2. The Law, the Flesh and the Spirit

2.1. The Law

St. Paul speaks here (Rom. 7), of the Law promulgated by Moses. That Law which contained the precept: "non concupiscence," added fuel to the fire existing in man viz. concupiscence, which the Apostle continues to call sin.⁷⁵

To make clear the mind of the Apostle expressed in Rom. 7, 8-13, Seripando takes us to the tragic scene in paradise, where the serpent assumed the divine precept, as an instrument to seduce Eve and to make her rebel against God:

This corresponds and fits in well with the fall and death of our first parents. The serpent deceived them with his cunningness and led them to a miserable death. Hence it comes to pass that cupidity born in man by the cunningness of the serpent, remains in man, as the serpent's vice-gerent, to lay in wait for man and kill him, taking occasion from the appearance of that first precept about cupidity, and of all the other precepts.⁷⁶

⁷³C. T. V. 247 f. Cfr. Jedin: *Papal Legate*, p. 321 # 3.

⁷⁴Seripando: *Commentaria*, p. 121.

⁷⁵Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 7, 8, p. 110.

⁷⁶Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 7, 11, p. 111.

Hence, the Law, which is good and holy, that is to say the Law which tends to lead man to holiness, became an instrument in the hands of concupiscence, to seduce man and to make him heap sin upon sin and to kill himself, or to exclude himself, from that life, which is the true life.⁷⁷

The Law is spiritual, says the Apostle.⁷⁸ But who has been really spiritual, that is, pure and perfect in such a way, as not to feel, within himself the movements which are contrary to the norm of doctrine and the rule of the Holy Spirit? Surely the Corinthians were not spiritual in this sense because Paul wrote to them saying: "*fratres non potui vobis loqui quasi spiritualibus*". Should we go to the Corinthians? One of the mortals, however just and holy, as long as he remained in the body which St. Paul calls "*animale*", could attain this perfection which is absolute in all respects. They could attain it, at that moment, when, "from the animal body that is sown, rises up the spiritual," because then, the cupidity being radically plucked off, it will no more rebel against the Holy Spirit.⁷⁹

The law, therefore, in spite of its tendency to make man spiritual, cannot succeed to do so, because of the flesh, which shelters concupiscence with it. "*Ego carnalis sum, venundatus sub peccato,*" bewails the Apostle.⁸⁰

2.2. The Flesh

The word flesh in St. Paul has to be understood in different senses according to different contexts. 'Wisdom according to the flesh' in 1 Cor 1, 16 signifies wisdom according to the world.⁸¹ In 2 Cor 10, 3 'flesh' is used to mean 'man'.⁸² In 2 Cor. 5, 16 it designates 'natural life'.⁸³ 'To live according to the flesh' is a phrase often used by Paul in the Romans and Galatians. Explaining Rom. 8,

⁷⁷Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 7, 12, p. 11.

⁷⁸Rom. 7, 14: "*Scimus enim quia lex spiritualis est ...*"

⁷⁹Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 7, 14 p. 113.

⁸⁰Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 7, 14

⁸¹Ms. Nap. VII A. 36, 1 Cor. C. I. N. XII (1 Cor. 1, 27) in the margin Seripando writes "*secundum carnem, secundum mundum: idem.*"

⁸²Ms. Nap. VII A. 36, 2 Cor. C. X n. II (1 Cor. 10, 3); cfr. *Commentaria*: Rom. 1, 3 and 3, 20.

⁸³Ms. Nap. VII A. 36, 2 Cor. C. V n. VI (1 Cor. 5, 16).

1 Seripando says: "*Secundum carnem eos ambulare dicimus qui una dumtaxat et solitaria fide plene in Christo Jesus se esse jactant et hanc libertatem ita accipiunt ut legem omnino contemnant atque rejiciant, carni prorsus obtemperent cupiditates sequantur et ad peccandum proclivitatem alant atque adaugeant.*"⁸⁴ 'To live in the flesh' has a different signification. Seripando explains it while he handles Gal. 2, 20. The just and holy Apostle was living for God, just as he said a while ago, and yet he was living in the flesh. The life in the flesh is that terrible fight of the flesh with the spirit, which he admirably describes in the 7th chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. Having described it, with diligence and subtlety, he exclaimed: "*Infelix ego homo, quis me liberabit de corpore mortis huius?*" Then, he concluded: "*Igitur idem ego menti quidem servio legi Dei*" (which is: to live for God), "*carne autem legi peccati*" (which is: to live in the flesh). The apostle means to say that he feels an inclination and propensity to sin, to which he is subjected in hard slavery, which he is unable to shake off.⁸⁵

The conclusion is that there is no one among the saints who does not feel this rebellion, this battle, this common enemy, and does not deplore it and try to shake it off. St. John's words confirm this idea: "*Si dixerimus quoniam peccatum non habemus, ipsi nos seducimus et veritas non est in nobis*" (1 John 1, 8.) The idea expressed by both these Apostles, is faithfully interpreted by Gregory the Great and St. Augustine.⁸⁶

St. Gregory tells us that, what Paul forbids, is not the existence of sin in the body; but the reign of it. In the corruptible flesh, sin can be made not to reign, but it cannot be made not to exist.⁸⁷

St. Augustine speaks of this in many places. In his last book he writes:

In libris quos adversus Pelagianos edidimus spiritualis hominis jamque sub gratia constituti melius intelligi verba ista monstravimus propter carnis corpus quod spirituale nondum est; erit autem in resurrectione

⁸⁴Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 8, 1, p. 122.

⁸⁵Seripando: *Commentaria*: Gal. 2, 20b, p. 294.

⁸⁶Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 20, p. 115, cfr. also Rom. 7, 14, p. 113.

⁸⁷Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 20, p. 115.

*mortuorum et propter ipsam carnis concupiscentiam cum qua ita confligunt sancti non ei consentientes ad malum ut tamen ejus motibus quibus repugnantibus resistunt, non careant in hac vita. Non eos autem habebunt in illa ubi mors absorbebitur in victoriam.*⁸⁸

2.3. The Spirit

By the spirit, Seripando understands the Holy Spirit, who dwells in the just.⁸⁹ The Holy Spirit has his seat in the mind of the just, as concupiscence has its seat in the flesh.⁹⁰ The law of the mind, namely the law of the Spirit, is opposed to the law of the flesh or to the law of the members, since the Holy Spirit is the adversary of concupiscence.⁹¹ Hence ensues the terrible internal conflict in man, which Paul describes in Rom. 7, 14-24.

Reflecting on the verse (7, 19): “*Non enim quod volo bonum hoc ago, sed quod odi malum illud facio,*” Seripando writes: “What is this good which the holy Apostle wishes to do, and yet he does not? That which he hates and yet he does? Certainty it is nothing else but to act rightly without the opposition of any cupidity, which may forward or resist him.”⁹²

Are we to suppose, therefore, that St. Paul thought that even the just man, who was strongly handed and guided by the Holy Spirit, against the attacks of concupiscence, remained a slave to sin? Seripando's answer is contained, in the explanation he adduces, regarding the exact nature of the liberty, which the just enjoy over sin, by reason of the indwelling Holy Spirit. The liberty of the just consists in this that, in spite of their helplessness, as regards the first

⁸⁸Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 20, p. 115.

⁸⁹Sometimes other things are called “*spiritus*” because of their necessary connection with the Holy Spirit. Thus in 1 Cor. 2, 3-5, Paul says that his preaching was “*in ostensione Spiritus*”. Seripando explains the word like this: “*sed spiritum, doctrinam scilicet Spiritus Sancti.*” Ms. Nap. VII A 36, 1 Cor. C. II n. II (1 Cor. 2/3-5). In Rom. 8, 11: “*Spiritus vero vivit propter Deum.*” ‘*Spiritus*’ is interpreted as ‘*mens*’; “*verum mens vestra ratione justitiae quam a Dei Spiritu ita receipt ut etiam ipsa Spiritus appelletur*” (*Commentaria*: Rom. 8, 11), p. 129.

⁹⁰Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 8, 9, p. 127.

⁹¹Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 18a, p. 116.

⁹²Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 19, p. 114.

movements of the flesh and conquer the rebellious movements of the flesh, however threatening or crushing they may be, and thus, bring it about that the sin, which resides in them, may not reign over them.⁹³

Because of this constant action of the propensity of evil in man, it is, perhaps (*forsan*), very seldom, that a man resists it, without also sinning in some manner.⁹⁴ This, as we can easily observe, from the wording, was only a practical conclusion drawn by Seripando, in the light of the great corruption that he was witnessing, both within and without the Church, at that time. There was, however, a certain law, which no just man could fulfil, as long as he remained in mortal flesh; it was the law concerning the indeliberate movements of concupiscence (*non concupisces*). Hence Seripando asserted that it was impossible for man to attain absolute perfection in this world. He brought in, the authority of St. Augustine to prove this thesis. In the Council, he met with the objection that St. Augustine was not consistent with this doctrine. Seripando challenged the objectors to show a single instance where Augustine taught otherwise.⁹⁵ Henninger takes up this challenge and, having admitted that Augustine had, indeed, employed some expressions which, at first sight, might lead to conclude as Seripando did, say that Augustine understood the same in a different way.⁹⁶ Here is a solution:

Solutio, ipso loco citato (i.e., “*Non igitur deus impossibilia jubet sed jubendo admonet et faceres quod possis*”) *innuitur prosequitur enim; “ad hoc ergo dixit lex: Non concupisces ut nos in hoc morbo invenientes jacere, medicinam gratiae quaeremus, et in eo praecepto scieremus et quo debeamus in hac mortalitate proficiscendo conari, et quo possit a nobis in illa immortalitate beatissima perveniri; nisi enim, quandoque perficiendum esset, numquam jubendum esset.*”⁹⁷

⁹³Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*: p. 121 f. Cfr. Q. 64.

⁹⁴C. T. XII, 546, 25-30.

⁹⁵C. T. XII, 551, 10 f.

⁹⁶Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p. 101 # 1 f.

⁹⁷Henninger: *S. Augustinus et Doctrina.*, p. 102 # 2. P. L. 44, 432.

Henninger seems to think that Seripando had understood Augustine, in a different way; but it seems to us that this very interpretation which Henninger gives to Augustine's words, had been given to them by Seripando himself. Here is Seripando's interpretation:

*Qua de re sane luculenter in his quas sequuntur Paulus ipse aget et Augustinus qui Paulum ubique sectatur pluribus locis egregie disputat, qui illud etiam asseverare ausus est: mandatum hoc 'Non concupisces' ad hanc vitam minime pertinere, sed illud quod monet sapiens: 'Post concupiscentias tuas non eas'. Ideo autem praeceptum fuisse, ut admoneremur, quid fide exposcere, quo spem praemittere et obliviscendo quae retro sunt, in quae anteriora nos extendere debeamus.*⁹⁸

What Augustine meant by this 'anteriora' Seripando shows from Augustine's own words when he speaks of the perfect justice. Perfect justice or the perfect observance of the commandment: 'non-concupiscence' is possible, when "*ex animali hoc seminato corpore, exsurget spiritual,*" i.e., in paradise.⁹⁹

Seripando wanted, as we know, to adhere to Pauline terminology and to the interpretation of Paul, given by St. Augustine. St. Augustine's interpretation of Romans 7,7-25, was dangerous and out of the context: *dangerous*, because it forced the Exegete to apply certain strong expressions which are intended to show the state of the non-baptized, to those who are already regenerated in the waters of baptism; a task fraught with great dangers, as we have seen, in the case of Seripando; *out of the context*, because the context shows that the Apostle wanted, in this chapter, to picture out to us the state in which man was before the Law of Moses and then after the Law of Moses till the coming of Christ, so as to place in great relief, in the next chapter, the benefit man received with the advent of Christ. No wonder, if to-day, we can hardly find a Catholic exegete who follows this dangerous way in handling Rom. 7, 7-25. Even many of the modern non-Catholic exegetes seem to have abandoned this method, which brings with it, many a hard problem.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸Seripando: *Commentaria*: p. 109.

⁹⁹Seripando: *Commentaria*: Rom. 7, 14, p. 118.

¹⁰⁰Cfr. Cornely: p. 357 footnote 2.

We do not say, therefore, that the Augustinian methods cannot, at all, be adapted, it can be; but, with great difficulty, as we have seen, in the case of Seripando, and as is clear from the words of Cornely: "*Neque enim negamus etiam Sancti Augustini sententiam verbis Paulinis, si nuda extra suum contextum considerantur, aliquo modo, adaptari posse ac veram continere doctrinam. Namque in renatis quoque, justisque, ut Apostolus alibi docet, caro concupiscit adversus spiritum et spiritus adversus carnem, ita ut similis lucta eis sit relicta* (2 Cor. & Gal.)."¹⁰¹

3. Conclusion

We see two men formed in the same school. Possessing the same intellectual heritage, living more or less in the same circumstances, both Augustinians, both burning with zeal for reform within and without the church, both dissatisfied with the practice of vesting gospel truths in their philosopher's languages, and both aspiring to restore the science of salvation to its pristine simplicity.

Both Luther and Seripando wished to be instructed directly by the Apostle and both viewed 'the tragic page', from the same dangerous angle. They found there, some very strong expressions, which, in fact, had been stressed upon, by the great teachers of their school from time to time. Their surroundings and their own inner experience endorsed those expressions, in all their tenor.

For Luther it was enough. He would not allow anyone to interfere with his freedom of thought. Helped by his impulsive nature, further reflections drove him to the extremes, and he came forth with his new theology of the total and irremediable corruption of human nature.

What was enough for Luther was not enough for Seripando. He wanted to remain a Biblical theologian in the strict sense of the word, not a theologian who began with scripture and ended with self. He would draw his conclusions from the words of scripture, without swerving from the norms of exegesis. He would not enter on Scripture study, depending on the brilliance of his intellect, but counting on divine help and guidance from those who are competent to direct him, viz. the Church and the Fathers. Hence it is that, although he viewed Rom. 7, 7-25 from a dangerous angle, through the influence of Augustine, and consequently adhered to Pauline

¹⁰¹Cornely: p. 357 # 1.

terminologies, which could easily mislead him, Seripando could, nevertheless, find out, and explain what those terminologies really meant, as we have seen from the foregoing pages. We cannot, however, affirm that the terminologies themselves had no special influence on Seripando. They left in him, an exaggerated sense of the infirmity of nature that remained in man, even after baptism, as can be seen from the following chapter.

CHAPTER 2

SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST'S GRACE

Both Seripando and the reformers were convinced that the grace of Christ was abundantly sufficient to lead man to eternal life. But there was a great difference between the ways they understood this truth.

The reformers held that the grace of Christ¹⁰² meant 'faith', whereas Seripando understood by it, not only faith but all the benefits that man has received through Christ: "*Ad gratiam vero Christi, non una tantum fides pertinet, quemadmodum recenti ista et nova Evangelii praedicatione contrahitur, in angustumque deducitur, sed et omnia illius erga genus humanum beneficia.*"

¹⁰²The word grace is accepted by Seripando in different senses. Sometimes Paul means by it any gift; sometimes the source of all gifts: '*fons et origo*' by which we please God. (Rom. 1, 7, 1, 5; 1 Cor. 15, 10); sometimes he uses it in the sense of "thanksgiving" (1 Cor. 10, 30; 2 Cor. 9, 14). Sometimes Paul expresses by that word, the absolute bounty of God (Gal. 1, 15), at other times it is considered as if it were a quality or form in the soul of man, (cfr. *Comment.* Rom. 12, 1). Sometimes 'grace' is understood as a *particular gift* v.g. the ministry of the Apostles 2 Cor. 8, 19. Cfr. 2 Cor. 8, 1; Rom. 11, 6; 2 Cor. 6, 1, 2; Gal. 4, 28.

'The Grace of God' is interpreted constantly, as the good and benign will of God (Cfr. *Comment.* Rom. 6, 1,2; 11, 36; 2 Cor. 8, 1; Gal. 1, 8). It is the origin of our election and our justice and salvation: *Comment.* 2 Thess. 2, 13; 1 Thess. 1, 1; Rom. 5, 2; 2 Cor. 1, 12; 2 Cor. 8, 1). This grace flows to us through Jesus Christ (*Comment.* Rom. 5, 2; 5, 21; 6, 11; 7,25; 12, 1). The action of grace within us makes us live a new life, restores to us the benevolence of God, enables us to fight against concupiscence. (*Comment.* Rom. 6, 11; 11, 15).

"The Grace of Christ" is sometimes understood as the Gospel (Gal. 1, 2), at other times it is taken for the merit of Christ (*Comment.* Rom. 6, 5) which is the fountain of the divine gifts to mankind (*Comment.* 2 Thess. 1, 3; Rom. 11, 36; 5, 16; 2 Thess. 3, 18; 2 Cor. 3, 13; Gal. 6, 8). It is therefore absolutely necessary for us (*Comment.* 2 Thess. 1, 3; Gal. 6, 18). Finally, the grace of Christ signifies the sum total of all the advances of God to man (2, 5).

"The Grace of the Spirit" as the power of the Holy Spirit, which makes us God's children by adoption, liberates us from slavery to sin, makes us friends of God and enables us to obey the laws of God, with purity and integrity" (*Comment.* Gal. 4, 30, 31; Rom. 8, 30).

Seripando combats the 'sola fide' theory and defends the doctrine of justification, through faith and charity, in his *Quaestiones*.

1. Article I: Faith that Justifies

Luther's famous discovery of "the new Gospel," took place between the years 1512 and 1513.¹⁰³ Then came his enlightenment regarding justification by mere faith ('sola fide').

1.1. The Protestant Faith: A Naked Faith

All the Catholic theologians of the Middle ages, says Seeberg, have spoken of a cooperation of, man with God. They placed their confidence in the grace of God and the merits of the justified. Luther did not depend on anything but on the grace of God.¹⁰⁴ He exalted faith or, more precisely, trust in Christ, to such an extent that, according to numerous Protestant theologians, it is the only essential point of his "Credo".¹⁰⁵ Love was, thrown to the background, and as Paquier says, instead of Augustine's maxim: 'Love and do what you want', Luther took for his: "Believe and do what you want".¹⁰⁶ Erich Roth, in a recent article, on Justification in Luther, points out that Faith, in Luther's understanding of the matter, is a new integration of life. Faith is that which makes the new creature - the Christian - alive. To use a vivid illustration, faith is the umbilical cord which conveys to us from Christ, a new eternal life.¹⁰⁷ Roth is referring to the explanation Luther gave to his 12th Conclusion of the disputation on infused and acquired faith (1520). The conclusion was: "*Etiam sola fides infusa satis est ad justificationem impii.*" Having indicated the Scripture passages, this led him to that conclusion (Rom. 1, 17; 3, 25; 4, 13; 10, 10), Luther says:

Quod autem aliqui non intelligunt, quomodo sola fides justificat, in causa est quod quid fides sit non cognoverint, nec gustaverint unquam, somniantes eam esse qualitatem latentem in anima (opinio Scholasticorum). Verum, quando vrbum Dei sonat,

¹⁰³Cfr. Paquier: art. cit. D. T. C. IX col. 1206 f.

¹⁰⁴Cfr. Seeberg: *Die Lehre Luthers*, p. 234.

¹⁰⁵Cfr. Paquier: art. cit. D. T. C. IX col. 1232 # 4.

¹⁰⁶Cfr. Paquier: art. cit. D. T. C. IX col. 1232 # 4.

¹⁰⁷Erich Roth in *Church Quarterly Review* 153 (1952) 179 # 3.

*quod veritas est, et cor adhaeret per fidem, tunc cor imbuitur eadem veritate verbi et per verbum veritatis verificatur, sicut si lignum frigidum adhareat ferro ignito ab eodem etiam ignescit et ardet. Corde autem sic per verbum imbuto mox et omnes vires et membra similiter immutantur. Hoc enim faciunt omnia membra quo cor inclinatur sive bonum sive malum. Et sic homo reputatur justus per fidem.*¹⁰⁸

1.2. Faith is Trust

This faith which justifies, is defined by Luther, as confidence, says Skewington, in his article, on the theology of Luther's lectures on the Romans.¹⁰⁹ Before Card. Cajetan at Augsburg, Luther plainly asserted his certitude about his justification. The same idea is expressed in his Commentary on the Galatians 4, 5: You must believe with a firm trust that Christ died for your own proper sins, that you are one of those whom he has liberated. Behold the faith which justifies you! It will bring it to pass that Christ dwells, lives and reigns in you. That is the testimony of the Spirit to our spirit, that we are the sons of God.¹¹⁰ Luther went even so far (in 1543?) as to say that to doubt about his justification, was to commit an irremediable sin, the sin against the Holy Ghost.

1.3. Seripando's Faith: The Full Faith

It is this twofold characteristic of the Lutheran faith that Seripando often rejects in his *Quaestiones*: 'sola fides' and 'fides fiducialis'.¹¹¹

Faith, in its naked form, or 'sola fides', as the reformers loved to call it, cannot lead man to justification, says Seripando; because, unless man unites with faith, 'the circumcision of the heart', 'a new heart', 'a new spirit', 'the law written in the heart', 'the walking in the way of the precepts of the Lord', – to put all in one word, charity – it will not be the faith preached by the Apostle, namely, the faith which 'works through Charity'; it will bring us neither justice nor

¹⁰⁸L. W. 6/94, 7 ff.

¹⁰⁹Cfr. Skewington: *Scottish Journal of Theology* 3 (1950) 11 # 4.

¹¹⁰L. W. 2/458, 20-26.

¹¹¹Cfr. QQ. 5, 11, 44, 38, 3, 60, 61, 67, 55.

salvation.¹¹² “*Non aufert peccata nisi gratia fidei quae per dilectionem operatur*”, said St. Augustine. In the Council, Seripando called it, after St. Thomas, ‘*fides formata*’, in opposition to ‘*fides informis*’.¹¹³

The study of Gal. 5, 6 (“*in Christo Jesu neque circumcisio aliquid valet neque praeputium sed fides quae per caritatem operatur*”), in the light of Gal. 6, 15 and I Cor. 7, 9, provides Seripando with a solid proof of the above truth. It is confirmed by the words of Paul in I Cor. 13, 2: ‘*si habuero omnem fidem... caritatem autem non habuero, nihil sum*’. We cite, here, Seripando’s concluding words: “*Haec Pauli verba sunt, ex quibus efficitur ut fides quae per caritatem non operatur, nihil valeat in Christo Jesu, quemadmodum circumcisio neque praeputium. Quod si nihil valet, neque justitiam igitur affert neque salutare quidquam, nuda ista vestra a caritate sejuncta fides.*”¹¹⁴

Another equally convincing proof is brought forward, from Rom. 8, 9b: “*Si quis autem Spiritum Christi non habet, hic non est ejus.*” It follows from this, says Seripando, that, by naked faith, no one can be justified. For, one without the Spirit of Christ is not of Christ; one, who is not of Christ, is not, surely, united with Him. One, who is not united with Him, cannot receive the grace of justification. Hence, he who does not possess, besides faith, the Holy Spirit also, will not be justified.¹¹⁵ In more than 27 of his *Quaestiones*, Seripando shows how alien to the mind of Paul, was the ‘*Sola fide*’ theory of the Reformers, and how it had narrowed down the extensive field of the Gospel.

¹¹²Cfr. Q. 5, p. 365.

¹¹³On December 17, 1546, Seripando said, in the Council: “*Cum Paulus dicit per fidem justificamur vel informem intelligit fidem vel formatam: si informem, male locutus est, ex ea nimirum non justificamur, si formatam, decretum male loquitur: ex fide enim formata justificamur. Dicit enim Beatus Thomas quod fides per caritatem formata est illa ex qua justitia est. Non dicit: est illa ex qua disponimur ad justificationem.*” C. T. V, 726, 12-15. Cfr. Jedin: *Papal Legate*, p. 388 # 2.

¹¹⁴Q. 61, pp. 503 f.

¹¹⁵Seripando: *Commentaria*, p. 128.

1.4. Faith is Not Trust

The confusing of faith with trust, started from an ignorance of the objects of each, said Seripando. In Q. 55, Seripando treats of the Lutheran conclusion, drawn from Gal. 4, 6 (“*Quoniam autem estis filii, misit Deus Spiritum Filii sui in corda vestra clamantem: Abba, Pater*”). It was a sin against faith, they asserted with Luther, to entertain doubts about ones predestination.¹¹⁶

Seripando shows how they confounded faith with trust. He compares Gal. 4, 6 and its parallel text: Rom. 8, 9, with another passage in the Romans, where the Apostle warns us to be careful: “*noli altum sapere... alioquin et tu excideris*” (Rom. 11, 20-22). The same Apostle who, first, inspired us with a firm trust, instils into us, after a while, uncertainty and fear about our salvation. Does the Apostle contradict himself? It is an absurdity to put such a charge on an inspired author. If we do not make the necessary distinction between faith and trust, we will misunderstand Paul. In the first case, the Apostle’s words are to be applied to the Church in general or to the Church of the Galatians or Romans, as such, and not to each individual. As applied to the Church, in general, it is an object of faith, and hence, is an absolutely certain truth, to doubt about which, will be a sin. But as applied to each individual it is not an object of faith but of trust which, by its nature, may be mixed with some uncertainty and fear. In the second case, the Apostle speaks of the individual and hence, as applied to the individual, it is an object of faith.¹¹⁷

The act of believing consists in accepting the Gospel of Christ, says Seripando.¹¹⁸ The contents of the Gospel which we accept, by believing, is something well defined viz. the death and resurrection of Christ, for the remission of the sins of man.¹¹⁹ Hence follows the unity of mind in those who belong to Christ.¹²⁰

¹¹⁶Q. 55: “*Argumentum haereticorum*,” p. 481.

¹¹⁷Q. 55: “*Refutatio*,” p. 483 f.

¹¹⁸Nap. VII A 36, 1 Cor. C. XV n. I (1 Cor. 1, 1 f.).

¹¹⁹Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 24, pp. 76 f. Cfr. also *Commentaria*, Rom. 1, 4; 1, 12; 3, 2; 9, 32; 1 Cor. 5; Rom. 4, 27; 1 Cor. 1, 13.

¹²⁰Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 1, 12; Nap. VII A. 36, 2 Cor. 13, 11: ‘*Idem sentite*’ says the Apostle, that is to say: as regards the things that pertain to faith *be at agreement and convinced in thought*.

The certainty of our belief is based on the authority of Christ and on the conviction of the debility of our intellect.¹²¹ Christ's words claim our belief because of His resurrection: "If Christ did not rise up from the dead, vain is your faith", said the Apostle; because if Christ did not rise up from the dead, our sins are not forgiven, for He did not conquer death, which is the penalty for sin."¹²²

1.5. More on the Nature of Faith

Seripando clarifies the nature of justifying faith, from the contrasts which the Apostle brings in, between faith and the Law, and between, faith and circumcision.

Commenting on the words: "*ut quod per legem effici non poterat, per fidem fieret*" (Rom. 4, 16), Seripando observes that in two ways THE LAW differs from faith. 1. The Law, as a means of salvation, was applicable only to one nation, whereas faith was accessible to all. 2. The Law promised justice to the merit of having observed it, and hence, it could not be said to confer justice gratuitously, whereas faith which depends solely on the promise made by God, believes that God fulfils the promise of justification, gratuitously, without expecting from the sinner the merits of the observance of the Law.¹²³

CIRCUMCISION cuts off the skin of the body, which was born with man; but faith cuts off the interior thoughts of man, the hopes, desires and counsels to which man is inclined, by nature. Circumcision submits a child to the danger of death, whereas faith puts an end, in some manner, to the desire of things pleasing to the flesh and turns the mind to God and to the observance of His Commandments. Circumcision joins you to the small Jewish nation, but faith makes you enter into a pact of love and good will with the whole human race.¹²⁴

FAITH is considered also on its relations with hope, Charity, and intuitive vision. Faith is the foundation on which our hope rests.

¹²¹Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 18; Nap. VII A. 36, 1 Cor. 11, 23-26 (c. XI n. VII).

¹²²Nap. VII A 36, 1 Cor. 15, 14 (XV n. VI).

¹²³Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 16, p. 71. Cfr. also Gal. 5, 5, p. 325.

¹²⁴Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 18, p. 72.

Hence it is said to be the "*substantia rerum sperandarum*" (Heb.11).¹²⁵

CHARITY too springs up from faith and preserves faith. "Who does not know" asks Seripando, "that God cannot be loved unless, first of all, He is believed to be propitious? Who, likewise, is ignorant that, by the loss of charity, one loses faith?"¹²⁶

Commenting on 2 Cor. 5, 6b, Seripando says that believing is different from seeing. "We believe what is said of the Lord, we do not see or look at it. Faith is that of which, we have not the sight." This obscure vision will once be changed into "*notitiam alteram*," says Seripando.¹²⁷

Faith is a gift which we receive through hearing, as Saint Paul says. But the external hearing is vain if God does not work interiorly. In that case, the external word can produce no salutary effect on the hearer, not to speak of the sinister ones that may follow. The Apostle expresses his mind on this point, when he says: "*Non enim omnium est fides*."¹²⁸ The justifying faith, this faith "which works through charity," is moreover, a faith "that obeys," "a strong and stable faith," a "living", "active" faith.¹²⁹

¹²⁵Nap. VII A. 36, 1 Thess. 4, 14 (c. III n. III). Cfr. also *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 9, p. 65 f.

¹²⁶Nap. VII A 36, 1 Cor. 13, 7 (c. XIII n. III). Cfr. also 1 Cor. 13, 13 (c. XIII, n. VII) *Commentaria*, Gal. 5, 22, p. 331 f.

¹²⁷Nap. VII A. 36, 2 Cor. 5, 6 sq. (c. V, n. III).

¹²⁸Nap. VII A 36, 2 Thess. 3, 2 (c. III, n. I).

¹²⁹Cfr. Nap. VII A 36, 1 Thess. 3, 6 (c. III, n. III) "*de fide et caritate vestra sine qua manea quodammodo et imperfecta est fides*." Cfr. also I Thess. 3, 8, (c. III, n. III).

Cfr. *Commentaria*, Rom. 10, 10: "*Obedientiam requirit sine qua fides in corde non habet domicilium*." Cfr. also *Commentaria*, Rom. 6, 16 b, p. 98. Rom. 4, 23, p. 75, Paul says that we too will be justified like Abraham, "*si tam robusta, constant, obediunt fide praediti erimus*." Cfr. also Rom. 4, 20; 5, 19; 4, 22; 1 Cor. 9, 13 (Nap. VII A. 36, c. IX, n. VI); 1 Cor. 10, 29 (c. X, n. IX); 1 Thess. 1, 3 (c. I, n. II), 1 Thess. 3, 10 (c. III, n. III).

Nap. VII A 36, 1 Thess. 1, 4 (c. I, n. II), "*memoria actuosae fidei, operosae caritatis et corroboratae, confirmatae que spei...*" Cfr. also 1 Thess. 1, 5 (c. I, n. II); *Commentaria*, Rom. 10, 10: "*quantacumque fuerit in corde fides, nisi ad eam oris confessio accedat, ad salutem non sufficere*," p. 197.

1.6. The Causality of Faith

The absolute necessity of faith for salvation is obvious from the fact that it is faith that unites us with the Fountain, from which alone, divine pleasure and good will flow to us: in other words: faith is the only way that leads us to justification.¹³⁰

In describing the relation of faith to justice, the Apostle employs different expressions: "*Justitia 'per fidem', 'ex fide', 'fide'.*"¹³¹ Interpreting the minds of the Apostle, from these expressions of Paul, Seripando calls faith "the way" and "the conductor," to justice, the "parent," the "foundation," "the origin," and "the root" of justice, and finally, "the cause" of justice.¹³² This last expression made Seripando differ from many of the theologians, at the Council of Trent. Discussion on the place of faith in justification, occupied the prelates, during four sessions.¹³³ Seripando held the causality of faith; but opinions differed. Finally, the prelates agreed on wording suggested by Cardinal Cervini which, ultimately, was put in the final decree: that faith is the "beginning and foundation of all justification."¹³⁴

The question returned, in connection with chapter 8 on justification. Was faith to be listed among the causes of justification? This time, Seripando's reply was in the negative.¹³⁵ This happened, not because he has changed his mind on the point, but because he wanted; by all means, to make use of the occasion, which presented itself, to remind the fathers, once again, that the mysteries of the faith were not to be forced into philosophical formulas. The council should simply say that the effects of Christ's Passion come to us, through faith or Christ's death is applied to us, in baptism, through faith:

Ardua certe quaestio est de, justificatione discernere secundum quatuor genera causarum et ostendere in

¹³⁰Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 1, 5, p. 20. Cfr. also Rom. 5, 1.

¹³¹Cfr. Rom. 3, 22; 3, 29; 3, 33; 4, 16; 5, 1; Gal. 2, 6; 3, 2.

¹³²Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 6, 17, p. 99. Cfr. also Rom. 3, 22; Gal. 5, 6. *Commentaria*, Rom. 9, 30, p. 170; Rom. 10, 11, p. 177. Q. 35, p. 450, where Seripando calls faith, "*initium ... fundamentum, radicem justitiae.*"

¹³³Cfr. Jedin: *Papal Legate*, p. 388 # 2; C. T. V, 741, 33-39.

¹³⁴C. T. V 733, 11.

¹³⁵C. T. V 742, 36.

*quo genera sit fides responenda, si in nullo genere locum habere potest, quomodo pro dignitate ejus sit mentio facienda cujus Paulus tantam habuit rationem quantam in suis fere omnibus Epistolis videre est. De his enim quae ad justificationem concurrunt doceri possumus ex Sacris litteris atque etiam ex priscis Catholicae Ecclesiae doctoribus. De quatuor causarum generibus, nulla certe ibi mentio, nullum verbum. Confugiendum igitur ad recentiores theologos et praesertim Divum Thomam qui apertius hac de re locutus est.*¹³⁶

Having explained the mind of St. Thomas, whose conclusions are: "*Fides est quae conjungit causam principalem instrumentali,*" "*Fides est per quam redemptionis effectus ad nos pervenit,*" "*Mors Christi nobis applicatur per fidem,*" and having shown the inaptitude of the term: "disposition," to express the real office which the Apostle seems to assign to faith, in justification, Seripando adds:

*Sed has angustias nobis parit philosophia, dum volumus ex ejus praescripto de divinis loqui mysteriis. Dicerem igitur mentionem fidei habendam esse vel cum dicitur, passio Christi est causa meritoria, addendo: cujus effectus per fidem ad nos pervenit, vel cum dicitur: Baptismus est causa instrumentalis, addendo: in quo per fidem mors Christi nobis applicator.*¹³⁷

Seripando's conviction regarding the causality of faith, as regards justification, is clearly expressed in his commentary on Rom. 10, 10.

*Sed harum quatuor rerum, fidei, justificationis salutis aptum et accomodatum, animadvertamus ordinem. Est enim inter eas causae et effectus necessaria connexio, cum ex fide justitia, ex justitia confessio, ex confessione salus exoriatur, qua ratione intelligamus verum esse quod Paulus inquit: "Corde eredi ad justitiam ore autem confessionem fieri ad salutem."*¹³⁸

¹³⁶C. T. V 743.

¹³⁷C. T. V 743; Cfr. Lyonnet: *Verbum Domini*: 29 (1951), 88-97.

¹³⁸Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 10, 10, p. 177.

St. Paul never used the word, 'cause', in describing the relation of faith to justice. All the same, Seripando who wants to adhere scrupulously to Pauline simplicity did prefer to use it, in this case. Seripando's justification of himself follows immediately after the above quoted passage: "*Hanc autem causarum et effectum colligationem agnoscunt illi qui in sanctis litteris didicerunt.*" In fact, the word 'cause', taken in the generical sense and not distinguished according to the '*quatuor genera*', is as simple as the words "through," "by," etc., to the understanding of the ordinary man.

Moreover, Seripando seems to have found this word more apt to expose the real mind of Paul, to the heretics of the time. Cardinal Bellarmine, Cervini's nephew, writing after the Council of Trent, says that the word 'cause' would have been a happier expression to use, regarding the relation of faith to justice. Although the Reformers preferred to call faith "the instrument by which the Justice of Christ was apprehended" rather than 'disposition', they agreed with Catholics in this: that the act of faith was necessary for the attainment of justice. According to Bellarmine, the temptation to advocate the '*sola fide*' theory, sprung up from the conception of the Reformers that faith affected justification, not '*per modum causae*', but 'relative', i.e., in such a way that, by the act of believing, one received what God had offered by His promise. "Man", continues the saintly Cardinal, "*si persuaderi possent fides justificare importando ac promerendo ei suo quodam modo inchoando justificationem, sine dubio, non negarent, id etiam dilectioni et paenitentiae, aliisque bonis actibus convenire.*"¹³⁹

Seripando distinguishes two phases in justification, which, *a parte rei*, are inseparable: namely remission of sins and sanctification.¹⁴⁰ Justification in both these aspects is effected by a faith, which is active. Further, in justifying faith too, there is a two-fold aspect to be taken into account: faith, in the strict sense of the word, and charity, by which faith is made active. To faith, Seripando

¹³⁹R. Bellarmine S. J.: *De controversiis*, Tom. IV Napoli 1858, p. 463 col. 2 # 1.

¹⁴⁰"*Spiritus Sanctus*" and "Charity" are indiscriminately used by Seripando to indicate the principle of sanctification, because the presence of the Holy Spirit is necessary for the infusion of charity.

ascribes the first part of justification and to charity, the second part of it.

The important thing to be noted is that faith, as long as it remains naked, does not begin the work of justification. When it is full, i.e. when it is made active by charity, it works out the justification of the sinner in both the aspects of it. In this light alone, can we understand the different expressions of Seripando, that we come across, in his Commentaries and *Quaestiones*.

The above-said distinctions are clearly brought out, in Seripando's commentary on 1Cor. 6, 11: "*Fide enim remittuntur peccata, Spiritu vero Sancto sanctificamur, utroque autem in Sacramento abluimur, fide scilicet et Spiritu Sancto.*"¹⁴¹

In some instances, Seripando's expressions may lead one to think that he separates faith from charity and assigns to each its own office, without stressing on its necessity of their simultaneous existence in the soul. Commenting on Rom. 3, 31, he says: "*Fide quam nulla quae bona et justa dici possunt antecedunt opera, peccata delentur, cum qua conjuncta fuerit caritas, otiosum esse hominem non sinit, sed legem implet.*"¹⁴² But Seripando's conviction, without any doubt, was that faith separated from charity, could not effect anything salutary. This he expresses, in forcible language, when he refutes the '*sola fide*' theory, in *Quaestio* 61, from Gal. 5, 6 ("*in Christo Jesu neque circumcisio aliquid valet neque praeputium, sed fides quae per Caritatem operatur*"). "*Quod si nihil valet,*" says Seripando, "*neque justitiam igitur affert neque salutare quidquam, nuda ista vestra a Charitate sejuncta fides.*"¹⁴³

In Seripando's treatise on justification, dedicated to Lattanzio Tolomei of Siena, in 1543, he had distinguished six kinds of justification (or six phases in it). There too, he insisted on charity as an essential part of justification.¹⁴⁴ In his conciliar treatise (1546) he distinguishes two main phases in justification, forgiveness of sins and sanctification, which are not distinguished from each other chronologically but only logically. He says that faith and hope are sufficient for the forgiveness of sins. Love springs forth from faith

¹⁴¹Ms. Nap. VII A 36, 1 Cor. 6, 11.

¹⁴²Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 3, 28, p. 60.

¹⁴³Q. 61 (Conclusion of the argument).

¹⁴⁴Jedin: *Papal Legate*, pp. 94-100.

by a psychological necessity. It has no part in the forgiveness of sins. It is rather God's first gift to the forgiven sinner, by which He enables the sinner to perform good works.¹⁴⁵ In the Council, Seripando asserted also that full faith (*fides formata*) was a part of justice.¹⁴⁶

In the Commentaries and *Quaestiones*, we have, thus, the doctrine of faith, in the same form as it was exposed by Seripando, at the council of Trent, if we are to except some terminologies like '*fides formata*', '*justitia operum*', which he could not dispense with, in his discussions with those, who were addicted to the scholastic terminology.

2. Article II: Justification

The Augustinian tradition had its influence on both Luther and Seripando, as regards the doctrine of justification too. Both are accused of having brought forward new theories on justification; Luther that of forensic justice, Seripando that of double justice.

2.1. Luther and Forensic Justice

The Augustinian pessimism regarding the fallen nature of man, and Luther's own development upon it, logically led the Reformers to quietism. If man is a living evil and if all his activity is vitiated, perfection would consist, in abstaining from all activity and allowing God alone to act in him.

A mind imbued with such an idea, would naturally take in, the words of St. Paul: "*non justificatur homo ex operibus legis nisi per fidem Jesu Christi*" (Gal. 2, 16) with all avidity, and work upon it, with all the creative power of imagination. This is how Luther wrote of the nature of justification, in 1531:

This most excellent justice, the justice by faith, which God imputes to us, through Christ, without our works, is neither the civil justice, nor the one attached to our works; it is absolutely of a different kind; in opposition to all these active justices, it is purely passive. Here we don't do anything; we do not render anything to God, we limit ourselves to receiving and submitting ourselves to the action of another, to the action of God who acts in us.

¹⁴⁵Jedin: *Papal Legate*, pp. 326-338; cfr. C. T. XII, 614-663.

¹⁴⁶C. T. V 725 f.; 741, 31-39.

Hence the best name for this justice by faith or Christian justice is, passive justice.¹⁴⁷

However, it will be wrong to suppose that Luther bade farewell to all activity. His Catholic education had put into him a tendency, which was contrary to his new theory that tendency expressed itself in the following manner, in his theory. Faith enables us to get hold of the justice, which is imputed to us. To take hold of it, and to maintain it, in us, to hold fast to our confidence in God and the certainty of our salvation, Luther would exhort us to an intense activity.¹⁴⁸ However, Luther would repeat that our activity is wholly corrupt and hence, without any merit as regards salvation. We remain at the same time sinners and saints: "*Igitur extrinsece sumus justi, quando non ex nobis nec ex operibus, sed ex sola Dei reputatione justi sumus. Reputatio enim ejus non in nobis nec in potestate nostra est. Ergo nec justitia nostra in nobis est nec in potestate nostra.*"¹⁴⁹ Again: "*Quia, si solum Deo reputante sumus justi, ergo non nobis viventibus vel operantibus. Quare intrinsece et ex nobis impii semper.*"¹⁵⁰

Hence, according to Luther, justice by faith is but a declaration of justice made by God, for the realization of which, in us, we have to try as much as we can; but interiorly, we always remain sinners and hence, our works are worthless both before and after our justification.

2.2. Seripando and Double Justice

Seripando's line of thought was not exactly the same as that of Luther, although some have thought otherwise. In the Council of Trent, Seripando openly proposed a theory, which has been, ever since attributed to him. The following report of October 8, 1546, represents the fact in a slightly different way:

Cujus (Seripandi) sententia maxime eo pertinuit ut quam occultissimi esse vellent, ne dum Lutherum et caeteros sequaces damnare cupiunt, etiam nostros Catholicos damnent. Inter quos Contarenus et Egidius Cardinales

¹⁴⁷L. W. 40 a/ 41, 15.

¹⁴⁸L. W. 6. 275; 42/452, 17-21. Cfr. Erich Roth, p. 179 # 3f.

¹⁴⁹Ficker II, p. 104 # 2.

¹⁵⁰Ficker II, p. 105 # 1.

*sibi hoc decreto damnari videbantur et cum ipsis, Albertus Pighius et alii plures. In eo scilicet unam tantum justificationem esse eamque ex operibus nostris nasci, in decreto ipso firmabatur, eorumque quos supra nominavimus Cardinalium et caeterorum sententiam explicavit, sententia Augustini et Bernardi comprobata ut scilicet in justificatione ipsa hoc est in ipso quidem actu justificandi, dum solutus vitalibus coram tribunali Dei se justum reddere intendit, nedum propria bona opera deferrre, sed etiam ipsius Christi justitiam quae Dei justitia appellatur. ... Addidit se haec Patribus divisisse non ut ita sentiret, sed ut totam rem ob oculos synodi judicandum proponeret, in hoc se saltem Synodo satisfecisse dicens, ne scilicet tot Patres inauditi per synodum damnarentur.*¹⁵¹

This report and Seripando's conciliar speeches on this theory show that Seripando didn't present it as his own, but as one maintained by "*piissimi et eruditissimi viri, doctores quoque celeberrimi et catholici.*" Further in presenting it, he makes it clear from the very outset that he acts as a third person, leaving the judgment to the Council. He defended it, not because he felt a liking for it but because he thought it his duty to enable the Council to consider the question in all its aspects, so that it might not be led to condemn so many Fathers for whom there was none to speak, in the Council.

The "*piissimi et eruditissimi*" Catholic Doctors of whom Seripando speaks here, are first of all Card. Gaspar Contareni who was the Legate at the celebrated conference at Ratisbon, for bringing about some understanding between the Catholics and Protestants. Gropper was the principal counsellor of Contareni in theology.¹⁵² Pighius was Gropper's Professor at Louvain.¹⁵³ Egidius of whom Seripando speaks is, to all appearance, Cardinal Egidius of Viterbo, Seripando's own professor. There was another Egidius (Aegidius

¹⁵¹C. T. I, 105.

¹⁵²Cfr. Rivière: *Mérite* in D. T. C. X, col. 732 f.

¹⁵³Cfr. also J. Paquier: Luther, in D. T. C. IX, col. 1224 f.

Romanus) a famous Augustinian theologian who was often spoken of, as a Cardinal, although he had never been one.¹⁵⁴

Hence, we can see that the theory defended by Seripando, though, not his own (let us believe his own words), was not foreign to the Augustinian thought. Contareni, as Legate, at Ratisbon, had agreed to certain formulas, which the Lutherans said, were their own.¹⁵⁵ About Pighius as Cardinal Quirini assures us, the Protestants had said: "*Totus noster est in causa justificationis.*"¹⁵⁶

Whatever, might have been the doctrine maintained by these theologians, the theory of double justice, defended by Seripando, in their name, at the council of Trent, has been attributed to himself.¹⁵⁷ The theory of double justice, in its general outline, is this: man's good works are so imperfect in final justification that they can be rewarded with eternal life only in view of the justice of Christ so that God's final verdict is based primarily and immediately on Christ's justice, and secondarily on good works.¹⁵⁸

In the Council, Seripando was misunderstood and accused of Lutheranism. The Cardinal president had to take him under his protection and declare that Seripando's theory was not heretical.¹⁵⁹ Out of the council, too, students of Seripandian theology on justification have found it difficult to understand his exact mind.

The fundamental question is: In what does the transmission of the justice of Christ consist, according to Seripando? In solving this question, there are some important considerations to be taken in to account. For, Seripando himself says that the justice of Christ is communicated to us through the sacraments, that it does not inform us, that it is communicated to us according to the measure of our faith and charity.¹⁶⁰

Jedin, the latest historian and close student of Seripando, has come to the following conclusions. The transmission of Christ's

¹⁵⁴Rivière: *Mérite* in D. T. C. X, col. 733.

¹⁵⁵Quirini: *Epist. Reg. Poli* vol. II, *Diatriba ad Epistolas*, p. CXXX, mentioned in the above said art. By Rivière.

¹⁵⁶Quirini: l.c.

¹⁵⁷Cfr. J. Paquier, art. cit., Henninger.

¹⁵⁸Jedin: *Papal Legate*, p. 336 # 2.

¹⁵⁹On Oct. 12, 1546. C. T. II, 431, 11 ff.; V, 666.

¹⁶⁰Cfr. Jedin: *Papal Legate*, pp. 348 -392; Henninger, pp. 22-31.

justice consists in the remission of sins, which is logically (not chronologically) followed by the infusion of charity, which has for its purpose the sanctification of man through the justice of works. The transmission of the justice of Christ means, still something more; otherwise the expression that Christ's justice is transmitted according to the measure of faith and charity would be meaningless. In what does this something more consist? Jedin leaves the question here with the following suggestion: "For any future study of the origins of Seripando's doctrine of justification, it should be noted that the term *duplex justitia* is identified with the name of that theologian who did more than any other to spread the idea, John Groppers."¹⁶¹

Henninger takes up this study, with great diligence, and failing to find any satisfactory solution from the writings of those whose authority Seripando quotes in his work: "*Pro confirmanda sententia de duplici justitia Catholicorum quorundam doctrina*" (October 1546), viz., of James Perez and Albert Pighius, he has recourse to the letter of Contareni on justification.¹⁶² From this study Henninger comes to the following conclusion: "*Teneamus ergo ex mente Card. Contareni justitiam Christi simul cum gratia inhaerente constituere causam formalem justificationis nostrae.*"¹⁶³

Taking this conclusion, as the basis, Henninger starts on further studies. He seeks the relation between the transmission of the justice of Christ (*remissio peccatorum per non imputationem*) and the infusion of charity. Seripando's opinion was that the remission of sins was, at least, in '*ordine naturae*', prior to the infusion of charity.¹⁶⁴

But Henninger sees that this view comes into conflict with the other expressions of Seripando: that the justice of Christ supplies the imperfections of our justice, that the justice is communicated to us according to the measure of our charity, all of which supposes the priority of inherent justice to the transmission of the justice of Christ.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶¹Jedin: *Papal Legate*, p. 350 # 1.

¹⁶²Cfr. Henninger, p. 23 # 3; 24 # 3.

¹⁶³Cfr. Henninger, p. 25 # 2.

¹⁶⁴Henninger, p. 26 f.

¹⁶⁵Henninger, p. 25.

However, Henninger conciliates both these series of ideas in the following manner:

*Fortasse omnia ista elementa dispersa in synthesin redigi possunt, si consideratur totus processus justificationis et glorificationis hoc modo: Est aliquis homo peccator, cujus Deus miseretur excitando in eo actus, per quos disponitur ad justificationem. Tunc Deus ei imputat justitiam Christi, remittit peccata et deinde infundit caritatem, ita ut nunc jam habeat justitiam inhaerentem et meritorie operetur. Sed simul per totum tempus vitae suae, super eum manet imputatio justitiae Christi, in qua semper debet confidere et magis quam in sua justitia inhaerente; tunc in articulo mortis ei applicabitur ad supplendos defectus suae justitiae et sic salvabitur, "adhaerente sibi misericordia Salvatoris." Sic justitia hominis praeter justitiam inhaerentem, consistit in imputata, cujus duplex est effectus: unus acceptatio operum, qua Deus opera bona, licet concupiscentiis st peccatis permixta, inordinatis affectibus foedata, regulam justitiae non attingentia ac proinde ad meritum vitae aeternae insufficientia, tamen intuitu Christi acceptat et vita aeterna praemiat; et hic effectus justitiae imputatae est natura posterior, ille natura prior quam justitia inhaerens; ille dat "jus ad misericordiam," in justificatione, hic in judicio.*¹⁶⁶

This, Henninger says, is the doctrine of double justice briefly stated, in its primitive and genuine form.

However, in his last defence of the theory, in the Council, (on November 26 and 27, 1546), Seripando gives some clarifications which seem to go counter to Heninger's conclusion. For, Seripando says that the theory of double justice is to be applied only in the case for great majority of Christians who, after baptism, often fall in to greater sins, and not in the case of the children who die after baptism, or of adults who die without having committed any mortal sin, after Baptism.¹⁶⁷

¹⁶⁶Henninger, p. 28 # 2.

¹⁶⁷C. T. V, 668, 23-29; 671, 23-26.

In spite of the fact that Seripando, had explicitly said that this was only a further clarification of the theory and not an alteration of it, Henninger thinks with Pallavicini that this was a real mollification of the genuine theory and hence, not to be taken into account, when we speak of the theory as such.¹⁶⁸

We will expose Seripando's doctrine on justification as he presents it, while commenting on Paul's words, and see if it throws any further light on Seripando's mind expressed in the Council.

2.3. Justification

The word 'justice' is used in different combinations: 'justice of God', 'justice of Christ', 'justice of the Spirit', 'justice of faith'.

JUSTICE OF GOD is a phrase which St Paul uses 8 times in the Rom. and once in 2 Cor..¹⁶⁹ Seripando understands it, in two different senses: 1. as a personal attribute of God, which appears in the fulfilment of the mercy He had promised, on the one hand, and in the demonstration of His anger to those who rebelled against Him (Rom. 1, 16, 17), on the other;¹⁷⁰ and 2. as a gift by which He washes off the sins of men and enriches them with charity, as though with a precious clothe (Rom. 3,22).¹⁷¹ In this latter sense, it is identical with what the Apostle designates by the terms: '*justitia per Fidem*', '*Gloria Dei*', '*Gratia Dei*', '*caritas*', '*beatitudo hominis*'.¹⁷²

JUSTICE OF CHRIST is the 'highest and the most perfect obedience of Christ'. It is the source of our justice.¹⁷³

¹⁶⁸Henninger, p. 29 # 1; 31 # 2. S. Pallavicini: *Istoria*, L. 8 c. 11 n. 12.

¹⁶⁹Cfr. Rom. 1, 17; 3, 6; 3, 21-22; 3, 25-26; 10, 3; 2 Cor. 5, 21. Cfr. E. Tobac, *Le Problème de la justification chez S. Paul*, Louvain 1908; *La Dikaïosune Theou dans Saint Paul* in *Rev. Hist. Eccés.* (1908) 5-18. Frutsaert: *La "justice de Dieu" dans Saint Paul* in *Rech. De Science Religieuse* (1911) 167-182. F. Frat: *La theologie de Saint Paul* II 291-295 and 549 -550. Lagrange: *Epître aux Romains* pp. 199-22. O. Kirss: *Die Briefe an die Roemer, Kor. Gal.* pp. 39-40. J. Huby: *Epître aux Romains* pp. 62-68. H. Oltramare: *Commentaire sur l'epître aux Romains* I 158-166. S Lyonnet: *De "Justitia Dei" in Epistola ad Romoanos* VD. 25 (1947) (extract).

¹⁷⁰Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 1, 18, p. 27 # 2, Rom. 2, 5, p. 34 # 2; Cfr. 2 Thess. 1, 6: Nap. VII A. 36 (c. I n. II).

¹⁷¹Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 3, 22, p. 56 # 2, Rom. 3, 25, p. 58, Rom. 10, 3, p. 173; Nap. VII A 36: 2 Cor. 5, 20-21, c. V, n. IX.

¹⁷²Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 7, p. 64.

¹⁷³Seripando: *Commentaria*, Rom. 5, 19, p. 88, Rom. 3, 22, p. 56 # 2.

JUSTICE OF THE SPIRIT is that justice which is brought to us by the Apostles, through their ministry of the Spirit.¹⁷⁴

JUSTICE BY FAITH which is, in other words, Justice of God has to be considered here with regard to its source, subject and nature.

THE SOURCE of this justice is the grace or good will of God.¹⁷⁵ It is called the work of the power of God.¹⁷⁶ The immediate author of it is Jesus Christ who conveys it to us through the sacraments He has instituted.¹⁷⁷ This justice is intended for all men. All have need of it. There is no distinction; "*omnes enim peccaverunt et egent gloria Dei*" (Rom. 3, 23).¹⁷⁸

Its NATURE is described as 'a return to grace', 'reconciliation', 'a new life', 'the remission of sins and sanctification'.¹⁷⁹ We get a greater insight into its nature, when we understand its relations to faith, charity, works, salvation, and Law and sin.

FAITH, as we have seen, is the only way to, and the cause of justice. Faith is reputed to justice (*imputari ad justitiam*), as if it were sufficient for the acquisition of justice (which is so precious a thing that no price or reward can procure it). Hence this attribution of justice to faith, is entirely the result of the merciful disposition of God. The Latin codices, says Seripando, add a phrase to Rom. 4, 5, which brings out this idea more fully. The phrase added is: "secundum propositum gratiae Dei. It clearly declares that this mode of procuring justice through the medium of faith, is not an

¹⁷⁴Cfr. Nap. VII A. 36: 2 Cor. 3, 9 b, C. III n. III.

¹⁷⁵Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 5, 2, p. 77. Cfr. also Rom. 3, 28, p. 59, Rom. 4, 2, p. 62.

¹⁷⁶Nap. VII A. 36, 2 Cor. 5, 20-21: "*Dicitur enim ea Dei justitia quia divinae tantum potentiae opus*" (c. V, n. IX).

¹⁷⁷Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 3, 21, p. 55; Rom. 4, 12, p. 68. Cfr. also Nap. VII A 36 1 Thess. 2, 13 (c. II, n. V).

¹⁷⁸Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 3, 23, p. 56 # 2. Cfr. also Rom. 9, 32.

¹⁷⁹Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 3, 25, p. 57, Gal. 6, 15, p. 341. Cfr. Nap. VII A. 2 Cor. 5, 16-17 (c. V, n. VI), 2 Cor. 5, 18 (c. V, n. VIII); 1 Thess. 2, 10 (c. II, n. III). Rom. 3, 21, p. 55, Rom. 1, 17, p. 26 # 2, Nap. VII A. 36, 2 Thess. 2, 13 (c. II, n. V).

invention of man, but the disposition of the divine will: (*divinae mentis consilium*).¹⁸⁰

CHARITY is only another name for the justice of God, although the heretics may resent to such a statement, says Seripando.¹⁸¹

WORK brings with it, the idea of merit or reward; but justice is a thing which cannot be merited by any human action. Hence nobody can expect to attain justice, through works. The only way to attain it is, as seen above, faith in Jesus Christ, which itself is a purely gratuitous of God. Hence actions devoid of faith, which the Apostle designates by "works of the Law" cannot have a place in the procuring of justice. The works, however, follow justification, viz., those actions that proceed from faith and the Holy Spirit, preserve, increase and perfect the justice already received and entitle the just man to the crown of justice. The actions that are said to prepare the way for justice are, indeed, useful in as much as they proceed from faith.¹⁸²

SALVATION is the crown of justice, the happy and eternal live.¹⁸³ The just man prepares himself to this end, through works of faith namely the observance of the Law of Christ. If he loses the justice already received, he can regain it, through faith and the sacrament of penance. But in this case, he will have to do penance to satisfy for the temporal punishment due to his sins.¹⁸⁴

THE LAW fulfilled a necessary condition for the attainment of justice, namely it brought in to man, the consciousness of his sins; it foretold the advent of justice through Christ, and revealed its own importance to give man the necessary strength to do what it commanded.¹⁸⁵ Justice by faith writes God's Law in man's heart;

¹⁸⁰Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 5, p. 63 # 2.

¹⁸¹Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 10, 9, p. 176.

¹⁸²Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 50, p. 472, Q. 32, p. 445, Q. 20, 419 ff.

¹⁸³Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 64, p. 517, Rom. 6, 16, p. 98, cfr. also Rom. 5, 10, 5, 19.

¹⁸⁴Cfr. Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, pp. 343-348; Rom. 5, 1, p. 77; C. T. 628, 39-42.

¹⁸⁵Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 3, 31, p. 61, Rom. 3, 21, p. 55; cfr. also Rom. 2, 13; 2, 26; 3, 20; 3, 28; 10, 5-7; 1 Cor. 15, 56 (Nap. VII A 36, 1 Cor. V n. XV); Gal. 2, 21; 3, 11.

and confers on him the gift of the Holy Spirit, who, henceforth, becomes his guide and strengthener.¹⁸⁶ There were some prescriptions of the Law, which were only figures and shadows of the things to come, e.g., circumcision.

These were abrogated by the Church, since they had already served their purpose, whereas others which were made for all time such as prayers and penance, were confirmed by Christ and the Church, and their observance, was made possible, light and sweet buy the great gift of the Holy Spirit, so that now, we can be not only hearers of the Law but also doers of it.¹⁸⁷

The sinner loses the justice of God; his mind and body become the habitation of evil; he neither desires nor perfects what is good,¹⁸⁸ he is saddened when he meditates on the law; he has but one law in himself, the law of his members, to which he willingly submits himself, he enjoys and boasts of the good things of this world, in him sin has its dominion, and it will finally drag him to eternal misery. The just man has of course, to fight hard in this life; the nature of his conflict, as described in Rom. 7, is frightening to the first sight; but he always keep sin under check, and merits the crown of justice.¹⁸⁹

The just man lives by faith i.e. he receives the promise of the Spirit through faith, and under the guidance of that Spirit, he observes the Law of God.¹⁹⁰ He thus becomes the possessor of the promise made to Abraham and a real child of Abraham; he is filled with the peace of justice, the peace that results from reconciliation with God; he is filled with hope for the future glory of the children of God which makes him ever joyful in his adversities.¹⁹¹ As adopted son of God, he is coheir with Christ; sin cannot dominate over him, because he is liberated by justice.¹⁹²

¹⁸⁶Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 49. In this connection, Seripando shows the difference between the Law of Moses and the Law of the Spirit. Then he gives a long list of contrasts between the two laws.

¹⁸⁷Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 9, pp. 374-378.

¹⁸⁸Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 7, 25b.

¹⁸⁹Seripando is here speaking of a man who *willingly* follows the inclinations of nature.

¹⁹⁰Cfr. Q. 40, p. 457.

¹⁹¹Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 4, 12, p. 68.

¹⁹²Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 8, 17.

This liberation, however, is not perfect, as long as he lives in mortal flesh, as we have seen above.¹⁹³ Hence perfect justice which consists in complete liberation from the slavery to sin, i.e. even from the involuntary movements of concupiscence, is not possible in this world; perfect justice is the reward that the just man expects at his resurrection.¹⁹⁴

2.4. Idea of Supplementary Justice

Here is a question, which one would naturally put to Seripando. Is the justice received from God, with the good works that were done under its influence, sufficient for a man to merit eternal life? Or has he the need of supplying what is lacking, through the justice of Christ?

The mind of Seripando may be found clearly exposed in Q. 1, which entitles thus: "*De peccatorum expiatione per opera quas satisfactiones appellamus.*"¹⁹⁵ Seripando puts this question to answer the heretics who said that the Catholics depreciated the redeeming value of Christ's death, by attributing the remission of sins to the satisfactory value of their works.

Seripando, first of all, affirms that, if Christ had not died for us, we would not have received any remission of our sins. This is the firm and perpetual foundation of the Catholic Church. But the foundation is not the whole edifice. From the true and profound sense of Holy Scripture, the Fathers have taught us the mind of God, in applying the merit of Christ to the sinner. It may be exposed as follows.

In all grave and mortal sins, there are three things to be taken into account: 1. the guilt, 2. the eternal punishment and 3. the temporal punishment.

If he wishes, Christ can remit all these completely, at His word; and in fact, He does so in Baptism. But, in the case of those who fall again into sin, after Baptism, and regain, justice through the sacrament of penance, He remit only the first two. The third one, namely, temporal punishment, is remitted, only to those who, after their return to grace, perform, not only patiently, but willingly the penance imposed on them, through those works which are judged to

¹⁹³Seripando, *Commentaria*, Rom. 8, 1, p. 121.

¹⁹⁴Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 29, p. 435.

¹⁹⁵Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, p. 343.

be fitting to take away the obligation of the punishment that remains, and powerful to check and bridle the impulses of their nature, which is depraved by the custom of sinning.¹⁹⁶

In proof of the revelation of such a disposition on the part of God, Seripando adduces, Prov. 15; "*Elenco siginis et fide purgantur peccata*" and Eccli. 3, 33; "*Ignem ardentem extinguit aqua et eleemosyna resisti peccatis*". Then he asks: "*Dicant quaeso quid in his locis sonet vox ista peccati? Ex omnibus sane quae sibi ipsis cogitatione fingere poterunt, nihil erit quod in hanc vocem his locis quadrare possit, praeter peccati poenam ad tempus (ut diximus) pendendam.*"¹⁹⁷

Seripando continues, and brings in, the way, God behaved, in forgiving the sin of the sister of Moses (Num. 12, 14), the real meaning of the solicitations of the prophets for not forgiving the sins of their enemies, the signification of the call for penance, by John the Baptist and, finally, the words of our Lord to His Apostles: "*Hoc genus non ejicitur, nisi per orationem et jejunium.*"¹⁹⁸ "*Horrendum illud quidem cruciamentum*", concludes Seripando, "*hanc quam defendimus poenam significabat, quam Christus Jesus, cum sibi voluerit, solo verbo imperioque suo dimitit. Nos vero eamdem, nisi ad fidem erga Christum opera sancta, qualia oratio sunt et jejunium adjuxerimus, numquam extinguemus. Neque propterea egere Christus dicitur, nostris operibus, quae cum voluerit, solo sermone, instaurat omnia.*"¹⁹⁹

Seripando's words, "*omnis nostra satisfactio, nullius certe, vi sua atque natura ponderis est, sed via omnem sumit ex ea parte, quatenus unica Christi satisfactione nititur, cujus ratione, benigne a Patre accipitur, atque ejus non tam justitiae quam erga Christum et eos qui in Christo fidunt, amoris et benevolentiae, satis esse dicitur*"²⁰⁰ seem to give us the clue.

These words seem to suggest that, according to Seripando, our satisfactory works have got some weight, not because they are valuable in themselves, but because they are accepted as such by the

¹⁹⁶Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, p. 343 f.

¹⁹⁷Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, p. 346 f.

¹⁹⁸Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, p. 348.

¹⁹⁹Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, p. 348.

²⁰⁰Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 1, p. 345.

Father in view of the satisfaction offered to Him by Christ, who is our Head. They are sufficient not to the justice of God but to the love and mercy which he cherishes towards Christ and those who confide in Christ. Thus in the case of good works, the acceptance by God, seems to imply two aspects: the acceptance of the works as valuable, in the sight of God, and the acceptance of them as sufficient to pay off debts.

When Seripando speaks of the 'corona justitiae', which is given to those who duly fight, he does not hint at any such special acceptance. This is how he defends the sufficiency of inherent justice to merit eternal life.

*Iam vero libido quam concupiscentiam, vocant numquam tanti fuit ut sanctos homines ne quae de Caritate mandata sunt, diligenter esequerentur plane impedire posset. Bellum illa quidem gerit cum hominibus perpetuum dum in hujus vitae librato versantur et dum adhuc per speculum, in aenigmate Deum agnoscunt, ut gravissimo saepe certamine et acerrima pugna omino sit opus ad ea omnia obeunda et mandata exhaurienda quae nobis caritas imposuit atque praefuit. Sed qui in hoc certamine, cupiditate non frangitur et sese praestat invictum, is solidam illam et constantem justitiam tenet, quae homini mortali potest in hac vita contingere. Itaque cum legitime certaverit, corona justitiae in caelo ubi sempiterno aevo fruitur, merito donabitur.*²⁰¹

The crown of justice according to Seripando is the crown God gives, out of His fidelity to His promises.²⁰²

If we accept this special distinction between satisfactory works and meritorious works in general, which Seripando's above quoted words seem to suggest, we can see some harmony in his conciliar expressions. We can, moreover, base our conclusions on the authority of Seripando's own words, rather than on conjectures.²⁰³

²⁰¹Seripando, *Commentaria*, Q. 64, p. 514.

²⁰²Cfr. Seripando's speech in the Council, on July 23, 1546. C. T. V, 373 f.

²⁰³Henniger's conclusions rest mostly on conjectures as we have shown above, Cfr. pp. 280 ff.

As regards the fundamental question: "In what does the transmission of the justice of Christ consist?" we think we have the answer in Seripando's own words contained in his speech of October 8, 1546:

*Justitiam Christi hac rarione nostram esse, non quod nos informet aut nobis assistat, portenta loquitur, qui haec loquitur, non hominum verba, ac perinde est de his pugnare atque cum larvis luctatri. Sed nostra dicitur quod per sacramenta nobis communicatur, ut nobis prosit, nos adjuvet, nostram suppleat imperfectionem, quemadmodum quae pro defunctis agimus, nonne dici possunt defunctorum esse, quoniam caritatis nostrae vi illis prosunt, illos adjuvant et quod illis deest supplet? Quanto magis caritas Christi, capitis cujus nos membra sumus, nostros facit justitiae suae thesauros?*²⁰⁴

This kind of transmission supposes inherent justice, and fits in well, with the idea that the transmission takes place according to the measure of faith and charity. It is not necessary, in the case of children who die after baptism and of adults who die without having committed grave sins after baptism. It becomes, on the other hand, necessary, as regards those who, often commit grave sins, after their baptism, and hence, accumulate much temporal punishment to be satisfied. These perform, of course, satisfactory works, but those works will not be really *satisfactory*, unless God the Father accepts them as such in view of the satisfaction offered by Christ. This acceptance does not mean that the works that have been, already performed, and answer to the whole temporal punishment that one had incurred. The measure depends on divine disposition (according to the measure of faith and charity etc.). This seems to have been the mind of Seripando when he said, that the theory of double justice didn't affect the satisfactory power of good works or purgatory. Good works were not affected since, if they needed a complement, they must have some value before God, and purgatory was not affected because the justice of Christ didn't complement human justice to such an extent that the just man is immediately received

²⁰⁴C. T. V. 487, 9-15.

into glory, but only to the extent of that he may pass through the final purification and then be received to eternal happiness.²⁰⁵

However, we cannot understand why Seripando said in the council that in the case of those who had but temporal punishment to satisfy, there was, still, need of a special act of the mercy of God to make them worthy of purgatory.²⁰⁶ There seems to have been some confusion; for as Seripando himself said after wards (November 2, 1546), he was as speaking of practical cases, and not of mere theory.²⁰⁷ Practically speaking, one who used to commit sin often gets bewildered, when he is called to stand before God's Throne of Justice, even though he knows that he has received absolution, through the sacrament of penance. The only recourse, in this bewilderment is to the mercy of God who can set right everything that is wrong, out of consideration for the merits of Christ.

One who had always entertained an exaggerated idea of the infirmity that was left in man, even after baptism, and who consequently, was too diffident in the purity and perfection of the good works performed by those who often fell into grave sins (although, they used to get themselves absolved, through the sacrament of penance), would, practically spending, gives them but little room to count upon their inherent justice, at the moment of death. We must remember that Seripando's theology was built upon the Augustinian exegesis of Rom. 7, 7-25.

This is the conclusion that we are led to draw, regarding the mind of Seripando, expressed in the Council, on double justice, in the light of the data we have got from his commentaries and questions. In these works, Seripando does not make any allusion to a double justice that is transmitted to the sinner in the first justification. Both the remission of sins and the infusion of charity are attributed to the merits of Christ who died for the sins of man. Both are considered to be two aspects of the same act, distinguished only in thought not, in fact. The only suggestion, therefore, that we get for the idea of a supplementary justice is, where Seripando speaks of the necessity of the acceptance of the good works of the

²⁰⁵C. T. V. 488, 1-10.

²⁰⁶C. T. V. 488, 1-10.

²⁰⁷C. T. V. 668, 23-29.

just, by God, as meritorious and satisfactory, in view of the merits of Christ.

Viewed from this standpoint, one can see greater harmony among the diverse expressions of Seripando's, in the Council, and also greater sincerity in his words, than does Henninger. Moreover, in this light, we can see how different is Luther's forensic justice which left man interiorly a sinner, from Seripando's double justice which explicitly taught the remission (deletion) of sins and infusion of charity as the essential aspects of justification.

CONCLUSION

We have in Seripando, a theologian who, urged by the need of his times, earnestly sought to restore theology to its biblical simplicity. With undaunted courage, he fought for his ideal, in the Council of Trent. As in his Commentaries, so in the Council too, Seripando appealed to the science of the Spirit, or to the knowledge of Holy Scripture, in opposition to the doctrine of the Philosophers. More than once, he advised the Council to avoid the philosophers' language which closed up divine doctrine, in narrow terminologies, and to adapt the Apostle's expressions which were simple and intelligible to all, adducing, if necessary, appropriate explanations.

It is true that the Augustinian pessimism, the surrounding corruption and reflections on his own inner experiences caused Seripando to mistake the picture of the sinner, drawn by Paul, in Rom. 7, 7-25, for that of the saint. It is also true that, consequently, he insisted on applying the strong expressions used by Paul to describe the state of the sinner, to the state of the just. But, while this mistake kept him tied to the Augustinian pessimism, he was saved from error, on account of his faithfulness to the exegetical principle of stability (analogy of faith).

Thus, we see Seripando designating concupiscence remaining in the just, by the word 'sin', calling the just still slaves to sin, and asserting that there remains, in the just, something which is displeasing to God. The explanations he adduces, although often forced ones, show that the meaning he gave to these terminologies, was genuinely Augustinian and not non-Pauline or non-Tridentine.

But for this almost unavoidable mistake, committed by Seripando, his ideal of a Biblical theologian is pursued by him, all throughout, with uncommon courage. As a theologian of the Bible, it was Seripando's strict rule not to overstate or understate scriptural truths. He did not find anywhere in Scripture, grace defined as a quality. In his Commentaries, he would describe it as if it were an interior form, but he would not assert that it **was** a form.²⁰⁸ In fact in the Council of Trent, he objected to defining grace as a quality; not because it was not a quality but because he wanted the Council to stick to Biblical terminology.²⁰⁹ Seripando took the same attitude, as

²⁰⁸Cfr. Seripando: *Commentaria*, Introduction to Rom. 12, p. 262.

²⁰⁹C. T. V. 489, 25 ff. Cfr. Jedin: *Papal Legate*, pp. 358 f.

regards '*meritum de condigno*' and '*meritum de congruo*', and the question of deciding the precise class of the '*quatuor genera causarum*' to which faith belonged.²¹⁰ One would say that Seripando, by insisting on biblical simplicity, wished to leave revealed truths, undefined and wanting in precision. Seripando would answer that it is better for us to leave undefined that which God himself wanted to remain undefined.

Seripando vehemently fought against understatement of Biblical truths. The Protestants had narrowed down the vast field of Scripture, by holding to their *sola fide* theory. Seripando shows them the necessity of taking in to account all the aspects supposed by the sacred author. He exemplifies this principle in his description of the faith which justifies (faith which works through charity), of the words '*imputare*' and '*non imputare*' (an absolutely gratuitous giving and taking away) and of the idea of justification (the remission of sins and infusion of charity).

Could we not call Seripando a Biblical Theologian of the Council of Trent? If we are to believe what Catharinus says, seripando may even be considered as the *first Catholic Biblical Theologian*.

²¹⁰C. T. V. 489.

THE FINAL RETROSPECT

Seripando, the preacher, the theologian, the General of the Augustinian order, the Father and Cardinal Legate at the Council of Trent, the member of special committee entrusted with the drawing up of decrees concerning Scripture, and honest and upright worker for the reform of his Order and for that of the Church in general, has left some very important messages to Exegetes and Theologians of today.

A sincere desire to offer to the souls redeemed by the blood of Christ, the doctrine of salvation in its pristine simplicity, caught hold of Seripando, from the thirties of the sixteenth century. He started on studying St. Paul with the help of his great master, St. Augustine. As an exegete, Seripando's ambition was to scrutinize the very words of Paul, in their original form, so as to drink deep of the saving waters, at their purest fountain.

The member of the Special Committee for studying Scriptural questions at the Council dispels all doubt from us, with regard to mind of the Council regarding exegetes. For, in his exegetical works which he dedicated to the President of the same committee, Cardinal Cervini, after the sessions of the Council, on Scripture, Seripando clearly shows that no Church authority had obliged the Catholic Exegete, to follow exclusively the vulgate, either as regards the text it follows or as regards the renderings it gives.

Seripando takes as his standard, the received Greek text and tries to restore it to original purity, through a comparative study of Greek and Latin codices. Although not all the rules he follows in preferring one reading to another, can be taken as ideal, his scope is, all the same, the ideal of the Exegete of every age. In rendering into Latin, the Greek text, thus restored, Seripando sticks to his principle of using words which are the most apt, the most ordinary and the most simple. He seeks help from the Vulgate, Erasmus and Cajetan; but he does not think himself obliged to follow any of them.

In fulfilling his second duty, as an Exegete, sense interpretation, Seripando reduces all the norms by which he was to be governed into two; the rule of flow and the rule of stability. Here too, Seripando makes it clear that the authority of the church and that of the unanimous voice of the Fathers were not an impediment, but a necessary help to the Exegete, in his personal reflections and research work on Scripture texts. A critical study of the numerous

Protestant exegetical works of his day, had taught Seripando, so much wisdom that the exegetical norms handed down by him, remain unexcelled even to day, as observes Jedin.²¹¹

The need of a Catholic Biblical Theologian had been keenly felt, in Seripando's day, as we have it from his contemporary, Ambrosius Catharinus. Seripando too felt that need, and he tried his best to make the Council too feel that Biblical Theology was the need of the day. He himself came forth with his *Quaestiones* to show the Reformers, from the Bible itself, in a language which savoured of Biblical simplicity and which avoided the philosophers' wisdom as well as terminologies, that it was not the Catholic Church, but they themselves who had misunderstood the Gospel of Paul. In his exposition and defence of the genuine Gospel of Paul, he shows the Protestants how their '*sola fide*' theory had narrowed down the extensive field of the Gospel, and his own brethren how far removed he was from Luther, in his teaching on concupiscence, faith and double justice, although he remained an Augustinian at the bottom, due to his mistaken view of the Apostle's tragic page, Rom. 7, 7-25.

Thus, Seripando, the distinguished Biblical Theologian of the Council of Trent, who may be called the very first Catholic Biblical Theologian, has left many a valuable message, to exegetes and theologians of today, through his Commentaries and *Quaestiones*.

²¹¹Jedin: *Girolamo Seripando*, II p. 395 # 3.