

The Smalcald Articles

Session 12 - Part III, Articles 13, 14 & 15

Article 13

Luther again addresses the issue of justification (as in SA II:1), but this time in order to put the works of the Christian into their proper perspective. So where do works fit?

Why does Luther say that even though our works are sinful and imperfect, they should not be counted as such? What comfort can the Christian find here?

From where do good works come? By what power? How is this also a comfort to the Christian?

What of those who bear no fruits out of faith?

Article 14

In what way are monastic vows in direct conflict with the teaching on justification?

What did Thomas actually teach concerning monastic vows as being like baptism?

Does this mean that no one ought to dedicate their life and work to the service of God?

Article 15

Is anything inherently wrong with human traditions and regulations in the Church? What does Luther speak against here?

Luther condemns the baptizing and consecrating of churchly goods (bells, altar stones, candles, etc). Does this mean that such items have no place in the Lutheran Church?

Finally Luther states that there is nothing in the Smalcald Articles that can be compromised. To recap, why is this so? How should we treat these and other various doctrines of the Faith?

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