

Belgic Confession of Faith (1561)

Article XIV

The Creation and Fall of Man, and His Incapacity to Perform What Is Truly Good

Leader: Therefore we reject all that is taught repugnant to this concerning the free will of man, since man is but a slave to sin, and *can receive nothing, except it have been given him from heaven.*¹ For who may presume to boast that he of himself can do any good, since Christ says: *No man can come to me, except the Father that sent me draw him?*² Who will glory in his own will, who understands that *the mind of the flesh is enmity against God?*³ Who can speak of his knowledge, since *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God?*⁴ In short, who dares suggest any thought, since he knows that *we are not sufficient of ourselves to account anything as of ourselves, but that our sufficiency is of God?*⁵

People: **And therefore what the apostle says ought justly to be held sure and firm, that *God worketh in us both to will and to work, for his good pleasure.***⁶ For there is no understanding nor will conformable to the divine understanding and will but what Christ has wrought in man; which He teaches us, when He says: *Apart from me ye can do nothing.*⁷

¹ John 3:27

² John 6:44

³ Rom. 8:7

⁴ 1 Cor. 2:14

⁵ 2 Cor. 3:5

⁶ Phil. 2:13

⁷ John 15:5