

This difference is thus drawn by the Expositor of the Confession of Faith. Hermin Witsius, and others, presented it long before him. One remark is sufficient to explode the bubble. If the sinfulness of the act—which lies in the sinner's intention of committing it—is only permissive, then God's decree has only reference to His own conduct towards the sin. He decreed that He would not prevent it, should it be about to happen. Permission, that is non-prevention, is no decreeing of anything, except God's action in relation to the thing. Here the Expositor forsakes Calvin, who scouts permission, and embraces Arminius, who maintains it. But we have not done with the above sophism yet. The argumentation amounts to this: God's decree is effective, as to securing the act, as an act; but permissive, as respects the sinner's intention in committing the act. This manœuvre cannot save from the spear of truth. Just a question here. Was not the sinner's *intention* decreed as well as the act? If the answer is "No," then something comes to pass in time, which was not decreed by God before time, which is contrary to the Confession. If the answer is "Yes," and that the sin is in the intention, then God, who decreed the intention, decreed the sin. And if so, He is the author of the sin; for, the sin and the intention are the same.

Again: Others have tried to escape here by asserting that "sin never comes to pass." "Sin is not a thing, but a quality." "Events do transpire, in connection with which men do commit sin." We are to understand then, that though God decreed the event, act, or thing, He did not decree the sinful quality. It is admitted that He decreed the things, acts, or events. Now admit that sin is a *quality*, separate from the acts—which is absurd—yet, could these acts and intentions exist without the sin? No candid, intelligent mind will say they could. If they could not, then the decree, which necessitates the acts and intentions, necessitates the sin also. Furthermore, if the sinful quality could exist separate from the act, it would still be a moral state of the mind of the agent acting; and if God decreed whatsoever comes to pass, so as to "infallibly" secure it, He must have decreed *that* moral state of mind. This cannot be evaded. So far, then,