

# The Augsburg Confession of 1530

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats



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❖ “Not only the people, but also those teaching in the churches, have generally been persuaded to believe in making distinctions between meats, and similar human traditions. They believe these are useful works for meriting grace and are able to make satisfaction for sins....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... From this there developed the view that new ceremonies, new orders, new holy days, and new fastings were instituted daily. Teachers in the Church required these works as a necessary service to merit grace....”



## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... They greatly terrified people’s consciences when they left any of these things out. Because of this viewpoint, the Church has suffered great damage....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... First, the chief part of the Gospel—the doctrine of grace and of the righteousness of faith—has been obscured by this view....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... The Gospel should stand out as the most prominent teaching in the Church, in order that Christ’s merit may be well known and faith, which believes that sins are forgiven for Christ’s sake, be exalted far above works....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Therefore, Paul also lays the greatest stress on this article, putting aside the Law and human traditions, in order to show that Christian righteousness is something other than such works [Romans 14:17]. ...”

# Romans 14:17

✚ **Romans 14:17** “For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit...”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Christian righteousness is the faith that believes that sins are freely forgiven for Christ’s sake. But this doctrine of Paul has been almost completely smothered by traditions, which have produced the opinion that we must merit grace and righteousness by making distinctions in meats and similar services....”

# Acts 10:12-15

✚ “[The sheet] contained all kinds of four-footed animals, as well as reptiles of the earth and birds of the air. Then a voice told him, “Get up, Peter. Kill and eat.” “Surely not, Lord!” Peter replied. “I have never eaten anything impure or unclean.” The voice spoke to him a second time, “Do not call anything impure that God has made clean.”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... When repentance was taught, there was no mention made of faith. Only works of satisfaction were set forth. And so repentance seemed to stand entirely on these works....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Second, these traditions have hindered God’s commandments, because traditions were placed far above God’s commandments. Christianity was thought to stand wholly on the observance of certain holy days, rites, fasts, and vestments....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... These observances won the exalted title of the “spiritual life” and the “perfect life.” Meanwhile, God’s commandments, according to each one’s vocation, or calling, were without honor....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... These works include a father raising his children, a mother bearing children, a prince governing the commonwealth—these were considered to be worldly and thus imperfect works, far below the glittering observances of the Church....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... This error greatly tormented people with devout consciences. They grieved that they were held in an imperfect state of life, as in marriage, in the office of ruler, or in other civil services....”



## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... They admired the monks and others like them. They falsely thought that these people’s observances were more acceptable to God....”

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❖ “... Third, traditions brought great danger to consciences. It was impossible to keep all traditions, and yet people considered these observances to be necessary acts of worship....”

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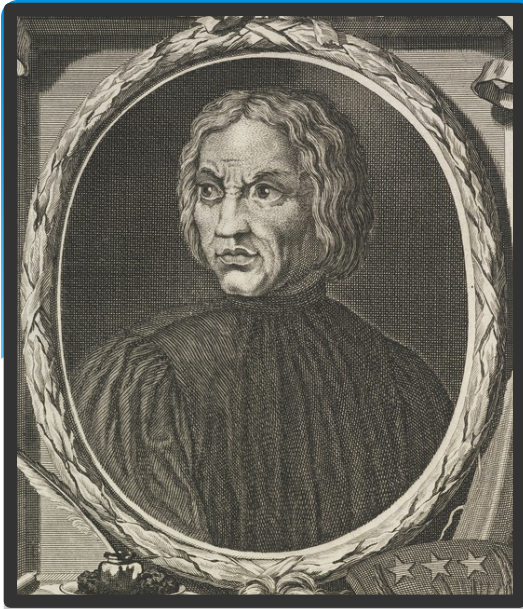
❖ “... Gerson writes that many fell into despair, and that some even took their own lives, because they felt that they were not able to satisfy the traditions. All the while, they had never heard about the consoling righteousness of faith and grace....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... We see that the academics and theologians gather the traditions and seek ways to relieve and ease consciences. They do not free consciences enough, but sometimes entangle them even more! ...”

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❖ “... The schools and sermons have been so occupied with gathering these “traditions” that they do not even have enough leisure time to touch on Scripture.<sup>15</sup> They do not pursue the far more useful doctrine of faith, the cross, hope, the dignity of secular affairs, and consolation for severely tested consciences....”



## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Therefore, Gerson and some other theologians have complained sadly that because of all this striving after traditions, they were prevented from giving attention to a better kind of doctrine....”

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❖ “...Augustine forbids that people’s consciences should be burdened. He prudently advises Januarus that he must know that they are to be observed as things neither commanded by God nor forbidden, for such are his words....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Therefore, our teachers must not be regarded as having taken up this matter rashly or from hatred of the bishops, as some falsely suspect. There was a great need to warn the churches of these errors that arose from misunderstanding the traditions....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... The Gospel compels us to insist on the doctrine of grace and the righteousness of faith in the churches. This cannot be understood if people think that they merit grace by observances of their own choice....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... So our churches have taught that we cannot merit grace or be justified by observing human traditions. We must not think that such observances are necessary acts of worship....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Here we add testimonies of Scripture. Christ defends the Apostles who had not observed the usual tradition (Matthew 15:3). This had to do with a matter that was not unlawful, but rather, neither commanded or forbidden. It was similar to the purifications of the Law....”

# Matthew 15:1-3

✚ “Then some Pharisees and teachers of the law came to Jesus from Jerusalem and asked, “Why do your disciples break the tradition of the elders? They don't wash their hands before they eat!” Jesus replied, “And why do you break the command of God for the sake of your tradition?”

# Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... [Christ] said in Matthew 15:9, “In vain do they worship Me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.” Therefore, He does not require a useless human service....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Shortly after, He adds, “It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person” (Matthew 15:11)....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... So also Paul, in Romans 14:17,  
“The kingdom of God is not a  
matter of eating and drinking but  
of righteousness and peace and  
joy in the Holy Spirit,” ...



## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... and in Colossians 2:16, <sup>25</sup> “Let no one pass judgment on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to ... a Sabbath.”...”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “...And again, “If with Christ you died to the elemental spirits of the world, why, as if you were still alive in the world, do you submit to regulations —‘Do not handle, Do not taste, Do not touch’ ” [Colossians 2:20–21]....”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Peter says, “Why are you putting God to the test by placing a yoke on the neck of the disciples that neither our fathers nor we have been able to bear? But we believe that we will be saved through the grace of the Lord Jesus, just as they will” (Acts 15:10–11)....”



## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... Here Peter forbids burdening consciences with many rites, either from Moses or others...”

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❖ “... In 1 Timothy 4:1–3 Paul calls the prohibition of meats a teaching of demons. It is contrary to the Gospel to institute or do such works thinking that we merit grace through them, or as though Christianity could not exist without such service of God....”

# I Timothy 4:1-3

✝ “<sup>1</sup> The Spirit clearly says that in later times some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons. <sup>2</sup> Such teachings come through hypocritical liars, whose consciences have been seared as with a hot iron. <sup>3</sup> They forbid people to marry and order them to abstain from certain foods, which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and who know the truth.”

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❖ “... Our adversaries object by accusing our teachers of being against discipline and the subduing of the flesh. Just the opposite is true, as can be learned from our teachers’ writings....”

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❖ “... They have always taught that Christians are to bear the cross [Matthew 16:24] by enduring afflictions. This is genuine and sincere subduing of the flesh [1 Peter 2:11], to be crucified with Christ through various afflictions....”

# Matthew 16:24 & I Peter 2:11

- ✚ **Matthew 16:24** “Then Jesus said to his disciples, “If anyone would come after Me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow Me.”
- ✚ **1 Peter 2:11** “Dear friends, I urge you, as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul.”

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❖ “... Furthermore, they teach that every Christian ought to train and subdue himself with bodily restraints, or bodily exercises and labors. Then neither over-indulgence nor laziness may tempt him to sin....”

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❖ “... But they do not teach that we may merit grace or make satisfaction for sins by such exercises. Such outward discipline ought to be taught at all times, not only on a few set days....”

# 1 Timothy 4:7-8

✚ **1 Timothy 4:7-8** “Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives' tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.”

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❖ “... Christ commands, “Watch yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness” (Luke 21:34). Also in Matthew 17:21, “This kind never comes out except by prayer and fasting.”...”

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❖ “... Paul also says, “I discipline my body and keep it under control” (1 Corinthians 9:27). Here he clearly shows that he was keeping his body under control, not to merit forgiveness of sins by that discipline, but to keep his body in subjection and prepared for spiritual things, for carrying out the duties of his calling....”

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❖ “... Therefore, we do not condemn fasting in itself [Isaiah 58:3–7], but the traditions that require certain days and certain meats, with peril of conscience, as though such works were a necessary service....”

# Isaiah 58:3-7

†<sup>3</sup> 'Why have we fasted,' they say, 'and you have not seen it? Why have we humbled ourselves, and you have not noticed?' "Yet on the day of your fasting, you do as you please and exploit all your workers.<sup>4</sup> Your fasting ends in quarreling and strife, and in striking each other with wicked fists. You cannot fast as you do today and expect your voice to be heard on high.<sup>5</sup> Is this the kind of fast I have chosen, only a day for a man to humble himself? Is it only for bowing one's head like a reed and for lying on sackcloth and ashes? Is that what you call a fast, a day acceptable to the LORD?<sup>6</sup> "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke?<sup>7</sup> Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-- when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?"

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❖ “... Nevertheless, we keep many traditions that are leading to good order [1 Corinthians 14:40] in the Church, such as the order of Scripture lessons in the Mass and the chief holy days....”

# I Corinthians 14:33-40

- ✚ **1 Corinthians 14:33** “For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.”
- ✚ **1 Corinthians 14:40** “But everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.”



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❖ “...<sup>41</sup> At the same time, we warn people that such observances do not justify us before God, and that it is not sinful if we omit such things, without causing offense....”

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❖ “...<sup>42</sup> The Fathers knew of such freedom in human ceremonies.<sup>43</sup> In the East they kept Easter at another time than at Rome...”

## Article XXVI: The Distinction of Meats

❖ “... When the Romans accused the Eastern Church of schism, they were told by others that such practices do not need to be the same everywhere. ...”

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❖ “...<sup>44</sup> Irenaeus says, “Diversity concerning fasting does not destroy the harmony of faith.” Pope Gregory says, in Dist. XII, that such diversity does not violate the unity of the Church. ...”

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❖ “...<sup>45</sup> In the *Tripartite History*, Book 9, many examples of different rites are gathered, and the following statement is made:

“It was not the mind of the apostles to enact rules concerning holy days, but to preach godliness and a holy life.”