

Is the "soul" immortal?

However, I permit the Pope to establish articles of faith for himself and for his own faithful such are: That the bread and wine are transubstantiated in the sacrament; that the essence of God neither generates nor is generated; that the soul is the substantial form of the human body that he [the pope] is emperor of the world and king of heaven, and earthly god; that **the soul is immortal**; and all these endless monstrosities in the Roman dunghill of decretals in order that such as his faith is, such may be his gospel, such also his faithful, and such his church, and that the lips may have suitable lettuce and the lid may be worthy of the dish.

From his Assertio Omnium Articulorum M. Lutheri per Bullam Leonis X. Novissimam Damnatorum (Assertion of all the articles of M. Luther condemned by the latest Bull of Leo X), article 27, as found in the Weimar edition of Luther's Works, vol. 7, pp. 131, 132.

R:3602

A Council of the Lateran, held A.D. 1513, under Pope Leo X., pronounced the immortality of the soul to be an orthodox article of Christian faith. The following is a translation of the rule which was adopted by this council, as given by Caranza, p.412, 1681.

"Whereas, some have *dared* to assert concerning the nature of the reasonable soul, that it is mortal; *we*, with the approbation of the *Sacred Council*, *do condemn and reprobate* all those who assert that the *intellectual soul is mortal*, seeing that the *soul* is not only truly and of itself and essentially the form of the human body, as is expressed in the canon of Pope Clement the Fifth, but likewise *immortal*; and *we strictly inhibit* all from dogmatizing otherwise, and *we decree* that all who adhere to the like erroneous assertions shall be shunned and punished as heretics."

Martin Luther visited Rome during the reign of Leo X., and the profligacy, corruption and licentiousness that he witnessed at the Papal court destroyed forever his former reverence for the sacred authority of Popes and Councils. For the decree of the Lateran Council he seems to have entertained a special contempt. In his *Defense*, prop. 27, "*Adversus Execrabilem Antichrist Bullam*," (Luther's Works, Vol. 2, folio 107, Wittenberg 1562) published in 1520, he said:

"I permit the Pope to make articles of faith for himself and his faithful--such as 'the soul is the substantial form of the human body,' *'that the soul is immortal,'* with all those *monstrous opinions* to be found in the Roman dunghill of decretals."