By its very nature, the problem of the assurance of salvation does not concern the unregenerate person, but rather the believer who lives as a Christian and considers himself to have experienced the causes of salvation briefly discussed in the last chapter. Inasmuch as assurance is a question strictly for the Christian life, our analysis must focus on that aspect of the *ordo salutis* that deals with the already regenerate person, namely, the topic of sanctification. Therefore, before delving into the epistemological question of salvation in particular, it is necessary first to complete our exploration of the ontological question and to describe Arminius’s thought regarding the Christian life of sanctification. This chapter will begin by investigating Arminius’s general doctrine of sanctification, and then proceed to a more detailed examination of his opinions concerning the possibility of Christian perfection and the possibility of apostasy. Consistent with the method employed throughout this essay, I shall engage in a comparative analysis between Arminius and his colleagues in the Staten College by means of the public disputations that were essential to the debate, albeit little known today. This comparison will provide additional context for understanding Arminius, the debate over assurance, and the Leiden theology.

I. Sanctification in General

A. The Nature of Sanctification

According to Arminius’s definition, justification and sanctification comprise the spiritual benefits that believers enjoy in this life, corresponding to the twofold promise that God will pardon sins and write his laws on the hearts of believers.\(^1\) Sanctification, as much as justification, is a blessing

\(^1\) *Disp. priv.* XIV.i.
that naturally flows from union with Christ. In fact, one recognized goal of justification is “holliness of life and the pursuit of righteousness.”

Sanctification in general, according to Arminius, is the separation of anything from its common use for the purpose of divine use. Arminius describes the sanctification of a person as when God purifies a sinful yet believing person and then grants him the Spirit of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, in order that he might live the life of God (vita Dei), for the end of God’s praise and his own salvation.

Sanctification consists in the mortification of the old person and the vivification of the new person. The object of such sanctification is both the person as a sinner (inasmuch as sin contaminates one from service to God) as well as the person as a believer (inasmuch as the person united with Christ is therefore holy). Arminius draws on the imagery of the Old Testament use of sacrificial blood to describe what the blood of Jesus Christ accomplishes. Not only does the sprinkling of the blood effect the expiation of sins, which is the cause of justification, but it also sanctifies those who have been justified, further enabling them to offer worship and sacrifices to God through Christ.

B. The Necessity of Good Works

Because of the Protestant insistence on justification by faith alone apart from works, along with the sharp rhetoric of Luther and some of his followers against the efficacy of good works for salvation, Reformed theologians recognized their vulnerability to Roman Catholic charges of antinomianism. Thus, in its teaching on sanctification, Reformed orthodoxy firmly declared the necessity of good works in the Christian

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2 Disp. pub. XXIV.i.
3 Arminius, De iustificatione (1603), xxxix: “sanctimonia vitae et studium justitiae.”
4 As noted in the last chapter, all the Leiden theologians agreed on the final cause of justification.
5 Disp. priv. XLIX.i.
6 Disp. priv. XLIX.iv.
7 Disp. priv. XLIX.v and vii.
9 See Arminius, De bonis operibus (1603), xi; idem, De bonis operibus (1609), x; Gomar, De bonis operibus (1599), xii.