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ON THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES IN OPPOSITION TO THE
PONTIFFS

Part One

I. Indeed, this must be seen as strange, and deservedly regrettable, that when differences were once discussed from the Scriptures, the matter has now returned to the question as to why it should be discussed from the Scriptures themselves when its dignity and Majesty should have been sacrosanct among Christians. This, of course, was the guile of the Popes, who, when they could not find sufficient protection in the Scriptures, resorted to exceptions [allegedly] contradicting the Scriptures, and in order to turn the Judgement Seat to their Church with a more plausible pretext, [to fend off] challenges to their Theologians and Pontiff, they themselves sat in their cause as Witnesses and Judges of his authority and dignity. This they did so as not to overthrow [the foundation of Scripture] completely, but at least to shake and undermine it in a strange way. And hence, the fact that although controversies about the Scriptures do not usually occur between the primary and most important issues, but rather the secondaries which exist between us and the Pontiffs. Although it was not from the primary issues that the disputes first began, they must, nevertheless, be considered no less serious and momentous; because they, too, should be built on a similar base and foundation. For since Scripture is the Principle and Rule of our faith, we will always unwaveringly and tenaciously stick to it, unless another Authority has once been asserted and demonstrated.

II. THE CONTROVERSIAL DEBATE OVER THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE IS TWOFOLD: (1) AGAINST THE ATHEISTS (2) AGAINST THE PONTIFFS

Regarding the controversial debate over the authority of Scripture, it may be considered twofold, against two classes of men. First, against the Atheists and the Epicureans, who are completely alien to religion and do not recognize any of the Authority and Divinity of the Word. Secondly, against the Pontiffs who profess to believe it and embrace it yet suspend belief according to the authority of the Church and its testimony, so that without it, if it does not exist, at least as far as they are concerned, it cannot be known. But now we release from the former, things which can be more conveniently handled at another time, and approach the latter, as we undertake to prove with the good God that the Holy Scripture is so intrinsically *αυτόπιστον* [trustworthy] and Divine, that it neither obtains its authority from the Church or from us.

III. But here, lest we strike at the threshold [of inadmissible evidence] the opinion of both parties must first be opened, so that it may be more easily ascertained what, exactly, is the chief point of this most vexed controversy. As regards the Orthodox [Protestants], we hold that the Sacred Scripture borrows all its authority from God, from whom it proceeded, and is so authentic intrinsically that its *αυθεντία* [authority] cannot and should not be suspended on the testimony of any Church, much less that of the Roman See. Not that the testimony of the true and purer Church does not have its own weight, but that it is neither the only one nor the main one, but only secondary and ministerial, without which the *αυτοπιστία* [self-confidence] of this Divine Word is

also consistent within, unless we are hostile to God speaking and wish to call into question the testimony established by Divine Authority.

IV. THREEFOLD RESPONSES CONSIDERED: THE SCRIPTURES, THE SPIRIT, THE CHURCH

Moreover, for the full explanation of our opinion, we must observe the Three, to convince us that the Divinity of the Scriptures can concur with the Scriptures, that is, with God speaking in the Scriptures, the Spirit bearing witness in the heart, and the Church delivering the Scriptures to us. For a threefold reason can be given which contributes to the persuasion of anything, either *objective* which includes the argument or motive for which I believe, or the *principal agent* which marks the principle of whose virtue I believe, or the *instrumental* which designates the means and organ through which I believe; for bodily vision three things are necessarily required: a visible object, the faculty of sight, and a transparent medium which transmits any species or rays on both sides: Thus, the Scriptures are the foundation and argument upon which I believe, the Holy Spirit is the principle and efficient cause whose power and efficacy I believe, and the Church is the instrument through which I believe. Hence, if it is asked, Whence is the authority of the Scriptures proved or made known to us? For the triple sense of the controversy, we have decided to answer it threefold. Or else it is asked: With what argument or why and for what reason is it to be believed, and then the answer is given: Scripture alone and the κριτήρια [criteria] instilled in us is why we know and believe the Divine Scripture - not because of anything outside of itself. Or it is asked by what instrument and medium or through what means we should recognize it as such, and here the answer is we obtain that knowledge through the common

ministry of the Church to whom God willed to commit His λογία [words]. Or, finally, the question is: From what principle or from what efficient cause arises faith which recognizes the Divinity of the Scriptures? The answer is that this is best done by the Holy Spirit working within, who alone is the author of saving faith.

V. WHAT IS THE TESTIMONY OF THE SCRIPTURES?

But when we speak of the Testimony of the Scripture itself, we do not want this to be understood merely as an artificial argument, as if the Scripture simply wanted faith applied to it because it claims to be Divine; but rather devised by reason, in so far as God imprinted in it such characteristics and criteria which cannot fall into human writing. Such is the divine truth of the Word, the wonder of the Mysteries, the sublime candor and παρρησία [brashness] of the writings, the agreement of the parts with each other, the sanctity and efficacy of doctrine, and other things of that kind in which the inimitable characters of singular majesty and wisdom are detected, while at the same time balance gravity and simplicity, all of which are hidden through a certain power by which He compels and conquers the mind of the pious reader. Indeed, from this point of view, we easily gather that the Holy Scriptures are not a book prepared by human effort, but prepared by the special guidance of the Holy Spirit, and therefore, truly divine and αὐτόπιστον. And here we think a distinction must be made between the object or foundation of faith and the evidence or stirring of the same. For the foundation cannot be other than divine revelation or the divine Word revealed. But the proof of this faith of ours is furnished by experience, which we have discovered in this divine revelation, and which, as if they were so many rays of His divinity,

allude to the effulgence of His divinity, so that the Word or divine Revelation is like the subject matter that faith embraces and through which the question, "What do you believe?" is answered. Also, the theoretical understanding or matter on which our faith rests, and by which the question "Why do you believe?" is answered. From this arises a certainty not merely probable and moral; otherwise our faith would not be more certain than the approval of any historical human writings, but rather it is one that is theological and infallible because it is enlightened by the faithful Holy Spirit who cannot deceive men; and also because Scripture does not rely on the word of men, who can both be deceived and deceive, but on the Word of God, who incapable of being deceived or deceiving.

VI. WHAT IS THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH?

To the testimony of the Scriptures, which is the primary *κυριον* [rule], there is added the *λειτουργικόν* [function] and ministry of the Church, which we do not doubt is also of some importance here. For although the works of any man are absolutely not necessary to know the Divinity of the Scriptures, since God can directly reveal His Word to whomever He pleases, as the Apostle testifies with respect to himself, Gal. 1:12, when he confesses, "For I neither received the Gospel of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Nevertheless, it is in the normal course of providence that God saw fit to use the works of men to bring men to faith. Therefore, He wished to commit the Oracles to His Church, to be delivered by the faithful; whence it often has no little weight in moving the hearts of men, and in exciting reverence for the Scriptures. And from this arises the manifold duty of the Church concerning the Scriptures, first of all as *Custodian*, who must preserve

this divine Testament with the utmost faithfulness, like that of the Tabernacle, in which sense Paul often exhorts Timothy to preserve the deposit, 1 Tim. 6:20 and 2 Tim. 1:14. Secondly, the Church *points us to* and leads us to the Savior who is described in the Holy Bible, as John declared to the Jewish Christians, John 1:29, “Behold, the Lamb of God,” and as the Samaritan woman reveals the Messiah to her neighbors (John 4). Thirdly, the *Avenger* who protects and vindicates the genuine books [of the Bible] by separating them from counterfeits and the spurious, so that the divine is not replaced by the human word and the copper is not substituted for gold; to which belongs the illustrious exhortation of Paul when he calls it ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας [foundation of the truth] 1 Tim. 3:15. Fourthly, the *Interpreter* το ὀρθοτομεῖν [handle correctly], the true and genuine meaning revealed both in the Word from the analogy of faith and the Scripture itself, Romans 12:6 and Ephesians 4. Fifthly, *Heralds* and *Messengers*, who propose and promulgate this Word as an Edict and Law in the name of the supreme Prince, in order to bring men to the obedience of the faith, in which sense ministers are called ambassadors, heralds, messengers, Rom. 10:15, 2 Cor. 5:19-20, Isa. 40:5, and their ministry of Preachers.

VII. Even though the Church has a manifold duty concerning the Scriptures, all this implies ministry, not teaching. Just as neither the Custodian nor the Avenger nor the Herald nor the Interpreter confer any authority on the things entrusted to them, but only deal with them organically and ministerially. Thus, whatever the Church does regarding the Word is not extended further than to the ministry, so that we may be said to believe through it, not because of it, as the Jews had to believe through John, John 1:7, and through the urging of the Samaritan woman. For the [Church has] same duty that the Samaritan

woman rendered to her fellow citizens, for she was leading them to Christ; and He afforded the Samaritans access to know him, and once having known Him they embraced her with far more certainty for His own sake; “Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world,” John 4:42. Thus, the Church is the medium of εἰσαγωγικόν [introduction] because it leads us to the Scriptures, and delivers it into our hands. But if we stop here, faith is only human, not divine, or steps to saving faith rather than believers themselves, until we come to Scripture and embrace it for its own sake. Wherefore we do not reject the testimony of the Church, but put it together in its own order; we do not neglect service, but we refuse teaching; we regard it as an instrument by which we believe, not as an argument for what we believe; as a guide to faith, not as the primary motive that prompts it; or as a testimony greater than any other human; but inferior to God speaking in the Scriptures, as the One from whom the Church obtains all her authority.

VIII. But since the Church can be considered either as a collective with respect to the faithful or as a representative with respect to the Shepherd, the question here is mainly about this: as a representative of the Shepherd. Which, again, according to the various circumstances of the time, can render one testimony more certain than another. For if we speak of the ancient and Apostolic, her Testimony must be equated with the Divine Testimony when the θεόπνευστος [divinely inspired] Apostles were still engaged in it. The witness of the Church when extracted after the time of the Apostles is worth less than the Apostolic Testimony because it was not infallible; but it was still more certain than the testimony of today, since it closely followed the age of the

Apostles, and was still distinguished by various miracles and signs. But the Testimony of the Church of today is inferior to all the rest, and so much less important, though it is the chief testimony inquired about. In fact, the Popes do not want the testimony of any other Church to be heard. However, they do not prove what they assume to be the truth of their own opinion, which, however, needs to be proven especially when, in their thesis, the authority of the true Church is asserted, but this is done in vain unless it is shown in hypothesis that the Roman one is such a true Church.

IX. WHAT IS THE TESTIMONY OF THE SPIRIT?

Indeed, although the Scriptures and the Church were speaking here, the voice of both would be in vain unless the action of the Holy Spirit, acting within, constituted the third. Hence, we say this third Testimony is necessarily required to have full conviction of the Divinity of the Scriptures. But our testimony is not one which imagines some voice of the Spirit speaking within and convincing us of things not in the Word, things that the Enthusiasts and Fanatics want, and from whom we are so enormously distant. But we understand nothing else than the power and effectiveness of the Spirit acting within and opening the eyes of the mind to recognize the rays of divine truth shining in the Word, and thus generating faith in our souls. Whence comes the twofold operation of the Spirit to be distinguished, one in the Word, which is called the external testimony, and the other in the Heart, which is the internal testimony. For the same one who speaks in the Word for the explanation of heavenly doctrine also speaks in the heart for the same application, for as it is testified in the Word objectively by way of argument, it is also testified in the Heart by way of principle, in this

sense 1 John 5 lists the Spirit among the witnesses of the Truth of the Gospel and the Divinity of Christ, and verse 6, "And it is the Spirit that bears witness because the Spirit is truth." The Spirit in the heart testifies that the Spirit in the Word, or doctrine delivered by the Spirit, is Truth. But the need for the Spirit is not only evidenced by the blindness of our minds, which do not grasp the things of God; but also the sublime heavenly Mysteries which could never possibly have been conceived or grasped by human reasoning. For in vision light is not only required in seeing the object, but also in the one who sees, for in vain the Sun would shine on the blind. Thus, the Spirit which shines in the Word for the revelation of truth must shine in the heart for the enlightenment of the eyes of the mind. Whence arises that πληροφορια [knowledgeable] assent of faith and firmness of heart which recognizes and embraces the Divinity of the Scriptures.

X. But lest we lose sight of this operation of the Holy Spirit, we must observe, (1) That the Spirit bearing witness within is never separated from the Word contained in the Scriptures: nor does His operation tend to any other than to seal up in our souls the divine truth of it. The Word is like a seed thrown into the earth by the Spirit, like a life-giving power by which it takes root and sprouts in us. The Word is the object which is proposed to the means; the Spirit is the force which disposes the means to embrace it; where we consider, Isaiah 59:21, "My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth," etc., and what Christ says, John 16:14, "He will glorify me, for he will take what is mine and declare it to you." Hence it is clear that He is most alien to the Anabaptist Spirit who despises both the Scriptures and indulges in private and extraordinary revelations.

(2) This testimony is indeed for the personal confirmation of individual believers in whom the Spirit lives and works, but it cannot be used for the conviction or conversion of others. For when He was known and seen only by the faithful, Rev. 2:17, His Testimony can only convince the believer to whom it is given, and does not benefit others, except by reason of the effects which are seen from without, 2 Cor. 4:13.

Therefore, I would be ridiculed if I wished to convince another that the Scriptures are divine because the Holy Spirit testifies to this in me.

(3) The Spirit may be said to be private in the sense of the subject, because it is in each believer, but not in the sense of an original principle common to the whole Church, 2 Cor. 4:13, because as the Sun illuminates everyone in the whole world, a private flame of love is not lit for each one. Thus, the Spirit whose light permeates the heart of the faithful cannot be said to be hidden; for the same Spirit who has always breathed in the Church and who breathed the Word of the Prophets and Apostles stirs and awakens the mind of the faithful and brings the same light of doctrine which is kindled in the Shrine of the Word into the Shrine of the heart. Hence, it is clear how unjustly the Pontiffs make objections to our doctrine of the Private Spirit which we have decreed to be common to all the faithful.

(4) The Spirit is not witnessed in all the Hearers of the Word, but only in the Elect, yet not with an equal degree of clarity or certainty. It is clear not only from the parable of the seed, Matt. 13, but from Christ, who declares the Spirit is not for all, John 14:16-17, and neither is faith, 2 Thess. 3:2, but only to the Elect to whom God deigns to reveal his mysteries by special grace, Matt. 11:25-26, so that it is not surprising that many doubt the truth of the Scriptures, nay, and defect from their

faith, John 6:64, 66. But it is agreed upon in all the faithful because it is given to them for that end, that they may testify of the things which have been given to us, 1 Cor. 2:12, and unless a man has the Spirit, Christ is not his, Romans 8:9. But as a disparate measure is communicated to the faithful, according as there are degrees in sanctification by which it is made that some are more advanced than others, both in faith and in charity, 1 Cor. 2:6, Heb. 5:13-14. Thus, the certainty and transparency of the testimony which He presents in them is greater or less. And from this it came about that not all the sacred books were always regarded as equally canonical by all, for some were rejected, while others accepted them.

(5) In order that the divine testimony of the Spirit may be distinguished from the contrary testimony of the fanatical Spirit, no other κριτήριον [criterion] can be used more surely than examining the Holy Scripture to determine if it is according to the norm of Holy Scripture, and also because this rule is given to us, Deut. 13:1-3, Isa. 8:20, 1 John 4:1-3, 8, and because He is the Spirit of truth, always constant and conforming to Himself, and does not testify in the heart in any other way than He testified in the Word. The Pontiffs, however, wrongly impute a circular argument to us here, (to which they themselves are manifestly bound), when Scripture proves [our doctrine of] the Spirit objectively, whereas the Spirit proves the Scripture efficiently, as we have demonstrated elsewhere in a special discussion about circular reasoning.

XI. From these, however, put in this way, it is easy to gather what is the opinion of the Orthodox [Protestants] on this most serious question: Of course, for the internal conviction of the Divinity of the Scriptures, the operation of the Holy Spirit in our hearts is absolutely necessary. But

the argument or motive which He uses to engender this faith is not the testimony of the Church, although it may also be of some importance in this respect: But it is only through the shining characteristics in the Word which radiate with such brightness that we believe the Scriptures for their own sake and not for another's sake. Therefore, if the loosening of faith is sought, we determine that it can be viewed two ways, either by reason of the foundation or of the external object, and this faith ultimately comes from divine revelation as expressed only in Scripture; Or by reason of the subject or internal principle which we determined to be the Spirit witnessing in the heart.

XII. THE OPINION OF THE POPES

But the Pontiffs here go off in a distinctly different direction, although they speak in a very complicated manner and do not always agree with themselves. First, there is no question some spoke more harshly than others. For there were those who, in the memory of our first Fathers, most vehemently defended Papism, asserting that all authority of Scripture depended on the Church, nor is it to be worthy of greater faith, apart from the testimony of the Church, of other works, such as the Koran, Titus Livius, and the Fables of Aesop. Hence, those blasphemous words which no pious person can read without horror, "In a pious sense it can be said that the Scriptures are as valid as Aesop's Fables if they are rejected by the authority of the Church," which Cardinal Hosius has written in book 3, *Against Brenz*. And that Baylius the Jesuit's Tract. 1 Catech. q. 12, openly declares that "without the authority of the Church, no more faith would be applied to Matthew than to Livy." Andradius, book 2, *Defense of the Council of Trent*, says, "There is nothing of the Divinity in those books in which the sacred

Mysteries are written, nor is it to be found in them which compels and constrains us by religion to believe that it is contained in them, but only to the extent of the Church's power, so that no one can oppose her without the greatest mark of impiety," and many others of the same kind, as Johann Eck in *Enchiridion of Commonplaces*, chap, 1; Albert Pighius, book 1, chap. 2, *On the Hierarchy of the Church*; Bellarmine, book 4, chap. 4, *On the Word of God*, as well as others.

XIII. Because the more recent theologians have observed these things were said too crudely and crassly, therefore they now speak more cautiously, explaining their minds in such a way that they concede the Scriptures are indeed absolutely divine in themselves, even without the testimony of the Church, but tell us, in so far as they wish that we may not to obtain this authority except through the Church's testimony by the grace of which the Divine may be known and accepted by us. Thus, the Church does not make the Scriptures true, for it has this from God its Author, but only so that it is recognized and believed as true. Hence, arose the distinction of common authority as to themselves and as to us, which they use in this argument, while complaining of being injured by us by perverting the state of the Question, which is instituted: Whether the authority of Scripture depends on the Church, as if the Church were to make the Scriptures authentic and to win over to it authority, which of itself, it did not have. But this is to be understood only as far as we are concerned because [the authenticity of Scripture] would not have become known to us except for the testimony of the Church. So that the question in controversy is not whether the Holy Writ is true and whence it has it, for it has this from God, its Author; But rather by whose reasoning and whence is it evident to us that the Scripture is true and divine, for they consider this to depend on the

Church. They use the famous judgment of Solomon regarding the mother of the child as a basis for their argument. For Solomon did not outrightly declare who the true mother was; rather he indirectly determined the answer through revelation.

XIV. But in whatever way they try to incrust this dogma of theirs, if we examine the matter more closely, it will be clear this distinction was invented to disguise and to deflect hatred rather than explain the truth. However, though the words were indeed changed, the same mindset was always with them. First, because no authority can be given in respect to itself which is not also given in respect to us, not only because it is εκ των προς τι from the nature of those related which necessarily includes respect to something else, but also because what makes the Scripture to be divine and authentic in itself, must also make it so to us. Wherefore the arguments and criteria which found its authority in themselves must also be based in respect to us, so that nothing can be said to simply be a foundation in so far as it is not also simply in respect to us. Indeed, if anything is the primary mover moving us to assent, it is the simple foundation of faith which regards not only us; and if it does not and cannot move us to assent, it is neither a simple foundation, nor does it regard us. Therefore, although the Church has said hundreds of times that Scripture is to be considered divine, I could not and should not agree if it was not Divine in itself. And although one denies the Church should be received as Divine, yet it is to be received as such by the very fact that it was established true and Divine in itself. Then, when the Adversaries want to question our view, the question becomes not 'Where does the authority of the Scriptures come from?' but 'From what source does the authority of Scriptures become known to us?' or 'From what source do we understand the

reasons and motives for that which we know and believe to be true?'; or simply 'What is the medium and instrument by which we are led to know the authority of the Scriptures?' If, on a later day, they wish to change the state of the question, they will not have us as dissenters, nor do we deny, as previously stated, that the Church is charged to point out the Scriptures. But if it is primarily understood the necessity to understand them correctly if their hypothesis is to be seen and spoken in accordance with their own opinion, this distinction is made in vain; For if the testimony of the Church is the main reason for which I believe the Scriptures are Divine, I will also have to make a decision regarding [the nature of] her authority, and thus, will always depend on the Church. Now this is what the former argued who spoke more smoothly. Nor can the judgment of Solomon help them convince us; for it was not the foundation nor the reason by which the true mother was known, but only the means by which it became known, since by his mediation there was a rousing of emotion in the mother's maternal bowels which was the proper cause of this knowledge. Thus, when the Church brings us to Scripture and shows the rays of Divinity shining in it, it is, indeed, the means by which we believe that it is Divine, but not the very foundation or formal reason for believing.

XV. Moreover, it is not pretend the Popes appear to be more sane in their understanding and speaking, while at the same time denying that the Church is the principal foundation or formal reason for which, by divine faith, we believe the Scriptures are truly the Word of God, but only the required condition necessary to elicit that act of faith, as Gregory of Valencia says, Vol. 3, Disput. 1, q. 1; and Gretzer in his treatise on the recognition of the Canonical Scriptures, c. 7; or the cause of the acceptance of faith, as Martin Becanus, *On Calvinist*

Circular Reasoning. But if it is asked on what foundation then rests Divine faith on which the divine Authority of the Scriptures is believed, or what is the formal reason for which we believe by divine faith, they answer that the Word of God is a Divine Revelation, or that they believe this to be the readily revealing Authority of God, as Gretzer and Becanus prove at length. But it is not difficult to discover this mask which they try to put on the simpler ones, and to show that they either speak *αυσσάτα* [inconsistently], or of a sign of deliberately deviating from the truth, which they seem to give with one hand and take away with the other. For indeed, they assert that divine revelation is the foundation or formal reason of faith; but if we ask further, where is that revelation by which we believe the Scripture is the Word of God, and which is the first and foremost all must know which must be received for its own sake, and not for any other reason, we find it is necessary for us to hold water here. Or else they will say that it is the Scripture itself, and so they will attack us, even though we want nothing else than to believe the Scriptures for the sake of the Scriptures themselves; Or some unwritten tradition, but the same question will be raised about that Tradition alleged to be Divine; Or that it is the voice of the Church itself in which and through which God speaks, which, however, they wished to be seen to deny.

XVI. And of course it is gathered from their own words that this was their genuine mind; For through the testimony of the Church is how they commonly answer the question, "Why do you believe that this Word is the Word of God?" Nay, they agree that no other answer can conveniently be given. Bellarmine, book 3, *On the Word of God*, chap. 10, responds to argument 13, "It is certain we do not know for sure what God has revealed unless we hear from the Church saying and

declaring so." Stapleton, book 1, *On the Authority of the Church*, against Whitaker, chap. 8, "Now therefore the highest external witness on earth is the voice of the Church," and chap. 9, "God speaking through the Church does not speak differently than if he spoke to us directly through visions and dreams or in any other supernatural way of revealing himself," and chap. 14. S. 12, "The whole formal reason of our faith is God revealing [Himself] through the Church." Gretzer, *On Recognizing the Canon of Scripture*, chap. 7, "Only by the testimony of the Church is the appropriate answer given to the question, How does one know that the revealed Scripture is divine?" Thus, they do not deny the Scriptures are the Word of God, but they maintain that it is not possible for such revelation to be known to us except because of another revelation which must be sought in the Church, through which God speaks today as through an infallible organ as he once spoke through the Prophets and Apostles.

XVII. THE STATE OF THE QUESTION IN CONTROVERSY

From this we can easily gather the state of the controversy, whether there is agreement or disagreement between us and our adversaries. First, it is clear we are not asking about the *Principle* or the *Efficient Cause* of faith through which we believe in the divinity of the Scriptures, or whether the Holy Spirit is necessary to generate this faith; for the adversaries cannot doubt this and have often professed to recognize the necessity of this principle. Stapleton complains against Whitaker more than once that a serious injury is being done to them when the opposite is attributed to them: "[Re:] The hidden mystery," he says, "the testimony of the Divine Spirit is absolutely necessary for anyone to believe the testimony of the Church and her judgment

concerning the approval of the Scriptures, and without this internal testimony of the Divine Spirit, even if the Church attests a thousand times, [it is only] when the Spirit recommends, promulgates, and approves the Scriptures, that faith will be obtained, or the people who hear will be persuaded;" Threefold to Whitaker, chap. 9. Also, Melchior Cano, *On Theological Passages*, book 2, chap. 8, and others. But we ask about the main argument or motive which the Holy Spirit uses in convincing us of this truth. Whether it is the non-artificial evidence of the testimony of the Church that the Pontiffs want; or is it really an artificial request from the marks of Scripture itself? This is what was decided. These two things must be carefully distinguished because they can throw enormous darkness into this dispute, and from this it came about that various people seemed not to have been quite successfully engaged in this dispute against their adversaries, as if this were the only thing sought: Whether the authority of Scripture depends on the internal conviction of the Spirit rather than on the testimony of the Church. For, as we have just said, the Pontiffs do not deny the necessity of the Spirit to convince us of this Authority, and if any difficulty were encountered in this respect, it would pertain to the question of Free Will, not of Scripture. But it is another thing to inquire from where, or by what means, and by what instrument the divine Scripture is to be known. Another is why, on account of what and what grounds such a thing is to be believed. Until now, as before, there has been an agreement between the parties that this should be done by faith through the power of the Spirit. But in these latter times there is a serious debate. For they say that we believe the Scriptures for the sake of the Church; But we, the Church, should be heard because of the Scriptures. He believes the Scriptures in so far as he receives the

testimony of the Church; we speak against the Church in so far as it is [in]consistent with the Scriptures.

XVIII. (2) It is also clear that the Church's Testimony is not to be debated simply, as to whether there is any reason for it; But rather of its weight and authority; Is it the first and foremost thing the Holy Spirit uses? For we do not deny the Church has its own roles, as we observed before: it performs the office of Custodian, Herald, Avenger, and Interpreter; But whatever she does here, we say that it is only ministerially and organically concurring, so that it is the medium of λειτουργικόν [ministering] and εισαγωγικόν [introduction] which the Holy Spirit uses, not κυριον [master] and principal; That indeed she preserves the truth, but does not establish it; she proposes but does not establish; she will point out and avenge, but not αυτοκρατορικως [imperially] judge. Just as the Edicts of Princes and Magistrates do not borrow their authority from the Heralds and Royal Ministers, although they make their Edicts known to the people through them. As a goldsmith, judging gold from copper or other metals with a balance or a stone, does not make the gold, but only indicates that it is true; and as a faithful Interpreter he must not reveal or bring out anything of his own opinion, but only bring out and elicit the hidden meaning by careful examination. But those with whom we deal do not only want service, but mastery; not that we only believe *through* the Church, but also *because* of her. Nay, the censor arrogates to himself the right of God to himself, and not only suspends our faith according to his own discretion, and their own from themselves, but also the voice of God Himself, imitating that which was not forbidden by the ancient Roman Senate, at which, "the divinity was pondered over human discretion," as Tertullian says, *Apology*, chap. 5, since he arrogates to himself the

same right in the Holy Scriptures. Hence the blasphemous audacity of Pope Nicholas who, in distinct. 19, Can. *If the Roman Pontiff*, he was not ashamed to decide, " This is only to be proved by the calculation of the Pontifical Romans, either approved or disproved, and therefore, the Old and New Testaments are ultimately to be accepted because the virtuous Pontiff has sanctioned them to be accepted by his authority and opinion."

(3) It is not asked whether the public testimony of the Church is to be preferred over the private testimony of each believer, as some wrongly form the state of the question: For apart from the fact that it is falsely supposed that the Spirit bearing witness in us is our own, whereas it is common to the Church, as we have seen before; The Spirit bearing witness to faith is not to be understood in the manner of something presented to the senses or evidence, but in the manner of a principle. And thus, no legitimate opposition can be established between the Church and the Spirit's testimony. But the question is whether the Testimony of the Church is to be preferred to the Testimony or marks of Scripture itself, so that we may believe the Scriptures because of that rather than because of this: The Pontiffs want us to follow them because [their opinion] is superior.

XIX. (4) It is not even asked whether there are certain characteristics and criteria in the Scriptures by which their Divinity can be shown as persuading, for the Pontiffs do not doubt this when they [allege it is *they* who] prove to us the Divinity of the Scriptures. Nay, they acknowledge not infrequently (so great is the power of the Scriptures that it sometimes bears true testimony from their enemies) that "nothing is better known, nothing is more certain, so that he must be

most foolish who denies having faith in it," as Bellarmine says, book 1, *On the Word of God*, chap. 2, so too Valencia, book 1, *On the Analysis of Faith*. But are those characteristics sufficient in themselves to establish faith of their Divinity in our minds? Or whether it is the chief motivator on account of which we are led to believe, and on which faith rests. But what they have erected they snatch away with the one hand, while denying what they had given with the other.

XX. (5) It is not asked whether the divine revelation is the formal reason of our faith simply and absolutely, or whether we believe something by divine faith. For the adversaries recognize this with us, or at least profess to recognize it. But what is that first and foremost revelation which must be believed by us by itself and for its own sake, and not for any other reason? Is it to be sought in the Scriptures or in the Church? We believe that it is contained in the Holy Scriptures, which is the first and most perfect Rule, and cannot or should not be sought outside of it. But the Pope must be sought in the voice and testimony of the Church, or in the brain of the Pope, in whom everything is finally resolved. From here the question is finally reduced to these terms, "Whence or for what reason or with what main argument does the Holy Spirit use to prove to us the Authority of the Scriptures? Is it the Testimony of the Church or the truth of the Scripture itself with its own arguments and criteria?" The Pontiffs asserted the former, but we claim the latter and undertake to demonstrate it.

**XXI. IT IS PROVED THE AUTHORITY OF THE SCRIPTURES DOES NOT
DEPEND ON THE CHURCH**

Now we can set up a proof of our bifurcated opinion, (1) κατ' ἀπορίαν, showing that the authority of Scripture does not depend on the Church.

(2) *κατα θεσιν*, by proving that the whole is founded on Scripture itself. And indeed, as regards the former, it is sufficiently gathered above, or from this one argument: The entire authority of the Church depends on the Scriptures, therefore it cannot reconcile any authority of the Scriptures, either regarding itself or regarding us. The reason for the consequence is self-evident; Because it is impossible for the same thing to have the same relation to the cause and to the effect, of the principle and of the principled, for in this way that which was before and that which came after would be known and unknown. The former proposition, however, is confirmed by a multiplicity of reasons.

(1) Because the Church is founded on Scripture and derives its specific being from it; for there is no Church without a calling, no calling except by the Word, hence it is said to be built on the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles, Ephesians 2:20. Hence, just as no house can even exist unless it has a substratum foundation, so neither can the Church unless the Scriptures are laid.

(2) Because one can have no certain knowledge of the Church except from the Word: For before we hear the voice of the Church it is necessary that we first be sure of the Church, whether it is, in fact, the Church. What is it? And where is it? Since these things cannot be perceived either by sense or reason, it follows that all this information is from Scripture, which not only teaches that there is a Church, but also describes it with those features and characteristics which do not allow us to claim ignorance. If, therefore, the Church is known from the Scriptures, and since it is already well known as far as we are concerned, then the Authority of the Scriptures does not depend on the Church [for authorization].

(3) Because the foundation of the Church's authority cannot be sought from any other source than the Scriptures. Is it possible for us to obtain such authority? Shall we expect it to be done by the authority of the Church itself? But this is precisely the issue in question. Such a hotly debated topic cannot be resolved using κοινή ἐννοια [common sense] alone. Therefore, it follows that we should have our perspective from the Word, and thus, the Word is first to obtain authority with us. Nor can the Adversaries doubt it when they are pressed by Us; When confronted with the question, How do they know the Church has this authority in consigning the Scriptures to the Canon, they immediately answer this is done because it is governed by the Holy Spirit. But if you insist further, where is it decided the Church should be so ruled? They immediately answer the various Scriptural testimonies by which they try to prove that Christ promised this, as Matt. 18:20, and 28:20, John 15:26, and 16:13, etc. Thus, they extract all their proofs from the Scriptures. How could this be properly done unless the Scriptures were first known and believed to be divine? Thus, they cut their jugulars with their own swords, establishing the dignity of the Scriptures by the authority of the Scriptures, while abandoning their opposite position, and either unwittingly or unwillingly confirming our opinion.

XXII. For this argument we extract the negative consequence. If the Authority of the Church depends on the Authority of the Scriptures, then we do not depend on the Church for the Authority of the Scriptures. [Yet our Adversaries insist] both are true: that at the same time the Church can borrow its authority from the Scriptures and the Scriptures likewise from the Church. And lest it should seem unreasonable to assert this, they try to prove it by citing examples. John the Baptist, they say, bore witness to Christ, and Christ to John; the

Epistles of Paul commend his authority magnificently, which, however, receive authority from their Author. We have no symbol of faith from any external authority except from the Church, in which, however, the Church itself is proposed to be believed. Thus, it would not be absurd if both the Church depended on the Scriptures and, conversely, the Scriptures depended on the Church. And this can be said with even more certainty, [they say], because the same Scripture which is said to establish the authority of the Church expressly affirms that it [the Church] is the pillar and ground of the truth, 1 Tim. 3:15, which could not truly be said unless the Truth contained in the Scriptures had won its Authority, in turn, by the Church's Testimony. Whence Bellarmine, book 6, *On the Church*, chap. 14, "If the Church is the pillar and support of the truth, The truth of the faith of the Church, as far as we are concerned, rests on the authority of the Church, and whatever the Church approves is true, whatever it disproves is false."

XXIII. But they try in vain to evade the force of our Argument. First, they gratuitously assume that it is both true to give the Church the authority of Scripture and again to take it from Scripture. For although in a different kind of matter in dispute it may sometimes take place that it is proved by an effect from the latter which proves the effect itself from the former, yet in the same genus is *ἀσυστατον* [inconsistent], unless we want the thing itself to be well-known and the obscure even better known because it is taken up for the proof of another, yet unknown because it is itself proved by another. Thus, we do not deny the testimony of the Church can prove the Scripture after the fact if used as an instrument or a medium, but we deny it to be the singular forceful argument and motive. Secondly, in the examples cited, they use false equivalences, which is an erroneous defense. It is one thing to bear

witness to Christ; it is another thing to unite with His authority; the former is correctly said of John the Baptist, but the latter is not the same. Wherefore Christ Himself, John 5:34, denies that He accepts testimony from men, as if, of course, He relies on it, but that He has a greater testimony than the testimony of John, that is, both His own works, the voice of the Father and the Scriptures themselves. Nothing stands in the way, therefore, regarding John's testimony about Christ, or Christ, on the other hand, testifying about John, because the justification for their testifying was quite different. John testified as a servant of the Lord, but Christ as the Lord who saves. John points others to Christ, as if with a finger. But Christ, as a King, confirmed the proclamation of His servant by His own authority; So that *through* John, but *not because of* John, they would believe in Christ, "He came," that is, "to testify of the light, that all might believe" δι' αὐτοῦ *through* him, not δι' αὐτόν *because of* him. Thus, we believe in the Word *through* the Church, not *because of* it; She bears witness to the Word, indicating and proposing it; But the Word testifies about the Church when it founds and establishes it. Paul's epistles commend the majesty of the Author after the fact to praise the work of its Maker; but Paul, as a man of God θεόπνευστος [divinely inspired] confers on them whatever authority they have before the fact.

(3) It is wrongly asserted that the Apostles' Creed has no authority except from the Church, since all of it is based on Scripture, from whom it has taken the words itself. Therefore, the whole force of their argument of the Church proving its [authority] from the Scripture [is defective because it's very existence is] founded upon the authority of the Scripture. So the Church could not give any authority to the Apostles' Creed, but rather it was transmitted [by the Church] to the

faithful as the sum of what is to be believed from the [authoritative] Scripture.

XXIV. As for the passage in 1 Tim. 3:15, in regard to the fact that it is the most problematic, which from time to time is objected to us as an argument with an Achilles heel, we must say a little more about it. I know that some learned men have had the mind to change the punctuation of this place so that 'the Church of the living God' completes the sentence with a period. For the pillar and support of truth is not referring to the Church, but to the Mystery of godliness [in verse 16], which the comma following points out, and also because it is not customary for Paul to begin his sentence with the particle 'kai,' and also because this is the most common way of speaking among the Jews when they speak of the principal articles, foundations and roots of their faith, as well as the heads of their faith; For whenever they begin to discuss their doctrines, they prescribe the foundation of foundations or the foundation of Wisdom at the threshold, which is clear from Maimonides, who starts his book about the foundation of the Law in this way: "The foundation of foundations and the pillar of Wisdom is to know that the first Being is." It is true that although it is an ingenious idea by which all the difficulty is completely removed, I do not know whether it is equally solid since the words themselves are clear to the reader that they are somewhat forced in this interpretation, which unites that which is divided and divides that which is united. Hence all the Syriac, Arabic, and Latin versions follow the received reading and refer it to the Church, to which the Fathers also join [in agreement]. And of course, when allowing the Scripture to remain as it is, the sense of it will be no less suitable. Indeed, the reasoning of Paul connects the two thoughts together very well. For the Apostle sets forth two

arguments in order to arouse Timothy to greater reverence and the pursuit of holiness. The first argument was made pertaining to the Church to which he ministered in a dignity which was such that the saint would strike a certain horror into all who gird themselves for this sacred λειτουργίον [ministry], “That you may know how each is to conduct himself in the household of God, which is the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.” Another argument is from the Mysteries whose proclamation was demanded of him, and due to the nobility and excellence of which is the great Mystery of godliness; whence he adds, Καὶ ὁμολογουμένως μέγα ἐστὶν τὸ τῆς εὐσεβείας μυστήριον [And without controversy great is the mystery of godliness], etc. Then the foundation of the Rabbi's wisdom is quite different from the Apostle's ground of truth. For Maimonides' *Halacha* and the foundation of Wisdom are the beginnings of his faith and the primary heads of his Religion, which must be held by all and supposed by the rest of the doctrine, such as the existence of God, etc., in which sense the Apostle, Heb. 6:1, calls the principles and rudiments of the Christian Religion θεμελίον [a foundation]. True, in this place Paul does not deal with the rudiments of Christianity, but with the great Mystery which includes understanding more difficult and more sublime chief heads of doctrine, which elsewhere he calls Wisdom among the perfect, 1 Cor. 2: 6.

XXV. However, even if the popular reading is retained, as we think it should be retained, nothing from it will come close to the opinion of the Pontiffs or depart from ours. (1) Because if the Church is called the pillar and ground of truth, this cannot be absolutely and simply understood only in those terms. For absolute truth is the pillar and foundation of the Church by which it is so established and supported

that it may stand when standing in truth or fall when truth is removed. For there would be no Church once the truth was banished from it. But the situation is very different with respect to the Church. For even if there were no Church on earth, the Truth would not perish, but the Truth would always remain in God, in the Angels, in the Blessed, and in the Scriptures. Therefore, in a very different sense, the Church is called the pillar of Truth, and Truth the pillar of the Church, for they mutually serve each other, but in different ways. Truth is the pillar of the Church exclusively and principally, while the Church is the pillar of Truth taken in a wider sense, ministerially speaking. The Truth is the pillar of the Church, really founding it and effectively supporting it. The Church is a pillar of Truth, preaching it and presenting it to the world. Truth gives existence to the Church, but the Church guards and protects the truth against Satan and the slanders of the world. Truth is the pillar of the Church in the architectural sense they say, but the Church is the pillar of Truth in the political sense. And hence Chrysostom says in Homily 1, inverting the sentence, "Truth is the stylus of the church." Irenaeus, book 3, chap.11, "The pillar and ground of the Church is the Gospel and the Spirit of life." And it can be said that Theodoret does not mean to take the pillar of Truth actively because it supports the truth, but passively because it is supported by the truth, as Truth marks the cause and the Pillar the effect. In this sense Dionysius, Bishop of Alexandria, according to Eusebius, *Church History*, book 6, chap. 41, he calls the martyrs "firm and blessed pillars of the Lord," not those who made the Lord firm. For it is far from those who have been so firmly established by Christ that they have steadfastly resisted even to the point of blood and life rather than preferring to throw away their faith. Thus, the foundation of God, 2 Tim. 2:19, is not *where* God is founded, but *what*

God founded and established. Thus, πλήρωμα τοῦ Θεοῦ [fullness of God], Eph. 3:19, is not that which completes God, but that which is completed by God. Hence, Pietro Contarini in homily 1, "It is not called a Pillar because the Church is firm and supports the truth, but because it is made firm by the truth."

XXVI. Secondly, it is one thing to be στῦλος καὶ ἐδραίωμα τῆς ἀληθείας [pillar and ground of the truth], but another to be θεμελίον or foundation. The Church is, indeed, said to be before, but not after, because it does not support the truth, but is itself supported by the truth as a foundation. Hence Paul, 1 Cor. 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ;" and elsewhere He is called a living stone and a cornerstone upon which the members of the Church must be built up as so many living stones, 1 Peter 2:7, Eph. 2:20. Hence, Irenaeus, book 3, chap. 1, he calls "the writings of the Apostles the foundation and pillar of faith." And Bede, book 1, in John 12, "The foundation," he says, "of the Church is in the solidity of the faith of the Apostles and Prophets."

Thirdly, Praise of the pillar and firmament of truth does not always imply the infallibility or authority of the one to whom it is attributed; so, in Eusebius, *History*, book 5, chap. 1: The faithful of Lyons say of Attalus the Martyr that he was "the pillar and ground of the Churches." Thus Basil, in letter 70, calls the primary orthodox bishops who stubbornly attacked Arianism the pillars and the foundation of the truth; and Gregory of Nazianzus marks Athanasius Basilus and Eusebius with the same name, vol. 1, p. 389. However, no one will say they won such authority for the truth of the Gospel because the truth depended on their testimony. Nor does Christ promise the victor in any other

sense, Rev. 3:12, that they will be a στῦλος [pillar] in the House of God on which the name of God, Christ, and the City of God should be inscribed to denote the immutability and constancy of happiness which corresponds to their constancy and faithfulness. For just as the pillars themselves were firm on earth, to protect the truth against all kinds of temptation, so the pillars will be in the heavens stable and immovable for the enjoyment of happiness. Thus, Gal. 2:9, Peter and James are called στῦλος because they were seen as the primary pillars of the Church; indeed, the same similitude frequently occurs among τους εξω [them outside the Church]. Thus, in the Republic honest and incorruptible Judges are called the pillars and foundations of justice; men distinguished by piety are called the pillars and light of the world; and in Euripides [plays] they call παιδες αρσενες [male children] οικων στῦλος, the pillars of families. Hence it is clear that although the Church is said to be the pillar and support of the Truth, the authority suspended from it is not immediately inferred from it.

XXVII. Fourthly, From this it is also very clearly certain that these words were used by the Apostle in reference to the particular church of Ephesus in which Timothy was then involved, for Paul speaks of the House of God in which Timothy dwelt. But the Pontiffs themselves recognize that the privilege of infallibility cannot be attributed to any one particular Church; and this very Ephesian Church long ago erred, nay, it perished from Christ through the destruction of Christ, Rev. 2:4.

Fifthly, Even if this related to the Catholic Church, it would not favor the Adversaries one whit, because it is clear this is to be understood of the collective Church or Assembly of the faithful over whom Timothy presided; not the representatives of the Superiors to whom they want

this privilege to exclusively belong. And because this praise, like most others, is attributed to the Church, it not promiscuously based on both the faithful and hypocrites who engage in its external [visible] communion; in which sense the Pontiffs understand the external Church to be composed of both good and evil, but formed by reason of the pious who properly constitute the Church and for whom alone it is properly named. Whence Jerome says in Job, chapter 26, "The Church, which is the assembly of all the Saints, is called the pillar and support of truth for its eternal stability in the Lord." But the ungodly who are ἀστηρίκτος [not support], who do not firmly love and retain the truth, do not belong to this Pillar, nor to the House of God, of which mention is made here, in whom neither God dwells nor does the truth have a fixed seat.

XXVIII. Sixth, Whatever is spoken here of the Church pertains to the task demanded of it; and is not always attended, resulting in a Church who does not always do what she is obliged to do: to preserve and defend the truth in any way she can, as in Malachi 2:7: The lips of the Priest are said to keep knowledge because he is obliged to do it out of duty, although he not always does so; indeed, as verse 8 shows. For the Church of Ephesus, of which the Apostle speaks here in particular, is already in decline, as has already been said. Therefore, the subject of the proposition must not be accepted without some limitation, of course, so that the Church is only called the Pillar and Base of Truth, in so far as she is the House of the living God who dwells in her through the Word and the Spirit, and in so far as she cultivates the truth, exalting it above herself, all the while retaining the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles upon which the Church must be built. Eph. 2:20. Otherwise, when they withdraw from her, because the external group

[Christians in Name Only] is sure to withdraw from the truth of God at some point, she should no longer be called the Pillar and Support of Truth, but rather the pillar of falsehood and the seat of error. For thus she loses her office and name, and is no longer properly the Church, but its ομονούμο [namesake], is even ψευδονυμώς [a pseudonym], if, instead of the mystery of piety, she supports μυστήριον ἀνομίας [the mystery of iniquity] directing [her disciples] into things other than where the truth is found. And here we firmly demonstrate that the Roman Church, no less than others, can claim this praise for herself, since she can no longer be considered the House of the living God, but rather the shrine of the Antichrist, and no more is the untainted truth heard there, but the most filthy lies and innumerable errors of the most dangerous kind: the Mother of Heresy and the School of Error are names she is deservedly called by her own students, such as Petrarch and Mantuanus and others. Nay, though it is so far from [the truth] the Pontiffs seek protection in this place [1 Tim. 3:15], allowing us to argue against the adversaries themselves from their own hypothesis. For by the very words which they use to prove the authority of the Church, they sufficiently show us that Scripture must be authentic *before* all testimony of the Church [is heard]; otherwise their argumentation will be futile, and they will go into a circle from which they will never be able to extricate themselves.

XXIX. And from these it is already clear enough, unless I am mistaken, that the adversaries wrongly place a great defense of their cause in this oracle of the Apostle. But since it is not yet clear as to its true meaning, let us see in a few words what Paul intended for himself, and what he particularly alluded to. Since he used a figurative metaphorical expression, doubtless he looked to someone which inspired his use of

columns. Though there were a few possibilities, either an architect for maintaining the integrity of a structure, or a Politician for the promulgation and protection of the Laws and Edicts that are enacted, Paul was not able to consider the first; not only because, in this sense, the Truth supports the Church which does not prop itself up; but also because he had already called it the House of God, which therefore, needed Truth as a foundation and a pillar on which to rest, let alone to support it. And so he must necessarily allude to the second, according to which they most frequently served for that purpose before the Courts, Praetorian Laws and Decrees of the Magistrates were weighed with public authority, to which Proclamations or Edicts were affixed so that they might be known to all, of which Demosthenes against Leptines and Pliny's *Natural History*, book 6, chap. 29, are to be seen as examples of this. Thus, the Church is most conveniently called the pillar and support of the truth, for the twofold reasons of Promulgation and Proclamation. Because the Church is bound to promulgate the Decrees of God and the Laws sanctioned by the inner counsel, for which reason λογια του θεου επιστευθησαν [God's Words were believed] and the heavenly Truth is made known to men as if it [belief] was suspended upon it; and also by reason of protection and custody, because she must not only propose it, but also vindicate and protect it from all corruption. For this reason it is called not only στυλος [pillar], but also εδραίωμα της προσείας [the ground of truth], because it is where truth lodges and, as it were, a throne and a fixed seat on which it sits. Favorinus interprets ιδραίωμα στηριγμα [foundation, support], that is, something on which nothing less than a column rests and stands upon. The etymology of the word itself opens ιδραίωμα from απο του ιδραίου [from the base] which denotes firmness and σταθιρόν

[steadiness];[Turretin then continues citing historical examples to reinforce his argument, such as Jerome]. This was Jerome's mind. "The Church," he says, "is the pillar and support of the truth because in it alone stands the established truth, which alone supports the building of the Church."

XXX. However, the Apostle does not seem to have looked only at the general use of columns; but to what more specifically did he allude when he mentions the House of God? Let us see what might have been the foundation of this expression. And to say nothing of the two columns, the one of brick, the other of stone, which men erected before the flood in order to inscribe in them their discoveries, of which is found in Josephus, book 1, *Antiquities of the Jews*, chap. 3; and not to mention the pillar of cloud and fire, which Moses presented to the people of Israel as a *οδηγον* [guide] and in which God is said to have dwelt. It is certain that in the Jerusalem Temple, which in a special way was called the House of God, there were several pillars to which Paul could point his finger; as he had called the Church the House of God, referring back to the Temple. Thus, could he call the same Church under another *σχεσει* [related] pillar, alluding to those two bronze pillars of which one [?]; the other was made mention in 2 Kings 11:14, and 2 Chron. 6:13, which is called just [?] bronze base and platform, which does not badly correspond to our *ιδραίωματί*, which had the shape of a column in such a way that it was also a platform and a royal throne on which kings used to sit whenever they were installed, as it is said of Joash when the king took the place of Ahaziah, 2 Kings 11:14, or they would make a covenant with God and take care to reform the worship of God for the better, as it is said of Josiah, 2 Kings 23:3, that "standing at the pillar he made a covenant with Jehovah." Or whenever

they solemnly performed something, as Solomon is said to have relied on it in the dedication of the Temple, 2 Chronicles 6:12, which was therefore called the Royal Pillar of the Jews. Thus, the Apostle presents to us an elegant allusion to the Truth: the Church is the Queen standing as a pillar and on a throne. Indeed, that pillar and platform indeed supported the King and lifted him up high, so that he could be looked upon by the people; but he himself did not gain authority, so the Church sets forth the truth, preserves it, and displays it so that it may be seen by men, but it does not bring it either authority or weight. And it can be said that Chrysostom, and after him Theophylact, wanted to set up an antithesis with the Jewish Church as well as legal shadows, so that they are [understood] opposed to Evangelical Truth which now most clearly [solves] the mysteries which were obscurely set forth under the Mosaic shadows, [now that we know] in what sense the Truth is taken, John 1:17. And so Paul let Timothy know what kind of holiness befits this House of God, no longer legal and secret, but true and real.

XXXI. Although we are easily led to believe that the Apostle looked at it [the Temple] because it was not unusual, we do not think the Sacred Writers, who allude to several things in the same phrase, reject the educated conjecture of men who want Paul to allude here to the Gentile Temples. Indeed, it is certain from the monuments of the Ancients that their temples were adorned throughout with several columns, the types of which were of various uses, not only for the support of the building, but also for its majesty and splendor. Hence, as Pausanias observes, images of the Gods or portraits of their Princes were often placed on their roofs. *Corinth.* p. 59, and *Eliac.* p 174. On some were hung arms, shields, and other trophies of victory; on others,

certain things were inscribed, such as eulogies, covenants, narratives of historical events, as a memorial to posterity, as Lactantius tells of the golden column placed in dedication to Jupiter Triphylum by Jove himself from Euhemero, as narrated by Lactantius, book 1, chap. 11. You will also read the decrees, precepts of manners, and the oracles as witnessed by Pausanias in Boethius' [*Consolation*].....[Turretin then gives several other examples of the use of columns during ancient times.] It is true that the mind of the Apostle did not obscurely infer [his imagery] from these; He had already contrasted the House of God not only to the Temple of Jerusalem, but also to the profane Heathen Temples. Thus, he establishes another contrast between the worship and decoration of both, because if the columns were seen to be wonderfully crafted, they were nothing but pillars of lies and error where nothing but mere fables and $\mu\theta\omicron\iota\ \alpha\theta\epsilon\omicron\iota$ godless myths and false images of the Gods were set forth. But in this mystical Temple he says that there is a very different pillar, not of lies but of truth, and in which are not presented the pretended false gods, but the living and most expressive image of the truth of God manifested in the flesh, who himself is the $\epsilon\acute{\iota}\kappa\omega\nu\ \tau\omicron\upsilon\ \Theta\epsilon\omicron\upsilon\ \acute{\alpha}\omicron\rho\acute{\alpha}\tau\omicron\upsilon$ [image of the invisible God], Col. 1:15. It does not set forth the 'wiser' myths, such as the wisdom in mystery of those who prostrated themselves in the columns of the Gentiles, indeed, [ours is] a great mystery of godliness, 1 Tim. 3:16, 1 Cor. 2:7, where the oracles of Apollo of a certain $\lambda\omicron\xi\omicron\upsilon$ are not to be read today, but the most certain $\lambda\omicron\gamma\iota\alpha$ [words] of the true and eternal God. Indeed, I preach to the Church nothing else than the sacred Truth of God and its Oracles and laws and covenants to be observed and followed by all, and to be handed down to posterity.

XXXII. And from these, in order not to get further involved in the elaboration of this passage, it is indeed clear that the Apostle wished here to commend the dignity and duty of the Church in the truth proposed and asserted. So then the Adversaries will not be able to carve out any lutes [on which to play songs] alleging their authority and infallibility are confirmed in this passage. Nor should Bellarmine be heard here, who asserts that nothing else is given to the Church than the guarding of the truth. The same may be said of the bookshops and of the boxes or cases which keep the Scriptures. For who does not see the great difference between the material and local observance of the Scriptures, which takes place in boxes and libraries, and the moral and formal preservation, preaching and defense of the truth, which belongs to every member of the Church; and when is it he is ever duly dismissed from this office? Thus, if the Church is said to be the Guardian, the one who guards it is not mute and ἀλογος [irrational], but alive and rational guarding it, so that she also prophesies, and by her proclamation commits the matter entrusted to her, which no one has said about the Library.

XXXIII. In vain Bellarmine also adds that the Apostle did not keep in mind the Scriptures, only the truth. For if he did not refer to the Scriptures, then why did he previously say that he is writing these things so that Timothy may know how he should spend his time in the House of God? Why is it elsewhere testified that the Scriptures are capable of σοφισαι [making you wise] to salvation? Nay, in the same way that he calls to mind the Truth, he calls to mind the Scriptures, since nowhere else can that Truth of which the Apostle speaks (obviously the saving and evangelical one which κατ' ἐξοχὴν [par excellence] is signified by this name because it is the most perfect of all

things, as eternal life is εἰσὸς [excellently] called life) be found, but in the Scriptures. Hence, when the study of the Word of God is commended to us, we should be enamored of no other than the Scriptures, Isa. 8:20, John 5:39 and 17:17, 1 John 2:20, 2 Peter 1:19, because the Bible is the only perfect standard of heavenly truth which the Church maintains as a pillar in its ministry. And if the Apostles foretold anything by word, they afterwards received it into the Scriptures, as Irenaeus well observes, book 3, chap. 1. And from this, Eph. 2:20 is explained by Stapleton that by the foundation of the Prophets and Apostles is to be understood the Doctrine preached. For when the Word, whether written or preached, is οὐσιοῦ [essentially] the same, and differs only in respect of the mode of revelation; if the preached Word is the foundation of the Church itself, then Scripture must also be granted as much. Hence Paul, who testifies he proposed all the counsel of God to his disciples, nevertheless affirms he taught nothing outside of Moses and the Prophets, Acts 20:27 and 26:22. And indeed from these up to the present time. Συν Θεῷ [with God's grace], the rest of the Dispute will be considered in the next part.