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

Part Two

I. We have at last attacked the serious and momentous Controversy between us and the Pontiffs concerning the Authority of the Scriptures, and we have seen what they were doing to clarify the state of the question, so that it could be clearly seen who agreed or who disagreed between the parties. We have also already proposed and asserted some arguments for the confirmation of the Orthodox [Protestant] opinion. We must now pass to others in which the same truth is demonstrated, and the $\alpha\upsilon\theta\epsilon\nu\tau\iota\alpha$ [authority] of the Scriptures independent of the Church is asserted.

II. THE ARGUMENT BY WHICH IT IS PROVED THAT THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE DOES NOT DEPEND ON THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH BECAUSE IT IS FALLIBLE.

So, therefore, the authority of the Scriptures is again shown to depend neither on us nor on the testimony of the Church. If human fallible testimony cannot establish divine and infallible faith, the Church's testimony will not be able to reconcile any Scriptural authority. So then in truth, therefore, before and after. The minor premise is self-evident; For since he can give nothing that he does not have, then that which is human and uncertain cannot be the cause and foundation of divine certainty. The consequence, however, is gathered from this: that whatever the testimony of the Church may be, it is nothing other than human, since it is the testimony of men either jointly or separately and

is, therefore, fallible and doubtful. This is further confirmed by the fact that Christ acting on the testimony of John, John 5:34, professes, "But I receive not testimony from man," so that He teaches this [truth], although He uses it to accommodate Himself to the Jews, who valued John as a man sent by God, and therefore, a testimony they did not dare reject. However, He did not desire it nor seek it, as if He needed it to gain authority for Himself. For He has a far greater Testimony by which He can more certainly be known: His own Works and the Father's own Oracle heard in heaven and recorded in the Scriptures, verse 36 [and 37]. Hence, Chrysostom in homily 1, "I, indeed, being God, did not need his testimony which is human," implying that it is absurd for a God-man to need to depend on human testimony, as if the Master from a servant, the Creator from a creature, God from man, and the first and infallible Truth from the uncertain and fallible word of mortals. Since the Scriptures are the Word of Christ, the rationale for both must be the same, so what is said about the Person of Christ must also be said about the Doctrine. This, however, is not said in the spirit as if we wished the testimony of the Church to be entirely removed from here, for we have already explained this in our refutation [Part 1]; but only to show that it is not absolutely necessary, nor can it lead us further than to human faith because of the very rationale of the principle from which it proceeds.

III. I know that our Adversaries falsely rule here on the supposition that the testimony of the Church is merely human and consequently doubtful and fallible. [For they claim] the word of the Church, that is, of the Council or of the Pontiff teaching from the Chair, is not at all the word of man subject to error, but in some way the Word of God, since it is spoken by the assistance and guidance of the Holy Spirit. Thus,

when God speaks through the Church, the certainty of the testimony depends on him and not on men. And from this they think that, clearly, the Spirit who is promised to the Church should lead her into all truth, John 14:14. I answer: Truly, it is not difficult to repulse this attack of our Adversaries.

(1) The Pontiffs commit violence [against Scripture] *κατα το βιαιον* when they do not claim the infallibility of the Church from any other source than from Scripture itself, for it will either be futile and their argumentation absurd, because it would then be necessary that the authority of Scripture should be made known and asserted to them before any testimony of the Church can be given.

(2) There is a sin in the false hypothesis that God, speaking through the Church, immediately renders it infallible. For there is a double inspiration to be distinguished, the one special and extraordinary which happened to the Prophets and the Apostles when *φερόμενοι υπο του Πνεύματος* [under the influence of the Spirit] they spoke, 2 Peter 1:19, which was really *αυτοπίετικν*, and though *αναμαρτησιαν* [they were sinners] He won over them. The other common and ordinary which is promised to Pastors and Teachers who duly discharge their duties, nay, and to individual believers, 1 Cor. 2:12, to whom is given the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation which, although it may be true in its order, has not set the servants of God out of all danger of error; who does not pervade minds with the splendor of His light so as not to leave in them the remnants of ignorance and error which prevent the testimony from being divine and infallible; since it is said to be divine only because it depends directly from God Himself and of those whom He willed to be *Θεόπνευστος* [divinely inspired], and since it was granted to no one

after the Prophets and Apostles, the modern Church would vainly claim this for herself.

IV. Nor should it be repeated here that the truth of the Divine Word is the same no matter who utters it, for apart from what is supposed and not proved, God always speaks through this Church, since it is certain that too often man's own heartfelt thoughts and visions block out the divine voice. It is also added that the authority of no Teacher can be compared with the Canonical Writers, since their word must always be weighed against the balance of these, so that nothing is admitted that does not agree with them. Hence, Augustine, book 2 [sic: 11], *Against Faustus the Manichean*, chap. 5, "In the innumerable books that have been written recently we may sometimes find the same truth as in Scripture, but there is not the same authority." Thus, to Jerome, Letter 19, "I alone," he says, "have learned to bestow both fear and honor upon those Scribes, who are now called Canons, so that I dare not believe any of them erred in writing."

V. In vain, however, they try to prove their opinion from the passage of John [14:14], when it is certain that the Apostles were primarily and most especially regarded here, who, as the Founders and Architects of the Church, must necessarily have had the gift of infallibility, and indeed obtained it by the extraordinary outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, which Francisco de Toledo, Cornelius Jansen and others of the Pontiffs acknowledged. Nor does it stand in the way of what Bellarmine quotes here from John 14:16, "This Spirit shall be said to remain with them forever," which cannot be said of the Apostles because they did not live forever, it must necessarily be referring to their Successors. For who does not know that eternity is not always

taken absolutely, but often κατά τι [somewhat], so that it is marked by a memorable duration which extends to the whole life of those in question; Thus, it is said that the Spirit will remain with the Apostles forever, inasmuch as He was never going to leave them during their whole lifetime. Thus, Luke of Bruges says, "Forever," that is, "not for three or four years, but as long as you live in this century, for His residing with you will not be temporary, as mine is," as Theophylact notes. Thus, 1 Tim. 6:14, Paul advises Timothy to keep the commandment until the bright coming of our Lord Jesus Christ; not that Timothy was going to live so long, but that they were perpetually subject to His observation; In the meantime, until then, on the hypothesis that he might live that long, he determined to maintain the command. However, we do not deny that Christ's promise can be analogically accommodated to each one of the faithful Pastors; nay, and to be fulfilled secondarily in each of the Faithful, in so far as they are guided by the Spirit by whom they are so led into all salutary truth that they never finally or totally fall away from the faith. However, no one will say that this gift is on the same level as the Apostles themselves, or that they are therefore made infallible, as the Anointing is said to teach the faithful all things, 1 John 2:20, although it is certain that even the faithful do not know everything, but only what is necessary for salvation and are not taught in such a way that they absolutely are no longer able to err. So the promise of Christ is to be understood with this limitation that the Spirit was going to lead the Church into all truth mediately through the Holy Scriptures inasmuch as He was going to lead them to the Word of God, which is the most perfect standard of all truth which, as long as they follow, they are never to deviate [from the truth]. And Christ Himself sufficiently hints

at this when He adds, "The Spirit will not speak of Himself, but will announce whatever He has heard," etc., lest anyone think He will propose new dogmas, rather than confirm the same doctrine that was preached by Christ. And thus, He will lead to all truth in no other way than by opening minds to understand the Scriptures. Again, although we grant that the Holy Spirit is always present in the true Church, guiding and teaching her not to fail in the faith, it cannot be inferred from this that all those who arrogate to themselves the title of Church while boasting the Spirit cannot err, can never stray from the truth or be corrupted. For the Holy Spirit is not bound to the succession of Bishops [of Rome], or to the Pontifical See, or to the external Ministry of the Church, which can often stray from the truth because of corruption, but it refers to the internal instruction of true believers, by which, when provided, they never fail completely from the truth. Finally, if this gift pertains to the Successors of the Apostles, either they will be understood distributed separately and individually or to all assembled in the Council. But neither can be said, not before, as Bellarmine himself testifies, book 2, *On Councils*, chap. 2, "The Spirit does not lead existing Bishops separately into all truth when they can err." And not later, for if individuals can err, why should they all be infallible at the same time [as in a Council]? It remains, therefore, that the Spirit was indeed promised to the Apostles as to extraordinary gifts, but to others that which was ordinary.

VI. ARGUMENTS AGAINST THE TESTIMONY OF THE CHURCH

Secondly, if the authority of the Scriptures as regards us depended on the Church, either it would be done by the collective Church, that is, by the Universal Faithful, or by their representatives, or by their Rectors,

and by them, either individually, or gathered together in a Council, or, in short, by some singular Pastor, in whom all power is vested, such as the Pontiff, as our Adversaries wish. But nothing of this kind can be said. For as regards the former, the Pontiffs themselves acknowledge that the collective Church does not have this right. The second can have no more place; for when the Pastors, either individually or collectively, are subject to error, by what means will they finally be able to bear certain and indubitable testimony? Nor can the Pontiffs deny this, who admit that councils, not only particular, but also general and ecumenical, may legitimately err, even when assembled by the Roman Pontiff himself, as is clear from Bellarmine, book 1, *On Councils*, chap. 6-7, and book 2, chap. 8-9. In addition, there is the ongoing question: by whose authority are the Pastors gathered in Councils? For this will either be done at one's own discretion, or by some special impulse of the Spirit, or by written Authority. But unique ενθουσιασμός [inspiration] was never approved by the Church and condemned in the Montanists and other heretics. Therefore, when finally turning to the Scriptures, as is necessary, we find the Scripture must establish its own authority before they gather together. Then it is also asked: How can we be sure the counsel of its Testimony did not err? Or else, on the other hand, it will arise from the voice of the Church itself. But whether the Church is itself the Council, whose authority it is disputed, or by the voice of Scripture itself, who will be able to believe either one unless its authority is previously known? Again, the Council will not make witnesses against the Adversaries themselves, but will only declare and pronounce the Scriptures divine. I ask on what foundation their judgment rests, and by what reasons they could have been led to make such a declaration. Or else they did it of their own free will and for no

other reason than because it so pleased them. But who has αλόγως [irrationally] persuaded them demanding to be believed for its own sake? Or they did so on the authority of the previous Councils and according to the testimony of the ancient Church. But not even in this way will the difficulty be removed; for we must at last arrive at the point of origin, unless we wish to go on to infinity. Or they did it under the influence of the Holy Spirit; but apart from that it cannot be evident to us of the divinity of that Spirit except from Scripture, since He is never separated from the Word. If He urged the Council to declare the authority of Scripture, He did so for no other reason than by showing the rays of divinity shining in the Word, from whose view the Council rightly pronounced that the Word was truly divine. But if the testimony of the Council concerning the word is based on the Word itself, how can it then be based on the Council's authority with us?

VII. THE SECOND ARGUMENT

But I would like to press the adversaries even more precisely. For if our belief in the Divine Scriptures is resolved into the authority of a general Council, let it be equally recognized by divine faith that this or that Council is legitimate. But this cannot be done, since it can only be proved by human testimony, indeed, it can be certainly possible; for in order that I may know that the Council is legitimate, it must be perceived by me; Or have all those concerned been lawfully summoned and attended the Council? Were they legitimate bishops and duly ordained? Was the voting freely done, otherwise was it the kind that, being doubtful and uncertain, the authority of the Council must also be uncertain. Again, if the Council must reconcile the authority of the Scriptures, it must first win us over. But by what agreement will they

finally be able to obtain it, if it has not yet been determined whether the Council is above the Pope or the Pope above the Council, for as long as nothing certain is sanctioned about the matter, it is still a matter before the judge, and neither party must be regarded as certain and indubitable. No one knows that among the Pontiffs this question was already once hotly debated and is still being agitated today and remains undecided, as Bellarmine himself testifies, book 2, *On Councils*, chap. 13, some claiming the authority of the Council above that of the Pontiff, others claiming the authority of the Pontiff above the Council. If, therefore, until now it remains undefined to whom that supreme authority is to be attributed, and if it is entirely free for anyone to doubt which is the infallible judgment, our thorn will always stick if it relies on no other authority. So, whatever the Council or the Pontiff judges about the Scriptures will always be in doubt, since it is based on doubt, hanging on to an uncertain beginning.

VIII. Let it also be granted that the Pontiff always maintains what is right and true, which is the opinion of the Jesuits and those of the Roman See, so that the Testimony of the Church is nothing other than the Judgment of the Pope. Not even by this tact will they strengthen their argument better or strengthen our faith more. First, because it is always uncertain who the true and genuine Pope is, since, according to the hypothesis of the Adversaries, the intention of the minister is absolutely necessary to perform the Sacrament, without which neither Baptism nor Ordination can properly take place, and no one can be sure of another man's intention; or was that Pope truly baptized and duly ordained, so, as a result, the entire Pontifical Religion, which rests on Pontifical authority, is uncertain and doubtful? Additionally, the same question always recurs, so it is clear to us that the Pontiff maintains this

right and does not err in his judgment. Or we shall have this insight from the Scripture itself, which has pronounced this power was given to the Pope by Christ. But what is the force of this testimony if we still doubt the Scriptures? Or from the ancient Traditions? But the same difficulty recurs regarding the truth of this Tradition. Or from the testimony of the present Church? But when the whole Church is finally brought from their own minds to one, the Pope, it follows that the Pope bears witness to himself, and to such an extent that he is to be believed simply because $\alpha\upsilon\tau\omicron\varsigma \epsilon\phi\alpha$ [of who he is], which everyone sees is most absurd. Again, when the reason for the Pope's judgment is clear, so that it depends solely on the mere discretion of the man who judges, such that his will replaces reason, and whatever he chooses to pronounce is to be believed; if this is the case, from whom will he be able to request [this infallible] faith? And why should his will rather than mine be the rule for me to believe? Or the basis of any judgment must be sought from the Scripture itself in order to pronounce that it is divine because Scripture itself is found to be such a being from its divine characteristics discovered through applying diligent study. Thus, with us the Scripture will always have its authority before any judgment of the Pope.

IX. And this assertion is confirmed by the fact that when the faith of all is one, as the Scripture clearly testifies, Eph. 4:5, the same truth must be the principle of faith, as well as the primary reason for believing, both in individual believers and in those who function as superiors who come in the name of representatives of the Church. Since the Church cannot itself be the first principle of belief in order to believe the Scriptures for its own sake, it must necessarily have some external foundation of its faith in the Scriptures. It cannot and should not be

imposed on the Christian people as the primary reason for believing, *αβασάνιστως* [without examination], we are to accept whatever the Church pronounces and ultimately restore our faith in her. But the reason for the Church's belief must be the same for each believer, so that they may, indeed, believe through her ministry, but not because of her authority, but only because of God speaking in the Scriptures, on whom the Church's judgment must be based and to whom she leads us by His testimony.

X. THE THIRD ARGUMENT

Thirdly, what was the authority of the Word before it was given in writing? It must be the same after it had been consigned to writing, since by it being written down it did not diminish its authority, but more firmly established it. Whence the Prophetic Word, which is no other than the Scripture of the Old Testament, is said by Peter, 2 Peter 1:19, *λογός τεβαρωτερος* [more sure word], that is, with respect to us, not only in the case of the testimony of any man speaking on earth, but also in the case of the voice of God Himself speaking in heaven. But the Word, before it was commanded in writing, was authentic in itself to those to whom it was conveyed, and no other external testimony was required. There was no external tribunal to consult the faithful to whom the Word was preached; no revelation was recommended by the authority of the Church, but was received by its own authority. From what cause did the ancient Patriarchs acknowledge the Word revealed to them to be the Word of God? Did any authority or judgment of the Church intervene here? Could the Word handed down by the Prophets be accepted as divine by the faithful except by taking refuge in some supreme tribunal of the Church, when we see that many times, against

the will of the Leaders of the [Israeli] Church, they expounded the Word of the Lord to the people, as Jeremiah testifies about himself, Jer. 8:8 and chapters 28 and 36. Thus, if we are talking about the Apostles, how did it happen that the Gospel preached by them obtained its authority among the hearers? Or by any testimony of the Jewish Church? But it was so far from approving the Gospel after assessing its message, that it tried to suppress it by all means, persecuting its Heralds with fire and sword. Did the Apostles have their own authority here? But who does not see that [their preaching alone] would have been a terrible thing among those to whom they were either completely unknown, as among the Gentiles, or hated and suspected, as among the Jews, to whom they were more familiar and more contemptible. And so, it remains that from no other source than from the sublimity, gravity and excellence of the doctrine itself, their Word obtained its authority with the faithful. And, of course, the Thessalonians, having heard Paul alone, without the testimony of any Church, embraced his doctrine as the Sermon of God, 1 Thess. 2:13; The Galatians received him as an Angel of God in the name of Christ Jesus, Gal. 4:14, without the recommendation of any Church. And the Bereans, Acts 17:11, did not demand the judgment of any Church to determine the truth of his word, for they only needed the truth of a single Scripture.

XI. THE FOURTH ARGUMENT

Again, if any decree or testimony of the Church had to intervene to demonstrate the divinity of the Scriptures, it was either singular or universal. First, it is absurd and useless because it deals with the faith of all who are Christians. The latter is false; for in regard to us nothing can be asserted from which the Scriptures had their authority. For the

Council of Jerusalem did not even touch upon this question, and the Old Testament already had its authentic canon; not only among the Jews, but also among the Christians, who confirmed their faith in their prophecies from the very beginning. After the Council of Jerusalem there was no universal judgment of the Church until Nicaea, that is, 325 years after Christ. I know the third Council of Laodicea and Carthage was brought in; but apart from the fact that they were only Provincial, and therefore specific, not universal and ecumenical, it is certain they did not establish the Canon, but assumed this had already been done. Canon 59 of Laodicea says, "Psalms should not be said privately in the Church, nor should books which are outside the Canon be read, except only the Canonical Old and New Testament." Thus, the third Carthaginian, "For we shall receive these things to be read from the Fathers." Therefore, the Canon was already established then, and no one can be cited from the Fathers who does not testify that it was already established before his time. Certainly, this is clearly gathered from the Council of Nicaea itself, where Arius could not have been condemned from the Scriptures, as Athanasius testifies in Eusebius, "from the words of the Scripture piously understood," unless the Canon of the Scriptures had already been established and recognized. But what is the use of many when the golden words of Emperor Constantine to the Fathers of the Council, which are found in Theodoret's *History*, book 1, chap. 7, remove all scruples. "The Gospels," he says, "and the Apostolic Books, as well as the Oracles of the ancient Prophets, teach us what to think about divine matters. Therefore, when there is disagreement, let us find the solution to the controversy from these divinely inspired words." If, then, the Scriptures were received from the Fathers and held for the Canons without any

particular or universal decree of the Church, Who does not see that their authority is wrongly suspended from the testimony of the Church?

XII. THE FIFTH ARGUMENT

And of course, the ancients were so far from suspending the authority of the Scriptures from the Church, so that, on the contrary, they held that the Church itself was to be sought for and known from the Scriptures, and nowhere else than in the Scriptures. Like all of us, there is one Augustine who occasionally insists on this against the Donatists, but nowhere is this more clearly witnessed than in the book, *On the Unity of the Church*, chap. 2, "Between us and the Donatists there is a question as to where we find the Church; what, then, are we to do? We seek it in His Words, who is the Truth and knows best His Body." Thus, chap. 3, "Let us not listen to, 'I say this, you say that,' but let us listen to 'the Lord says this.' Certainly, there are the Lord's Books, on whose authority we both agree, both believe and serve, there we seek the Church, there we argue our case." And a little later, "Let those things which are against us and one another be taken away, not the divine canonical books because we recite something else, but rather because I do not want the Holy Church to be shown from human documents but from divine oracles." And chap. 16, "Whether they," that is, the Donatists, "should only hold as the Church that which shows it by the Canonical books of the Divine Scriptures, because we do not, therefore, say that it is necessary for us to believe that we are in the Church of Christ because we hold to the Church of the Optatus, or Ambrose or other innumerable bishops of our communion or because so many wonderful things are done in it; Whatever such things are done in the Catholic Church are therefore to be approved because they are done in

the Catholic [Universal] Church, not that it is manifestly Catholic because these things are done in it. When the Lord Jesus Himself had risen from the dead and offered His body to be seen by the eyes of the disciples and touched by their hands, lest they should suffer any delusions, He judged that they should rather be confirmed by the testimony of the Law and the Prophets. These are the causes of our documents, these foundations," etc. These words prove more clearly than the noonday light that the Church is to be demonstrated by Scripture, according to the opinion of Augustine.

XIII. But because he chanted from his book "*Against the Fundamental Epistle of Manichaeus*," chap. 5, it is usual to repeatedly object to us the passage where he says, "But I would not believe the Gospel unless I was moved by the authority of the Catholic Church," so before we pass on to other things let us see for a few moments whether it is of any importance to confirm the sentiment of the Adversaries because it can easily be shown that an errant position has been brought against us. Let it not be said that our faith rests on human example or testimony. Whatever Augustine's mind may have been, it cannot be enforced against us, for we stand and fall only on our Lord and His oracles. There can be many arguments used here, from which it is abundantly clear that the sense which the Adversaries attach to these words is very alien both to the truth and to the mind of Augustine.

First, not a few Pontiffs of note teach that this is to be understood not of the present Church, whose [alleged] authority we are fighting against, but of the primitive Church, which, as Jean Gerson says in his Treatise, *On the Spiritual Life of the Soul*, Lecture 2, "It is the gathering of the faithful who have seen Christ, heard Him, and stood as

witnesses." And in that opinion are Gerson, Driedus, and Durandus; Or they want Augustine not to speak of the main foundation on account of which the authority of the Scriptures is believed, but of the means by which unbelieving men and novices in the faith are first brought to the knowledge of the Holy Scriptures. This is the mind of Peter de Alliaco, Cardinal of Cambrai, who argues thus about the Testimony of Augustine, "By the authority of Augustine," he says, "it is not held that he himself believed the Gospel by the authority of the Church as by the theological principle from which the Gospel is proved theologically to be true, but only as from the cause moving him to faith in the Gospel. It is not as if he or others had said, 'I would not believe the Gospel unless I was moved by the holiness of the Church or the miracles of Christ.' He did say that although some cause of faith in the Gospel is assigned, there is no prior principle of which faith is the cause for the Gospel to be believed." Thus, Melchor Cano, book 2, *De Locis Theologicis*, chap. 8, "It does not teach that the faith of the Church is based on the authority of the Church, but simply that there is no certain way by which either an unbeliever or a novice in the faith can enter the sacred books without the one and the same consent of the Catholic Church." But whichever way we follow these sentiments, nothing will come close to the opinion of the Pontiffs [who believe otherwise].

XIV. Secondly, it is certain that Augustine is speaking of himself here, not as he was then a Catholic, but either as he had once been a Manichean or in the person of a Catechumen. He may therefore acknowledge that he was led by the authority of the Church to believe the Gospel. It does not follow from this that faith depends on the Church's authority, because the rationale of beginners is different from that of those who are proficient or perfect. The Church can indeed be,

in respect of the former, a guide to the faith of the Scriptures, as we have said before, but it cannot immediately be the primary mover and master with respect of the faithful. Indeed, lest anyone should rule that Augustine should be seen to be speaking of himself already as a Catholic, from what he says in the imperfect [tense]: he would have been moved to believe, he would not have been moved to believe in any other sense than the perfect [tense]. We are inclined to answer that this phrase is familiar to us from the African custom. [Turretin continues with several more grammatical examples from Augustine.] Innumerable examples of this kind might be adduced to prove the frequent use of this expression by Augustine.... [Turretin then argues Augustine was merely speaking in the person of the novice/Catechumen, which is a necessary context to rightly understand the passage in question.] Thus, *Confessions*, book 3, chapter 10, “I mocked those holy servants and prophets of yours.” Not that he recognized they were Prophets when he was unredeemed, otherwise how could he have mocked them? But because they really were such and held by him as such later when he wrote this.

XV. Thirdly, Augustine deals with the outward motive for faith, which is ministerial and human, not with the infallible principle of belief. Although he admits the authority of the Church can be one of the motives for faith regarding those who are just beginning to prepare themselves for the faith of the Gospel, which he calls the appropriate beginning of the search in his book, *On the Utility of Belief*, chap. 7. He acknowledges, however, that it is not the only or main thing; but the very truth contained in the Scriptures is far more preferable to it [the authority of the Church], as is clear from chap. 4. After having brought up the various things by which he was bound to the Catholic Church, he

adds, "But with you," that is, the Manichaeans, "there is none that invites and holds the promise of only personified truth, which indeed, if it is so perfectly shown that it cannot be called into question, is preferable to all those by which I hold Catholicism, but if it is only promised and not presented, no one will move me from that faith which has fastened my mind with so many ties to the Christian Religion." So chap. 14, "Let us follow those who invite us to believe before we are yet able to look," (this is the first step and introduction to faith) "so that by faith itself we may deserve to be more powerful than what we believe to be understood," (that is, let us obtain from the practice of that age) "no longer to men, but to God Himself, strengthening and enlightening our mind internally." From which it is easy for anyone to gather that it was not the mind of this holy man to suspend the faith we have in the Scriptures upon the decision of the Church, but only to indicate we also confess the truth so that those who are not yet enlightened by the Church should be brought into reverence and docility, in order to learn Christ's faith from the Gospel. In this way the authority of the Church is like an introduction by which we are prepared for the faith of the Gospel. Hence, Johann Wessel's book, *On the Power of the Church*, rightly says the source of the Word is about believing, not comparison and preference. And it may not be inconvenient to refer to this that Augustine uses the word of agitation, not of persuasion, or of any other term, in order to imply that the Church makes the same claim of faith, not principally and primarily, but initially and organically, and indeed, as an auxiliary cause, not as an essential and primary cause.

XVI. Fourthly, the authority of which Augustine speaks is not that of law and power, as the Adversaries imagine here, as if it were to be believed

simply because the Church said so, but the Authority of dignity, which, of course, was sought from the great and illustrious documents of the divine Providence in the Church, in which is recognized the finger of God, such as the miracles among its people, the unanimity of its people, the long duration of its succession, and that kind of thing. Thus, chap. 4, "For if I were to omit the Wisdom which you do not believe exists in the Catholic Church, there are many other things which hold me most justly in its bosom: It holds the consent of peoples and nations; it holds an Authority begun by miracles, nourished by hope, increased by charity, strengthened by antiquity." In this sense, we do not deny that the authority of the Church can help the faith in converting and strengthen it in the converted, but it will never belong to the [alleged] fact that it is its primary foundation, which is not to be sought outside the truth contained in Scripture itself.

XVII. SCRIPTURE SHOWN TO BE PROVEN BY ITSELF

And from these things we have sufficiently deduced from the Church that the Scriptures do not borrow their authority, neither in regard to themselves nor in regard to us, which was the first head of our proof. We now proceed to the second, in order to demonstrate that the Scripture itself is proved by no other source than by itself, and that it is believed to be divine for its own sake. This, however, cannot be demonstrated by a single argument. First, from the nature of the highest classes and first principles. For if the highest classes of things and the first principles in the order of natural things have this special feature: that they are known only by themselves and cannot be demonstrated [as having an origin] elsewhere, otherwise things would go on ad infinitum, then Scripture, which is the first principle in the

order of supernatural Revelation on which the rest depend, must have its own authority and not be derived from elsewhere. But the Philosopher notes that this is about the nature of first principles, Topic 1, "Truths and first things are those which have faith not from others but from themselves, for it is not necessary to seek in scientific principles why, but that each thing is certain by itself." This is what Basil's words refer to in Psalm 115, "It is necessary that the principles of individual disciplines be such that we do not inquire into them." If then, the principles of other sciences do not borrow their authority from elsewhere but are known by themselves in respect of those who are powerful in natural light. Who will say that the Scripture, which is the first principle of faith, needs some kind of light to make it known to those who have enlightened eyes of understanding? Hence Lyra's prologue in the Bible, "Just as in philosophy the truth is known by reduction to the first principles [which are] known in themselves, so also in the Scriptures handed down by the Holy Theologians the truth is known as far as what is to be held by faith with reference to the Canonical Scriptures." Nor does Stapleton succeed in doing this for us, since he accepts that the principles are, indeed, not proven in themselves and are indemonstrable τω διοτι [for God's sake], but because of our slowness they are sometimes explained to us as to το οτι [the fact that] in this way the Scriptures are demonstrated by the Church, not for what they are in themselves, but what they are in relation to us, so that they may be accepted by us. However, now we do not seek by what means the Scripture can be known to us, but by what argument or for what reason it is held divine by us; that the Scriptures are factual, indeed, for God's sake. If then Stapleton admits that the Scripture cannot be proved from any other place except for

God's sake, but only as to the fact that He comes to us and bestows upon us what He will, we admit that the Scripture can be proved from the latter by its marks, but we deny from the former.

XVIII. Secondly, from Comparisons, as the objects of the senses are by nature so compared that they are judged by their well-disposed faculties as soon as applied to them, without any other external evidence, as being imbued with those qualities, the impact of which is easily recognized because of the mysterious proportion and agreement of the faculty to the object as the matter to the form. E.g., the Sun is seen by its own rays and innate brightness; food is known by its own sweetness; its smell is perceived by its own fragrance. So that even without witnessing the light of the sun, the sweetness of the food and the fragrant odor, I can easily recognize them by themselves and distinguish them from others. This very thing occurs in grace, and especially in the business it carries on. The Holy Scripture is presented to us with respect to the new man and his spiritual senses, Heb. 5:14; or under the image of the Sun and the wonderful light, Psalm 119:105; 2 Peter 1:19; as only the sweetest food and the sweetest honey, Psalm 19:10 and 119:102-103; Isa. 55:1-3; 1 Peter 2:2; like a most fragrant fragrance, Song of Solomon 1:3; like a most delightful voice, John 10:27, 1 John 1:1; like a sharp sword and a very penetrating fire, Heb. 4:12; Jer. 23:29, by itself it is easily recognized by the new man's senses, and by its own light, its own sweetness, its fragrance, and its efficacy. It offers nothing of itself by which to be known, making it necessary to find evidence elsewhere. From here the Sun of justice no sooner rises and spreads the glittering rays of the Word than the faithful immediately look upon him with the divine eye of faith and exult in his light, Mal. 4:2, John 5:35, the lovely voice of Christ, no sooner does it

ring in our ears than we hear it and obey it as His sheep, John 10:27; Song of Solomon 2:8. The bread of life and the honey of divine consolations are not immediately applied to him unless he immediately swallows it and tastes this good Word of God, 1 Peter 2:3; Heb. 6:5; Song of Solomon 2:3, and let the palate taste the sweet fruit. Christ's satisfaction and justice ὀσμὴν εὐωδίας [a sweet smelling aroma], Eph. 5:2, it cannot be proposed to him that he should run at the smell of his perfumes, Song of Solomon 1:3, and fly like a heavenly eagle into that divine πτώμα [corpse], Matt. 24:28. In short, the fire and sword of heavenly Truth cannot be drawn out and moved without immediately inflaming the soul and penetrating to the inner recesses of the heart; and he shall reach even to the division of the bones and the spirit, and the framework and marrow, and shall judge the thoughts and conceptions of the heart, Heb. 4:12. When, therefore, the Scripture calls itself Light, Food, Voice, Odor, Fire, and Sword, it testifies that it has an implanted and innate power, which provides a clear proof of its existence to all those whose senses are trained to distinguish between true and false, good and evil. Therefore, if someone asks by what reasons we should be convinced that it has flowed from God unless we take refuge in the Church, it is the same as if someone asks where we learn to distinguish light from darkness, white from black, sweet from bitter: For the Scripture does not convey a darker sense of its truth than do the things of color, white and black, and the tastes of sweet and bitter. Hence, Lactantius, book 3, *The Divine Institutes*, chap. 1, "The power of truth is so great that it defends itself, even in small matters, by its clarity."

XIX. This very fact can be further confirmed by the like. For if there is no effect in the natural world which does not refer to certain notes and

characteristics of its cause, whether natural or voluntary. If the individual works of God offer the wonderful virtues of the Worker for us to see, and represent Him in such a way that He is not obscurely known by them: Who will believe that Scripture, which is a great work of God, has no κριτήρια [criteria] of its Author? Nay, He ought to present Himself in it to us for contemplation all the more clearly because He wished to deliver it to that end that it might be the most splendid mirror of the Divinity, and an unyielding standard of faith and morals. In other words, it must be said that God was either unable or unwilling to express himself in it. Both of which are no less impious than absurd, and are equally opposed to God's Goodness, Wisdom and Power.

XX. FROM THE NATURE OF SCRIPTURE

Thirdly, we gather the same from the nature of Scripture itself. For what reason is there the Law concerning the Subjects of the Testament for the Custodians to whom it is committed? Or Rules and Regulations for the Artisan who uses them? It must be the Scriptures for the Church. For that law borrows its authority from the Subjects to whom it is carried or from the heralds to whom it is given to promulgate, but it has that authority only from the Prince who sanctions it. Nor does the Testament obtain its weight as regards us from Him to whom it is entrusted, but from the will of the Testator. Nor does the virtue of the gnomon and the ruler depend on the innate talent and skill of the craftsman who handles those instruments, but from its internal and essential property which God, the author of order and truth, gave to it. Thus, may the Church accept this eternal Law of the King of Kings as Subject to it, and promulgate it as a Herald. And may she keep the

Testament of the heavenly Father to apply this infallible Table and Rule, and let her use the rules like an expert craftsman for the building of faith. However, no one will say the authority of Scripture can be reconciled when it depends entirely on its nature and essential property, which was given to it by the Father of lights, the Author of it. Hence, the ministry of the Church is indeed left to the faithful, but with no authority; and if he adds or detracts from the orders received from the Lord, he incurs the same crime in which a Notary corrupts the records of a Testament, or promulgates a false Edict by a Herald, and falsifies a Royal Signature. Nay, the crime is so much more heinous against the eternal Divine than that committed against human perishables.

XXI. Nor should it be omitted here that the Pontiffs themselves want the Scriptures, with respect to the Church, to be like *Letters of Credence* (as Cardinal Perron called them) which would build up faith for him in his ministry, however earnestly the Cardinal desires to elicit the insufficiency of the Scriptures by using such a comparison because the Letters of Credence do not contain every instruction given to the Legate. Because there are not only Letters of Credence, but also an Edict from the Law of the Prince which sanctions everything to be believed and done so that it is forbidden to add or subtract anything from it. Nevertheless, we can use that person [the hypothetical Legate] as an argument, for the confirmation of the opinion that we are defending; for just as the Letters of Credence do not have their authority from the Ambassador or among those to whom they are sent, but only by the authority of the Prince himself and by his seal. Thus, although the Scriptures may be conveyed to us by the Messengers of God, they can never receive their weight and authority from them, but

finally from themselves and from the characters themselves, which are as it were the seal of the supreme Prince, by which it is most certainly recognized as divine and infallible by itself.

XXII. THE AUTHENTICITY OF SCRIPTURE IS NATURALLY PROPER IN AND OF ITSELF

Finally, surely we may compile more proof. If the Scripture is Authentic in and of itself, as we want it to be seen, this cannot be admitted by the Adversaries. For whatever confers upon itself the authority of the Scriptures, making it Divine and αυτοπιστος [self-authenticating], that also must necessarily gain our respect. For since the authority of the Scriptures is nothing else than its dignity and divine excellence, by which it is made to earn the faith and obedience of men, what prevents that which makes it present in itself also present to us? Especially so, since the Scripture is Divine in itself because of the wonderfully sublime mystery that is conveyed in it, and because of the perfect agreement of all parts with each other, and because of the teaching that is everywhere heavenly with nothing earthly, and because of the supreme sanctity and purity of both the dogmas and precepts, and because of the great effectiveness of the Word, which penetrates the inner recesses of the heart more powerfully than a two-edged sword, and because of other such κριτήρια [criteria] instilled in it. Why should the same evidence, exposed to the eyes of the mind, not instill faith in us? Or else Scripture is not sufficient in itself to establish or demonstrate its αυθεντιαν [authenticity] to us. But neither can this be said before because the Scripture is also self-authenticating for the Adversaries themselves, nor afterwards, because nature is the quality by which any subject is constituted, so that it may become known to us through its

nature, if only we wish to appeal to it, just as the heat by which fire is constituted is hot, or the flavor of food which constitutes its being savory declaring as much to those who have taste. The character or style of any book leads us to the knowledge of the Author without any other evidence, so that he who has been trained in the reading of Aristotle or Cicero will easily be able to distinguish genuine writings from suppositions by the style and character of speech, even if no one testifies this to him. Why should not even the divine characters of the Scriptures, which constitute His majesty and authority, also declare the same to us if only we desire to open the eyes of faith so as to devote ourselves to its study? Indeed, I do not doubt that the work of the Church can intercede in order to make it known to us through its intervention, but the ministry by which we are brought to that faith is one thing; the foundation and principal motive on which our faith rests is another. Nor can this be doubted by Bellarmine, who uses the same method. For disputing against the Libertines, he proves the Divinity of the Scriptures from the Characters inherent in them, book 1, *On the Word of God*, chap. 2, e.g., he solidly proved the Scripture from its marks; and thus, Scripture can be proved by Scripture or not, And thus, he runs into himself because he openly confesses, "There is nothing more certain in the Holy Scriptures which are contained in the Prophetic and Apostolic letters, so that he must be very foolish who denies having faith in them." In the same opinion are also the majority of the Pontiffs who, defeated by the force of the truth, acknowledged that the Scriptures are proved by themselves, whose testimonies we now omit for the sake of brevity. {Turretin then cites several works.] And from these demonstrations, without going any further, we

conclude that Scripture is so *αυτοπιστον* that neither it nor we depend on the testimony of the Church to give Scripture its authority.

XXIII. Here several objections are raised against us by the Adversaries, but because they have already been discussed in the preceding passages, I add only one thing which is usually posed to us as an insoluble knot. It is demanded that it is necessary for some infallible, visible speaker, an authority in the Church, to convince us of the authority of Scripture, as well as the truth of the Articles of Faith [i.e., the Pope]. For since the manner of the Scriptures or of its examination is not only difficult, but almost infinite and impossible for them, it is necessary to take refuge in the path of the authority of the Church, unless we wish that God had failed in this part which is of such importance to the faithful. But this way of examining the Scriptures is entangled with so many difficulties that it is inaccessible and impervious, not only to the faithful who are idiots and simpletons, but also to the most learned. For here it is first required to consider the intricate question of the Canonical books, in order to know whether the passage in question is truly authentic.

(2) Whether the version we use conforms to the original for which knowledge of the original languages is required.

(3) Are there not various readings in the quoted passages which weaken the strength of the argument?

(4) So that the meaning of the passage in consideration must be seriously weighed, whether parallel places or opposites occur which compel us to give it a different meaning, and other things of that kind which cannot be obtained without great effort and without the risk of error.

Hence, they conclude there is another shorter and safer way to be followed, of course: the way of their Church's authority in which the faithful can easily and without discrimination acquire a discernment of which [argument] has been renewed not so long ago by the defenders of the Roman Church, the Bishop Melden, Arnaldo, Nicole, and others, who are wont to applaud themselves for it, while [accusing our argument] as an Achilles, hopelessly used to crush their invincible argument.

XXIV. Truly, it is not difficult to repulse this attack of our Adversaries, first by retort, because whatever [argument] is brought contrary to [their interpretation of] the Scriptures falls back on their Church [to demonstrate otherwise], since [they claim] the authority of their Church is infallible. However, [this claim] cannot and should not be admitted unless it has been first proved. But how can it be proved? Is it from immediate revelation [from God]? But our Adversaries agree this is not given today. Or from Scripture? But neither can this be said, both because it is supposed to depend on the authority of the Church, and because, according to the hypothesis of the Adversaries, the way of Scripture is lengthy and impeded by a thousand obstacles. Or from Tradition? But the same difficulties recur, for here the true Tradition must be accurately distinguished from the false; original and varied readings must be examined, and the genuine meaning must be sought; And also there are the places in Scripture where far greater diligence must be paid because of the danger of corruption and seduction which, since these things are not within the grasp of the common people, renders even this way impossible. They will perhaps say that this knowledge can be had from the characteristics of divinity and

infallibility which are observed in their Church. But even this cannot satisfy:

(1) Because such features and characteristics are in large part compatible with false societies and schismatic churches which are not only not infallible, but which are actually engaged in error.

(2) Because various of these characteristics are either falsely and illusively attributed to the Roman Church, or she contains much less than what is believed [to be true].

(3) Because in the Roman Church there are many contrary characteristics, from which it is evident that it is not only fallible, but that it has actually erred.

(4) Finally, no less effort is required in investigating the truth of these facts with respect to the Roman Church. In a word, the way of authority which is pleaded here necessarily presupposes some previous examination first, so that we may know whether such a kind of infallible authority is given and spoken by the visible Church, which is rightly disputed and constantly denied by the Reformed.

Moreover, in which Church is that authority, and in which person or seat? Whether she has certain and evident marks and characters by which she is known; from which it is gathered that whatever is twisted into Scripture in order to elevate her authority is rightly cast into the Church.

XXV. Secondly, we answer unambiguously that it is gratuitously assumed that the way of examination requires a full and detailed discussion of all questions that can be moved, either about the canonical books or about the version or meaning of any place, which

would require a skill in languages and a great equipment of learning. Indeed, it must be properly observed that Scripture can be a rule of faith in two ways, either to produce faith in that degree of perfection and fullness of which a man can be capable in this life; or only to the level of simple sufficiency for salvation. With respect to the former, it is certain that a great deal of study and labor is required in the examination of all that is contained in the Scriptures, in shaking out the terms from the pen, in comparing the versions with the sources, in attending to the sequence of the subject of the speeches, the subject itself, the purpose of the speaker, while closely considering other circumstances separately, all of which simple folk, peasants or women are incapable. But for the latter, where the question is about the degree of faith in regard to the simple sufficiency for salvation which arises from the essential doctrines, there is no need for such a discussion because such doctrines are set forth quite clearly in the Scriptures, not just in one place, but in several places. Moreover, the faithful are effectively endowed with divine grace to sufficiently recognize and sense its truths, so that neither the variety of readings nor the diversity or imperfection of the version would prevent them from being apprehended, although they neither raised the question of the Canonical books, nor learned the original languages.

XXVI. We do not say this because we think the faithful can, without any examination, know the divinity of the Scriptures or the genuine meaning of any passage. For thus, faith would be blind and implicit, which we condemn in the Roman Church, which wants to be believed *ανεξισταως* [regardless] because it boasts that it is infallible. But we must distinguish a two-fold examination: one in which the difficulty of a full discussion of all that may occur either in regard to the marks of

Scripture or in regard to the meaning of any place, another which pertains to a discussion giving heed to the inclination of the mind to believe the truth. We recognize that the former is only learned, and we do not doubt that the road is long and difficult, which requires great work and study, and will require a large measure of learning. But the latter we contend also belongs to the simpler ones who can engage in it with fruit, if only they are guided with the right reasoning by the light of the Holy Spirit, by which the eyes of enlightened minds believe and embrace mysteries otherwise impervious and inaccessible to sense and reason. This is the examination and judgment to which the Apostles often exhort the faithful, whom they wish to examine the spirits, so that they may judge for themselves what they said. This the Bereans put into practice when they compared the words of Paul with the Scripture. By the intervention of the Holy Spirit the faith of the Gospel is established in us by His influence, whereby truth is like a supernatural light which comes into the mind, imbued with efficacious grace which is received as a lucid and clear impression.

XXVII. And hence it is not obscurely perceived how he can have a degree of maturity sufficient to generate true conviction in his mind. Without doubt the external light offers itself to us to be seen without any other means. As the objects of the senses by themselves affect our senses, as was said before, no other reason is needed to convince us that we can really see light, really taste the food, and other such sensory activities. Thus, the heavenly Truth, which is usually designated in the Scriptures by the objects of the senses, affects our spiritual senses so directly by His own light or sweetness that He does not allow Himself to be ignored. But He would instill in it [Scripture] a certainty and sufficiency to attain πληροφοριαν πίστεως [full assurance of faith],

not with evidence for scientific demonstration, but with the power of perceiving proof, which is sufficient to remove the scruples of doubt, calm the conscience, and to instill hope of salvation. That is, insofar as such objects can fully satisfy the legitimate and natural desires of the soul to obtain perfect happiness by insinuating Himself into our minds in such a way that they [Scriptures] are received as divine and true by all, both the weak and simple, as well as the learned and advanced. Wherefore this sense of conscience is sufficient to distinguish truth from evil, and to reject erroneous and fatal doctrines, as well as those which cannot stand with the essential and fundamental truths of Religion, with which each believer is imbued. For example, the principle of adoration of one God, which is the first foundation of Religion, is sufficient in the simplest of persons to reject the Worship of Creatures, although he will never perceive the controversy which is between us and the Roman Church concerning this head. The principle of the one Sacrifice of Christ is sufficient to reject the human satisfactions of Purgatory and Papal Indulgences. The principle of the truth of the human nature of Christ, who is similar to us in all things except sin, is sufficient to reject the Real Presence of Transubstantiation, the Sacrifice of the Mass, and the worship of the Host, which principle also applies to other false doctrines.

XXVIII. I know that our opponents have a retort to our opinion of the certainty of the truth discovered by the aforesaid examination, to follow [attend to] the aforesaid private individuals appointed by us to be infallible because no one can be convinced of the truth found by examination without believing himself to be infallible. There are many ways we can reply to such fiction.

(1) It is gratuitously assumed that no truth can be found by examination without infallibility; if this were the case, nothing certain could ever be found in the sciences and arts, because there is no mortal who is infallible. Therefore, it is one thing to be convinced that one is absolutely infallible and can never err, and another thing to be convinced that one has not erred in this or that doctrinal head.

(2) Although no one is absolutely infallible; it does not follow that no one can ever be bestowed this when certain he has not erred. This is because certain truths are given that are so evident and sensible, both in nature and in grace, that they impress their certainty on the minds, as seen above. Nor should it be retorted that heretics can also flaunt the certain conviction they have of their errors. For the empty and vain conviction based on illusions and false prejudices must not make the true certainty of the faithful, which is based on indubitable foundations and criteria, vanish. And if we cannot easily recognize the characteristics that distinguish false convictions from true ones, it follows that all convictions are less than true and real [and not to be trusted]. From which it is clear that God has not been lacking in things necessary for the faithful, although He has not left an infallible and visible authority in the Church to settle all controversies because Scripture alone can be sufficient for them as an infallible standard, if they are devoted to meditating on it with the help of the Holy Spirit. Our opponents argue it should not be said that the Church is not infallible because she [needs it by necessity since she] is established in a worse place than all other societies, exposed to factions of heretics and schismatics, and because Paul teaches there must be heretics, 1 Cor. 11:19, and the fact itself proves this. Our retort to this argument: If such an infallible remedy was instituted by Christ, why then did it not

obtain the result for which it was established in the first place? Why were heresies and schisms not repressed in the time of the Apostles and in the following centuries? Why are the Greek and Latin Church torn by various differences and are still being torn every day? Of course, the remedy must be useless because it never produced the effect it is said to produce. And, indeed, still ineffectual up to now.