

THE CONFESSION OF FAITH.

CHAPTER 1.-Of the Holy Scripture.

V. We may be moved and induced by the Testimony of the Church to an high and reverent esteeme of the holy Scripture.¹ And the heavenliness of the Matter, the efficacy of the Doctrine, the majesty of the Style, the consent of all the Parts, the Scope of the whole (which is, to give all glory to God), the full discovery it makes of the only way of mans salvation, the many other incomparable Excellencies, and the intire perfection thereof; are Arguments whereby it doth abundantly evidence itself to be the Word of God: yet notwithstanding, our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and Divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word, in our hearts.²

Question 1—*What function doth the Church hold in relation to the Scripture?*

Answer—She is 1.) the keeper of the oracles of God to whom they are committed, Rom. 3:2. 2.) She is the guide, to point out the Scriptures and lead us to them, Isa. 30:21. 3.) She is the defender, to vindicate and defend them by separating genuine books from the spurious, in which she may be called the ground of the truth, 1 Tim. 3:15. 4.) She is the herald who sets forth and proclaims them, 2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 10:16. 5.) She is the interpreter inquiring into the unfolding of the true sense. But all these imply a ministerial only and not a magisterial power. Through her, indeed, we believe, but not on account of her; as through John the Baptist the faithful believed in Christ, not on account of him, John 1:7; and through the Samaritan woman Christ was known by the Samaritans, not on account of her, John 4:39.

Question 2—*Do the internal marks of the Scriptures evidence it to be the Word of God?*

Answer—Yes. As 1.) the matter discovered within is heavenly indeed: the mysteries of the Trinity, incarnation, satisfaction of Christ, resurrection of the dead, *etc.*, are such that unaided reason could scarcely discover, 1 John 5:7, 8; John 1:1, 14; Rom. 5:8, 9; 1 Cor. 15:42-44. The purity of the precepts which regulate both the thoughts and internal affections of the mind are adapted to render man perfect in all virtue and worthy of his Maker, Matt. 5:27, 28; Ps. 119:104. Also, the certainty of prophecies concerning things even most remote and hidden; for the foreseeing and foretelling of things which depend upon the Divine will alone is the prerogative of the Deity, Isa. 41:23. 2.) The majesty of the style shines forth both in its simplicity as well as its weighty expression. Additionally, it demonstrates boldness in its scope of commanding all, from the lowest to the highest, Heb. 4:12. 3.) In its form, it shows forth the consent of all the parts. We speak of the Divine agreement and entire harmony (*παναρμονια*) of doctrine, not only between both Old and New Testaments in the fulfilling of prophecies and types, but also between the books of each testament. This agreement is manifested even more when one considers that the writers were many in number and wrote over a vast period of time in various places. This fact precludes the possibility of the writers concurring among themselves what things

¹ 1 Tim. 3:15.

² 1 John 2:20, 27; John 16:13, 14; 1 Cor. 2:10-12; Isa. 59:21.

were to be written. 4.) With regard to its end, the direction of all things to the glory of God and the salvation of men, Rom. 11:36; John 20:31. These criteria cannot be found in any human writing (which always display proof of human weakness) and prove the Scriptures truly divine, especially when, not each for itself, but all collectively are considered.

Question 3—*Does our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and Divine authority thereof, flow from the testimony of the Church or the internal marks of the Scripture?*

Answer—No. Our full persuasion and assurance of the infallible truth, and Divine authority thereof, is from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, bearing witness by and with the Word, in our hearts. The same Spirit who acts objectively in the Word by presenting the truth, operates efficiently in the heart also by impressing the truth upon our minds, 1 John 2:20, 27; John 16:13, 14; 1 Cor. 2:10-12; Isa. 59:21. Thus, he is very different from a spirit of enthusiasm, Isa. 8:19, 20. The private judgment of the Spirit (which is such subjectively to the subject in which it inheres) is different from that which is such originally because it depends upon man's own will. The Spirit that testifies in us concerning the inspiration of the Scriptures is not peculiar to individuals with regard to principles and origin, 2 Pet. 1:20, 21; John 16:13. Rather He is common to the whole Church and so to all believers in whom He works the same faith, although He is such subjectively with regard to each individual because He is given separately to each believer, Eph. 4:4, 5; 2 Cor. 1:22.