

for orthodox and genuine which, being taken from the Scriptures themselves (that is, from the spirit of that tongue in which they were written, they being also weighed according to the circumstances and expounded according to the proportion of places, either of like or of unlike, also of more and plainer), accords With the rule of faith and charity, and makes notably for God's glory and man's salvation.

Wherefore we do not despise the interpretations of the holy Greek and Latin fathers, nor reject their disputations and treatises as far as they agree with the Scriptures; but we do modestly dissent from them when they are found to set down things differing from, or altogether contrary to, the Scriptures. Neither do we think that we do them any wrong in this matter; seeing that they all, with one consent, will not have their writings matched with the Canonical Scriptures, but bid us allow of them so far forth as they either agree with them or disagree.

And in the same order we also place the decrees and canons of councils.

Wherefore we suffer not ourselves, in controversies about religion or matters of faith, to be pressed with the bare testimonies of fathers or decrees of councils; much less with received customs, or with the multitude of men being of one judgment, or with prescription of long time. Therefore, in controversies of religion or matters of faith, we can not admit any other judge than God himself, pronouncing by the Holy Scriptures what is true, what is false, what is to be followed, or what is to be avoided. So we do not rest but in the judgment of spiritual men, drawn from the Word of God. Certainly Jeremiah and other prophets did vehemently condemn the assemblies of priests gathered against the law of God; and diligently forewarned us that we should not hear the fathers, or tread in their path who, walking in their own inventions, swerved from the law of God (Ezek. 20:18).

We do likewise reject human traditions, which, although they be set out With goodly titles, as though they were divine and apostolical, delivered to the Church by the lively voice of the apostles, and as it were, by the hands of apostolical men, by means of bishops succeeding in their room, yet, being compared with the Scriptures, disagree with them; and that by their disagreement betray themselves in no wise to be apostolical. For as the apostles did not disagree among themselves in doctrine, so the apostles' scholars did not set forth things contrary to the apostles. Nay, it were blasphemous to avouch that the apostles, by lively voice, delivered things contrary to their writings. Paul affirms expressly that he taught the same things in all churches (I Cor. 4:17). And, again, "We," says he, "write none other things unto you than what ye read or acknowledge" (II Cor. 1:13). Also, in another place, he witnesses that he and his disciples -- to wit, apostolic men -- walked in the same way, and jointly by the same Spirit did all things (II Cor. 12:18). The Jews also, in time past, had their traditions of elders; but these traditions were severely confuted by the Lord, showing that the keeping of them hinders God's Jaw, and that God is in vain worshiped of such (Matt. 15:8-9; Mark 7:6-7).