

is the only ground of our justification and acceptance before God. He is our King, to whom our allegiance is due, not only as His creature, but as the purchase of His blood. To His authority we submit; in His care we trust; and to His service we and all creatures in heaven and earth should be devoted.

We believe, moreover, all those doctrines concerning sin, grace and predestination, known in history as Augustinian. These doctrines were sanctioned by the Council of Carthage, A. D. 416; by a more general Council in the same place, A. D. 418; by Zosimus, Bishop of Rome, A. D. 418; and by the third Œcumenical Council at Ephesus, A. D. 418. It is impossible, therefore, that we should be pronounced heretical without including the whole ancient church in the same condemnation. We not only glory in the name of Christians, but protest the true faith of Christ, and follow the communion of the Catholic Church. Still further to quote your own words, "Truth must continue ever stable and not subject to any change."

Neither are we schismatics. We believe in true "Catholic unity." We cordially recognize as members of Christ's visible Church on earth all who profess the true religion, together with their children. We are not only willing, but earnestly desire, to maintain Christian communion with them, provided they do not prescribe as a condition of such communion, that we should profess what the Word forbids. If any Church prescribes unscriptural conditions of fellowship, the

error and the fault are with such Church, and not with us.

But although neither heretics nor schismatics, we cannot accept your invitation; because we still hold the principles which prompted our "ancestors," in the name of primitive Christianity and in defence of the "true faith," bravely to protest against the errors and abuses which had been foisted upon the Church—principles for which our fathers were by the Council of Trent, representing the Church over which you preside, excommunicated and pronounced accursed. The most important of those principles are the following:—

First.—That the Word of God, as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, is the only infallible rule of faith and practice. The Council of Trent, however, demands that we receive, *pari pietatis affectu* the teachings of tradition as supplementing and interpreting the written Word of God. This we cannot do without incurring the condemnation which our Lord pronounced on the Pharisees when He said, "Ye make void the Word of God by your traditions."

Second.—The right of private judgment. When we open the Scriptures we find them addressed to the people. They speak to us; they command us to search their sacred pages; they require us to believe what they teach; and to do what they enjoin; they hold us personally responsible for our faith and conduct. The promise of the inward teaching of the Spirit to guide men into the knowledge of the truth is made to the people of