

men—less than one in a billion of all who have lived upon earth—were infallible when acting as agents, if not at other times in their lives. No, it is not permissible to *assume* the infallibility of the Bible, and then infer that of the agents, or *vice versa*.

II. *We have no test whatever which can discriminate between a fallible authority not yet transcended and an infallible authority.*

Consider the nature of human authority. A scientist, A, strictly defining his terms, says, "All x is y ." Previously, he had made many statements which had been verified by other scientists, and this agreement in results had established his reputation as an authority. Because he was correct in a number of instances, he is assumed to be correct in others. P, at any number of removes from A, observing something inconsistent with the proposition "All x is y ," or finding no record of the statement having been verified, may conclude to test it, and, noticing cases in which x is not y , dissents from his predecessor's conclusion. Before P appeared, the authority of A may never have been questioned since the time his reputation became established: but, obviously, however painstaking and conservative A may have been, there always existed—not a possibility merely, but—a strong probability that an induction based upon a greater knowledge of facts, the use of finer instruments, or a change in some other factor, would discredit some things which he held to be true.

This will illustrate what is true in the case of the Bible. The only legitimate foundation B can have for the statement, "The whole of the Bible is true," is a careful consideration of each and every proposition contained in it, and then, having found all of them true, his conclusion will embody the result of a perfect induction. But what does this imply? That the Bible in its entirety is really true? That it will withstand the tests which other men may apply through all time to come? No; but simply that, measured by the degree of development attained by B, no flaw was found. C, more unfolded than B, may at any time point out errors which will compel the re-statement, "Some of the Bible is not true." As it cannot be proved that C never can furnish evidence contradicting B, therefore no man is justified by reason in claiming that the Bible is an infallible book. Under circumstances most favorable to the case of conservatism, he could not go beyond the assertion, "No man has ever yet disproved a single statement made in the Bible."

III. *Only an infallible being can apply the necessary tests to prove that man or a book is infallible.*

We have to deal now, not with assumptions, uncertain beliefs, or guesses, but with the question of *sufficient proof*. The testimony of a fallible being cannot furnish sufficient proof, because the very attempt to measure another person with a view to finding out whether he is infallible or not, presupposes the possession of an infallible standard and