

strongly: "Why," he says, "passing by the rest, does He discourse with Peter concerning these things? He was the chosen one of the apostles, and the mouth of the disciples, and the head of the company. For this cause also did St. Paul take his journey to visit him in preference to the rest; and, withal, showing him he must have confidence, for his denial has been done away with. Christ places in his hands the empire over the brethren. He appointed Peter teacher, not of the Church, but of the habitable globe."

The supremacy of Peter is the conviction and faith of all Christian antiquity. These prerogatives of supremacy and infallibility conferred on Peter must in the very nature of things descend to his successors. Peter is, by appointment of our Lord, the rock on which the Church is built, and its firmness and stability depend on him. For the permanent good of the Church, and in order to preserve it safe from Satan's assaults, Peter is made its head and guardian. It follows, therefore, from these considerations, that for the security and well-being of the Church Peter's sublime prerogatives should continue as long as the Church herself will exist: that is, till the consummation of the world. Peter's authority must therefore continue in his successors. Hence, the illustrious Bousset truly says: "The prerogative conferred on Peter cannot be supposed to have ceased with him, because the foundations of a building designed to last forever cannot be subject to the ravages of time; therefore Peter will always live in his successor, and will always speak from his chair. Such is the Doctrine of the Holy Fathers, such is the declaration of the 630 Bishops assembled in the Council of Chalcedon." (Sermon on Unity.)

In order to the perfect fulfillment of the sublime duties of the primacy Christ conferred on Peter and his successors the gift of infallibility in teaching matters of faith and morals to the universal Church. This is evident from the scriptural passages which we have already cited to prove the primacy.