

if their Church be divinely infallible, then it is impossible to suppose that she could have ever erred in teaching the true faith of Christ, because she is always guided by the Holy Spirit of God, and therefore that all the alleged proofs of her errors are merely founded upon the private opinions of fallible men, in opposition to the divine authority of the Church. Protestants, on the other hand, compare the doctrines of the Church of Rome with the doctrines of the Bible, which is admitted on both sides to be divinely inspired—and from an induction of particular instances they assert that *some* of these doctrines are *not contained* in the Bible at all, while *others* are evidently *contrary* to the teaching of the Bible. They thus arrive at a result which is founded on the comparison of two important facts, and from this they conclude that the Church of Rome has manifestly erred in matters of faith, and consequently that her claim to infallibility is an unwarrantable presumption and an unfounded tradition.

This is simply the state of the question on this momentous subject, and it may be reduced to this brief inquiry—Whether is there strong evidence to prove that the Church of Rome *cannot err*, or to prove that she *has actually erred*? This alternative includes the whole controversy, when we take into consideration the solemn consequences involved in it, in the reception or rejection of all the doctrines and practices which are founded by the Church of Rome on the principle of divine Infallibility.

But what is meant by the Infallibility of the Church? It must be observed that “the Church” is here used by Roman Catholic Divines in a peculiar technical sense, not as including the whole body of the faithful, either visible or mystical, but only the *representative* Church, the “teaching and judging” Church, that is, the legitimate