

true doctrine of Christ is the unchangeable rule of Christianity, which can never be altered or superseded by any human authority. But the question is, whether it is possible for the visible Church ever to depart from teaching the true faith of the Gospel to such an extent as to require a reformation of her doctrines, and consequently to justify the separation of her members who are convinced of the necessity of such reformation, while others refuse to acknowledge the errors of their church. The Church of Rome maintains that the Universal Visible Church of Christ is preserved, by a special privilege conferred upon her by Almighty God, from the *possibility of error* in all matters of faith; and, therefore, that it can never be lawful for her members to leave her communion under any circumstances, or to attempt any alteration in her established system of doctrine. This special privilege is known by the name of the "Infallibility of the Church," and it is believed to consist in the perpetual guidance of the Holy Spirit, directing and controlling her in all her decisions. The Church of Rome further identifies *herself* with the Universal Church, and claims the privilege of Infallibility as her own peculiar prerogative; for though it has never been formally asserted or defined in any of her public decrees, yet it is virtually implied in all her proceedings, and strenuously held by all her Divines, as the very foundation of faith. It is attempted to prove this fundamental principle by certain arguments which appeal to the reason and judgment of mankind, and having succeeded in establishing this position, it follows that all the *doctrines* which she teaches are divinely true, as resting upon the same *principle* of infallible authority. She does not, indeed, encourage an examination of each separate doctrine on independent grounds of inquiry, as such a process might lead to their rejection on account of their apparent opposition to Scripture or to primitive