

I shall only remark that this doctrine on the one side exalts private judgment to a height above all law and authority, and on the other makes authority seem to be the sole warrant of private judgment! It exalts private judgment above all law and authority, for what I deem to be innocent is to me innocent, say law and authority what they will. For a second reason, because the opinion of the one or two or more theologians, which opinion is called authority, acquits me, only provided I myself deem the men to be learned and pious. Moreover, these are but private persons, and their expressed opinions are only the utterance of their private judgment. Yet while thus exalting private judgment, the doctrine makes what is called authority seem to be the sole warrant of private judgment. For the opinion of a writer or writers, being accepted as that of the learned and honest by my private judgment, is called authority. This whimsically-constituted authority is then made the sole ground on which is based my innocence in doing an act generally believed to be sinful. My judgment that the bad act is innocent renders it innocent, and the judgment of another man lifts my erring judgment above blame. No place here for the "deceivableness of unrighteousness," none for the allowing of yourself in that which condemns you, your deepest condemnation being that you not only do it but allow it, as "quite fair" in yourself; ay, and take pleasure in it as done by others.

The practical consequences of such a theory of morals are thus summarised by our reclaiming Jesuit: "According to the doctrine of *bona fides* always excusing from sin, taken as they explain it, countless unbelievers have not sinned when in many things, because of corrupt usage and habit, or because of evil counsel, they in good faith acted against the law of nature; for instance, when they worshipped idols, sacrificed their children to the gods, in honour of their gods slaughtered the martyrs, or celebrated foul rites with indecency, fornication, adultery, and other such actions. No more do countless heretics sin, when in good faith they persecute the true Church of God, lay waste its temples, slay the pastors of the Lord's flock. Nor yet do the faithful sin, or