

A If I will beleue the church. **¶** That is truth quod he, but ye proue me not yet that god hath bodē me beleue y church. **¶** He somewhat interrupted me quod I with your other subteltie, by which ye would it shoulde seme an absurditie to byd vs beleue the church. For as much as therby ye said it shoulde seme that we were commaūded nothing els, but eche to beleue other, and than in diuers opynions take, we coulde not wyt which parte shoulde beleue which. **¶** Wherof sith I haue shewed you the contrary, and remoued that blocke out of the waye for **B** combyng, we shall I thinke seme to the other point, that Christ commaūdeth vs to beleue his church. For as his father said of him selfe hyre him, so said he of his church whan he sent it abrode to be spred forth. **¶** For whan he had gathered his church of his apostles and his disciples, & therupon sent them forth to preache, said he not vnto them, he that hyreth you hyreth me? Did he not also commaūde that who so would not hyre the church shoulde be reputed and taken as paynyms & publicans? **¶** What was quod he, where men would not amende their lypng. Was it not quod I general where a man wolde not amēde any damnable faute? Yes quod he. Is misbeleue quod I none suche? Yes mary quod he. **¶** Than is quod I the church his Judge vpon his beleue, to shewe him whether it be trewe or false. So it semeth quod he. **¶** Hath his lypng quod I nothinge a do with faith? Howe mene you that quod he? **¶** Thus quod I, as if Luther late a frere & haupng now wedded a Donne, were commaūded to amēde his lewde lypng and put away that harlot, whom he abuseth in continuall incest and sacrilege vnder the name of a wife, and he would say that he did wel ynoughe, and that their bowes coulde not bynde them, were he not bounden to beleue the church and obey therto as well concernyng his beleue as his lypng? **¶** Yes verely quod he. **¶** Than aperereth it quod I that we be by Christe commaūded to hyre, beleue and obey the church, as well in matters of faith as of maners. **¶** Which thing well appereth also by that our loyde wolde that who so were disobedyēt shoulde be taken as a paynyme or a publicans. **¶** Of which two the one offended in misbeleue the other in lewde lypng. **¶** And thus it aperereth that not onely Christ is the man that ye be sent vnto & commaūded by god

to beleue and obey, but also the church **¶** is the person whom ye be by Christ commaūded to hyre and beleue and obey. **¶** And therfoze if ye will in faith or lypng or auoydng of all dānable error (that ye might fall in by mysseunderstandyng of scripture) take a sure and vnfallible way, ye must in all these things hyre beleue & obey the church, which is as I say the perso who Christ sendeth you to for the sure solucion of all such doubtēs, as to the mā in whose mouth he speketh him selfe, and the holy spirite of his father in heuen. **¶** And surely this is much to be marked. **¶** For it is the perpetuall order which our loyde hath continued in the gouernaunce of good men from the begynnyng, that like as our nature first fell by pryde to the disobedyence of God with inordinate desire of knowledg like vnto god, so hath God euer kepte man in humilite, strapyng him with y knowledg of confession of his ygnoraunce, & byndyng him to the obedience of beleue of certayne thinges, wherof his owne wit wolde verely wene the contrary. **¶** And therfoze are we bounden not onely to beleue agaynste our owne reason, the poyntes that God shewed vs in scripture, but also y God techeth his church without scripture agaynste our owne mynde also, to gyue diligent hyrnyng, ferme credēce, and faithfull obediēce to the church of Christ, concernyng the sefe & vnderstandyng of holy scripture, not doubting but sith he hath commaūded his shepe to be ledde, he hath provided for them holesome mete and trewe doctrine. **¶** And that he hath therfoze so farre inspired the olde holy doctours of his church with the lpyght of his grace for our instruction, that the doctrine wher in thei haue agreed, and by many ages consented, is the very trewe faith and right way to heuen, beyng put in their myndes by the holy hande of him, **¶** *omnes in domo*, that maketh the church of Christ all of one mynde.

The .xxviii. chapter.

¶ The messenger este sonys obiected agaynst this, that we shoulde beleue the church in any thyng where we fynde the wordes of scripture semyng playnly to say the contrary, or beleue the olde doctours interpretacions in any necessary article, where thei seme to vs to say contrary to y terte, shewing that we may perceyue the scriptures

A sure & true:
fallible waye.

Belene the
church with
out scripture

Math. 18.

A plainly, whan it appeareth one to you, and to the whole church another. ¶ Yet yf I see it so quod he, though holye doctours and all the whole church would tell me the contrary, me thinketh I wer nomore bounden to beleue them al, that the scripture meneth as they take it, thā yf they woulde all tell me that a thyng were white which I see my self is black. ¶ Of late quod I, ye woulde beleue the church in some thyng. And nowe not only ye would beleue it in nothing, but also wher as god wold the church shold be your iudge, ye would nowe be iudge ouer the church. And ye wyl by your wit be iudge whither the church in the vnderstandyng of holy scripture y God hath wrytten to his church, doo iudge a right or erre. As for your white & black neuer shall it be that ye shall see y thing black that all other shall see white. But ye may be sure that if al other se it white and ye take it for blacke, your euen bee soze deceiued. For the church will not I thinke agree to call it other than it seemeth to them. And much meruaile wer it if ye shold in holy scripture se better than the old holy doctours and Chyristes whole church. ¶ But yf I see quod I ye must consider that ye and I do not talke of one doctour or twayne, but of the consent and comen agrement of the olde holy fathers. For that we speake not of y doctrine of one mā or two in the church but of the comen consent of the church. ¶ We speake not also of anye sentence taken in any tert of holy scripture, wherby riseth no doubt or question of any necessary article of our faith, or rule of our liuing (For in other bye matters may there be take of one tert. x. senses peraduenture, and all good ynough withoute warantise of the best.) But we speak of such two diuers and contrary senses taken, as if yone be true, y other must nedes be false, & y as I say concerning some necessary point of our faith or rule of oure liuing, whiche is also depending bypon faith & reducible therto. As if one wolde holdy breke his vow for y he thought y no man wer bounde to kepe any. Such pointes, I say let vs consider, they bee y we speake of. And this remembred betwene vs, thā wyl we somewhat se what your saying doth proue. ¶ I shall not much nede quod I to speke with you in disputing, by what menes the scripture is vnderstanden, sith ys be agreed with nature and diligence the grace of God muste nedes go, or els no diligence or

helpe of nature can pzenasse. For I wyl nothing denye you, but that god maye & wyl also, geue his grace nowe to vs, as he gaued of olde to his holy doctours, yf there bee as muche towardnesse and no more let or impediment in our self than was in them. I will also graunt you y we maye nowe by thesame meanes by which they might than vnderstande the scripture as well as they did than, and I will not much sticke with you for one ace better. And wer it not for the sinnes that we sinke in, we might percase vnderstande it better by quater tre deuence, hauing their labours therein & our own therewith. But sithe I am so gentle to graunt you so many thinges, I trust ye wyl grant me this one, that yf any such point of our faith, as god woulde haue men bounden to beleue, they did vnderstande the scripture one waye and we a nother beig the one to the other so clene contrarye, that yf the one were true, the other must nedes be false, ye wyl than graunt I saye, that eyther they erre or we. ¶ That must nedes be quod he. ¶ Ye wyl also graunt quod I, that in suche pointes as we speake of, the error wer danable. For we speake of those pointes onely, to the belief wherof god wil haue vs bounden. I graunt y he. For damnable wer it i such case to beleue wrog. And wrog shold they or we beleue yf they or we beleued a wrog article, because they or we thought that the scripture affirmed it. And as damnable wer it and yet muche more, if we beleued a thyng wherof we beleued that the scripture affirmeth the contrary. For the beleued we that the scripture were false. This is y I very well said. But for the more playnnesse let vs put one example or twaine. And what point rather than the article touching the equalite in god, head of our sauioz Chyrist to his father. ¶ For yf the contrary beliefe were trewe, than wer this alway damnable & plain ydolatrie. Very trouth quod he. ¶ May not quod I the other example be the matter that we haue in hande, concertyng saintes reliques, ymages, and pilgrymages, which thinges if it be (as ye say many reckon it) ydolatrie, than is it yet worse to doo therein as we doo, than yf oure beliefe were wronge in the other pointe. And that as muche worse, as the saintes or y ymages either, be worse than the holy manhead of Chyrist. That is quod he very true. ¶ Than quod I let the fyrst point alone because therein we

A be all agreed, and I speake of the seconde, if the old fathers toke the scriptures one waye and we the contrarye. Though it might be that we wer able to vnderstand the scriptures as well as they, yet if thei so vnderstode the that they thought this kynde of woorthip not forbydden but commaunded and pleasaunt to god, and we newe men on the other syde thoughte it vtterly forbydden and holden for ydolatrie: the one parte did not in dede vnderstande the scripture right, but were in a damnable errour. That will no man deny quod he. I doubt not now quod I but that your self seeth verpe well howe

Many thinges I might here laye for them to proue you that thei erred not so. First their wittes as much as our new mens, their diligence as great, their erudicion greater, their study feruent, their deuotion hotter, their number fare greater, their time continued longer by many ages perseuering, the contrary oppinions in fewe and thole alway sone faded, thei taken alway for catholike, the contrary part for heretiques. Here might I laye you the holines of their life and the plenty of their grace wel appearing therby, and that our lord therfore opened theyzen and suffered and caused them to see the trouth. And albeit he vsed therein

None open myracle noz sencyble reuelacion, whereof as ye say thei none allege or pretende for the proufe of their oppinions in their interpretacions of holy scripture, yet vsed he the secret supernaturall meane, by which his grace assistente to good men that labour therfore, by motions insensible to the self, inclineth theyzen assent vnto the true side, and that thus y olde holpe fathers dyd in the point y we speake of, and in such other, perceiue the right sence of holy scripture so far forth at the leastwise, as thei wel knewe that it was not contrary to their belief. And here might I laye you also that if it had

Bene otherwise and that they had therein damnably bene deceiued, than liuyng & dyng in damnable erroz they could not haue bene saintes, as God hath shewed them to be by many a thousand myracle both in their liues & after their deatnes. With this might I also laye & very well conclude, that sythe thole holy doctozs and the churche, bee (as by their bookes plainly appereth) al of one fayth in this poynte and suche other, that therby wel appereth that the churche is in y trouth, and is not in the vnderstandyng of the scripture that speaketh of the matter a

ny thyng deceiued, but thei clearely de-
Creined that do vnderstand those tertes of holy scripture to the contrarye. These thinges as I say, & yet many other moze might I saye. But sithe ye did your self put the church and the both in one case, and so thei be in dede: I will rather proue you the trouth of them by the trouth of y church, than the trouth of the church by the trouth of the. And so semeth me good reason. For surely sithe they were but members of his church, god had his speciall cure vpon them mozte especiall for the profite of his churche, by whose hole cozps he moze setteth than by any member therof, saint, apostle, euangelist, or
F other. And therfore must I yet aske you againe whither the church may haue any damnable errour in the faith by mistaking of scripture or otherwise. That is quod he somewhat harde to tel. Now quod I somewhat I meruaile that ye remember not that your selfe hath agreed all ready, that these woordes of Chyriste spoken vnto Peter, I haue prayed y thy faith shall neuer faile, were not onelye
Luke. 22:
Peter head of
the church.

ment by the faith in Peter his owne person, but also by the faith of the churche. For to him was it spoken as head of the church. Yes I remember q he right wel that I agreed it. But I remember also y
C notwithstanding mine agrement ye wer content that we should ensearche againe and againe the matter otherwise besyde, wherin mine agrement should not bind me. Lo quod I that had I for gotten again. But let it than alone for the while and tell me this. Did not Chyriste entend to gather a flock & congregacion of people that should serue god and be his special people? Yes q he y is very trouth. For so saith plain scripture of Chyriste in sondrie places. As where the father of heauen saith vnto Chyriste in the psalme.
Postula a me et dabo tibi gentes hereditatem tuam, ask of me and I shall geue the payntm people for thine inheritauce, and many o-
H ther places. And els vndoubtedlye his whole comyng had bene in maner frustrate and in vaine. That people quod I whiche should be an inheritauce did he entende should endure for his owne dayes onelye whyle he liued here, or els that it should go forth & continue long after. Nay quod he that shall continue whyle the woerde lasteth here tyll domes daye, and after in heauen eternally. Shall this people quod I haue among them the knowledg and vnderstandyng what he woulde they shoulde
m. li. **do**

The differences
 betwene the
 olde doctours
 and the new.

A do to please God with all? *Pe quod he.*

Whither shall they quod I, haue thys knowledge for a while in the beginning and than lese it, or shall they haue it styl as long as they continue? Here he begā a litle to stagger. Why quod I, can ye call them his people anye longer yf they lese the knowledge howe to serue hym & please hym: if thei for south to doo they? duette as slacke seruantes sometime do, yet may thei mende and doo better another time. But if they lese the knowlege of they? duette, thā wote thei nere which

Way to amend, as he that knoweth fornicacion for synne, may fall by frailtye to fornicacion. But sith he knoweth it for nought, though he synned moze in y doying, than if he had not knowen y prohibition, yet dothe the knowledge geue him warning and occasiō of repētance & amendement, which must nedes lache if he had lost the knowledge. Wpō this he graunted that it must nedes be y thys people must nedes haue alway y knowledge how to serue and please our Lord, or els they ceased to be his people. Is not this people quod I called y church? *Yes quod he.* Than the church q I alway hath and alway shall by your reaso have the knowledge and vnderstāding, how god maye be serued and pleased.

Trowth quod he. Is quod I that knowledge fully had wythout the knowledge of such thynges as god bindeth vs to beleue? *May quod he.* What if we knew them in suche wyse quod I as we coulde rehearce them on oure fingers endes, & yet beleued thē not to be true, wold this knowledge serue? In no wyse q he. For if ye beleued them to be false, though ye so knew them that ye could rehearce thē by rowe, ye could take no warning by them to please and serue god with them, which is the cause wherfore the church

D should of necessitie know them. This is quod I very well sayde. Than sythe ye grant y the church shall ever endure, and that it could not endure wout the knowlege of such thynges as may please god, nor those thynges can bee all knowen yf knowledge lacked of those thynges that god byndeth vs to beleue, nor the knowledge of thē any thyng serue to y knowledge and warnyng geuen vs of goddes pleasure, but yf we not onely can tel thē but also beleue them, whiche beleue ye graunte is called faith, of this it consequently foloweth that the church all wayes hath and all wayes shall haue the knowledge and belief of such thynges

as God will haue it bounden to beleue. **C**

That is trouth quod he, because God hath lestē holy scripture to the church, and therein is all, and the church beleueth that to be true. And therfore therein and thereby hath the church all that warning and learning of goddes pleasure that ye speake of, without whiche it can not endure. Are ye there yet a-

Faith was before scripture.

We haue sondry wayes proued & agreed betwene vs, that this knowledge and faith was before scripture and wytyng, and many thynges of necessitie, to be bothe beleued and done, that are not in holy scripture. And yet after al this to long to bee repeted ye retourne a gayne to the firste pointe so often confuted, that nothing is learned nor knowen but by holy scripture. But nowe go to and suppose it were so, what shoulde ye wintie thereby? For what if God quod I hadde lestē the scripture to the church locked by in a close chesse, & that no manne shoulde looke therein, wold that haue serued? *May varde q he.* What if he hadde lestē it open and wytten in such wyse that no man could read it? What were all one quod he.

What if euery man quod I could reade it and no man vnderstande it? As litle wold it serue quod he as the other. Thā q I sithe it serueth the church to learn goddes pleasure therein, and that can it not as ye grant your self, but if y church vnderstande it, it foloweth of this that y church vnderstandeth it. And thus euery waye for the faith and knowledge of goddes pleasure, yf it bee as ye saye all knowen by the scripture, and no part other wyse, yet alwaye to this poynte ye bring it in the end, that the church hath the sure knowledge thereof. And then

The church hath the knowledge of scripture.

that be so, ye shall not as ye lately said ye shoulde, in any diuerse textes of scripture seming to make a doubtful article of our faith, & to bring in question what we be bounden to beleue, after ye haue read in scripture al that can be readde and heard on bothe sydes all that can be sayde, than take whiche part semeth to your self most profitable.

For if ye stande still for all that in a doubt, than after your bytter prayers made to god for his grace and gyde in y choyce, go take you the one part at aduerture and cleue therto, as though ye wer sure by your confidence in god, that hys grace had enclined your assent to the sure syde. But sith he hathe shewed you playnly by reason that he hath geue his church

A church in all suche thinges knowledge of the trowth if ye will take the sure way and put your self out of all perplerite in the point it selfe, and the scriptures that touche it, ye shall take for the truth that way that the church teacheth you therein howe so ever that matter seme beside vnto your self or to any man els.

The. 29. Chapter.

The authour proueth by scripture that God instructeth the church of Christe, in euery trowth necessarilye requisite for our saluacion.

B Truly quod he ye wynde it well about. But yet ye made as though ye woulde haue shewed that God had in scripture tolde me, that he had and ever would tell hys church y^e trowth in al such maters. And now ye bring it to the poynt, not the holy scripture tellethe me y^e tale but mans reason. And surely as I shewed you before, I dare not wel trust reason in maters of faith and of holy scripture. I began quod I to proue it you by scripture, and ye than putte me out in the beginning. Howbeit this reason hath scripture for his foundacion and ground.

C And though it somwhat bylde further thereon, yet is not reason alwaye to be mistrusted where sayth standeth not against it, nor god sayeth not the contrarye. Excepte reason bee so farr out of credence with you, that ye wyl not now beleue him yf he tell you y^e twise twaine make soure. I wene you will fare by reason as one did once by a false shewe. He swaue that he would not for. x. li. heare hym say his crede. For he knew him for suche a lyer that he thought he shold neuer beleue his crede after, if he hearde it once of his mouth. Howbeit quod I let vs yet se whether god himself in scripture tell you the same tale or no. God tellethe you in scripture that he would bee with his church to the ende of the worlde. I thinke ye doubtte not thereof, but those woordes he spake to the whole church that than was and ever shall bee from the apostles dayes continued till y^e ende of the world. That in good faith quod he must nedes bee so. Than were this in good faith ynough or I for oure purpose, syth no man doubteth, wherfore he will be with his church, except we shold think that he would be therewith for no thing, wherfore shold he be with it but to kepe it and preserue it wth the assistance

Reason is not to be mistrusted where sayth standeth not against it.

Math. 28.

of his gracious presence from spiritual mischiefes specially, and of all other specially fro infidelitie and fro ydolatre: which was the spectail thyng fro which he called his church out of the gentiles which els as for mozaill vertues and politicall yf they had not lacked the ryght cause and ende of referryng theyr actes to god, were many of them not farr vnder mani of vs. Let vs go further. Woth he not in the. xlii. c. xvi. Chapter of saint John agayne and agayne repete, that after his going he will come again to them. And saith he will not leue them orphanes, as fatherlesse children, but wil come again to them himself. Let vs adde now therunto y^e woordes before rehearsed, that he will be with them till the woordes ende, and it appeareth playn yf he met all this by his whole church that shold be to the woordes end. When he said vnto them I call you frendes, for al that I haue heard of my father I haue made knowen to you, he spake as to hys perpetuall church and not to the Apostles alone, but if he saide to them alone these woordes also, I commaund that ye loue eche other, so that none shold loue eche other after but only they. Now lest the thinges that he taught them shold by the church after be forgott, which was more to be doubted than of the selfe yf heard it, he said vnto them also. These thynge, quod he, haue I spokē to you abiding here with you. But the comforter whiche is the holy ghoost (whome my father shall sende in my name) he shall teache you al thing, and he shal put you in minde and remembrance of al thyng that I shal haue saide vnto you. So that here ye see that he shall agayne allwaye teache the church of new, the old lessones of Christ. And he said also to them, that this comforter, this holy ghoost, the spirit of trowth, shold be sent to abide wth the for euer, which cannot be ment but of y^e whole church. For the holy ghoost was not sent hither into y^e earth here to dwel with the apostles for euer, for they dwelled not so long here. Now if the spirit of trowth shall dwel in the church for euer, how can the church erre in perceiuing of the trowth, in such thinges I mene as god wil binde them to knowe or shall be necessary for them to knowe? For onely of such thinges ment our lord, when he said that the holy ghoost shal teach them al thing. For as saint Poule saith, the manifestation and shewing of y^e spirit, is to the vtilitie and profite. This holpe

John. 14

John. 15

John. 16

The church cannot erre.

m. lli. spirits

A spirite also was not promised by our saviour Christe, that he should onely tell his church again his words, but he said further, I haue quod he, besides al thys many thinges to saye to you, but ye bee not able to bere them nowe. But whan he shal come that is the spirit of trouth, he shal lede you into all trouth. As our lord saide not that the holy gost shoulde write vnto his church all trouth, but y he should lede them by secrete inspiracion and inclinacion of their heartes into all trouth, in which must nedes be conueined both informacion and ryght be-

B lief of euery necessary article, and of the right and true sense of holy scripture, as farre as shall bee requisite to conserue y church fro any damnable errour. Now whan the holy ghoſte shall by gods promise, bee for this purpose abiding in the church for euer, and Christe hymself hath also sayde that he wyl not leue hys church as orphanes, but wil com hys self, and be with it vnto the ende of y woꝛlde and sayth also that his father is in hym, and he is in his father, and y his father and he be bothe one thing, not bothe one parson, but both one substance, & with

John. 14

The whole
Trinitie is re-
sident with
the church.

C the holy ghoſt bothe one god, than must it nedes folow that to the woꝛldes ende, ther is in the church resident y whole trinitie. Whose assisence being to y church perpetuall, howe can it at any time fall from true faith to false errors and heresies?

The.30. Chapter.

Wheras the messenger had thought before, y it wer hard to beleue ani thig certainly saue holy scripture though the scripature did agree therein and commaunde it, the authour sheweth that sauing for the authoritie of the church, menne coulde not knowe whas scripture they shoulde beleue. And here is it shewed that God wyl not suffer the church to bee deceiued in y choyle of y very scripture of god from any counterfeit.

Nowe is it I suppose well and clerelye proued by scripture the thng that I promised, that is to wytte that y church can not erre in any such substance all article as God wyl haue bounden to beleue. But yet for as muche as ye regarde nothing but scripture onelye, this woulde I sayne wytte of you, whyther ye beleue that Christe

was borne of a virgin. What els q he. Why beleue you that quod I? The ghoſpel sheweth me so quod he. What yf it byd not quod I, were than youre Crede out of credence, but yf he byynge wytnesse with hym? The Crede quod he is a thng by it self. Yet is it quod I no parte of the ghoſpell as the Water noster is. And yet I thinke, yf ghoſpell hadde neuer bene written, ye wold haue beleued your Crede. So thinke I too quod he. And wherefore quod I, but for because the church should haue shewed you so? But lett our Crede alone a while and go we to the ghoſpell selfe. Whiche ghoſpel telleth you that Christ was borne of a virgin? The ghoſpell of saint Luke, quod he. Howe know you that quod I? For I reade it so q he in the boke. Ye reade quod I suche a booke. But howe knowe you that saint Luke made it? Howe knowe I quod he other bookes, but by that they beare the names of their authours writte vpo the. Knowe you it wel ther by quod I? Many bokes be ther that haue false inscriptions, and ar not the bokes of them that they be named by. What is trouth quod he. But yet though men did peradventure erre and faile in the name, as yf he shold repute a boke of stories to be made by Titus Titius, which he neuer made but some other honest conning man, yet wer the bokes neither lesse eligaunt nor lesse true therfoze. For in likewise if the church byd misake the verpe name of some Euangelist and ghoſpel, yet were the ghoſpell neuer the lesse true. That is quod I wel l said. But how be ye sure th at the matter of the boke is true? Mary quod he for I am. What is quod I the reason that a mayde layeth for her owne knowelodge of her maydenhead. But she coulde tell another how she knoweth she hath it, sauing that she is lothe to come so nere as to bee a knowen y she coulde tel how she might lese it. But here is no sache feare. Tel me therfoze wher by wot ye that the matter of that boke is true? I thinke quod he that god sheweth me so. That is well thought q I. But he tolde it you not mouth to mouth. So quod he. But he hath tolde it to other in the begynnng or els it was wel knowen in the begynnng whan he wrote it. And he was knowen and beleued by his lyuynge, and the myracles that god byd for him. And after that it was once knowen, the knowelodge wente foorth fro manne to manne. And God hath so wrought

A wrought with vs that we beleue it because the whole Church hath alwaye done so before our dayes. Howe coms you quod I to the very popnte. For many thinges hath bene true, that in procelle after hath leste to be beleued. And many a thing hath in h beginning been knowe for false, and yet hath after hap- ped to be beleued. But the gospels & holy scripture, god prouideth that though p- case some of it may perithe and bee lost, whereby they might haue harme, but not fall in erreure for the sayth shoulde stand though h scriptures wer all gone) yet shall he neuer suffer his church to be deceued in that poynte, that they shall take for holye scripture any booke that is not. And therefore saiethe holye saint Austine, I shoulde not beleue the ghospell, but if it were for the church. And he sayeth good reason. For were it not for the spirit of God keepng the trouth thereof in his church, who could be sure whiche were the very ghospels? There were many that wrote the ghospel. And yet hath the church by secrete instructe of god, reiected the remenaunt and chosen out these sowe, for the sldre vndoubted trewe. What is quod he sure so. This is q I so sure so, that Luther himself is driuen of necessitie to graunt this, or elles he perceiureth that there were none holde noz suretie in scripature it selfe, yf h church might be suffered by god to be deceued in that poynte, and to take for holy scripture that writng that in dede wer not. And therefore he confesseth that this must nedes be a sure ifallible ground that God hath geuen this gifte vnto his church, that his church can alwaye discern the woerde of god from the woerde of mene. In good faith quod he, that must nedes be so, or els all would faile. And I than ye that would beleue the church in no thing, noz geue sure credence to the tradicion of the church, but if it wer proued by scripture, now see it proued to you, that ye could not beleue the scrip- ture, but if it were proued to bee scrip- ture by the iudgement and tradicion of the church. So quod he, but whē I haue learned once of the church, that it is holy scripture and the woerde of God, than I beleue it better than I beleue all the church. I might by a light person some- time knowe a muche moze substan: all man. And yet whan I know hym, I wil be: ue him muche better than hym, by whom I knowe him, if thei varped in a tale and were contrary. Good reason q

sayth dothe stand without scripture.

B

C

I singular great gifte.

D

I But the church biddeth you not be- leue the contrarpe of that the scripture sayeth. But he telleth you that in suche places as ye would better beleue h scrip- ture than the church, there ye vnder- stande not the scripture. For what so e- uer woordes it speaketh, yet it meaneth not the contrary of that the church tea- cheth you. And the church can not bee deceued in any suche weightie popnte. Whereby shall I know quod he? Why be we at that point yet quod I: haue we so sone for: gotten the perpetual assistece of the Trinitie in his church, and the praiour of Christ to kepe the faith of his church fro sayling, and the holpe ghoff sent of purpose to kepe in the church the remembraunce of Christes woordes and to lead them into all trouth: what wold it haue profited to haue put you in remē- bzaunce of the assistence of god with the children of Israell walking with them in the cloude by day, and in the pillar of fyre by night in their earthly vbiage, and therby to haue proued you h much moze special assistence of god with his christē church in their spiritual vbiage, where- in his especiall goodnes well declareth his tender diligence, by that he dothe vouchsafe to assist and comfort vs with the continuall ptesence of his pzeiousse body in the holye sacrament? All this would not help, if manifest reason that I made you, and euidēt scripture that I rehered you, cannot yet pzynt in pour heart a perceiuing that the assistence of god in his church must nedes pferne his church from all damnable erreurs in the faith, and geue his church so farre sozth the vnderstanding of scripture, h thei may wel perceiue that no part ther- of well vnderstande, standeth againts any article that the church beleueth, as parcel of their christen faith. say quod he I perceiue it well whā I remēber it, but it was not ready in remembraunce.

A

The pzeiousse of Christes boode in the sacrament.

B

The 31. Chapter.

In that the church can not erre in the choise of the true scripture, h au- thour proueth by the reason whiche the kinges highnes in his noble and mosse famous booke obiecteth againt Luther, that the church cannot erre in the necessarye vnderstanding of scripture. And finallye the authour in this chapter doth briezely recapit- le certaine of the pzyncipall pointes that be before proued. And therewith endeth the first booke.

A **E**t would I quod I aske you one thing, wherefore thynke you, wil not, Christ suffer his church to bee deceiued in the discerning of holpe scripture from other wryting, and suffer them to take a booke of holy scripture, that wer none in dede: Lette men might quod he, of some false boke reputed of holy scripture, haue greate occasion geuen them to concele the wronge doctrine and wronge oppinions of the faith, yf God woulde suffer his church to take a false deuised booke for holpe scripture and for his owne holpe woordes. We sape quod I verpe trouthe. Howe what yf in the verpe scripture he shoulde suffer his church to misse the ver. e sentence in a matter substanciall of oure faith, wer they not in like parell to fal by false vnderstanding in to like errours, as they myght by false wrytinges? Yes that they were quod he. For sooth quod I, so were they and in muche more. For in a false booke misse taken for scripture, though they hadde it in neuer so high reuerence for some good thinges that they founde in it, and thereby shoulde haue great occasion to beleue false errours wrytten in the same, yet hauing as the church alway that haue the true faith, firste in hearte, they shoulde finde many mistes to kepe out y errours. But nowe yf we falsely shoulde vnderstande the true scripture, there were no waye to scape fro damnable errours. And therefore maye I sape to you, as the kynges highnesse most prudently layed vnto Luther, sith god wyl not suffer his church to misse take a booke of scripture, for perill of damnable errours that might ensue thereon, and like perill maye there ensue by the misse construing of the sentence as by the misse taking of the boke, it muste nedes folowe that God will in thynges of oure faith no more suffer the to take a false sentence for true, than to take a false booke for scripture. And with this reason his highnesse concluded hym so clerely, that he durste neuer since for shame touche that poynts againe, noz any colour coulde lape, but that vpon his own confession in al substanciall poyntes concerning the sayth or knowledge of vertue pleasant to god the church hath so right vnderstanding of scripture, that it wel and truly perceineth, that no terte therein ca be right vnderstanden, against any article that the church beleueth for thing to bee be-

lened of necessitie. And this point durst he neuer since touch noz make aunswere thereto, albeit that the kynges highnesse with this one pointe alone plainly turneth by and destroyeth the grounde and foundation of all heresies that Luther would haue beleued. And therefore of al thinges had Luther gretest cause to answer this pointe earnestly, and would vndoubtedly if he had wylt how. Surely yf your frend I meruayle not though he did not. For this pointe is to clere he coulde not, And I am herein fully satisfied. Than bee you quod I satisfied in this also, that the faith of the church is a right rule to cary with you to yf it be of scripture, to shape you y vnderstanding of the textes by, and so to take the as they maye alwayes agree ther with all. We it quod he. Than are ye quod I also fully answered in this that where ye saide ye shoulde not beleue the church telling a tale of their owne, but onely telling you scripture, ye now perceiue that in suche thinges as we speake of, that is to witte necessarpe poyntes of our faith, if they tell you a tale whiche if it were false were damnable, ye must beleue and maye bee sure that sythe the church can not in suche thinges erre, it is very true all that the church in suche thinges telleth you. And that it is not their owne woerde, but the woerde of god though it bee not in scripture. That appeareth well quod he. Than are ye quod I, as fully satisfied that where ye lately saide that it were a disobedience to god and preferring of the church before hymselfe, if he shal beleue the church in suche thinges as god in his holpe scripture sayeth hymselfe the contrarpe, ye now perceiue, it can in no wise bee so. But sythe his church in suche thynges as we speake of cannot erre, it is impossible that the scripture of God can be contrary to the faith of the church. That is very true quod he. Than it is as trewe quod I, that ye bee further fully answered in the principall poynte that the scriptures layed agaynst ymages and pilgrymages and woorschip of saintes, make nothing agaynst them. And also that those thinges, ymages I meane & pilgrymages, and prayng to saintes, are thinges good and to bee hadde in honoure in Christes Church, sythe the church beleueth so. Whyche as ye graunte and see cause why ye shoulde graunte, can in suche poyntes not bee suffered for the speciall assistance of god and

The church
that alway
haue the
true faith.

Note.

The faith of
the church is
a right rule to
the study of
scripture.