

“On the broad shoulders of William Perkins, epoch-making pioneer, stood the entire school of seventeenth-century Puritan pastors and divines, yet the Puritan reprint industry has steadily bypassed him. Now, however, he begins to reappear, admirably edited, and at last this yawning gap is being filled. Profound thanks to the publisher and heartfelt praise to God have become due.”

—J. I. Packer, Board of Governors’ Professor of Theology,
Regent College, Vancouver, British Columbia

“Without a doubt, the Puritans were theological titans. The Puritan theological tradition did not emerge out of a vacuum. It was shaped by leaders and theologians who set the trajectory of the movement and shaped its commitments. William Perkins was one of those men. Perkins’s contribution to Puritan theology is inestimable, and this new reprint of his collected works is a much-awaited addition to all who are still shaped and influenced by the Puritans and their commitment to the centrality of the grace of God found only in Jesus Christ. Even now, every true gospel minister stands in debt to Perkins, and in his shadow.”

—R. Albert Mohler Jr., president, The Southern
Baptist Theological Seminary

“The list of those influenced by the ministry of William Perkins reads like a veritable Who’s Who of the Puritan Brotherhood and far beyond. This reprinting of his works, so long unobtainable except by a few, is therefore a publishing event of the first magnitude.”

—Sinclair B. Ferguson, professor of systematic theology,
Redeemer Theological Seminary, Dallas

“The father of Elizabethan Puritanism, Perkins presided over a dynasty of faith. The scope of his work is wide, yet on every topic he treats one discovers erudition and deep reflection. He was the first in an amazing line of ministers at Cambridge University’s main church. A pastor to pastors, he wrote a best-seller on counseling, was a formative figure in the development of Reformed orthodoxy, and a judicious reformer within the Church of England. I am delighted to see Perkins’s works made available again for a wide audience.”

—Michael Horton, J. Gresham Machen Professor of Theology
and Apologetics, Westminster Seminary California

“William Perkins was a most remarkable Christian. In his relatively short life he was a great preacher, pastor, and theologian. His prolific writings were foundational to the whole English Puritan enterprise and a profound influence beyond his own time and borders. His works have become rare, and their

republishing must be a source of real joy and blessing to all serious Christians. Perkins is the first Puritan we should read.”

—W. Robert Godfrey, president, Westminster Seminary California

“This is a welcome collection of the gospel-saturated writings of William Perkins. A faithful pastor, Puritan leader, prolific author, and lecturer, Perkins defended the doctrines of the Protestant Reformation throughout his life. Giving particular emphasis to *solus Christus* and *sola Scriptura*, these Reformed doctrines drove him as a pastor to preach the unsearchable riches of God’s truth with confidence and assurance. Sadly, Perkins is unknown to the modern Christian. However, throughout the centuries, the writings, meditations, and treatises of this Puritan luminary have influenced Christians around the world. It is my hope that many will be introduced and reintroduced to the writings of this Reformed stalwart. May his zeal for gospel advance awaken a new generation of biblical preachers and teachers to herald the glory of our sovereign God in this present day.”

—Steven J. Lawson, president, OnePassion Ministries, and professor of preaching at The Master’s Seminary

“Relatively few in the church’s history have left a written legacy of enduring value beyond their own time. Perkins is surely among that select group. Reformation Heritage Books is to be commended for its commitment to making his *Works* available in this projected series, beginning with this volume.”

—Richard B. Gaffin Jr., professor of biblical and systematic theology emeritus, Westminster Theological Seminary

“Christians have heard about William Perkins, especially that he was an extraordinary preacher whose sermons made a deep impression on Cambridge and that they were still impacting the town in the decades that followed Perkins’s death at a mere forty-four years of age in 1602. He was at the heart of the revival of truth and holy living that made the Reformation a glorious work of God. He was the outstanding Puritan theologian of his time, but most of us have not had the opportunity to study his works because of their rarity. After more than three hundred years, this ignorance is going to be ended with the remarkable appearance during the next decade of the complete works of this man of God. We are looking forward to their appearance very much. There will be sufficient gaps between their publication to ensure a sincere attempt at imbibing the truths of each volume, and then we face the challenge of translating Perkins’s teaching into flesh-and-blood living.”

—Geoff Thomas, pastor, Alfred Place Baptist Church, Aberystwyth, Wales

The Works of
WILLIAM PERKINS

The Works of WILLIAM PERKINS

VOLUME 7

A Reformed Catholic
The Problem of Forged Catholicism,
and Universality of the Romish Religion
A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times,
and An Instruction Touching Religious or Divine Worship

EDITED BY SHAWN D. WRIGHT AND
ANDREW S. BALLITCH

General editors:
Joel R. Beeke and Derek W. H. Thomas



REFORMATION HERITAGE BOOKS
Grand Rapids, Michigan

The Works of William Perkins, Volume 7
© 2019 by Reformation Heritage Books

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be used or reproduced in any manner whatsoever without written permission except in the case of brief quotations embodied in critical articles and reviews. Direct your requests to the publisher at the following addresses:

Reformation Heritage Books

2965 Leonard St. NE
Grand Rapids, MI 49525
616-977-0889 / Fax 616-285-3246
orders@heritagebooks.org
www.heritagebooks.org

Printed in the United States of America
19 20 21 22 23 24/10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

ISBN
ISBN

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Perkins, William, 1558-1602.

[Works]

The works of William Perkins / edited by J. Stephen Yuille ; general editors: Joel R. Beeke and Derek W. H. Thomas.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 978-1-60178-360-8 (v. 1 : alk. paper) 1. Puritans. 2. Theology—Early works to 1800. I. Yuille, J. Stephen, 1968- editor. II. Beeke, Joel R., 1952- editor. III. Thomas, Derek, 1953- editor. IV. Title.

BX9315.P47 2014

230—dc23

2014037122

For additional Reformed literature, request a free book list from Reformation Heritage Books at the above regular or e-mail address.

Contents



General Preface	ix
Preface to Volume 7	xi
<i>A Reformed Catholic</i>	1
<i>The Problem of Forged Catholicism, and the Universality of the Romish Religion</i>	169
<i>A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times, and An Instruction Touching Religious or Divine Worship</i>	411
Scripture Index	515
Subject Index	

General Preface



William Perkins (1558–1602), often called “the father of Puritanism,” was a master preacher and teacher of Reformed, experiential theology. He left an indelible mark upon the English Puritan movement, and his writings were translated into Dutch, German, French, Hungarian, and other European languages. Today he is best known for his writings on predestination, but he also wrote prolifically on many doctrinal and practical subjects, including extended expositions of Scripture. The 1631 edition of his English *Works* filled over two thousand large pages of small print in three folio volumes.

It is puzzling why his full *Works* have not been in print since the early seventeenth century, especially given the flood of Puritan works reprinted in the mid-nineteenth and late twentieth centuries. Ian Breward did much to promote the study of Perkins, but Breward’s now rare, single-volume compilation of the *Work of William Perkins* (1970) could only present samplings of Perkins’s writings. We are extremely pleased that this lacuna is being filled, as it has been a dream of many years to see the writings of this Reformed theologian made accessible again to the public, including laymen, pastors, and scholars.

Reformation Heritage Books is publishing Perkins’s *Works* in a newly typeset format with spelling and capitalization conformed to modern American standards. The old forms (“thou dost”) are changed to the modern equivalent (“you do”), except in Scripture quotations and references to deity. Punctuation has also been modernized. However, the original words are left intact, not changed into modern synonyms, and the original word order retained even when it differs from modern syntax. Pronouns are capitalized when referring to God. Some archaic terms and obscure references are explained in the editor’s footnotes.

As was common in his day, Perkins did not use quotation marks to distinguish a direct quotation from an indirect quotation, summary, or paraphrase, but simply put all citations in italics (as he also did with proper names). We have removed such italics and followed the general principle of placing citations in quotation marks even if they may not be direct and exact quotations. Perkins generally quoted the Geneva Bible, but rather than conforming his quotations to any particular translation of Scripture, we have left them in

his words. Scripture references in the margins are brought into the text and enclosed in square brackets. Parenthetical Scripture references in general are abbreviated and punctuated according to the modern custom (as in Rom. 8:1), sometimes corrected, and sometimes moved to the end of the clause instead of its beginning. Other notes from the margins are placed in footnotes and labeled, "In the margin." Where multiple sets of parentheses were nested within each other, the inward parentheses have been changed to square brackets. Otherwise, square brackets indicate words added by the editor. An introduction to each volume by its editor orients the reader to its contents.

The projected *Works of William Perkins* will include ten volumes, including four volumes of biblical exposition, three volumes of doctrinal and polemical treatises, and three volumes of ethical and practical writings. A breakdown of each volume's contents may be found inside the cover of this book.

If it be asked what the center of Perkins's theology was, then we hesitate to answer, for students of historical theology know that this is a perilous question to ask regarding any person. However, we may do well to end this preface by repeating what Perkins said at the conclusion of his influential manual on preaching, "The sum of the sum: preach one Christ by Christ to the praise of Christ."

—Joel R. Beeke and Derek W. H. Thomas

Preface to Volume 7 of William Perkins's Works



Entering into the world of late sixteenth-century polemics can be difficult for twenty-first century readers. Unfamiliar names and arcane theological terms can make reading these polemical texts seem like an excursus in patristic or medieval church history, far removed from the concerns of our day. We will be helped if we understand the world in which William Perkins (1558–1602) lived and to which he addressed his polemical treatises. We need to understand both his Protestant polemical heritage as well as the English context of the latter days of Queen Elizabeth's reign. The fact that Perkins was both a Protestant Scholastic and an Englishman influenced what he said and how he communicated it. After we notice these two worlds Perkins inhabited, we will notice his purpose in penning *A Reformed Catholic*, *Problem of the Forged Catholicism*, and *A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times*. We shall conclude with an overview of each of these three treatises.

Protestant Polemical History

Although William Perkins died just fifty-six years later than Martin Luther, he inherited a rich Protestant tradition of anti-Catholic polemics. Protestants strove to prove that their views were the traditional Christian perspective. Contemporary Roman Catholicism had deviated from historic Christianity.¹ Much doctrinal and liturgical corruption had crept into the church over the course of the middle ages. This perversion from biblical truth had reached its climax in the Catholic response to Protestantism at the Council of Trent (1545–1563).²

1. Irena Backus helpfully shows that Protestants of Perkins's time were intent on showing their doctrinal continuity with the patristic era. She focuses on two of Perkins's contemporaries, Theodore Beza (1519–1605) and Lambert Daneau (c. 1530–1595). See "Reformed Orthodoxy and Patristic Tradition," in *A Companion to Reformed Orthodoxy*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis, Brill's Companions to the Christian Tradition (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 91–117.

2. Trent's influence was of such note that it started an era of Catholicism marked by adherence to its rigid antagonism towards Protestantism, called "Tridentine," that lasted until the Second Vatican Council of the 1960s. Prior to Trent, disparate views were allowed within Catholicism on all sorts of matters—including whether justification was by faith alone. Afterwards,

Protestants wielded Scripture, theological reasoning, and historical argumentation to argue that their opinions represented biblical orthodoxy.

Perkins lived during the period often labeled “Protestant Scholasticism” or “Protestant Orthodoxy,” a movement represented in both confessional Lutheranism and the Reformed tradition from roughly 1565 to 1725.³ Orthodoxy represented a level of discontinuity with medieval Catholicism. For example, Protestant Scholastics adhered to the doctrine of justification *sola fide* taught by their sixteenth-century Reformation forefathers, not to the medieval accretions of the Catholic scholastics. At the same time, though, the Protestant Orthodox believed they were in a stream of significant continuity with the true catholic tradition.⁴ Protestant scholastics like Perkins were greatly concerned to answer Catholic opponents who regularly suggested that Protestantism was a novel religion, one that would lead its adherents to hell.

Protestant Scholastics, in fact, found it necessary to regularly defend the faith in light of Catholic polemics. Cardinal Robert Bellarmine (1542–1621), for example, was a key Protestant opponent who “subjected Reformed doctrine to continual criticism in his writings.” His *Disputations on Controversies in Regard to the Christian Faith against the Heretics of this Time* (1586), for example, “saw multiple printings and elicited more than two hundred reactions from the Lutheran and Reformed camps.”⁵ The perceived threat of renewed Romanism explains why Perkins labored to expose the deadly errors of revived, Tridentine Catholicism. Richard Muller notes that the Orthodox became more conversant with the history of the church than the first and second generation

though, only Tridentine views were acceptable. For this reason, after 1563 it is appropriate to speak of “Roman” Catholicism. See Marvin W. Anderson, *The Battle for the Gospel: The Bible and the Reformation, 1444–1600* (Lexington, Mass.: Ginn, 1987).

3. For a defense and description of the various phases of “early” and “high” orthodoxy, as well as their relationship to the Reformation era ending in 1565, see Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 1:52–81. According to Muller’s schema, Perkins is a representative of early orthodoxy, which spanned the years 1565 to 1640. See Muller, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:60–62.

4. Three important books demonstrate this reality. See Jaroslav Pelikan, *Reformation of Church and Dogma (1300–1700)*, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, Vol. 4 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984); Steven Ozment, *The Age of Reform, 1250–1550: An Intellectual and Religious History of Late Medieval and Reformation Europe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); and Heiko A. Oberman, ed., *Forerunners of the Reformation: The Shape of Late Medieval Thought Illustrated by Key Documents* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966). On Luther’s medieval roots, see Heiko A. Oberman, *Luther: Man between God and the Devil*, trans. Eileen Walliser-Schwarzbart (1990; repr., New York: Doubleday, 1992).

5. Willem J. van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, trans. Albert Gootjes, *Reformed Historical-Theological Studies* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2011), 109. The Latin title was *Disputationes de controversiis christianae fidei adversus huius temporis haereticos*.

Reformers had been. Their polemic “include[d] more of the tradition of the church than had been utilized” by Calvin, Heinrich Bullinger, and their contemporaries.⁶ The Orthodox lived in a different world from their theological forebears in Wittenberg, Geneva, Zurich, and elsewhere. They benefitted from having established universities that allowed them the time to reflect on and defend the faith from their Romanist opponents. The intense vitriol of Roman Catholic apologetics led them to respond with new and stronger arguments to answer their Catholic foes. William Perkins, certainly the premier English Scholastic in the Elizabethan era (1558–1603), was among the most astute of Reformed apologists of his day, using all of the tools of the scholastic method—and also all of the revived historical study of his day—to rebut Roman charges and build up his fellow Protestants. He did this in his rather unique context of serving within the established Church of England. And he also did this in line with other Reformed thinkers, as the following survey of two of them demonstrates.⁷

In addition to his vast examination of the validity of Catholic doctrine in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, John Calvin (1509–1564) regularly critiqued Catholic doctrine.⁸ His polemic varied from the rather humorous *Treatise on Relics*, in which Calvin documents the numerous abuses of the Catholic practice of venerating relics, to his technical disputation defending the traditional Augustinian position of the extent of human sinfulness against Albertus Pighius.⁹ In addition, Calvin composed treatises against the theology faculty at the Sorbonne in Paris and critiqued some of the Council of Trent’s doctrinal findings.¹⁰

6. Muller, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:66.

7. We include here John Calvin and Theodore Beza, given their influence on the subsequent Reformed tradition. Some include Perkins in “the trinity of the orthodox” along with Calvin and Beza. See Joel R. Beeke and J. Stephen Yuille, “Biographical Preface,” in *The Works of William Perkins, Volume 1* (Grand Rapids: Reformation Heritage, 2014), x.

8. For helpful summaries of Calvin’s polemic against Rome, see Maarten Stolk, “Calvin and Rome,” trans. Gerrit W. Sheeres, in *The Calvin Handbook*, ed. Herman J. Selderhuis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2009), 104–12; and Richard C. Gamble, “Calvin’s Controversies,” in *The Cambridge Companion to John Calvin*, ed. Donald K. McKim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 188–203.

9. See Wulfert de Greef, *The Writings of John Calvin: An Introductory Guide*, trans. Lyle D. Bierma (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1993), 156–57; John Calvin, *The Bondage and Liberation of the Will: A Defence of the Orthodox Doctrine of Human Choice against Pighius*, ed. A. N. S. Lane, trans. G. I. Davies, Volume 2 of *Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1996).

10. See John Calvin, *Articles Agreed Upon by the Faculty of Sacred Theology of Paris, in Reference to Matters of Faith at Present Controverted; with the Antidote*, in *Selected Works of John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, ed. Henry Beveridge and Jules Bonnet, trans. Henry Beveridge (1844; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 1:71–120; John Calvin, *Acts of the Council of Trent: with the Antidote*,

In many ways, though, Calvin's most pungent critique of Catholicism occurred quite early in his writing career, in his *Reply* to Jacopo Sadoletto, the bishop of Carpentras, France, who wrote a treatise entreating the Protestants of Geneva to return to the Roman communion during the period of Calvin's forced exile to Strasbourg.¹¹ Sadoletto urged the neophyte Protestants back to the Roman communion out of concern for their souls since to break with the one true church, the church which contained the truth and the correct means of salvation, was to endanger one's soul eternally.

Calvin's reply makes the principal point that God's glory is at stake in the debate and that an individual's salvation is determined by whether he or she is submitting to the error of the Catholic Church or the biblical truth of the Reformed churches. Calvin labors to prove that Protestants are the true church; Catholics are out of line with the historic understanding of what the true church is. In fact, Calvin argues that the Reformed have "that ancient form of the Church, such as their writings prove it to have been in the age of Chrysostom and Basil, among the Greeks, and of Cyprian, Ambrose, and Augustine, among the Latins."¹² Protestants—not Catholics—are the true church, so Rome has abandoned the true church. Protestants—not Catholics—honor the church and Christ:

Ours be the humility, which, beginning with the lowest, and paying respect to each in his degree, yields the highest honor and respect to the Church, in subordination, however, to Christ the Church's head; ours the obedience, which, while it disposes us to listen to our elders and superiors, tests all obedience by the Word of God; in fine, ours the Church, whose supreme-care it is humbly and religiously to venerate the Word of God, and submit to its authority.¹³

Submission to the Word of God, rather than to the recent traditions of Catholicism, was essential to one's salvation, Calvin observes. This leads him to discuss justification by faith alone (*sola fide*), which he labels "the first and keenest subject of controversy between us."¹⁴ Having seen one's utter sinfulness and inability for good before the all-holy God,

in *Selected Works of John Calvin: Tracts and Letters*, ed. Henry Beveridge and Jules Bonnet, trans. Henry Beveridge (1844; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1983), 3:17–188.

11. For relevant historical background as well as the texts of both Sadoletto and Calvin, see John Calvin and Jacopo Sadoletto, *A Reformation Debate*, ed. John C. Olin (1966; repr., Grand Rapids: Baker, 1976)

12. Calvin, *A Reformation Debate*, 62.

13. Calvin, *A Reformation Debate*, 75.

14. Calvin, *A Reformation Debate*, 66.

Then we show that the only haven of safety is in the mercy of God, as manifested in Christ, in whom every part of our salvation is complete. As all mankind are, in the sight of God, lost sinners, we hold that Christ is their only righteousness, since, by his obedience, he has wiped off our transgressions; by his sacrifice, appeased the divine anger; by his blood, washed away our stains; by his cross, borne our curse; and by his death, made satisfaction for us. We maintain that in this way man is reconciled in Christ to God the Father, by no merit of his own, by no value of works, but by gratuitous mercy. When we embrace Christ by faith, and come, as it were, into communion with him, this we term, after the manner of Scripture, *the righteousness of faith*.¹⁵

To Calvin, then, polemics against Catholicism was a matter of life and death. The truth was uniform in the sense that it originated in God and was given to His people in Scripture. Biblical truth was confirmed by much of the church's tradition, for it demonstrated that in its early centuries the church held to a great deal of scriptural truth that it had discarded over the centuries.

Theodore Beza (1519–1605), Calvin's successor in Geneva and a contemporary of Perkins, likewise carried on an extensive polemical debate with Catholics in the generation after Calvin's death.¹⁶ Beza's "A Brief Comparison between the Doctrine of the Papists, and this of the holy Catholic Church," in his *A Brief and Pithy Sum of Christian Faith*, serves as a useful example. Originally published in 1559 in French as a summary of Genevan Reformed doctrine, it was translated into English in 1589.¹⁷ In fifteen points, Beza notes the differences between Catholics and the Reformed church in a number of different areas, some of which are central as well in Perkins's polemic in *A Reformed Catholic*. Beza centers his disagreement on areas related to a person's eternal dwelling place, noting that "the principal difference is concerning the substance of the doctrine wherein consists our salvation."¹⁸ So distinct is the difference between Catholics and Protestants, he avers, that "the papists worship a false God,

15. Calvin, *A Reformation Debate*, 66–67; italics original.

16. See Shawn D. Wright, *Our Sovereign Refuge: The Pastoral Theology of Theodore Beza*, Studies in Christian History and Thought (Milton Keynes, U.K.: Paternoster, 2004), and Shawn D. Wright, *Theodore Beza: The Man and the Myth* (Fearn, U.K.: Christian Focus, 2015), 15–38.

17. See Theodore Beza, *A Briefe and Pithie Summe of the Christian Faith, Made in Form of a Confession, with a Confutation of al Suche Superstitious Errours, as are Contrairie Therunto*, trans. R. F. (London: Roger Ward, 1589). The original work was *Confession de la foi Chrestienne, faite par Theodore de Besze, contenant la confirmation, d'icelle, et la refutation des superstitions contraires: Reveue et augmentee de nouveau par lui, avec un abregé d'icille* (n.p.: Conrad Badius, 1559). For a discussion of this work, see *Theodore Beza: The Man and the Myth*, 69–110.

18. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 232.

which is neither righteous nor merciful.”¹⁹ When Beza notes that Roman doctrine “makes the oblation of Jesus Christ of none effect,” he employs a wealth of Catholic thinkers such as Cyprian, Jerome, Chrysostom, and Gregory the Great, to prove that the Roman church of his day threw off Christ’s completed work on the cross, usurping it with “holy water and an infinite number of other such toys.”²⁰ In fact, one of the features that characterizes Beza’s work is his use of Catholic thinkers such as Augustine, Ambrose, and Epiphanius to contradict contemporary Roman doctrine.²¹ One final historical example will suffice. Attempting to show that Catholics are wrong in their understanding of the sacrament of the eucharist, Beza rehearses the beliefs of Augustine and Jerome and argues that the ancient church practiced the Supper much differently from contemporary Catholicism. Other times he employs Bernard of Clairvaux to confirm his point against his Roman opponents.²² One of Beza’s central claims was that Catholics could not have assurance of their salvation. Instead, they taught that “to be assured of election and salvation in Jesus Christ, and to pray with all trust and assurance, as St. James says, is a presumption. But to trust in good works, as they call them, and to pray and wait upon whatsoever they teach of their own brain, this is no presumption after their doctrine, but a true and catholic devotion.”²³ Beza countered this error with the biblical teaching that the only “means to be joined and united with Jesus Christ,” in other words, “to have salvation in him,” is faith. This faith is “an assurance that all Christians ought to have of their election and salvation, by the only grace and goodness of God, in Jesus Christ.” This faith and assurance “is created and daily increased by the virtue of the Holy Ghost, within the hearts of the elect, by the means of preaching the word of God and the ministration of the sacraments.”²⁴

Beza’s summary statement of the errors of Catholicism is noteworthy: “There is neither word of God purely declared, nor prayers duly made, neither sacraments rightly administered in the papistry. But all is notoriously reversed and changed, which be nevertheless the very substantial and true marks of the Christian church.”²⁵ Polemics about doctrine were not just debates to be won by the most rhetorically skilled orators. Rather, they mattered because eternity was in the balance.²⁶

19. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 231.

20. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 237.

21. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 239.

22. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 281–83, 319.

23. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 248.

24. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 245.

25. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 286.

26. Beza, *Briefe and Pithie Summe*, 323.

William Perkins was part of this Reformed polemical tradition. Perkins likely had two concerns. On the one hand, he was aware of the progress that revived Catholicism was making on the European continent, taking back control of previously held Protestant regions, and eventually taking back “a half dozen small principalities that were entirely Reformed by law” in 1590. Philip Benedict describes the Catholic advance in these terms:

The winds of religious change switched direction about 1590 and began to blow toward Rome. The lure of Catholic thrones, the force of educations received in Catholic courts, and the appeal of the Roman church's combination of tradition, hierarchy, and splendor to an age that prized baroque display all tempted Protestant rulers and great nobles to convert.²⁷

For this reason, English Calvinists responded to Catholic apologists. One of Perkins's Cambridge colleagues, William Whitaker, for instance, wrote his *Disputatio de sacra scriptura* (1588) largely in response to two Catholic apologists, Thomas Stapleton and Robert Bellarmine. Muller notes that “Whitaker was particularly adept...at turning the Roman Catholic stress on tradition against itself by finding patristic views contradictory to the claims of late sixteenth-century Roman Catholic theology.”²⁸ Second, closer to home than Roman apologetic efforts on the continent were Catholic attempts to infiltrate England with their doctrine and win the laity back to the papal cause. Again, Benedict writes,

Cambridge divines were active in the polemical confrontation with Catholicism. From the late sixteenth century onward, a vast new corpus of Catholic devotional literature began to take shape offering guides to the laity for pious behavior, associated most famously with such names as Luis de Granada and François de Sales. Part of this corpus was aimed in translation at the English Catholic market. Many of the first Cambridge works

27. Philip Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed: A Social History of Calvinism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002), 295.

28. Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2003), 2:107. On Whitaker see Frits G. M. Broeyer, “Traces of the Rise of Reformed Scholasticism in the Polemical Theologian William Whitaker (1548–1595),” in *Reformation and Scholasticism: An Ecumenical Enterprise*, ed. Willem J. van Asselt and Eef Dekker, Texts and Studies in Reformation and Post-Reformation Thought (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2001), 155–80. So concerned was Whitaker to respond to Bellarmine that when he first answered the Catholic apologist in his university lectures, he worked from copies of the manuscripts of the Cardinal's book since Bellarmine's *Disputations* had not yet been published. See van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*, 109.

of practical divinity were written in response to this publishing offensive, to furnish a Protestant counterpart to this literature.²⁹

Among the Puritans penning responses to the Catholic onslaught, “Perkins was the central theological influence.”³⁰

English Polemical Context³¹

When Perkins picked up his pen against the Church of Rome, the Protestant Elizabethan Settlement was quite unsettled, both by Roman Catholics without and unsatisfied Protestants within.³² With the back and forth of the Tudor monarchs, the Church of England swung between Catholicism and Protestantism, or some mixture of both. Contemporaries, without the benefit of hindsight, would have been very much aware of the precarious position of England's national church. This leads one to ask just how Protestant England was during Perkins's lifetime, a much debated question in the historiography of the English Reformation. Once asked, this question implies another: Was the Reformation “from above” or “from below”?³³ Ultimately, however, this is a false dichotomy. For England to adopt Protestantism officially, both monarch and parliament had to be involved. But for Protestantism to succeed long term, it had to be accepted by the populace. It seems clear the change did not definitively take place until late in Elizabeth's reign.³⁴ For Perkins, then, it was not at all certain until late in his life that his people would ultimately turn from Rome. The

29. Benedict, *Christ's Churches Purely Reformed*, 318. In his *A Reformed Catholic*, for instance, Perkins expresses concern that the English laity were willing to lean in a Roman direction. See *A Reformed Catholic*, 157.

30. Benedict, *Christ's Churches*, 318.

31. This section was largely adapted from Andrew Ballitch, “‘Scripture is both the Glosse and the Text’: Biblical Interpretation and Its Implementation in the Works of William Perkins” (PhD diss., Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, 2017), 213–16.

32. W. B. Patterson, *William Perkins and the Making of Protestant England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 6–26.

33. The work done on this question is vast. A. G. Dickens, *The English Reformation*, 2nd ed. (University Park, Pa.: Penn State University Press, 2005) represents the “from above” camp. For revisionist interpretations, see Eamon Duffy, *Saints, Sacrilege and Sedition: Religion and Conflict in the Tudor Reformations* (London: Bloomsbury, 2012), Christopher Haigh, *English Reformations: Religion, Politics, and Society Under the Tudors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), and G. W. Bernard, *The King's Reformation: Henry VIII and the Remaking of the English Church* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005). Post-revisionist mediation includes Alec Ryrie, *The Gospel and Henry VIII: Evangelicals in the Early English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003) and Ethan H. Shagan, *Popular Politics and the English Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

34. Susan Doran and Christopher Durston, *Princes, Pastors, and People: The Church and Religion in England, 1500–1700* (London: Routledge, 2003). Some historians argue that Protestantism was never accepted by a significant number of English men and women; cf. Christopher Haigh,

uncertainty of his country's allegiance drove Perkins to oppose Catholicism in his writing and preaching.

The Catholic threat Perkins and his contemporaries felt from both within and without was a perception in tune with reality. That the Catholic voices rather than Catholic beliefs were stamped out during Edward's reign was manifested by both the ease of Mary's reversals and the number of her supporters.³⁵ Catholic consolidation under Mary encouraged unity and outspokenness among Rome's sympathizers under Elizabeth.³⁶ But while Mary's bishops courageously took a stand against Elizabeth's settlement, it cost them their careers and freedom.³⁷ At this point, what happened to the Catholic community in England is debated. Did it die and, with the advent of the missionary priests, return as something distinct in the late 1570s and 1580s? Or did it live on, adapting to the reality of disestablishment? Fundamentally, this is a question about the continuity or discontinuity of the recusant Catholic community of Elizabethan England and its medieval antecedents.³⁸ Evidence suggests the Catholic community continued, and Marian priests functioned as pioneers in sustaining the officially proscribed religion, finding patronage among the conservative laity, especially the gentry. The Catholic missionaries, then, brought new confidence to the Catholic community and aided in its expansion.³⁹ The significant fact is this: adherents of the old faith existed in England and became increasingly active throughout the second half of the sixteenth century.

"The Church of England, the Catholics and the People," in *The Impact of the English Reformation, 1500–1640*, ed. Peter Marshall (London: Arnold, 1997), 249.

35. Duffy, *Saints, Sacrilege and Seditious*, 220–21.

36. Lucy E. C. Wooding, *Rethinking Catholicism in Reformation England* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 269.

37. Peter Marshall, *Reformation England, 1480–1642* (London: Arnold, 2003), 170.

38. For discontinuity proponents, see John Bossy, *The English Catholic Community, 1570–1850* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976), 4, 11; and J. C. H. Aveling, *The Handle and the Axe: The Catholic Recusants in England from Reformation to Emancipation* (London: Blond and Briggs, 1976), 21. For the continuity perspective, see Alexandra Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain* (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2014), 173; Christopher Haigh, "The Continuity of Catholicism in the English Reformation," in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. Christopher Haigh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 178; J. J. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation and the English People* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1984), 142. Marshall provides a nice synthesis and balance (*Reformation England*, 176–78). For a history of research and bibliography on this topic, see Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*, 4–27.

39. Scarisbrick, *The Reformation of the English People*, 142–45. For Catholic patronage among the gentry, see Michael C. Questier, *Catholicism and Community in Early Modern England: Politics, Aristocratic Patronage and Religion, c. 1550–1640*, Cambridge Studies in Early Modern British History (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).

The Elizabethan Settlement temporarily silenced the Marian theological establishment. Key leaders were imprisoned, while others scattered.⁴⁰ By 1563, Catholics were even forbidden to participate in Church of England services by papal decree.⁴¹ Over one hundred Oxford University men fled the country during Elizabeth's first decade on the throne. They sought to train good leaders, while waiting on God's providence, anticipating England's return to the Catholic fold. Among these men was William Allen, who founded the English College of Douai in 1568.⁴² Similar seminaries appeared in Rome and other strategic locations, quickly becoming the training ground for missionary priests. The first of these missionaries returned to England in 1574.⁴³ The more significant date, however, is 1580, the commencement of the Jesuit missionary endeavor in England and the arrival of Edmund Campion and Robert Parsons. Campion became the movement's first martyr, while Parsons led the enterprise into the seventeenth century. With the influx of Catholic missionaries in the 1580s, it became clear to English Protestants that Jesuits favored the use of force and Catholicism became increasingly viewed as treason.⁴⁴

Sanction of violence for the Catholic cause in England was not new. Mary Stuart was the hope of Catholic plots for the duration of her almost twenty-year imprisonment. The first was the Northern Rebellion of 1569, which sought to free Mary. Pius V, attempting to aid the uprising, issued the bull *Regnans in Excelsis*, excommunicating Elizabeth in 1570.⁴⁵ However, the 1580s saw the climax of Catholic schemes. John Somerville's assassination attempt and the Throckmorton Plot both took place in 1583. The Parry Plot came to light in 1585. The Babington Plot the following year, which Mary Queen of Scots was aware of, concluded with her execution in 1587. War with Spain began in 1585, and the height of this conflict in 1588 brought the threat of the Spanish Armada, a threat so real that England's victory could only be interpreted by contemporary Protestants as divine intervention.⁴⁶ Though English Catholics

40. Duffy, *Saints, Sacrilege and Sedition*, 209.

41. Marshall, *Reformation England*, 171.

42. Bossy, *The English Catholic Community*, 12–13.

43. Kenneth L. Campbell, *The Intellectual Struggle of the English Papists in the Seventeenth Century: The Catholic Dilemma* (Lewiston, N.Y.: E. Mellen Press, 1986), 12.

44. Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*, 315–20. Marshall, *Reformation England*, 178; Duffy, *Saints, Sacrilege and Sedition*, 12.

45. Campbell, *The Intellectual Struggle of the English Papists*, 8. Campbell here points out that such episodes obscure the fact that the vast majority of English Catholics at home and abroad were loyal to their queen. Further, many loyalist Catholics attacked the Jesuits and missionary enterprise ferociously (Arnold Pritchard, *Catholic Loyalty in Elizabethan England* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1979), 175.

46. Marshall, *Reformation England*, 179.

divided over the Archpriest Controversy, they nonetheless entered the seventeenth century as an active community of nonconformity.⁴⁷

For Perkins, the Protestant future of his beloved England remained uncertain. Various and widespread Catholic communities existed, posing a significant obstacle to the progress of the Protestant Reformation project. This was the impetus behind Perkins's polemical urgency. To be sure, an apologetic edge is apparent throughout Perkins's preaching and writing, but *A Reformed Catholic*, *Problem of the Forged Catholicism*, and *A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times* pick up this initiative directly. These three treatises embody Perkins's sustained polemic against Roman Catholicism and bring his considerable powers to bear on the apologetic task of the Protestant Church of England.

Perkins's Polemical Purpose

A Reformed Catholic

Written in 1598, *A Reformed Catholic* was William Perkins's attempt to show his readers, as the subtitle to the treatise makes clear, both "how near we may come to the present Church of Rome" in various religious points and also "wherein we must forever depart from them" (*A Reformed Catholic*, 1).⁴⁸ In other words, he tried to show both the similarities and the insurmountable differences between biblical Protestantism and Tridentine Catholicism. He was concerned that some French Catholic writings claiming that Roman Catholicism and Protestantism were substantially the same religion had been translated into English and their views were persuading some impressionable laypeople.⁴⁹ Perkins's aim, then, was to show his readers that this similarity thesis was untenable: "This union of the two religions can never be made, more than the union of light and darkness." Indeed, we must "stand out against the present Church of Rome," he declares (3). Taking Revelation 18:4 ("Go out of her my people, that ye not be partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues.") as the text for his apology, Perkins urges that the Holy Spirit declares "men must depart from the Romish Church in regard of judgment and doctrine, in regard of their faith and worship of God" (12). To those wavering on whether to adopt Catholicism, Perkins argues that the Roman religion, especially since the Council

47. Campbell, *The Intellectual Struggle of the English Papists*, 24; Bossy, *The English Catholic Community*, 42–46; Marshall, *Reformation England*, 182–83.

48. Hereafter, the title will be assumed, and just the pagination will be given.

49. David Barbee notes that Perkins used the church fathers so that Englishmen would know how to read and interpret them correctly. See David M. Barbee, "A Reformed Catholic: William Perkins' Use of the Church Fathers" (PhD diss., University of Pennsylvania, 2013), 143–52. Perkins expresses his own concern for the laity when, in his chapter on saving faith, he warns, "unless the mystery of popish doctrine be well known, any common man may easily be deceived and take such for good Protestants that are but popish priests" (*A Reformed Catholic*, 139).

of Trent, in many particulars is neither catholic nor apostolic (167). Perkins notes that though “in words they honor Christ,” yet the Catholic Church has actually turned “Him into a pseudo-Christ and an idol of their own brain” (3). They claim Jesus as Lord and Savior, but they truly deny Him to be both. This claim—that Protestantism and Rome have such different doctrine that seeking communion with Catholicism will result in eternal damnation—occupies Perkins throughout. He offers three additional reasons for penning “this small treatise.” First, he desires to put a stop to those who seek reconciliation between Protestantism and Romanism, since they differ in substance. Second, he wants Catholics to think better of Protestants, seeing that they agree on several matters. Finally, he tries to instruct “the common Protestant” to see how far, and how near, the two churches are from each other (5).

Problem of the Forged Catholicism

Problem of the Forged Catholicism, the first Latin edition of which was published in 1604, proves that the patristic witness sides with the Protestant Reformation in general and the Reformed tradition in particular, as it existed in Perkins's conception of the Church of England. Though named only in the subtitle, Jodocus Coccius's *Thesaurus Catholicus* (1599) was the stimulus for Perkins's efforts. Coccius converted from Lutheranism upon discovering the supposed continuity and antiquity of the Catholic faith. He amassed a vast number of quotations attesting to Roman doctrines.⁵⁰ Perkins's goal was twofold. First, to expose those documents from the church fathers and medieval thinkers, as late as Bernard of Clairvaux, Francis of Assisi, and Bonaventure, which were counterfeit, suspect, or corrupted. Second, to demonstrate from reliable texts that key Roman Catholic doctrines articulated at the Council of Trent were anything but the universally accepted positions of the church throughout its history. As one would expect, such a task would require a command of an incredible array of sources, and on this point, Perkins does not disappoint.

A Warning Against Idolatry

In *A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times*, Perkins criticizes the Church of Rome and urges his countrymen toward further reformation. In his dedicatory letter, Perkins implies that he wrote no earlier than 1598, referencing God's blessing on England in bestowing the gospel under a gracious queen for more than forty years, a clear allusion to Elizabeth I. He goes on to say England owes God a debt of gratitude, which it has failed miserably to repay. The

50. Jean-Louis Quantin, “The Fathers in Seventeenth Century Roman Catholic Theology,” in *The Reception of the Church Fathers in the West: From the Carolingians to the Maurists*, vol. 2, ed. Irena Backus (Leiden: Brill, 1997), 962.

only adequate response, then, is “to repent of our unthankfulness, to embrace the gospel more than we have done, and to walk worthy of it in holiness of life” (*A Warning Against Idolatry*, 413). This is what Perkins is calling his people to. In his preface to the reader, he expounds four further causes for writing. First, he seeks to convince the Church of Rome of its idolatry. Consequently, he will refute those who claim Protestants and the Church of Rome differ in details alone and not in substance. Second, he seeks to persuade recusants of Rome’s idolatry. Third, he wants to foster further loathing of Rome’s religion among the English people. Such animosity is appropriate, for, as he makes clear, salvation is on the line. Fourth, he desires to educate the general populace about the true worship of God, that they might worship not with empty externals, but with understanding.⁵¹ In the end, the religion of Rome is idolatry and not to be trifled with.

Perkins’s Polemical Content

A Reformed Catholic

The question Perkins answers in *A Reformed Catholic* is, “How close or far is Protestantism from Roman Catholicism?” To answer his query, he first defines a “Reformed Catholic” as “anyone that holds the same necessary heads of religion with the Roman Church. Yet so as he pares off and rejects all errors in doctrine whereby the said religion is corrupted” (5). To that end, Perkins shows that in many ways Protestants agree with Catholic doctrine. They are not schismatics. He desires to demonstrate both “how far forth we may join with [Rome] in the matter of religion” and “how far forth and wherein we must dissent and depart from them” (12). Perkins, in fact, does not spend equal time on both fronts. Although he does seek to demonstrate that Protestants and Catholics share areas of agreement, the majority of the treatise, as well as its polemical thrust, proves that Catholic errors since the Council of Trent are so grievous that the two “churches” are not the same.⁵²

The order of the treatise is not complicated. Perkins selects twenty-one doctrines and practices, evaluating how Protestants and Catholics understand each of them. He tells us that there is no particular order to the topics; rather, he had no respect for the proper “laws of method,” and dealt with issues as they

51. The self-definition of English Protestants was directly linked to how they perceived their relationship to Rome (Walsham, *Catholic Reformation in Protestant Britain*, 23).

52. Perkins’s project is thus different from Michael Allen and Scott R. Swain, *Reformed Catholicity: The Promise of Retrieval for Theology and Biblical Interpretation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2015). On the Council of Trent and Perkins’s interaction with it, see Barbee, *A Reformed Catholic*, 29–31, 172–90.

came to his mind (5).⁵³ There may be, nonetheless, some significance to the arrangement Perkins selects. He bookends the treatise around issues that deal specifically with a sinner's salvation. The first six points covered are human free will, original sin, assurance of salvation, justification by faith alone, merit in salvation, and satisfaction for sin. The final two points come back around to salvation: faith and repentance. Almost in the middle of the treatise, in the thirteenth point, Perkins also deals with an issue that is essentially salvific: how much perfection must one have to attain heaven, and what is the source of that perfection? This suggests that Perkins is fundamentally concerned with the question of the nature and certainty of individual salvation throughout *A Reformed Catholic*.⁵⁴ It comes as no surprise that by far the longest chapter in the treatise is the fourth, which compares Catholic and Reformed understandings of justification.⁵⁵ This point is more than twice as long as every other chapter, save two.⁵⁶ Perkins's desire is not to win a debate. He longs that his readers would go to heaven.

In addition to the salvific thrust of the work, Perkins also highlights several practices that distinguish Catholics from Protestants. Such thorny issues as the valid use of tradition, taking vows, the use of images, and fasting garner his attention. In all these he maintains that Catholics are fundamentally in error. Other specifically Catholic practices and doctrines—things such as worshipping departed saints and trusting in their intercession, the existence of purgatory, papal supremacy, and the notion of implicit faith—also engender separate treatment by Perkins. Three specifically Catholic eucharistic doctrines—the real presence of Christ in the eucharist, the notion of the mass as a true propitiation, and the efficacy of the sacraments—also merit a separate chapter each. This

53. Regarding Perkins's arrangement of material, James Herbert notes, "His Roman Catholic critic, William Bishop, subsequently observed that Perkins indeed must have abandoned formal method for a less disciplined approach, otherwise the Reformed theologian would not have discussed certainty of salvation before discussing justification." To Herbert, though, "it was precisely the doctrine of individual assurance which occupied Perkins's mind as he extemporaneously described the Reformed Catholic." See James C. Herbert, "William Perkins's 'A Reformed Catholic': A Psycho-Literal Interpretation," in *Church History*, 51 (1982): 8–9.

54. Herbert suggests that the four chief errors Perkins deals with were justification, Christ's total satisfaction for sin, the real presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, and images (Herbert, *Psycho-literal Interpretation*, 10–16).

55. For Perkins's doctrine of justification, see Barbee, *A Reformed Catholiclike*, 225–28.

56. The two that are about half as long as chapter 4 are chapter 3, on assurance of salvation, and chapter 10, on the manner of Christ's presence in the Supper. The former confirms our opinion that salvation is a key concern of Perkins, while the latter was a consistent issue debated by Reformed, Catholics, and Lutherans during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Our assessment also assumes that the pagination of chapter 21 and 22 should be adjusted per the editorial comment in chapter 21.

attention indicates how significant the Lord's Supper and the theology surrounding it was to Perkins and to Protestants concerned with nascent Catholicism and its eucharistic practice and theology.

Perkins concludes with a chapter showing the sins of the Roman church.⁵⁷ Prior to that, though, in the conclusion to his twenty-first point on repentance, Perkins actually details the sins for which Roman Catholicism is guilty. These serve as his summary of the significance of the work, reminding his readers that the Protestant-Catholic divide is not merely a matter of logic, or of different styles or vocabularies. Reformed Christians worship the true God and also believe the correct doctrine of salvation. Catholics, on the other hand, are guilty of seven sins showing how far they are from the truth. The first two of them are noteworthy. First, Romanism is atheistic, in the sense that "it makes the merit of the works of men to concur with the grace of God, [thus] it overthrows the grace of God" and also denies "the infinite justice and mercy of God" (153). The unfortunate conclusion is that "they have plainly turned the true God into a fantasy of their own" (154). The result of this loss of God means that all they do in "worship" is idolatry: it is "mere will-worship, without any allowance or commandment from God," far removed from the biblically mandated worship of the true God (154). Their second great sin is idolatry that was "as gross as was ever among the heathen" (154). They wrongly worship saints and Mary. They vainly attempt to worship God via images, and show the height of their idolatry "in that they worship a breaden god, or Christ in and under the forms of bread and wine" in the Supper (154). These two great cataclysmic sins are essential to understand. They show that, for Perkins, the recovery of the doctrine of salvation inevitably leads to the true worship of God.

Perkins's arrangement of material is consistent throughout most of the chapters. He divides each chapter into four distinct parts. Perkins begins by demonstrating "Our Consent," showing those areas within a given topic where Protestants and Catholics agree. Even if there is not total agreement, he often delineates points where there is partial similarity. Following this, he comments on the Protestant "Dissent or Difference." In this section he describes in some detail the areas in which Roman doctrine is deficient. In the following "Our Reasons" portion of the chapter, he defends the Protestant faith using a variety of sources, primarily Scripture, but also scholastic reasoning and the tradition of the church. This is followed by the "Objections of Papists," in which Perkins notes, and responds to, the best Catholic critiques of his prior argumentation.

The following survey of an example of each of these sections from different chapters in *A Reformed Catholic* should help to orient us to Perkins's

57. See his "Advertisement" at the conclusion of *A Reformed Catholic*.

treatise. We begin with the first section, "Our Consent." In chapter 14, "Of the Worshipping of Saints, Specially of Invocation," Perkins notes two areas of consent, or agreement, between Catholics and Protestants. First, he observes that "The true saints of God, as prophets, apostles, and martyrs, and such like are to be worshipped and honored" in a few different ways. Christians, in the first place, should recollect them in a godly manner. Mary's example (Luke 1:48), the woman who anointed Jesus's feet with oil (Mark 14:9), David's remembrance of the patriarchs (Psalms 105 and 106), as well as Hebrews 11 provide essential biblical support. Additionally, Christians should thank God for the lives of departed believers. Finally, believers honor departed Christians by the "imitation of their faith, humility, meekness, repentance, the fear of God, and all good virtues wherein they excelled." Perkins's second conclusion is that the true relics of departed saints are "their virtues and good examples left to all posterity to be followed." This demonstrates "respect with due reverence" (111). Perkins here demonstrates a willingness to draw as close to the Catholic position as possible without countenancing the unbiblical rite of the adoration of the saints. The Bible calls us to honor dead Christians and to imitate their faith. We are not to worship or pray to them.

Chapter 19, "Of the Efficacy of the Sacraments," provides us with a helpful example of Perkins's second component, "The Difference." First of all, he describes the view of "the best learned" Catholics who hold that sacraments are "true and proper instrument causes, having force and efficacy in them to produce and give grace." This is wrong because sacraments are not physical instruments but, rather, are voluntary ones in which "it is the will and appointment of God to use them as certain outward means of grace." Second, Catholics assert that a rightly administered sacrament "is a work done"; it "gives grace immediately" (134). This *ex opere operato* notion of sacramental grace must be eschewed in favor of the two ways in which the act of receiving the sacrament is efficacious in the lives of believers. First, the sacraments signify God's good pleasure towards his people: "God testifies unto us His will and good pleasure partly by the Word of promise and partly by the sacrament, the signs representing to the eyes that which the Word does to the ears, being also types and certain images of the very same things that are promised in the Word and no other." These sacramental signs are essential to our faith, "For when the faithful receive the signs from God by the hands of the minister, it is as much as if God Himself with His own mouth should speak unto them severally and by name promise to them remission of sins." In the second place, sacraments "are pledges of God's favor to us." When Christians receive them in faith, God promises "to give the thing signified, He binds Himself, as it were, in bond unto us, to stand to His own word" (135). In the third place, Perkins observes that to

Rome the sacraments convey justification to the recipient. This is, in essence, putting the cart before the horse. Rather, “a man of years must first believe and be justified before he can be a meet partaker of any sacrament” (136). The sacraments increase one’s faith; they do not produce it. Far from discounting the importance of the sacraments, by demonstrating the Reformed view vis-à-vis that of the Catholics, Perkins magnifies how important the sacraments are to Christians because they represent God’s grace to us and call forth a response of faith.

We note an example of the third element, “Our Reasons,” from chapter 1, “Of Free Will,” in which Perkins had previously shown the difference between the Catholic and Protestant positions in this way: Rome believes a sinner is like a sick and weak person who nonetheless has the ability to stir himself or herself to seek help, while the Reformed believe the sinner is “stark dead” so that “God must first come and put a new soul into him, even the Spirit of grace to quicken and revive him” (16). To confirm this position, Perkins offers five reasons. In the first place, persons can only choose according to their natures, “For such as the action is, such is the faculty whence it proceeds; such as the fruit is, such is the tree; such as the branches are, such are the roots” (16). Biblical texts such as Genesis 8:21 and Romans 8:7 confirm this point. Second, 1 Corinthians 2:14 teaches that no one approves of divine things apart from God’s intervention in his or her life. Third, Ephesians 2:1 and Colossians 2:13 instruct us that natural men have no desire for spiritual good. “A dead man in his grave cannot stir the least finger because he wants the very power of life, sense, and motion. No more can he that is dead in sin will the least good” (17). In the fourth place, the Bible everywhere teaches that the salvation of sinners is due to God’s powerful working; nothing is ascribed to human free will. John 3:3, 1 Corinthians 15:10, Ephesians 2:10, 4:24, and Philippians 2:12–13 are among the scriptural texts supporting this argument. Finally, Perkins offers proof according to “the judgment of the ancient church.” Here he refers to three separate works by Augustine (d. 430), and quotes Fulgentius of Ruspe (d. 533), Bernard of Clairvaux (d. 1153), and the Second Council of Orange, *Arausica civitas* (d. 529) as support for his view (18).⁵⁸ Of course, a consequence of Perkins’s use of “the ancient church” is that the beliefs of the Tridentine Catholic Church are not consonant with historic Christianity. The Reformed are in this sense the true Catholics.

For the fourth element, “Objections of the Papists,” we turn to chapter 3, “Certainty of Salvation.” Already Perkins has asserted three points of dissent:

58. For Perkins’s evaluation of the Christian tradition and his use of the patristic fathers, see Barbee, *A Reformed Catholic*, 63–77; 195–200.

Catholics hope for salvation, but Protestants can have assurance of it; Catholics teach that salvation is at best only probable, while Protestants aver that one can have full assurance; Catholic confidence in God's mercy is based on conjecture, while Protestant confidence comes from the reality of faith (26). To this Catholics express three main objections. First, they teach that since God does not address an individual with a particular command (saying, e.g., "Cornelius, believe!"), an individual can ordinarily not arrive at certainty that he or she has believed. To this Perkins responds that "in the Scripture, the promises of salvation are indefinitely propounded" (26). When a person hears a gospel minister charge him or her to believe in Christ, it is as if God Himself were summoning the individual personally. Second, Catholics teach that since the Apostles' Creed nowhere commands individuals to trust in their own salvation, "no man is bound thereto." Perkins responds that Roman apologists do not understand the Creed well for "every article implies in it this particular faith." As an example, he uses the first line, "I believe in God." This is no bare conjecture about a vague deity. Rather, this statement contains three truths: "the first, to believe that there is a God, the second to believe the same God is my God, the third to put my confidence in Him for my salvation." Texts such as Psalm 27:13, 78:22, and John 20:28 support this point (27). Third, Rome argues that since Christians are to daily ask God for pardon (Matt. 6:12), we are not to expect certainty of pardon in this life. Unfortunately, though, they have failed to see that this petition is not dealing with "our old debts or sins as of our present and new sins. For as we go on from day to day, so we add sin to sin; and for the pardon of them must we humble ourselves and pray" (27). This simple observation overturns the errant interpretation. In fact, Perkins usually spends a majority of the "Objections" section to countering the sharpest critiques of his Catholic opponents. He wants to be fair in noting Roman criticisms. But he is not silent about their errors.

Problem of the Forged Catholicism

Problem of the Forged Catholicism begins with a clear statement of the problem, or the position Perkins will defend: "It is impossible for any popish divine in the world to show out of the true monuments of the councils and fathers, and out of their natural sense and meaning, that the faith of the present Church of Rome is truly catholic in those points wherein it dissents from the reformed churches of the gospel" (*Problem of the Forged Catholicism*, 171).⁵⁹ He does not build a strawman to tear down in his presentation of the doctrine of the Church of Rome, rather the faith of the Roman Church has specific content

59. Hereafter, the title will be assumed, and just the pagination will be given.

according to Perkins. It is “the doctrine concerning the way and means of salvation, propounded in the Council of Trent, in the Roman Catechism to the parish priests, and in the Missal and Breviary, which are reformed and printed by the command and authority of Pope Pius I” (171). Perkins is attacking an understanding of salvation, consolidated and made dogma in the sixteenth century as a response to the Protestant Reformation, which undermines the gospel.

Before he makes his argument, Perkins leads his readers through three preliminary considerations, laying the foundation for what follows in the body of the work. The first concerns the authority of the fathers and the manner in which they wrote. The fathers themselves understood Scripture to be the ultimate authority and perceived of their own authority as derived from agreement with the writings of the prophets and apostles. They were human beings, and, as such, spoke unfittingly at times, made errors, and clearly contradicted one another at points. Second, Perkins spends almost fifty pages cataloging the counterfeit, suspect, and corrupted works of the fathers, as well as writers in the middle ages. His index includes works from popular patristic authors such as Tertullian, Origen, and Athanasius, and infamous forgeries like *The Donation of Constantine*. But he also references obscure writers and works that are likely to be recognized only by historians of the period. Third, Perkins briefly explains the causes of the corruption of the apostolic religion—causes reduced to the incorporation of heathen opinions—especially those of pagan philosophy, heathen customs and rites, and resuming abolished Jewish ceremonies. After stating his presuppositions, Perkins moves to the heart of the treatise, namely, showing that the religion of Rome is falsely called catholic.

Perkins identifies dozens of what he calls “the chiefest places of divinity,” and demonstrates that their Roman Catholic interpretations are not properly catholic (222). He does this in one of three ways. He shows either they were not received from the time of Christ or the apostles, or that they were only received as opinions, not articles of faith, or that the purest churches never held them in the way proposed by Trent. We will focus on two for the purposes of this introduction, Holy Scripture and justification, the formal and material principles of Protestantism.

On the doctrine of Scripture, Perkins begins by setting the parameters of the canon. He establishes from patristic quotations and councils that the ancient church acknowledged only the Jewish Old Testament as true and perfect, to the exclusion of the apocryphal writings. While extra-biblical books are considered respectively canonical, such that they are derivative of the Old Testament or recount the history of God’s people and are therefore used in ecclesiastical contexts, only the books of the Protestant Old Testament are absolutely canonical. This distinction between respective and absolute canonicity accounts for

the reverence offered to some extra-biblical writings by the church fathers. Of course, Roman Catholics and Protestants agree on the canon of the New Testament, so Perkins quickly moves from Old Testament canon to the authoritative text itself.

Perkins asserts that the widespread opinion of the church fathers was that the Hebrew and Greek text of canonical Scriptures was uncorrupted and pure. This is undeniable, according to Perkins, citing Jerome, Augustine, and Arias Montanus. And regarding the vulgar translation, which was edited by Jerome to become the Vulgate, the evidence overwhelmingly attests to its lack of use among the patristics. Perkins demonstrates this by comparing early Latin biblical citations with this vulgar edition. The differences are stark. The vulgar edition gained popularity beginning with Gregory the Great in the late sixth century. However, even he, and others as late as Bernard of Clairvaux, would follow other translations at times. Perkins's conclusion then: the Vulgate was neither only nor wholly approved by the church, as it was at Trent, until more than one thousand years after Christ.

The nature of Scripture, according to Perkins—in good Protestant fashion—is such that it is self-authenticating. It is not authoritative because of the approbation of the church. In fact, “the canonical Scripture is a principle of divinity deserving credit of itself, and therefore not manifestable by any other exterior principle” (231). The principles of divinity are the truths found in the pages of Scripture. Scripture is the final arbiter of theological discourse. All legitimate conclusions of divinity are drawn from it. And not only is Scripture self-authenticating, infallible, and authoritative, it is perspicuous, precisely because it is self-interpreting: “The holy Scriptures, in all such things as are necessary for our salvation, do manifestly, truly, and infallibly explain and open themselves, serving for both gloss and text” (232). And lest anyone think that such a high view of Scripture is in danger of bibliolatry, Perkins concludes, “The infallible and determining judgement of all controversies of faith is in Christ's own person, or in the Holy Ghost, so far as He speaks unto us in the Scriptures canonical” (232). Scripture is so important to Perkins because, through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, it is the very word of Christ.

Perkins understands the church fathers to teach justification by faith alone through the imputation of Christ's righteousness. They testify that obedience is imperfectible in this life, and that God's judgment is satisfied and everlasting life attained only by the righteousness of the crucified Christ. Perkins claims that while the ancient fathers do at times speak differently and “undefinitively” of justification by faith, “yet in their serious meditations, and when they were entangled with temptations, they never fled unto any justice by works, or unto any merits” (276). He quotes Primasius: “It is God's purpose to justify man,

without any works of the law or any other merits whatsoever, by faith alone.” And Eusebius Emisenus: “Though we sweat in toil of soul and body, and exercise all our powers in obedience, yet shall we never attain by any desert to get the kingdom of heaven as a recompense for them.” And Bernard of Clairvaux: “It is sufficient for me unto all righteousness, to have Him my favorer, to whom only I have given cause of offence. All that He doth not impute unto me is as though it were not at all. Not to sin is God’s justice, and man’s justice is God’s pardon” (278). These, among numerous others, witness to the concept of salvation by grace alone through faith alone extant in the patristic period and beyond.

Yet Perkins acknowledges that the church fathers are at times quite unclear on this issue of justification by faith alone, and he suggests several possible explanations. First, sometimes the fathers speak improperly of the article of justification by putting it in the place of sanctification, or the renewing of the whole man. Second, the fathers will affirm that works justify, but in a declarative, rather than an effective, sense. Works are the fruit of faith; they demonstrate justification. Third, there are times when the fathers simply speak hyperbolically of works, in the hope of motivating them among their hearers and readers. In the final evaluation, the concept of justification articulated at the Council of Trent is not to be found in the first millennium of the church’s history.

The doctrines of Scripture and justification are fundamental to the differences between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism. From these questions of authority and the basis of salvation seem to flow the many other concepts Perkins attempts to debunk in this treatise. The nature of this sustained engagement with the Church of Rome is such that Perkins often assumes his readers are aware of Catholic teaching and practice, a safe assumption in his context. And it is worth noting that Perkins does not shy away from authors such as Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Cyprian. He read them carefully, as well as many medieval writers, and even knew the papal decrees. He did not limit his purview to Protestant favorites like Chrysostom, Augustine, and Bernard of Clairvaux. Perkins had to display both breadth and depth to plausibly defend his final conclusion: “No apostle, no holy father, no sound catholic, for 1200 years after Christ, did ever hold or profess that doctrine of all the principles and grounds of religion, that is now taught by the Church of Rome, and authorized by the Council of Trent” (410).

A Warning Against Idolatry

Perkins draws his treatise on idolatry and true worship, *A Warning Against the Idolatry of the Last Times*, from his exposition of 1 John 5:21, “Babes, keep your selves from idols.” The apostle’s overall purpose for writing was “to set down

marks and tokens, whereby men may know whether they be the children of God or no" (*A Warning Against Idolatry*, 419).⁶⁰ The immediate context, then, here at the end of his letter, is John answering the objection that a child of God may fall away and lose his or her salvation. This implies that there is no assurance of salvation, except for the present, which is no assurance at all. In 1 John 5:18–20, John answers the objection negatively. Perkins summarizes, "The effect of the answer is, that he which is born of God so preserves himself by grace that he cannot be drawn by Satan to commit the sin that is to death." Then in 1 John 5:21, he provides the rule for how the children of God should persevere: "hold fast the true and spiritual worship of God, and for this cause avoid all things that may withdraw your hearts from God, especially take heed of idols" (419). From this negative command, Perkins explains what idols are, and how one avoids them. Then, from its positive counterpart, he elucidates what true worship of God looks like. This move from the negative to the positive is not simply a convenient platform; it is demanded by the text. Perkins understands "the property of divine law, in forbidding anything, to command the contrary" (475). What follows is a brief summary of Perkins's argument.

Perkins explains the command in two ways: by defining what idols are, and by discussing how to avoid them. Idols are images, either of false gods or of the one true God. The golden calf incident in Israel's history is an illustration of the latter. The context of Exodus 34:5, Aaron's statement about the holy day of Jehovah, makes this apparent. According to Perkins, there are three kinds of idols. The first is when God is conceived differently than He has revealed Himself in His Word. 1 John 2:13 says that he who denies the Son does not have the Father. The second happens when God is worshipped differently than He has required in His Word. The second commandment rules out any images used in the worship of God. Third, idols are made when God's properties or actions are transposed to creatures. Examples of this are when God's divinity is attributed to Mary and the Pope. Saints, sacraments, works, and the Eucharist are further examples in the Church of Rome. What belongs to God is most frequently given to creatures through worship: praying to angels and saints, swearing by anything other than God, pilgrimages to holy places, and using the crucifix.

Second, Perkins discusses how to keep oneself from idols. To eschew idolatry, one must avoid making idols, having idols, the religious use of idols, and even the users of idols. The two lawful uses of images are appointed by God, such as the Cherubim on the mercy seat and their common use in society in cases like images on coins, which Jesus himself acknowledges. With respect to the idolatrous, both their deceits and their fellowship must be shunned. Rome

60. Hereafter, the title will be assumed, and just the pagination will be given.

uses five deceits to excuse idolatry, all of which must be spurned. First, they admit to using images of God, saints, and angels, but differentiate this from idol worship. Second, they claim not to worship the actual images, but God, to which they point. Third, they claim they only worship God and merely give honor to angels, saints, and images with their service. Fourth, they claim their prayers to saints, their veneration of images, and their relics are confirmed by miracles. Fifth and finally, they claim it is only heathen idolatry that Scripture condemns. Perkins spends considerable time unveiling the excuses of Rome as deceit.

But not only should their deceits be avoided, fellowship with idolaters should be rebuffed as well. Joining in the exercise of their religion is wrong for Roman Catholicism has overturned the very foundation of salvation. Some appeal to 2 Kings 5:18, where Naaman prays to God in the temple of an idol. Perkins explains from the context that the prayer was one of confession, an appeal for mercy. In civil society, one may have dealings of necessity in day-to-day life with idolaters. Paul does not forbid the Corinthians from interacting with the idolatrous of the world, in what Perkins classifies as societies of concord, but with a brother who is an idolater. However, one must not enter into what Perkins designates a society of amity with idolaters—marriage for instance. Malachi 2:11 condemns intermarriage as an abomination and 2 Chronicles 19:2 forbids helping the wicked in their pursuits. Perkins's guidelines for avoiding idolatry are clear: shun close relationships with idolaters and reject their arguments.

Perkins expounds the positive command to truly worship God, providing a definition of true worship. He does so in six points. The first is the foundation of worship, which is knowledge of God and ourselves. Second, the rule of worship is worship administrated according to Scripture, which is in essence an articulation of the regulative principle. Third, the end of worship must be the glory of God. Fourth, worship must be conducted by acceptable persons, that is, those who have been turned to God by the Spirit. Fifth, worship must be directed to the Son. Sixth and last, worship of God must be incommunicable, voluntary, and sincere. In short, true worship must be governed by Scripture from beginning to end.

Worship is either *principle* or *less principle*, in Perkins's estimation. *Principle worship* is a work of God in us, making us holy and good, restoring His image in us. It is worship in spirit and truth, referenced in John 4:24. It is love out of a pure heart, a good conscience, and authentic faith, according to 2 Timothy 1:5. *Principle worship* begins in this life and continues into eternity. It pleases God in itself. It includes subjection to God and cleaving to Him through love and confidence manifested through humility, patience, prayer, and thanksgiving.

On the other hand, *less principle worship* is outward worship. It is worship with the body, exercises of godliness, which is called adoration. In contrast to *principle worship*, it is not pleasing to God in itself, but by reason of inward worship. This *less principle worship* consists of worship in the church, worship in the home, and personal worship. Church services include preaching, fellowship or mercy to those in need, the Lord's Supper, and public prayer. Household worship involves instruction and prayer. Personal worship involves the private reading of Scripture and prayer. The fact that Scripture is central to all three levels of external worship is consistent with Perkins's overall emphasis on the Word of God and its total regulation of worship.

Conclusion

The three treatises included in this volume together strike a helpful balance of emphases on theology, history, and practice. *A Reformed Catholic* exists as a systematic, theological presentation of Perkins's Reformed soteriology in contrast with the Church of Rome. Perkins's *Problem of the Forged Catholicism* is an exercise in historical theology, proving from the primary source documents of church history that the Roman Catholicism articulated at Trent is not supported by the first twelve-hundred years of the church's witness. *A Warning Against Idolatry* handles worship practices—including liturgies, ceremonies, customs, and rites—concluding that all the externals of worship must be regulated by Scripture in the strictest sense. Taken as a whole, Perkins's polemical work against the Church of Rome draws a clear dividing line between Roman Catholicism and the Reformed tradition.

The enduring significance of Perkins's polemic resides primarily in its clear presentation of the reasons for the sixteenth-century break with Rome. Five hundred years after the Protestant Reformation, discussions are taking place about whether or not the Reformation ought to continue. Dialogues carry on the ecumenical fervor of the late twentieth century. There is much talk about the changes made to the Roman Catholic Church at Vatican II. Perkins offers an interpretive grid for judging whether changes in Roman Christianity are substantive from a Protestant perspective. By providing a vivid exposition of Roman Catholic belief and practice as it existed at the time of the Reformation, Perkins supplies the church today with a backdrop—a historical context for evaluating contemporary Catholicism.

We could not have completed this volume on our own, so we are grateful to be able to thank some of those who helped make this book possible. Thanks are due to Lau Yeong Shoon and Ann Dykema who completed the herculean task of typing Perkins's archaic English into a manageable document for us to work from. Their countless, and painful, hours of trying to make sense of Perkins

saved us more time than we can imagine. We also thank Rod MacQuarrie, project manager at Reformation Heritage Books, for his many hours of painstaking proofreading and conscientious editing. His toil made our work better, as did the editorial pass of Samuel Caldwell, Sandra Barrett, and Gary den Hollander. We thank Linda den Hollander for her excellent typesetting work, and her patience in making final corrections. Shawn wishes to thank his family for encouraging him in this labor and for reminding him that it is worthwhile to read the old guys. Supremely, Gretchen, thank you for believing that history and theology matter. Your life proves this abundantly. Shawn would also like to thank the trustees of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, its President, R. Albert Mohler Jr., and his Dean, Gregory A. Wills, for supporting his efforts by granting a half-sabbatical during which much of his work on this volume was completed. Andrew would like to thank his family for indulging this project and for sacrificing while it came together. Darcy, especially, thank you for valuing your husband's interest in the Puritans and for your endless encouragement. Andrew would also like to thank Shawn for affording a young scholar the opportunity to participate in a work as eminently important as this republication endeavor. Most of all, we thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, William Perkins's Lord and ours. To Him be all the glory!

—Shawn D. Wright and Andrew S. Ballitch

A Reformed Catholic

or

A Declaration Showing how near we may come to the present Church of Rome in sundry points of Religion, and wherein we must forever depart from them,

With an
Advertisement to all favorers of the Roman religion, showing that the said religion is against the catholic principles and grounds of the catechism.

Printed by John Legat,
Printer to the University of Cambridge, 1635

To the right worshipful, Sir William Bowes, Knight, etc.

Grace and peace.

Right Worshipful, it is a notable policy of the devil, which he has put into the heads of sundry men in this age, to think that our religion, and the religion of the present Church of Rome are all one for substance; and that they may be reunited as (in their opinion) they were before. Writings to this effect are spread abroad in the French tongue, and respected of English Protestants more than is meet, or ought to be. For, let men in show of moderation pretend the peace and good estate of the Catholic Church as long as they will; this union of the two religions can never be made, more than the union of light and darkness. And this shall appear, if we do but a little consider, how they of the Roman church have razed the foundation. For though in words they honor Christ, yet in deed they turn Him into a pseudo-Christ and an idol of their own brain. They call Him our Lord; but with this condition, that the servant of servants of this Lord may change and add to His commandments, having so great a power that he may open and shut heaven to whom he will, and bind the very conscience with his own laws, and consequently be partaker of the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Again, they call Him a Savior, but yet in us—in that He gives this grace unto us, that by our merits we may be our own saviors, and in the want of our own merits we may partake in the merits of the saints. And they acknowledge that He died and suffered for us, but with this caveat, that the fault being pardoned we must satisfy for the temporal punishment either in this world or in purgatory. In a word, they make Him our Mediator of intercession unto God; but withal, His mother must be the queen of heaven, and by the right of a mother command Him there. Thus, in word they cry “Hosanna,” but indeed they crucify Christ. Therefore, we have good cause to bless the name of God that has freed us from the yoke of this Roman bondage and has brought us to the true light and liberty of the gospel. And it should be a great height of unthankfulness in us, not to stand out against the present Church of Rome, but to yield ourselves to plots of reconciliation. To this effect and purpose, I have penned this little treatise, which I present to your worship, desiring it might be some token of a thankful mind for undeserved love. And

I crave withal, not only your worshipful (which is more common) but also your learned protection; being well assured, that by skill and art you are able to justify whatsoever I have truly taught. Thus wishing to you and yours the continuance and the increase of faith and good conscience, I take my leave. Cambridge, June 28, 1597.

Your worship's in the Lord,
William Perkins

The Author to the Christian Reader

By a Reformed Catholic, I understand anyone that holds the same necessary heads of religion with the Roman Church; yet so as he pares off and rejects all errors in doctrine whereby the said religion is corrupted. How this may be done, I have begun to make some little declaration in this small treatise, the intent whereof is to show how near we may come to the present Church of Rome in sundry points of religion, and wherein we must ever dissent.

My purpose in penning this small treatise is threefold. The first is to confute all such politics as hold and maintain that our religion and that of the Roman Church differ not in substance, and consequently that they may be reconciled. Yet my meaning here is not to condemn any pacification that tends to persuade the Roman Church to our religion. The second is, that the papists which think so basely of our religion may be won to a better liking of it when they shall see how near we come unto them in sundry points. The third, that the common Protestant might in some part see and conceive the points of difference between us and the Church of Rome and know in what manner and how far forth we condemn the opinions of the said church.

I crave pardon for the order which I use in handling the several points. For I have set them down one by one, as they came to mind, not respecting the laws of method. If any papist shall say that I have not alleged their opinions aright, I answer that their books be at hand, and I can justify what I have said.

Thus craving your acceptation for this my pains, and wishing unto you the increase of knowledge and love of pure and sound religion, I take my leave and make an end.

The Places of Doctrine Handled

1. Of Free-will
2. Of Original Sin
3. Assurance of Salvation
4. Justification of a Sinner
5. Of Merits
6. Satisfaction for Sin
7. Of Traditions
8. Of Vows
9. Of Images
10. Of Real-presence
11. The Sacrifice of the Mass
12. Of Fasting
13. The State of Perfection
14. Worshipping of Saints Departed
15. Intercession of Saints
16. Implicit Faith
17. Of Purgatory
18. Of the Supremacy
19. Of the Efficacy of the Sacraments
20. Of Faith
21. Of Repentance
22. The Sins of the Roman Church

Revelation 18:4

And I heard another voice from heaven say, "Go out of her, my people, that ye not be partakers of her sins, and receive not of her plagues."

In the former chapter, Saint John sets down a description of the whore of Babylon, and that at large as he saw her in a vision described unto him. In the sixteenth verse of the same chapter, he foretells her destruction. And in the first three verses of this 18th chapter, he goes on to propound the said destruction yet more directly and plainly; withal alleging arguments to prove the same, in all the verses following. Now in this fourth verse is set down a caveat, serving to forewarn all the people of God, that they may escape the judgment which shall befall the whore. And the Word contains two parts: a commandment, and a reason. The commandment, "Come out of her, my people," that is, from Babylon. The reason, taken from the event "lest you be partakers, etc." Touching the commandment, first I will search the right meaning of it and then set down the use thereof and doctrine flowing thence. In history, therefore, are three Babylons mentioned: One is Babylon of Assyria standing on the river Euphrates, where was the confusion of languages, and where the Jews were in captivity, which Babylon is, in Scripture, reproached for idolatry and other iniquities. The second Babylon is in Egypt, standing on the river Nile, and it is now called Cayr; of that mention is made in 1 Peter 5:13 (as some think) though indeed it is as likely and more commonly thought that there is meant Babylon of Assyria. The third Babylon is mystical, whereof Babylon of Assyria was a type and figure; and that is Rome, which is without question here to be understood. And the whore of Babylon, as by all circumstances may be gathered, is the state or regiment of a people that are the inhabitants of Rome and appertain thereto. This may be proved by the interpretation of the Holy Ghost, for in the last verse of the seventeenth chapter the woman, that is, the whore of Babylon, is said to be "a city which reigneth over the kings of the earth."¹

1. This paragraph break is not in the original.