



A Brief Treatise of Doctrine Useful for Every Christian Breve tratado de doctrina útil para todo cristiano

Text Information

Author | Juan Pérez de Piñeda

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Collection | Prayer, Spirituality, and Life after Death: Global Medieval Perspectives

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Translation by Kathryn Phipps.

Introduction to the Text

This **Prologue** to *A Brief Treatise of Doctrine* (1560) is attributed to Dr. Juan Pérez de Piñeda—a Spanish scholar, theologian, priest, and condemned heretic. Pérez published in Spanish while in exile in Francophone nations, collaborated with Jean Calvin, read Lutheran texts, and was in communication with other Spanish Reformers through clandestine networks. *A Brief Treatise of Doctrine* is representative of these intercultural and interdenominational influences in Pérez's own thought, and consequently resists established dichotomies between Spain and Europe, Catholicism and Protestantism, Calvinism and Lutheranism.

Scholarship on Pérez's life and works is archetypical of scholarship on the Spanish Reformers in general. Catholic critic Marcelino Menéndez y Pelayo aptly described the state of the field with the biblical appropriation: "the harvest is plentiful but the workers are few" (*Historia de Los Heterodoxos Españoles*, v.1." 18). Extensive bibliographic work on the Spanish Reformation has preserved and organized a plethora of primary sources pertinent to the field. Consequently, the few modern scholars who have worked on the Spanish Reformation have approached it in broad terms, producing long histories and general studies. While a handful of anglophone scholars have begun studying the reformers individually, much work remains. As such, **A Brief Treatise of Doctrine** is the perfect text to introduce into Anglophone consideration of the Spanish Reformation. With increased access to Pérez's writings, interdisciplinary studies on Pérez can shed new light on the intricate web of theological developments sprawling onto the international stage of 16th-century Europe.

Introduction to the Source

The first edition of *A Brief Treatise of Doctrine* was published in 1560 in Geneva by Jean Crespin, a printer with known Calvinist leanings. Along with the other works of Pérez, this text was banned in Spain and would only have circulated through clandestine networks of Reformation sympathizers. By 1560, those networks were collapsing as more arrests were made in Spain by the Inquisition. Consequently, it is improbable this text had a wide circulation. It likely would have disappeared were it not for the dedicated efforts of Luis de Usó y Río and his partner Benjamin B. Wiffen to collect and preserve reformist texts in the 19th Century. The two men worked cross-continently to find rare books in small bookstores around the world. They re-bound and re-printed the works they found in the *Reformistas Antiguos Españoles* (*Old Spanish Reformers*), the oldest editions of which are held today in the National Library of Spain.





About this Edition

For the transcription and translation of this work, I consulted various editions of the *Reformistas Antiguos Españoles* collection as early editions have non-standardized orthography and make generous use of abbreviations. In the transcription, I generally standardize the orthography in cases where there is no ambiguity in meaning between the variations. For example, **e, i, í, and y** were used interchangeably for the modern y (meaning and); the transcription will use the modern **y**. In the translation, I interpret fidelity to be alignment with the author's purpose in writing rather than with the formal elements of style. While not always the appropriate metric of fidelity, the explicitness of Perez's reasons for writing within the text itself justifies this approach. Accordingly, the goal of the translation is to parallel Perez's style and tone, and I accordingly modify formal characteristics such as syntax and segmentation. Most commonly, hypotactic sentences that read fluidly and persuasively in Spanish become bulky and poorly constructed in English. Consequently, I cut would-be run-on sentences to better communicate Perez's erudite tone. Similar logic guides the introduction of paragraph breaks. All in all, Perez's writing seeks to be clear, accessible and persuasive; the translation seeks to do the same.

Further Reading

Boehmer, Edward, editor. *Bibliotheca Wiffeniana*. Burt Franklin, 1883.

- *An introduction to the collection of reformist texts to which A Brief Treatise of Doctrine belongs.*

Kinder, A. Gordon. *Spanish Protestants and Reformers in the Sixteenth Century: A Bibliography*. Grant & Cutler, 1983.

- *A bibliography of primary sources and secondary sources from both Catholic and Protestant perspectives.*

Kinder, A. Gordon. "Juan Pérez de Pineda (Pierius): A Spanish Calvinist Minister of the Gospel in Sixteenth-Century Geneva." *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* (Liverpool); Liverpool, vol. 53, no. 4, Oct. 1976, pp. 283–300.

- *Introductory article on the author.*

Luttikhuisen, Frances. *Underground Protestantism in Sixteenth Century Spain: A Much Ignored Side of Spanish History*. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2017.

- *A detailed introduction to key figures of the Spanish Reformation.*



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Por único remedio y defensa, nos dejo Dios su palabra, para que guiados por ella, le supiésemos servir, y nos acorriésemos a el, para ser ayudados en toda necesidad. Mas cuando por la malicia de los hombres es corrompida y falsada, o se enseña en su lugar doctrinas humanas, de necesidad son por ellas inducidos en error los que las creen, y vienes a henchirse de ignorancia y de escrúpulos sin saber lo que agrada a Dios, ni el como se ha de hacer, ni adonde han de acudir por socorro en sus trabajos. Porque solos los que signen a Cristo, y siguenlo los que abrazan su pura palabra, tienen este saber y claridad. Para que pudiésemos evitar estos daños, y que no fuésemos engañados con tomar la doctrina de los hombres por la de Dios, y las corrupciones con que falsifican su palabra, por la pureza con que el la tiene dada, nos manda el mismo por su Apóstol probar todas las cosas, y retener lo que es bueno: y que no creamos a todo espíritu, sino que probemos los espíritus, si son de Dios, cuya palabra es el toque, donde se debe hacer esta prueba y examen.

Por tanto es necesario, que tenga tal sentido el Cristiano, que pueda discernir entre la verdadera, y la falsa: entre la que es de Dios, y la de los hombres, para que conocida y desechada la una coma mala y perniciosa, pueda seguir la otra, y asegurar se por ella de lo que Dios le promete, y requiere del. Saber hacer este juicio lo debe tener por una de las cosas mas propias que le pertenecen, pues depende de ello su salud.

Pero Satanás por medio de sus ministros ha siempre trabajado por privar nos de esto que tan conjunto y anexo es a nuestra Cristiandad: y ha llegado a tanto con su diligencia que hubo de acabar con nosotros, que solamente aprobásemos, o condenásemos, lo que ellos aprobasen, o condenásemos, lo que ellos aprobasen, o condeñasen: que tuviésemos por santo y bueno, lo que ellos santificasen, y por malo aquello que dicen por tal. Y que así estuviésemos siempre pendientes de ellos: de suerte que ni hablásemos, ni sintiésemos de otra manera que nos hubiesen ellos enseñado. Trajeron-nos por esta vía a una miserable servidumbre harto mas intolerable y dura, que la que sufrió el pueblo de Dios en Egipto, y en Babilonia debajo de tan crueles tiranos. Vinieron de esta manera a despojarnos del ser de hombres y quitarnos enteramente el juicio de la razón, en querer que tomásemos gusto en lo que a ellos les sabía bien. Y haciéndonos recibir por verdadero Dios al falso que ellos mismos habían inventado, para dar hartura a sus vientres.

As our sole remedy and defense, God left us his word to guide us so that we might understand how to serve him and run to his aid, so that we may be helped in all our needs. However, when men corrupt and falsify his word through malice, or when they teach human doctrines in its place, it forces the people who believe them to inherently be in error. Their followers become stuffed full of scruples and ignorance, and they do not know what pleases God, nor how one might please him, nor from where they can find help in their works. It is only those who follow Christ (those who embrace his pure word truly follow him) who have this knowledge and clarity. In the hope that we would avoid these mistakes and not be tricked into confusing the doctrine of men and their corruption through the falsification of his word with the doctrine of God and his purity in giving it, God himself, through his Apostle, commands us to put everything to the test and to keep only what is good. Let us not believe every spirit. Instead we test the spirits to see if they are of God, whose word is the touchstone on which we must test and examine **them**¹.

Therefore, it is necessary that the Christian be of sound mind so that he may discern between what is true and what is false, between what is of God and what is of man, so that by recognizing and tossing out one as evil and pernicious, he may follow the other and to make sure of what God promises him and requires of him. Knowing how to make this judgment should be considered one of the greatest personal responsibilities that belong to him because his salvation depends on this.

But Satan has always worked through his ministers to sever us from this capacity, which is so attached and connected to our Christianity, and he has diligently accomplished this by stopping our own judgment, so that we only approve and condemn what they approve and condemn, and that we take for holy and good whatever they say is sanctified, and for evil whatever they say is evil. They do this so that we become eternally dependent on them, in the hopes that we would never speak or feel anything but what they have taught us. In this way they bring us into a miserable servitude, even more intolerable and difficult than the one the people of God suffered in Egypt and in Babylon under such cruel tyrants. They came to strip away our very humanity and to deprive us entirely of judgment and reason, hoping that we might take pleasure in whatever seems good to them and making us welcome the false god that they themselves had invented as the true one, just so they could fill their stomachs.



Y así no nos quedó mas de la figura de hombres. Porque el hombre sin juicio mayormente en cosa tan importante como es la de su salud, ya no es hombre, sino inferior a los animales que de todo punto perecen. Cautivaron nos las consciencias trayéndolas aperadas con cargas insufferibles: obligándolas a cosas que Dios aborrece, y defiende por su ley, y privaron-las de la libertad de obedecer y armarse a su palabra. Con habernos criado y rescatado Jesús Cristo, y estar por esta razón sumamente obligados a su servicio como vasallos suyos, enemistaron-nos con él, y hicieron-nos siervos del Anticristo. En lugar de adorar a Dios, y depender totalmente del, han nos hecho adorar a los palos y a las piedras figurados, y vestidos como hombres y mujeres, y a depender y poner en ellos nuestra confianza: teniéndonos de esta manera avasallados, metieron mano en nuestras haciendas hasta haberlas casi todo chupado. Y finalmente pusieron nos en venta para hacer de nosotros y con nosotros lo que bien les estoviese, como lo tenía tanto antes dicho Apóstol S. Pedro, y como claramente lo muestran ya los daños y calamidades en que por esta causa hemos incurrido.

Ya el Señor, pues muestra tener piedad de nosotros, in nos comienza a abrir los ojos para conocerle, y andar por el derecho camino, que guía a la vida, no debemos suportar mas tan turo cautiverio, sino reducirnos a la libertad que por su clemencia nos tiene dada, que es, no depender de hombres, en el negocio de nuestra salud, sino de sola su palabra, y por ella condenar y desechar constantemente todo lo que le contradice por antiguo, autorizado, y aprobado que sea de ellos, porque nos lo tiene así Dios mandado.

Estos pues que han sido autores de nuestros engaños, crueles carniceros de nuestras conciencias, y ladrones de nuestras haciendas, y los discípulos de ellos como los descubre ahora la verdad que resplandece de lo alto, por no perder el señorío que tan impiamente se han usurpado sobre las consciencias ajenas, llenos ahora de furor, hacen grande fuerza, para que llamemos tinieblas a la luz de la palabra que Dios nos comunica. Por la cual se nos da a conocer por Padre: y llamemos luz a las tinieblas y engaños que hasta ahora han enseñado, y todavía enseñan con tanta pertinacia.

With this, we are left with nothing but the form of man. For man without better judgment in something so important as salvation, is no longer man, but is inferior to the animals he now resembles in every respect. They captivated our consciences, chaining them with insufferable loads, forcing them to things God abhors and prohibits in his law, and depriving them of the freedom to obey and draw closer to his word. Having been raised and resurrected by Jesus Christ and being for that reason entirely obliged to his service as his vassals, we made ourselves his enemies and servants of the Antichrist. Instead of adoring God and depending on him completely, we have been forced to worship figures made of sticks and rocks that are dressed like men and women, and to trust and put our confidence in them. Having thus made us their subjects, they dipped their hands into our livelihood² until it was almost drained empty. Finally, they put us on sale to do to us whatever is best for them, just as the Apostle Saint Peter said so long before, and just as the injuries and calamities we have already endured for this reason so clearly demonstrate.

Given that the Lord already shows to have mercy on us, and that he begins the opening of our eyes and sets us on the straight path that leads to life, we should not endure any longer under such harsh captivity, but instead return to the liberty he has given to us in his mercy, which is to not depend on men for the negotiation of our salvation, but instead to depend solely on his word. By it we can condemn and perpetually cast out anything that contradicts him regardless of however old, authorized, and approved it might be, because God has not mandated it to us.

These men — the authors of our deception, the cruel carnivores of our consciences, and thieves of our livelihoods (as the truth that shines from on high reveals them to be) - and their disciples are now raging so that they do not lose the dominion over other peoples' consciences which they have so impiously usurped. They exert enormous effort to force us to call the light, the word that God communicates to us and that by which we come to know him as Father, "darkness," and to make us call the darkness and trickery that they have taught until now and continue to teach with such obstinacy, "light."



Para este fin a la doctrina que es luz traída del cielo por el autor de la luz, la infaman por diversas vías, y la llaman nueva, para que extrañados por esta vía, in enemistados los hombres con ella, no le den orejas ni la reciban: y así se queden ellos todavía en su autoridad, y no pierdan las ganancias acostumbradas. Ingenio es este del demonio, y frutos son de su espíritu en los que son regidos por el. Llamar así a la doctrina de Dios, no es cosa reciente, ni ha poco que comenzó, ni es pequeño el número de las ánimas perdidas por dar crédito a los que así la infaman.

Cuenta San Marco, que después de haber echado Jesús Cristo un demonio del cuerpo de un hombre, quedaron maravillados de ver tal cosa los que se hallaron presentes, y decían ¿que es esto? ¿que nueva doctrina es esta? Por estar ignorantes de la verdad, les parecía que era cosa nueva la palabra de Dios, contenida en toda la divina Escritura, siendo la cosa mas antigua que jamás hubo entre los hombres. Que cosa sea Evangelio, y quien Jesús Cristo Autor de el, cual sea su virtud y eficacia, y enseñar por él á los Cristianos á conocer á Dios, no es cosa nueva, como aquellos pensaban entonces, y como falsamente piensan también el día de hoy los hombres que están engañados y metidos todavía en sus errores. Porque por virtud del Evangelio echó Dios el demonio de los primeros padres, y los reconcilió consigo. El Evangelio predicaron los patriarcas y profetas; esta reinó desde el principio, en todos los que verdaderamente fueron pueblo de Dios, y por él fueron salvos: á él tuvieron siempre recurso los fieles en todos sus males y trabajos; este fue desde el principio prometido de Dios por salud y remedio del genero humano: el Evangelio enseñó Jesús Cristo venido al mundo, y este mismo mandó á sus discípulos que enseñasen á los hombres. A San Pablo, porque era fiel, y lo enseñaba con la pureza que lo había recibido de Jesús Cristo, lo llamaban en Atenas, Novelero, Enseñador de nueva doctrina. Pero quien eran, veamos, los que le dan tal nombre. No otros por cierto sino aquellos que estaban hinchados con las ciencias humanas, y los discípulos de ellos y la gente ignorante y entenebrecida. Mas no porque ellos la infamaban, era nueva, ni dejaba de tener su verdad y eficacia, ni de haberla recibido de Dios, ni de ser la primera que hubo en el mundo. Que la llamasen así los paganos no es de maravillar, porque o habían oído tal cosa, pero que en el día de hoy, los que se llaman pueblo Cristiano, los que han recibido el bautismo, que confiesan creer el símbolo de los Apóstoles, y que en la oración Dominica llaman á Dios por el nombre de Padre, y dicen que viven en la esperanza de la vida eterna, la llamen Nueva, y á los que la enseñan, como Dios les manda, Noveleros, sediciosos, alborotadores de las repúblicas, cosa es, cierto, de grande admiración e espanto.

To this end, they defame the doctrine of light brought down from heaven by the author of light through diverse ways. Moreover, they call it new so that with people thus estranged and made enemy to it, they do not hear or receive it. Consequently, they keep men under their authority, and they do not lose the profits to which they have grown accustomed³. This is the devil's invention, the fruits in those that are governed by him are from his spirit. Now, it is nothing new to treat the doctrine of God like this, nor did it begin recently, and it is not it a small number of souls who have been lost for believing those who so defame it in this way.

Saint Mark recounts that after Jesus cast a demon out of a man's body, those that were present there were amazed and said, "What is this? What new doctrine is it?" because they were ignorant of the truth. It seemed to them that God's Word—that which is contained in all of the divine Scriptures, being the oldest thing that ever was among men—was something new. The Gospel and its author, Jesus Christ, and all their power and efficacy, are not new, nor is it new to teach Christians through the Gospel to know God. By the power of the Gospel, God cast out the demon from the first fathers and reconciled them to him. This is the Gospel the patriarchs and prophets preached: The Gospel reigned since the beginning in all who were truly people of God, and they were all saved by it. In all their woes and works, the faithful always had it as a recourse, and it was promised by God since the beginning as the salvation and remedy for all mankind. The Gospel shows that Jesus Christ came to the world, and he himself commanded his disciples teach the world. In Athens, they called Saint Paul an inventor and teacher of new doctrine because he was faithful and taught the Gospel with the purity that it received from Jesus Christ. But let us see who those men who called him such a name truly were. They were none others but those who were stuffed full of human knowledge and their disciples, and other ignorant and unenlightened people⁴. But this doctrine did not become new just because they defamed it, nor did it lose its truth and efficacy, nor did it cease to be received from God as the first doctrine that came into the world. That pagans would call it new is not surprising because they would not have heard of such a thing. What is surprising is that today, those who call themselves the Christian people, those that have been baptized and who profess belief in the symbol of the Apostles, and who in the Dominican prayer call God by the name Father, and who say that they live in the hope of eternal life, would call it new! And that they would call those who teach this doctrine as God commanded them to, inventors, rebels, and conspirators against the republic, is surely a thing of great astonishment and fright⁵.



Donde se ve claramente cuanta es la ira de Dios, que reposa sobre los hombres por el pecado. ¿Qué otra cosa es esto, sino llamarse Cristianos, y juntamente ignorar su propio nombre, y ser capitales enemigos de su verdadero salud, y correr desapoderadamente a ser despeñados en perdición? Dicen, que se guarden de esta doctrina que es nueva y fabricada de los herejes: como si aquellos a quien ellos ponen tal nombre, por abrazar la doctrina y justicia del cielo, fuesen autores del Evangelio, y como si fuese el Evangelio seminario de herejías.

La gloria damos a Jesús Cristo, que es el solo autor de su Evangelio, por habernos hecho partícipes de su salud eterna por medio de él. Estémonos (dicen) quedos, y firmes en nuestra antigua fe. Sigamos la santidad y vida de nuestros padres: vamos nosotros por donde ellos fueron: tengamos la autoridad de los Concilios, y huyamos novedades. ¡O, gente miserable y ciega, y casi desauiciada de remedio!

¿Que fe hay antigua si no es la del Evangelio? ¿Qué santidad verdadera sino la que por él se alcanza? ¿Qué camino acertado sino seguir á Jesús Cristo que es el camino, la verdad, y la vida? ¿Qué otro Concilio sino el que fue tenido en el cielo y después revelado al Mundo por Jesús Cristo, que nos es dado del Padre por Maestro y Enseñador.? ¿Qué puede mandar el Concilio de los hombres congregados en su propio nombre á título de Dios sino cosas humanas? ¿Qué hay que esperar pues ya tenemos todos los artículos del Concilio de Dios resumidos en el Nuevo Testamento donde nos es mandado oír y seguir á Jesús Cristo? Si esto no mandan los Concilios ¿de que sirven? y si mandan esto ya está mandado y declarado por el Señor. A estos infamadores de la verdad puede se les decir lo que respondió el Señor Jesús Cristo a los Saduceos: vosotros andáis errados, porque no sabéis las Escrituras, ni la virtud de Dios.

Por manera, que les viene todo su mal de estar enemistados con la palabra de Dios, y de no leerla, ni entenderla, y de poner estanque de ella los que tienen poder y autoridad, con hacer que ninguno la lea, ni la entienda, sino a la manera de ellos, es a saber, que con mortalísimo odio la aborrezcan y persigan.

From this it is clear how great the wrath of God is against these men because of their sin. What else is this, but simultaneously to call themselves Christians and to ignore their own name, to be the greatest enemies to their true salvation, and to run so furiously only to be thrown off a cliff into perdition? They claim they are protecting themselves from this new doctrine fabricated by heretics, as if those whom they malign for embracing the doctrine and righteousness of heaven were themselves the authors of the Gospel, and as if the Gospel were a seminary for heresies.

We give glory to Jesus Christ, who is the only author of his own Gospel, for having given us a share of his eternal salvation through it. May we be (they say) firm in our ancient faith. Let us follow the saintliness and life of our fathers as we go towards where they went. May we have the authority of the Councils and flee from novelties. Oh, miserable and blind people, who are on your deathbeds without a **cure**!

What faith is old if it is not the faith in the Gospel? What saintliness is there except the one achieved by faith? What other right path can be found except by following Jesus Christ who is the way, the truth, and the life? What other council is there but the one held in heaven and then revealed to the world through Jesus Christ, who is given to us from the Father as Master and Teacher? What other mandates can a council of men who, under the pretext of God's name, congregate in their own name create except for human things? What is there to wait for since we already have all the articles of God's Council resumed in the New Testament, which commands us to hear and follow Jesus Christ? If the Councils do not mandate this, what good are they? And even if they do mandate this, it has already been mandated and declared by God. The only thing that remains is to put it in action. To those who defame the truth respond with exactly what the Lord Jesus Christ said to the Sadducees, "you walk in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the truth of God."

Those with power and authority have an evil antagonism against God's Word because they do not read or understand it, and they dam it up to ensure that no one else reads or understands it in any way contrary to their own understanding.



De aquí es, que estos que quieren ser tenidos por padres y lumbreras de los otros, condenan tan furiosamente a los inocentes, así a los que la enseñan como a los que la aprenden, sin oírlos, ni examinar la causa, ni pesarla con justas balanzas, contentos con solo saber que siguen esta doctrina Evangélica, para tenerlos por errados y herejes, y darlos luego por condenados, pensando que en matarlos hacen a Dios grande servicio.

No son, cierto, regidos estos varones sangrientos por el espíritu y mansedumbre de Cristo, el cual anda a buscar los errados, para reducirlos al camino de la verdad, a los llagados, para atarles y sanarles su llagas: a los pobres para enriquecerlos con sus bienes, y no para hacerles tratamientos contrarios; pero son regidos por el espíritu de aquel que tiene por deleite matar y derramar sangre humana y que no puede sufrir la claridad de las obras y maravillas de Dios. Y por tanto estos no pueden sufrir esta doctrina, ni conocer al Señor cuya es, ni ver los milagros que el día de hoy por ella hace en los que las reciben, sacándolos del poder de Satanás, haciéndolos los lobos ovejas, de osos y leones, corderos: de engañados y engañadores, maestros de verdad, de hijos tinieblas hijos de luz.

Pero los que con verdadero deseo de conocer al Señor, consideraren nuestra doctrina, o por mejor decir, la de Jesús Cristo, Señor y Redentor del mundo, y lo que por ella pretendemos, que es, dar a Dios la honra que se le debe, y a los hombres la que el manda, atinarán al blanco, y vista claramente la verdad, juzgarán muy de otra manera que los otros, que son amadores de las tinieblas. Otra cosa, cierto, es el Evangelio, que las exposiciones que los hombres le han dado de sus propias cabezas sin sentimiento ni espíritu de Dios, aplicándolo, no para conocer y seguir a Jesús Cristo, y mortificar los afectos de la carne y mundo, sino para cubrir sus propios errores, en que fueron enseñados y criados. En sola la Escritura Divina está la pureza de la verdad, y á ella nos manda el Señor por sus Evangelistas y Profetas que la vamos á buscar. Las exposiciones de los hombres, por santos que hayan sido, no son Sagrada Escritura, ni tienen aquellos quilates de verdad ni aquel Espíritu con que ella fue escrita.

By this we know that they abhor, reject, and persecute God's Word with a deadly hatred. Consequently, those who want to be considered fathers and luminaries by others so furiously condemn the innocent—those who teach this doctrine and those who learn it—without hearing them, nor examining the cause, nor measuring it with just balances. Instead, they are content with the mere knowledge that they follow this Evangelic doctrine to call them errant heretics and to convict them as condenados, thinking that by killing them, they do God a great **service**.

Truly, these men with bloody hands are not governed by the spirit and gentleness of Christ, who searches for those who have gone astray to show them the path of truth, for the broken to bind up and heal their wounds, for the poor to enrich them with his own goods, and not to give them the opposite treatments. Instead they are governed by the spirit of him who delights in killing and spilling human blood, and who cannot withstand the brightness of the works and wonders of God. And because they cannot bear this doctrine, nor know its Lord, nor see these miracles he works today in those who receive it: he removes them from the power of Satan and makes the wolves into sheep, the bears and lions into lambs, and the deceived and the deceivers into teachers of the truth into sons of darkness into sons of light.

However, may those with the true desire to know the Lord consider our doctrine— or better yet, the doctrine of Jesus Christ, Lord and Redeemer of the world—and see that all we intend through this doctrine is to give God the honor he deserves and to men the glory that he sends. They will thus hit the mark and, seeing the truth clearly, they will judge those who are lovers of darkness very differently. The Gospel is something other than the expositions that men have given it from their own heads without the sense or the spirit of God, not using it to know and follow Jesus Christ and to put to death the desires of the flesh and the world, but instead to cover their own errors in which they were taught and raised. The purity of the truth only exists in the Holy Scriptures. The Lord sends us to the Scriptures through his evangelists and prophets so that we will search for it. Human explanations, saints though they might have been, are not Sacred Scripture, nor do they have those carats of truth, nor that Spirit with which the Scriptures were written.



Porque muchos de ellos erraron en sus doctrinas, y se desdijeron después de lo que primero habían enseñado; como hizo San Agustín en el libro de sus Retrataciones, y otros muchos como Orígenes, San Jerónimo, San Cipriano. Donde se manifiesta que no hablaban con tal espíritu cual el de los Apóstoles. Porque el Espíritu Santo, que hablaba por su boca de ellos, no puede errar, mas antes enseña toda verdad, como se lo había prometido el Señor antes de subida al cielo. Yo os enviaré les dice el Espíritu Santo, y él os enseñará toda verdad, y os declarará las cosas que os he dicho.

Pero el Espíritu de los hombres puede errar, y muchas veces yerra, en daño suyo, y de los otros. Y porque en el negocio de nuestra salud se corre grande riesgo y peligro en seguir reglas combadas y tuertas de hombres, los cuales son ciegos de suyo, y mal propios para ser guías de otros, es necesario á él que no se quiere perder, seguir regla tan derecha que no pueda engañar á los que se rijeren por ella. Esta es la regla del Evangelio, que es toda divina. La cual tiene por Autor á El que es Verdad y Sabiduría eterna de Dios, que ni engaña ni puede engañar. Por tanto queremos antes creer al Evangelio y seguir lo que él es infalible, cierto, inmutable, y no contiene que verdad y ellos son mentirosos, mudables, y variables, y no nos son dados por regla de conocer y agradar á Dios.

Mas ha ya de quinientos años cuando estaba el mundo lleno de tinieblas que muchos hombres sofistas, y otros que no lo eran, hicieron diversos comentarios, glosas, exposiciones, nuevas leyes y tradiciones, allende de las que estaban antes hechas, las cuales fueron fácilmente recibidas de todos, sembradas e esparcidas por la Cristiandad. Y fueron tantos y en tan grande numero que la verdadera simiente, que es el Evangelio, fue de tal manera con ellas cubierto y sepultado, que ya casi no se veía, ni divisaba. Porque en lugar de él, fueron recibidas, obedecidas y seguidas, mucho mas que si fueran palabra de Dios, con ser á la verdad no otra cosa que paja. Y el verdadero Evangelio quedó en un perpetuo silencio, tanto que se vino á olvidar aun hasta los vocablos de él, y los maestros y enseñadores de los pueblos no lo sabían y erales un lenguaje bárbaro y no entendido; pues á estas doctrinas, leyes y tradiciones de hombres (cosa aborrecible delante de Dios) llaman ellos la doctrina Antigua, y por mantenerla y defenderla acosan, destierran, infaman, persiguen, y matan á los Santos, y discípulos de Jesús Cristo y desechan el verdadero Evangelio que Dios por su sola bondad nos ha restituido— y dicen que es doctrina nueva y engañadora, y que incurren en muchos peligros los que la siguen, que se suman todos en ser herejes y caer en las manos de los enemigos de ella.

Many of them erred in their doctrines and they later contradicted what they had at first taught; like Saint Augustine did in the book of his Retractions, and many others like Origen, Saint Jerome, and Saint Cyprian. So then, it is clear that they did not speak from the same spirit as the Apostles. Because the Holy Spirit, who did speak through their mouths, cannot err, but rather he teaches every truth, as the Lord promised before ascending to heaven. "I will send you," he tells them, "the Holy Spirit, and he will teach you every truth, and will declare to you what I have told you."

Now, there is a great risk and danger in the business of our salvation in following warped and half-blind rules made by men who are blind and poorly qualified to guide others. Therefore, it is necessary for him who does not want to be lost to follow the rule that is so straight it could not trick those who are guided by it. This rule is perfectly divine and comes from the Gospel. Its author is the One who is the eternal Truth and Wisdom of God, who neither deceives nor can deceive. Therefore, we want to believe the Gospel and follow it before we believe in men. It is infallible, certain, immutable, and contains nothing but truth. Yet their rules lie and are ever-changing and variable. They are not given to us as the rule to know and to please God.

When the world was full of darkness over 500 years ago, many sophists, and others who were not, made many commentaries, annotations, explanations and new laws and traditions beyond the ones established earlier. Their works were sown and dispersed by Christianity and were easily received by all. There were so many of them in such a massive quantity that they covered and buried the true seed of the Gospel so that it could barely be seen or perceived. These new laws were received in place of God's Word and were much better obeyed and followed than if they had been God's Word, while in truth being nothing but **chaff**⁸. The true Gospel remained in a perpetual silence, to the extent that even its very words were forgotten, and the teachers and instructors of the towns knew nothing of it. To them it was a barbaric language they could not understand. Consequently, they now call human doctrines, laws and traditions (a detestable thing before God), "ancient doctrine," and they relentlessly pursue, exile, defame, persecute, and kill the saints and disciples of Jesus Christ for upholding and defending it. They cast out the true Gospel that God in his goodness has restored to us, saying that it is new and deceitful doctrine and that those who follow it fall into many dangers. They lump them all together as heretics and place them in the hands of this doctrine's enemies.



Vean lo que enseñamos y predicamos, lean con paciencia nuestros libros, como nosotros leemos los suyos, y hallarán con verdad (si con todo tienen ojos para ver, y orejas para oír) que tenemos la verdadera y antigua doctrina venida del cielo y revelada por el Espíritu Santo; que es el Evangelio Eterno de Dios; que son las promesas de su reconciliación prometidas y cumplidas en su Hijo Unigénito; que es aquel admirable misterio de la piedad y misericordia que ha Dios habido de nosotros: el cual (como dice San Pablo á Timoteo) fue manifestado en carne, justificado en Espíritu, visto de los Ángeles, predicado por los Apóstoles y discípulos de Jesús Cristo á las gentes de tal manera que fue creído en el mundo, y después recibido en gloria.

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¿Son por ventura nuevas tales cosas? el Padre Celestial, como dice el mismo Apóstol á los Efesios, nos eligió en Cristo antes de la fundación del mundo, para que fuésemos Santos y irreprehensibles delante de él en caridad. Y nos predestinó para adoptarnos por hijos en Jesús Cristo, según su buena voluntad, para alabanza de la gloria de su gracia por la cual nos ha hecho agradables a sí. Por el cual tenemos redención por su sangre y remisión de pecados, según las riquezas de su gracia. Todas estas cosas son parte de aquel grande secreto y admirable consejo de Dios, por el cual había deliberado de antes que fuese fundando el mundo de salvarnos por tal media y llamarnos con una santa vocación, no por nuestras obras, sino según su santa gracia, la cual nos es dada por Jesús Cristo antes de todos tiempos: mas ahora es cumplida por la manifestación que nos ha hecho Jesús Cristo, mostrándose en forma de hombre, el cual destruyó la muerte y ha revelado la vida en luz y en inmortalidad. Visto pues y considerado que son estas cosas tan antiguas, y que de tantos tiempos acá han sido sembradas, anunciadas, y predicadas por el mundo, ¿Como son estos tan desvergonzados, en llamarlas nueva doctrina?

Let them see what we teach and preach. Let them read our books with patience, just as we read theirs, and if they have eyes to see and ears to hear, they will find with truth that we have the true and ancient doctrine from heaven, revealed by the Holy Spirit, and that God's Gospel is eternal. The promises of his reconciliation are promised and fulfilled by his only-begotten Son, who is that the wonderful mystery of the pity and mercy God has had on us. He is the one who, as Saint Paul says to Timothy, was made flesh, justified in Spirit, seen by the Angels, preached by the Apostles and disciples of Jesus Christ to all people in such a way that it was believed in all the world, and then received in **glory**⁹.

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Is there any chance these are new things? The Heavenly Father, as the same apostle says to the Ephesians, "He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world in order that we might be saintly and blameless before him in **love**¹⁰. And he predestined us to adopt us as sons in Jesus Christ, according to his good will, for the praise of the glory of his grace by which we have been made pleasing to him. By which we have redemption by his blood and the remission of sins, according to the riches of his **grace**." All of these things are part of that great secret and wonderful counsel from God, by which he had determined even before the world was founded to save us in this way and call us to a holy calling. This was not because of our works, but in accordance with his holy grace, which was granted to us through Jesus Christ before time, but now it is fulfilled by Jesus Christ's sign to us, revealing himself in the form of man. He is the one who destroyed death and who has revealed life in light and immortality. So then, having seen and considered that these things are so ancient and have been sown, announced, and preached throughout the world even from so long ago, how are these men still so unashamed to call them new doctrine?



¡Oh, miserables hombres! cesad ya de blasfemar tan desacatadamente: y dad gloria á Dios con nosotros y reverenciad su verdad como conviene. No se os haga de mal desdeiros de los engaños en que estáis, porque no vengáis á ser endurecidos con los reprobados que no quieren creer á la verdad, pero aprueban sus injusticias y errores. Por el amor, pues, que debo á todo Cristiano, quise hacer este Tratado, harto breve, llamado la doctrina Nueva y Antigua, por el cual se podrá fácilmente conocer si somos, con razón o sin ella, llamados predicadores y seguidores de nueva doctrina. Y así en él se puede saber y entender cómo es confundida la nueva doctrina por la antigua, para responder á los que ciegos de sus intereses, olvidados de los juicios y castigos de Dios, tienen tan perdida la vergüenza, que se osan oponer y hacer contradicción a Jesús Cristo, batallando contra su santo Evangelio, lo cual es una averiguación y testimonio cierto de su condenación.

Por tanto, os ruego á todos hermanos muy amados en el Señor, que la estudiéis y entendáis que la doctrina Nueva es la de los hombres, contraria y repugnante á la que vino del Cielo, y la Antigua es de Dios, para que recibéndola y sujetándoos á ella, seáis salvos con salud eterna, y en lo mismo tengáis firmísimo testimonio de ser hijos del Altísimo, y herederos para siempre de su celestial Reino. Amen.

Oh, miserable men! Immediately cease such disrespectful blasphemies, give glory to God with us and revere his truth as is fitting. Do not become **evil-rid** yourselves of the deceptions that trap you so that you do not become hardened with the condemned who do not want to believe truth but approve of their own injustices and errors. For the love that I owe to every Christian, I wanted to write this fairly short Treatise, naming the new and old doctrine, so that one could easily know if we are rightly called preachers and followers of new doctrine or not. And so, by this Treatise, you can know and understand exactly how the new doctrine is confused for the old, so you can respond to those who are blinded by their own interests, who forget the judgments and punishments of God, and who have entirely lost all shame to the point that they dare to oppose and contradict Jesus Christ, and fight against his holy Gospel, which is a verification and testament to their condemnation.

Therefore, I beg you, all my brothers and sisters whom I deeply love in the Lord, that you would study and understand that the New Doctrine is the one produced by men and is contrary and repugnant to the doctrine from Heaven. Know also that the Ancient Doctrine is from God and that by receiving and submitting yourselves to it, you will be saved with eternal life, and in the same you will have exceptionally firm testimony of being children of the Most High, the heirs forever to his heavenly kingdom. Amen.

Critical Notes

Translation

- 1 *El toque*, translated touchstone, refers to the exam that metalworkers use to test the quality of a metal.
- 2 *Hazienda*, translated livelihood, refers to the goods, possessions, riches of an individual, frequently tied to land and property.
- 3 Pérez here references the ways the church profited off of its laity, a common complaint for reformers. The customary penalty for those excommunicated from the church was the confiscation of goods, where the Inquisition retained all of the property of the condemned.
- 4 *Entenebrecida*, translated unenlightened, has to do with those raised and kept in darkness. Rather than unenlightened, with connotes a lack of light, *entenebrecida* implies more of being kept in darkness, and importantly, has no connection to the Enlightenment, in Spanish, *Renacimiento*.
- 5 *Alborotadores de las repúblicas*, translated as conspirators against the state. *Alborotadores* are those who commit sedition. As Cascardi notes, *república* was a word frequently used by humanists to describe the commonwealth, the people, that comprised a nation. There was an immense concern about the socio-political impacts of literature, and writers of doctrine were considered threats to the state. However, it should be noted by the modern reader that *república* did not mean a republic form of government in its modern sense as Europe was still solidly in the era of monarchies. Cascardi, "What the Canon Said," 22–23.



- 6 *Desauziada de remedio*, translated as on your deathbeds without a cure. Desauziar, today desahuciar, means to declare terminally ill or to have not hope for especially in a medical context. De remedio emphasizes this medical register suggesting that the people who are blinded by Catholic doctrine are terminally ill with no hope of a spiritual cure.
- 7 *Condenado*, or the condemned, is left here in Spanish because it is as direct of an allusion to the Inquisition that Pérez makes in this text. Condenado was the phrase the Inquisition would use to declare someone as guilty and then would have them either repent through confession or would deliver their punishment. In Pérez's case his verdict was condenado for his "Lutheran" heresies, and relegado en estatua, as the consequence of the verdict. This whole passage uniquely addresses Inquisitional authorities, specifically identifying those with political power and authority and criticizing them for abuses.
- 8 *Paja*, translated chaff, is listed in Percivals' 1591 dictionary as meaning "chaffe, strawe, litter" (NTLIE). This likely alludes to biblical passages referring to chaff separated from the wheat to be cast into a fire (Matthew 3:12).
- 9 Here Pérez interestingly introduces the relevance of reading with the aim of reconciliation.
- 10 Pérez here draws from Ephesians 1:4-7. Interestingly, of the verifiable editions readily available, Pérez punctuates this verse in alignment to the punctuation in this translation. Editions of the Bible in Spanish and in English, however, link "in love" or "en caridad" (in modern translations, "en amor") to the start of the second sentence, changing the verse to read, "....to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love he predestined us."