

The Roman Catholic Church in History by Walter
Martin: 1. Pope Peter? 2. Tradition

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The Roman Catholic Church in History

By Walter Martin

Bible Text: Galatians 1:6-9; Ephesians 2:8-10

Preached on: Monday, January 4, 1960

Christian Answers of Austin, Texas

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Walter Martin: This is the Bible Answer Man, Walter Martin, you're on the air.

Caller: I'm calling to find out if there is any scriptural basis for marital separation.

Announcer: Stay tuned for the answer to this and other important questions as the Christian Research Institute presents "Dateline Eternity" with Professor Walter Martin, the Bible Answer Man. Professor Martin is the founder and Director of the Christian Research Institute, San Juan, Capistrano, California and Professor of Comparative Religions at Melodyland School of Theology in Anaheim. The Christian Research Institute is supported through the gifts and prayers of people like yourself who are interested in straight answers from the Bible. We hope that as this program of prerecorded questions and answers unfolds you will find answers to your questions. Of course, the ultimate answer to all questions is Jesus Christ.

Larry Wessels: Who is Walter Martin? Professor Martin, founder and Director of the Christian Research Institute, is widely acknowledged as the outstanding evangelical authority on pseudo-Christian cults and the study of comparative religions in America. He has debated some of the most controversial intellects in this country through his popular radio and television ministry, and is the author of numerous articles in national magazines. His best-selling book, "Kingdom of the Cults," has become the primary reference work in this field.

Walter Martin: As Christians, what ought our attitude to be? There ought to be an attitude of gratitude, an attitude of joy because God has delivered us from this system into the glorious liberty of the sons of God. We are not the descendants of this papacy nor do we wish to be. We do not wish its sacraments, we do not wish its dogmas. We worship only Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords, Redeemer and Savior of lost men. We reject a corrupt church, a backslidden church, an apostate church, and reach out to her people with the love of Christ, holding forth holy Scripture as Strossmayer said, and standing upon the liberty wherein Christ has set us free.

Let us not think that Rome has changed her basic positions. She has not. Her catechisms are essentially the same. Her dogmas uncompromising. It is the same Roman Catholic Church as at the Council of Trent only carefully adapted to American Protestant culture. It is the Roman Catholic Church which today threatens Protestantism in various parts of the world whenever she gains the upper hand.

Larry Wessels: Now we just heard Walter Martin himself say the Roman Catholic Church was apostate. In fact, that comes from Walter's tape which I've already told everybody I bought just about every tape they ever put out by good old Walter, and here it is right here, "Peter the Rock: Catholic Church tradition and the Bible," and he said what you just heard right on this audio cassette.

This is Larry Wessels. Walter Martin says, "Roman Catholicism nullifies the Gospel," page 39 from his book, "The Roman Catholic Church in History." Cross-reference this to Galatians 1:6-9 where having another or nullified Gospel is cursed by God.

Speaker: The Roman church in effect nullifies the good doctrine of the Gospel by adding the traditions or commandments of men. Herein lies the deadly parallel to Judaism mentioned by our Lord in Mark 7.

Christian Answers of Austin, Texas
presents
The Roman Catholic Church in History
by Walter Martin
Chapters One & Two
Narrated by: Dan Rosema

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The Roman Catholic Church in History
by Walter R. Martin

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The Roman Catholic Church In History
Preface.

The lectures which make up this booklet were delivered in New York City at Calvary Baptist Church in 1958 and 1959. Because so many persons requested copies of them, it became necessary to put them in printed form. In delivering these lectures, I have endeavored to avoid personalities and have sought only to discuss certain of the theological views of the Roman church.

At the outset, we admitted that the average Roman Catholic practices is religion sincerely. We sympathized with the fact that having been born and reared in Catholicism, he has been so thoroughly imbued with certain teachings that they are woven into the very fiber of his being. We have not sought to be argumentative or bigoted and have concentrated as much as possible upon facts drawn from authoritative Roman Catholic sources.

We trust that if any Roman Catholic reads this booklet, he will understand that we are only obeying the precept of Scripture which tells every Christian Catholic and non-Catholic to, "Test all things; hold fast that which is good," 1 Thessalonians 5:21, Catholic Confraternity Edition. No one who is sure of his convictions need fear and honest appraisal and critique of those convictions for only darkness fears the light and, "the entrance of thy words gives light," Psalm 119:130. We have also made extensive use of the Douay version of the Old Testament and the 1951 Catholic Confraternity version of the New Testament. These lectures were not intended to foster animosity and should not be either construed or used in an unkind spirit, but with the desire to learn and apply the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. "For if the Son shall make you free, you shall be free indeed," John 8:36.

The author wishes to express his gratitude to the many persons whose efforts in typing and proofreading made this publication possible. We have retained as much as possible the style in which the lectures were originally delivered, believing that such a popular and informal approach enhances the presentation and comprehension of an admittedly controversial and provocative subject.

Walter R. Martin
Livingston, New Jersey
August, 1960

Chapter 1 The Papacy – Was Peter the First Pope?

In order to understand Catholic theology and psychology, we must recognize that Rome maintains that she alone is the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. We must also know what the Roman Church teaches concerning Protestants, and concerning final authority in things spiritual.

Papal Claims

The Roman Catholic Church makes the following claims: (a) the Pope alone is successor to the Apostles; (b) he is the Vicar of Jesus Christ; (c) he alone is the guide and director of all Christendom; (d) by his own declaration he is "the way, the truth, and the life." He is absolute head of the Roman Church. It is interesting to note that in Italy early in 1958, for the first time in recent history, a civil court ruled a Roman Catholic bishop guilty of defamation of character because he accused a couple of living in sin and concubinage

since they had not been married by a Catholic priest. As a result, the late Pope Pius XII cancelled the celebration of his birthday because he considered this overruling of ecclesiastical authority an omen of difficulties that were coming for the Roman Catholic Church. In effect, his statement is a tacit admission that the Roman Church is perhaps uneasy about her power and authority in one of her greatest strongholds - Italy. We should not forget that the decision of the court was overruled by a higher court under intense Papal pressure. But the fact that in Catholic Italy such a thing happened at all is, to say the least, food for thought.

The Roman Papacy brings up almost automatically the interesting question of, "Was Peter the first Pope?" The question demands some background if a satisfactory answer is to be given. According to Catholic teaching, when the Roman popes speak, they are speaking infallibly, without error: they are speaking as God, and Roman Catholics are to obey them as God (that is, in any area proclaimed to be under the heading of "faith and morals"). I quote now from The Bull of Pope Boniface VIII, entitled *Unum Sanctum*, which can be found in many Catholic reference books:

"We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce it to be necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." Cardinal Manning, certainly an authority, states that this decree is "infallible, and beyond all doubt, an act *ex cathedra*."

This is the teaching of the Catholic Church concerning the authority of the Pope. Such statements are tremendously important because they reveal the extreme dogmatism of the Roman Church. Pope Pius IX stated: "I alone, despite my unworthiness, am the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Jesus Christ. I alone have the mission to guide and direct the Barque of Peter. I am the way, the truth, and the life. They who are with me are with the Church; they who are not with me are out of the Church. They are out of the way, the Truth, and the life. Let men well understand this, that they be not deceived or led astray by soidisant Catholics who desire and teach something quite different from what the head of the Church teaches."

This, then, is the position of the Roman Popes. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; I alone, and despite my unworthiness, am the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Jesus Christ." A vicar is "a deputy, one who acts for another" - in this case for Jesus Christ. For Roman Catholics, the words of John XXIII on matters of faith and morals are as infallible as if they came from the throne room of Jehovah Himself. Failure to believe them incurs excommunication.

I will now quote some very interesting statements from the Roman Catholic Catechism, which are taught in all Catholic schools. Then we will go on to the "proofs" that the Catholic Church uses to establish that Peter was the first pope. First of all, Lesson II on the Church clearly states:

"The Church is the congregation of all those who profess the faith of Christ, and partake of the same sacraments and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible head." The word Church here implies the religious society founded by Jesus Christ which, of

course, they maintain is the Roman Catholic Church. Listen, further, to some of the statements which they make. Concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: "He rules, governs and preserves the Church." But how does He do it? "Through the ministry of His Apostles and their successors." Who is the visible head of the Church? "Our Holy Father the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the Vicar of Christ on earth and the visible head of the Church." Other names of the Pope: "Sovereign Pontiff, Father of Christendom, His Holiness."

In contrast to this position, turn in the Catholic Bible to the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel and you will find a statement concerning the Person of God the Father made by the Lord Jesus Christ – a statement tremendously important when considering the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on the Papacy. Only once in the entire Bible and in this passage (also known as "the High Priest's prayer") does Jesus Christ use this term. I want you to note to Whom He applies it. Christ said: "And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to Thee Holy Father, keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one." (John 17:11) The Scripture, then, plainly speaks of a Holy Father but the Scripture speaks of but one Holy Father. The Scripture speaks exclusively of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ! The Roman Catholic Church has therefore taken the very title of God Himself and has bestowed it upon sinful men. They have given to every succeeding pope the title, "Holy Father", and yet the Scripture says there is but one Holy Father and out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, His Son, this title is given to God His Father. "Holy Father, keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given me."

This is significant, because the Lord Jesus Christ many times used language that the Roman Catholic Church has adopted. The interesting thing, however, is that Christ's usage of the terms is frequently the direct opposite of what the Catholic Church claims for them, as seen in the case of John 17:11. Sometimes, they do not even hesitate to disobey His expressed commands. For example, every priest is designated "Father," or given the honorary title of spiritual father. John XXIII and his papal predecessors have been given the title "Holy Father" chiefly because this sets them apart or designates that they are in some way different from other men - that they have a special office. Yet it was the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Gospel of Matthew, Who made a statement most damaging to this Roman Catholic teaching. I quote from the Roman Catholic Douay version of the Bible: "And call no one on earth Father, for one is your Father who is in heaven. Neither be called master for one only is your master, the Christ. He who is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matthew 23:9) But this is not true of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The Catholic Church divides its people by means of an autocratic, self-perpetuating hierarchy consisting of the pope, cardinals, arch-bishops, bishops, monsignors, and priests. Under them are the laity, those who are taught by those who are allegedly above them in spiritual authority. They are, very literally, the servants of this hierarchy, not the reverse. To know this is true, you need only go to St. Patrick's Cathedral and watch a Roman Catholic bow subserviently before a cardinal or bishop and kiss his ring. You need only notice that one of the ceremonies of Roman Catholic teaching is bowing before the Pope, prostrating oneself before him, and the kissing of his toe.

It is common knowledge that Roman Catholics have an almost superstitious respect for their priesthood, particularly for the priests' hands since they allegedly handle God (the Host) at the sacrifice of the Mass, as Roman Catholic theology teaches. Roman Catholic teaching maintains that the priest, after he is ordained, (though he himself may be a terrible, openly reprobate individual), so long as he is performing the rites of the Church is, when he consecrates Mass, in reality, validly performing a divine work.

A few weeks ago, when I was riding in a subway in New York City, I sat bolt upright while looking at the various advertisements. One of the signs said: "A Prayer to God, Send us more Christs." I blinked and looked up again in amazement. Sure enough, it read: "Send us more Christs." On closer inspection I found it was a prayer to the Virgin Mary to send the Catholic Church more "Christs." And these "Christs," the poster said, were "missionaries," "teachers" and "priests"! Such teachings of the Catholic Church rarely get out that far into the public eye for Protestants to fully understand, but every priest, after ordination, believes he possesses the authority of Christ. They are often referred to in foreign countries, where the Catholic Church is much more open and bold concerning certain of her teachings (Mexico, Spain, and South America), as almost divine beings who have the power and authority to not only forgive sins, but to bless and curse in God's name. You will find this in many, many Roman Catholic statements published in these countries and some even in the United States.

Relative to the Catechism statement; "Our Holy Father the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, the Vicar of Christ on earth," etc., the Scriptures teach us that the Vicar of Christ on earth" according to the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of the Gospel of John, is none other than the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity.

"And I will ask the Father and He Will give you another Advocate ... the Spirit of truth" ... "When He is come ... He will teach you all the truth." (John 14:16-17, 16:13-14)

Who, then, is the true Vicar of Christ on earth? It is the Holy Spirit. He it is who guides the Christians. It is not necessary for a visible head of the Church to exist even if there were a thousand denominations. As long as they were agreed on the fundamentals of the Christian Faith and were possessed of the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, there would be no confusion sufficient to jeopardize the effective proclamation of the grace of Christ and the faith that delivers the soul from death. Such agreement on basic issues does exist in Protestantism and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (II Corinthians 3:17)

Now, let us go a bit further into the Roman Catholic teachings concerning the Pope. The Pope is called the "Vicar of Christ" because he allegedly "represents" Christ and acts in the name and place of Christ over the whole Roman Catholic Church. Why does the Church need a visible head? The Roman Catholic Catechism states their answer:

"The Church, as a visible society, needs a visible head to preserve unity in faith, morals, and government throughout the world."

Yet it is the specific function of the Holy Spirit, as taught by Jesus Christ, to preserve exactly what the Pope is supposed to preserve: faith, morals, and government throughout the earth! There is a direct contradiction between the office of the Papacy and the office of the Holy Spirit, for it is the Holy Spirit Who is the third Person of the Godhead. It is He Who indwells the believer; it is He Who makes intercession for us; it is He Who is our friend, our companion, our "comforter," not the "Vicar of Christ" of the Roman Catholic Church. (See John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7.) It is good to bear this in mind that the Unity of the Body of Christ is not dependent upon outward organization, but upon spiritual fellowship.

We shall now progress to a very interesting section of Scripture with which every Catholic is familiar: St. Matthew 16:18. I do not know how many times I have talked to Roman Catholic people who have referred me to this passage of Scripture. They have said to me:

"You know, your church began with Calvin," or "Your church began with Knox." or "Your church began with Luther or Zwingli, (or someone else); but the Roman Catholic Church alone began with Jesus Christ." They almost always turn to this reference to "prove" their point. Even if a Catholic does not know his Bible at all, you can always be certain that this is one verse in his Bible that he knows very well. We should read the context of this passage carefully, because if we just quote verse eighteen, we miss the heart of what Jesus was saying.

Beginning with verse thirteen, we read: "Jesus having come into the district of Caesarea Philippi began to ask his disciples saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?' But they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others Elias, and other Jeremias, or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But whom do you say that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said 'Thou art The Christ, the Son of the Living God.'

"Then Jesus answered and said, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood have not revealed this unto thee, but my Father in Heaven. And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' And then He strictly charged His disciples to tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ."

Now, I would like to ask a question at this point- a question that I always ask my Roman Catholic friends. I often say to them, "Let's not get into an argument about Peter and the Rock and things of this nature. The important things we want to get into our minds is this: who is the one Person that should have understood what Jesus said better than anyone, whether he be a Roman Catholic Pope, a bishop, a priest, or a Protestant theologian?" Invariably the average Catholic will say, "Peter, of course: he was the one to whom Jesus was speaking." With this, we readily agree.

Now in this connection I would refer you to the second chapter of Peter's first epistle. I point Catholics to this chapter rather than mere interpretations given by any Protestant theologian, which I am sure from experience they are unwilling to accept. I refer them to the supposed first Pope, for I am certain that they are willing to take what he has to say as the correct interpretation of what Jesus said to him in Matthew, the sixteenth chapter.

I quote from the Roman Catholic Bible: "Draw near to Him, a living stone, rejected indeed of men but chosen and honored by God. Be you yourselves as living stones, built thereon into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Hence, the Scripture says, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious, and he who believes in it shall not be put to shame!" "For you, therefore, who believe, is this honor. But to those who do not believe, A stone that the builders rejected, the same has become the head of the corner and a stumbling stone and a rock of offense. To those who stumble at the word and who do not believe, for this, also they are destined. You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people that you may proclaim the perfection of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

When you read Peter's statement in context, one understands immediately what he is talking about. It is that simple. Peter here tells every Christian that he is a little "stone" built up into a spiritual "temple," and Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. To illustrate it, Peter quotes Isaiah, the prophet, who was speaking prophetically of the coming Messiah. If Peter really was the "cornerstone," this question must be explained by the Catholic Church: Why didn't Isaiah say, "Behold I lay in Rome a chief cornerstone?"

If Peter was allegedly Bishop of Rome and Vicar of Christ, and if the Church is built on him, it cannot be built in Zion, which is in heaven - the heavenly Jerusalem - it must be built here on the earth, and its foundation must rest at St. Peter's Basilica! If Peter was the Rock, then Isaiah, the prophet, would have to have written, "Behold, I lay in Rome a chief cornerstone," but he did not because Isaiah, the prophet, was not speaking about Peter - and Peter himself said so!

Isaiah, the prophet, was speaking about Jesus Christ, "Behold, I lay in Zion (the city of God) a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious, and he who believes in it shall not be put to shame." (Isaiah 28:16, Douay version) The Greek here very clearly reveals that the word translated "it" can also be rendered "Him." I prefer, instead of saying "it" to say "Him" because you cannot believe on an "it": you can only believe on a Person. Here the Person is the Lord Jesus Christ as Peter points out.

The Catholic Church then must explain the phrase, "Whoever believes on Him, shall not be put to shame." After all, Peter was certainly not the one who was going to be believed upon. If people believe in Peter, they will be put to open shame, for Peter was but a sinner saved by grace. To believe in Christ as the "cornerstone," as Peter says He is, will not put anybody to shame. It is also significant, when you read verse nine of the Catholic version of the Bible, to notice that Peter in writing to Christians (see I Peter 1:1-9 and

2:24-25), (not to a pope, or to cardinals, or to bishops, or to priests), makes this amazing statement: "You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood."

Think of that, every Christian is a member of the priesthood. We are all priests before God, - "a holy nation, a purchased people" - that you, (not the clergy alone), "may proclaim the perfections of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." That is the true teaching of the Scripture, we're all members of a new priesthood. In Revelation 1:6, we are told that Christ "hath made us a Kingdom and Priests to God and His Father." There is, then, a priesthood of all believers. If you are a Roman Catholic outside of Christ, and you want to know what your position will be if you accept the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him alone for your salvation, here is the truth from Scripture. God says you do not need a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, or a priest - God says you will be a priest, a member of a "holy priesthood," and He is going to use you, as a Christian, to bring people out of darkness into His marvelous light. This is a wonderful promise from the Word of God and it only needs to be accepted and acted upon to validate its truth experientially in the Christian life.

How, then, should we understand Matthew 16:18? We could take the Greek and show how there is a play on words; we could give you grammatical explanations, but you would be more confused than edified, because a knowledge of Greek is essential. Therefore, I will just ask you to think about the following: Who should understand better than anybody else what Jesus said? The answer must be "Peter." What does Peter say? Peter says, "We're all little stones, and we are built up into a spiritual temple, made of other little stones (i.e. other believers, the Church), and Jesus Christ is the "cornerstone." Therefore, upon Whom was the Church built? Upon Jesus Christ: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious: and he that believes in Him shall not be put to shame."

Now, let's go one step further. What more do the Scriptures say concerning the Stone? The second chapter of Ephesians, the twentieth verse, is one of the greatest texts in the New Testament dealing with the subject of the foundation Stone of the Christian Church. Certainly, if we are to be edified, we must draw upon the source that deals most thoroughly with the problem of the Papacy and Roman Catholic teaching - we must deal with the Bible.

Again from the Roman Catholic Bible, let me quote what the Holy Spirit says concerning these things: "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him, the whole structure is closely fitted together and grows into a temple, holy in the Lord. In Him, you are being built into a dwelling place for God in the spirit." There is no mention of Peter here; there is no mention that the Church is built upon Peter as the rock. "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets" - Peter, it is true, is in there, but the whole structure does not rest upon Peter; it rests upon Jesus Christ, the "chief cornerstone."

In I Corinthians 10:4, we learn, as we do over and over again in the Scripture, that Christ is considered a Rock. This verse - I Corinthians 10:4 - concerns Christ, and it uses the

illustration of the wilderness travels of the Jews [- for in the wilderness the children of Israel partook of the blessing of Christ], and it cites a specific instance which is important: "... all ate the same spiritual food, all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the spiritual rock and the rock was Christ." Christ then is consistently described in Scripture by the metaphorical usage Rock. The whole foundation of Roman Catholicism admittedly rests upon Peter as the rock. Once you have shown that Christ is the Rock, there is no apostolic succession. There is no authority for the claim of the Roman Catholic Church and there is no basis to their claim that they are the "only true Church of Christ."

That this claim is made by the Catholic Church, and that their dogmatism goes far beyond anything that the Protestant Church maintains, no informed person denies.

I quote the Roman Catholic Catechism on this point: "Why did Christ found the Church? Christ founded the Church to teach, govern, sanctify, and save all men. By what means does the Church sanctify and save all men? The Church sanctifies and saves all men by means of the Mass, the Sacraments, and special blessing and devotions. To save their souls, Catholics must, 1. Believe all the teachings of the Church; 2. Keep the commandments of God and the Church; 3. Pray to God and worthily receive the Sacraments." I think this quotation is very important. Here, out of a Roman Catholic Catechism, comes vindication for Father Feeney of Boston, who was unfrocked by the Catholic Church because they said he was teaching a doctrine they did not believe, and because he would not keep silent on the subject and submit to discipline. His doctrine was this: "Unless you belong to the Roman Catholic Church, you will be lost." In effect, he was saying, "There is no salvation outside the Roman Catholic Church." He was excommunicated for refusing to keep silent on this point, though Rome has never denied her official teaching on the subject - which teaching, incidentally, Feeney was propagating.

Pope Pius XII never fully answered Fenney's special plea, based on sound authority, because to answer his plea would be to admit what the Roman Church has always taught.

Once again I quote the Roman Catholic Catechism: "Are all people bound to belong to the Catholic Church? All are bound to belong to the Church, and he who knows the Church to be the true church and remains out of it, cannot be saved. Why are all bound to belong to the Church? All are bound to belong to the Church because Christ founded it for all nations and for all times, and it alone possesses the means that is necessary for salvation. What is the meaning of the saying, 'Outside the Church there is no salvation'? This means that whoever, through his own fault, willfully remains outside the True Church will not be saved."

I repeat it for emphasis: "This means that whoever, through his own fault, willfully remains outside the True Church, will not be saved." The Jesuits have a doctrine called, "Invincible Ignorance." If you are so invincibly ignorant that you cannot understand that the Catholic Church is the True Church, God will somehow pardon you and accept you, if you do not oppose the Catholic Church. That doctrine dooms all Protestant Christians

according to Roman Catholic theology, because according to our belief as taught in the Scripture, we "willfully through our own fault" remain outside the Roman Catholic Church.

The true position of the Roman Church is very clear. This is taught in their parochial schools and is a very well known fact in ecclesiastical circles. The average Catholic may not be aware of it, but this is the teaching of his Church; this is what he is taught in his high school, and this is what he must, when pressed, believe. The late Bishop Ronald Knox of England, as quoted by Time Magazine, put it even more bluntly when he stated, "All the identification discs in Heaven will be Roman Catholics."

Further evidence as to the Roman Church's true position is shown in this quotation from "The American Ecclesiastical Reviews": "No one can have a real objective right to practice any but the true religion, and Catholics believe that Catholicism is the only true religion which God commands all men to accept. Every other religion is false and opposed to God's plan for man's salvation..." (January, 1946, pages 35-37)

History And Papal Tradition

In view of Rome's assertions previously quoted, and her insistence on historical vindication, it might be profitable to examine some instances that do not favor her claim to either unbroken Apostolic succession or papal infallibility. Gregory I was the first pope of any great renown or of whom we have a reliable historical record. He lived about the year 590 AD. Gregory I, or Gregory the Great, was once faced with a dispute concerning Communion. In this dispute he made some pertinent statements. I quote Gregory's "ex cathedra" pronouncement concerning Communion because it is just the opposite of the "ex cathedra" statement by the Roman Catholic Church today. Gregory said: "Cursed be anyone that does not receive both bread and wine and teaches others not to take both bread and wine."

According to another equally infallible Pope and the Council of Trent: "Cursed be anyone who teaches that we must receive both bread and wine." Here are two papal injunctions, both of which allegedly come from God, in which Catholics are cursed both coming and going. If they take the bread and the wine, they are cursed by the pronouncement of the Church today. If they do not receive both, they are cursed by the Church yesterday. Any way you look at it - if they take bread and wine, or if they do not take bread and wine - they are still cursed by a pope and, strangely enough, they are speaking on matters of "faith and morals" and are, therefore, allegedly infallible!

There are quite a few other statements made by popes that make fascinating reading, but I think the most fascinating is the fact that a number of the popes in Roman Catholic history took it upon themselves to argue with one another to the point that, at one time there were three lines of Papal claimants all claiming to be the successor to St. Peter; all of them trying to occupy the chair of Rome (1378-1417 A.D.); all of them fighting and plotting against one another to get there. These three Popes, Gregory XII, Clement VII, and Alexander VII, all gave way to Martin V in 1417, but in the interim the "faithful"

followed all three. Their conflicting pronouncements and "divine" decrees notwithstanding, yet Rome still claims the true succession from Peter has never been broken.

It is also an historical fact that the infamous Borgia family, the most notorious poisoners in the history of the world, had as their father Alexander VI, Pope of Rome. Alexander obtained the chair of Peter by simony, lived an immoral life and practiced simony and immorality, even after he ascended the papacy.* With his son, Caesar, he tried to unify Italy under the Borgia crest. These are some of the examples in the development of the Papacy. Yet the Roman Church says that Alexander VI, even in his wickedness and in his assent to the murder of other people, was still the Vicar of Christ on earth; and that in matters of "faith and morals" he could do no wrong. Other highlights in papal intrigue include the false reigns of Popes Christophorus, Sergius III, John X, and John XI from 903-936 A.D. - all of whom disgraced their office - and considerable evidence has been adduced from reputable sources to the effect that Pope John VIII was a woman!

We could go into other aspects of the Papacy but the important thing is that the Word of God teaches us that the Papacy does not rest upon Scriptures, it rests upon tradition; it rests upon the teachings of a group of people who, through the ages, have built an entire organization upon little more than the premise that they have a divine right to rule.

In the midst of discussion with Roman Catholics over the historicity of Papal tradition, a very significant often neglected fact should be brought to bear. This is the fact that until 1870 the papacy was not considered infallible and was only rendered so after much protest from noted Catholic leaders had been silenced by papal pressure. One such noted leader was Bishop Joseph George Strossmayer, who joined twenty-one Archbishops and sixty-four Bishops in voting against the elevating of Pope Pius IX to the position of an infallible interpreter of truth for Catholics. At the famous eighty-fifth General Congregation of the Vatican Council, July 13, 1870, Bishop Strossmayer delivered a vigorous defense of his position, extracts of which we shall quote as a brilliant summarization and critique of the massive folly of papal infallibility.

"Well, venerable brethren, here history raises its voice to assure us that some popes have erred. You may protest against it or deny it, as you please, but I will prove it. Pope Victor (192) first approved of Montanism, and then condemned it. Marcellinus (296-303) was an idolater. He entered into the temple of Vesta, and offered incense to the goddess. You will say that it was an act of weakness; but I answer, a vicar of Jesus Christ dies rather than become an apostate. Liberius (358) consented to the condemnation of Athanasius, and made a profession of Arianism, that he might be recalled from his exile and reinstated in his See. Honorius (625) adhered to Monothelism: Farther Gratry has proved it to demonstration. Gregory I (785-90) calls anyone Antichrist who takes the name of Universal Bishop, and contrariwise Boniface III (607-9) made the patricide Emperor Phocas confer that title upon him. Paschall II (1088-99) and Eugenius III (1145-53) authorized dueling; Julius II (1509) and Pius IV (1560) forbade it. Eugenius IV (1432-39) approved the Council of Basle and the restitution of the chalice to the church of Bohemia; Pius II (1458) revoked the concession. Hadrian II (867-872) declared civil marriages to

be valid; Pius VII (1800-23) condemned them. Sixtus V (1585-90) published an edition of the Bible, and by a Bull recommended it to be read; Pius VII condemned the reading of it. Clement XIV (1769-1774) abolished the order of the Jesuits, permitted by Paul III and Pius VII re-established it. Pope Vigilius (538) purchased the papacy from Belisarius, lieutenant of the Emperor Justinian. Pope Eugenius III (IV in original) (1145) imitated Vigilius. St. Bernard, the bright star of his age, reproves the pope, saying to him: "Can you show me in this great city of Rome anyone who would receive you as pope if they had not received gold or silver for it?"

"You know the history of Formosus too well for me to add to it. Stephen XI caused his body to be exhumed, dressed in his pontifical robes; he made the fingers which he used for giving the benediction to be cut off, and then had him thrown into the Tiber, declaring him to be a perjurer and illegitimate. He was then imprisoned by the people, poisoned, and strangled. Look how matters were readjusted; Romanus, successor to Stephen, and after him, John X, rehabilitated the memory of Formosus.

"But you will tell me these are fables, not history. Fables! Go, Monsignori, to the Vatican Library and read Platina, the historian of the papacy and the annuals of Baronius (AD 897). These are facts, which, for the honor of the Holy See, we would wish to ignore.

"I go on. The learned Cardinal Baronius, speaking of the papal court, says (give attention, my venerable brethren to these words), 'What did the Roman church appear in those days? How infamous! Only all-powerful courtesans governing in Rome! It was they who gave, exchanged and took bishoprics; and horrible to relate, they got their lovers, the false popes, put on the throne of St. Peter.' (Baronius AD 912)

"Look now. The greatest number of these anti-popes appear in the genealogical tree of the papacy. And it must have been this absurdity that Baronius described; because Generbardo, the great flatterer of the popes, had dared to say in his Chronicles (AD 901):

"This century is unfortunate, as for nearly 150 years the popes have fallen from all the virtues of their predecessors, and have become apostates rather than apostles."

"I can understand how the illustrious Baronius must have blushed when he narrated the acts of these Roman popes. Speaking of John XI (931), natural son of Pope Sergius and of Marozia, he wrote these words in his annals - 'The holy church, that is, the Roman, has been vilely trampled on by such a monster.' John XII (956), elected pope at the age of eighteen, through the influence of courtesans, was not one whit better than his predecessor.

"I grieve, my venerable brethren, to stir up so much filth, I am silent on Alexander VI, father and lover of Lucretia; I turn away from John XXIII (1410), who, because of simony and immorality, was deposed by the holy Ecumenical Council of Constance.

"I do not speak of the schisms which have dishonored the church. In those unfortunate days the See of Rome was occupied by two competitors, and sometimes even by three.

Which of these is the true pope? ... Could you do it (decree the infallibility) and maintain that avaricious, incestuous, murdering, simoniacal popes have been vicars of Jesus Christ? Oh, venerable brethren! To maintain such an enormity would be to betray Christ worse than Judas ... Let us turn to the teaching of the Apostles, since without that we have only errors, darkness, and false traditions.... What must I do to be saved? When we have decided that, we shall have laid the foundation of our dogmatic system firm and immovable on the rock, lasting and incorruptible, of the divinely inspired Scriptures ... (do not) let them make Pius IX a god, as we have made a goddess of the Blessed Virgin. Stop, stop, venerable brethren, on the odious and ridiculous incline on which you have placed yourselves. Save the church from the shipwreck that threatens her, asking for the Holy Scriptures alone for the rule of Faith which we ought to believe and to profess. I have spoken; may God help me!"

To what Bishop Strossmayer said, all Protestants can heartily agree. The papacy as a system then is built upon false premises. However, the pity is that power politics silenced him and his worthy supporters. The teaching of the Scriptures is that Jesus Christ is the "chief cornerstone." "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ Jesus." (I Cor. 3:11)

To study the Papacy is to learn a valuable lesson - to learn that when we surrender to men what we are commanded to surrender only to the Holy Spirit, spiritual tyranny and slavery of the human mind and the souls of men can come about.

With Thomas Jefferson, we in America today, might well say: "We have sworn, on the altar of Jehovah, eternal hostility against all forms of tyranny over the minds of men." "I say unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it ... You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone ... and the stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner ... whosoever believes in Him shall not be ashamed." (Ephesians 2:20, I Peter 2:6-7)

Catholic Tradition and the Bible

Our next lecture covers what I consider to be the key to Roman Catholic theology, that is, the place of Tradition in the Roman church. I spent a very profitable time recently going through Roman Catholic encyclopedias and a number of other official Catholic publications studying what they mean by Tradition and the comparison of its place with the place and authority of Scripture. I want to make clear in this lecture as I have in the other lectures that we are here examining the theology of Rome, we are not trying to pillory Roman Catholics. We are but evaluating certain aspects of Catholic theology.

First we must understand that for Roman Catholicism, tradition, since the Council of Trent, is on an equal plane with the Bible though they openly admit that the Bible came directly from God and that tradition was handed down by Apostolic authority. It is important we understand that the Greek word, "Paradosis," translated "tradition," appears 12 times in the New Testament. The Roman Catholic Encyclopedia, (Volume fifteen,

page seven) states: "There are divine traditions not contained in holy Scripture, revelations made to the apostles, either orally by Jesus Christ or by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, and transmitted by the apostles to the Church." They give examples to substantiate this: John, the 12th chapter, verse 30, for instance.

I think we ought to examine some of the references which are utilized by the Roman church to better understand what they are talking about. In John 20:30, we find these words: "And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book." The Roman Church says that because there were signs and things said and things done by Jesus not written in this book, these things are apostolic or divine tradition. But let us take some more references to round out their case: 2 Thessalonians 2:15, is another illustration that the Roman Church cites to illustrate its right to teach oral tradition. "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the belief in traditions, which ye have been taught, whether by word or our epistle," (2 Thessalonians 2:15). Note again the use of the word tradition in 2 Thessalonians 3:6, "Now we command you, brethren in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us."

It is very important that we understand these verses because I believe if we closely study the Scriptures, there emerges two primary fallacies in their line of reasoning. First of all, they assume that the apostles intended the transmission of these traditions on an equal plane with Scripture and that the apostles intended we should note today everything which Jesus told and showed them. John apparently did not think this was so for he plainly states that he omitted them deliberately and he was acting under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. The interesting thing about all of this is that many of the traditions taught by the Roman Catholic Church today (and I might add that a large body of Roman Catholic teaching is tradition) are not warranted by the Bible.

First of all, the use of holy water, prayers to the saints, the doctrines of Purgatory and Limbo - are all anti-biblical traditions. The worship of angels and of the Virgin Mary are traditions. The doctrine of Mary as the "second Eve" is tradition. Traditions of various types were introduced into the Catholic Church over many centuries. They are not substantiated or taught by any verse or verses in the Scripture. Catholic apologists are well aware of this fact, for time and again they have been challenged not only by Protestants but by theologians in their own ranks as we shall see when we study the doctrines which have evolved concerning the virgin Mary.

The very things which we are supposed to accept as valid traditions from the apostles are contradicted by the writings of the same apostles. Therefore, the Christian is faced with a problem: which should he accept? Should he accept the Scriptures, admittedly the Word of God, or should he accept tradition in place of Scripture? You cannot have both if they are contradictory and they most certainly are, in not a few instances.

The Scripture certainly does not teach prayers to the saints or to the virgin. As a matter of fact, the Scripture says, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man,

the man Christ Jesus," (1 Timothy 2:5). Now the word "mediator" in the Greek means "intercessor" or a "go-between" God and man. This individual, this intercessor, is the Lord Jesus Christ. In the fourth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews, you will find one of the great instances in which the Word of God teaches that the tradition that persons other than the living can intercede for us before God, is not supported by Divine revelation.

Verse fourteen of the fourth chapter of Hebrews states: "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus Christ the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." And in the fifteenth verse of the same chapter we read, "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin." Verse sixteen utterly demolishes the idea of the necessity of intercessors, "Let us therefore (this is written to Christians) come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Mark this well: there is not one verse of Scripture in the New Testament anywhere which authorized anybody to intercede with God after death. We are told to pray one for another only while on earth. Prayer that is blessed of God is prayer which is supposed to be directed to God while we are alive. There is no authority in Scripture for prayers either by, to or for the dead. Yet this is a cardinal tradition of the Roman Catholic Church - a tradition which the fourth chapter of Hebrews very pointedly contradicts.

It is a question, then, whether we accept a human tradition or Scripture itself. We might also point out that God, the Holy Spirit, is our intercessor who both indwells and pleads for us, with unutterable groanings, he pleads for the saints, (Romans 8:26-27).

Now I will probably go out on a limb with some people when I make this statement, but I believe it is fundamentally sound. I am willing to consider any tradition which is not contradictory to the teachings of the Word of God.

Every one of us accept some tradition. For instance, on December 25th all of us celebrate the birthday of the Lord Jesus. According to the most eminent authorities, the Lord Jesus Christ was probably born in the month of July or August yet the tradition is to commemorate his birth on December 25. How many of you keep Good Friday between 12 and 3? Well, many people do. Do they do it because they know it was exactly on that Friday between 12 and 3 that Jesus died? Of course not! But the tradition has been passed on through the centuries and we observe it as part of tradition. It does not imperil the Scriptures. We accept the term "Easter," but it is a pagan celebration taken over by the Christian church. It was originally a festival held in honor of the goddess, Estes, but we do not worship that goddess of Easter. We have merely taken over a tradition. We all wear new clothes and hide Easter eggs and tell the children about the Easter bunny, that also is a tradition. I am not against tradition as such and no Christian should be ashamed to practice such cultural habits. They are essentially harmless.

The place where we conflict with the Roman Church is in their assumption that their tradition is equal in authority with the Bible. Because they make this claim, it is essential that we understand the Bible claims for itself supreme authority and it shares this authority with nothing else, and no one, except the Holy Spirit, its author, (cf. 2 Timothy

3:15-16). In John 17:17, Jesus said, "sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, tradition is not the Word of God: the Bible is the Word of God. Therefore, when Jesus said, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth," He places His stamp of approval not upon the supposed oral tradition of the apostles but upon the written authority of the Word of God.

Now, our Roman Catholic friends often ask us this question: "Which came first, the Bible or the Church?" You say, "The Bible." They say, "Oh no, it was the Church; the Church came at Pentecost," and they refer you to the Book of Acts. And you know they are right! The Church began at Pentecost. The Church came before the Bible, that is the New Testament. However, we should quickly ask them this question: "Which Church?" That is a very difficult question for them to answer. If by the Church they mean the Roman Catholic Church, we disagree. Was the Roman Catholic Church in Ephesus? Was it in Galatia? Was it in Philippi? Was it in Thessalonica? Was it in Antioch? No, it never was.

Our Roman Catholic friends do not like to discuss the history of the papacy with the Greek Orthodox Church for the simple reason that the Greek Church had more bishops than the Roman Church and if any group is the successor to St. Peter, the Greek Orthodox Church is, not the Roman Catholic Church. If you will check church history, the Roman Catholic Church and the Greek Orthodox Church had a split in the 10th century. The great number of bishops who held the majority of votes were not in the Western Roman Church; they were in the Eastern Greek Orthodox Church. Therefore, if you want to build historically today do not build upon the Roman Catholic teaching, build upon the Greek Orthodox because they are just as old and they have first claim. We do not have too much discussion on that subject because not many Protestants know it.

Secondly then, we deny the assumption that there was a centrally governed church in apostolic times. While it is true that the Church in Jerusalem generally ordered things, the Apostle Paul labored mightily for three years without their guidance and James, the Lord's brother, (Galatians 1:19 and Galatians 2:1, 8, 9 and 11), was its primary leader, not Peter as the Roman Church would like to establish. Paul's work was recognized by them and they gave him the right hand of fellowship, but they did not govern his work, (Galatians 2:9).

Some of our Roman Catholic friends raise another question with which we ought to deal. They say:

"The Bishop of Rome is called the successor to Peter, and he is called 'Pope' which means 'papa' or 'father.' He is the Vicar of Christ; he reigns in place of Jesus Christ here on the earth." This is another aspect of the tradition of the Catholic Church. A very provocative subject is brought out here because the Vicar of Christ, the one who reigns in the place of Christ here on earth, places himself in a peculiar position: he has to decide what is the Word of God and what is not the word of God. He has to make decisions and if he makes these decisions, he must be backed up by his counsels and by his Cardinals. He must have supreme authority, but when you go back to the history of the Christian Church and start to study the early records of the ante-Nicene, Nicene and post-Nicene

fathers, you find a great number of men writing letters to each other and each one calling the other "Papa" or "Pope." For example the "Papa" of Alexandria might write to the "Papa" of Antioch or the "Papa" of Hippo might write to the "Papa" of Constantinople.

When Roman Catholics say then that the Bishop of Rome is the Pope we should remind them of this fact i.e. the term "Papa" or "Pope" merely designated a Bishop of a particular locality whose authority was limited to that jurisdiction.

At the famous Council of Nice, 325 A. D. there were some 318 Bishops or "Popes" in attendance and the Bishop of Rome was conspicuously absent. The Roman Catholic Church then finds no authority in history for asserting that she is the successor to Peter, for she only assumes that there was a centrally governed church when she speaks about "which came first, the Bible or the Church?"

We should say this in reply to the Roman position: the Christian Church came first - this we admit - but the Christian Church was made up of groups of believers in various localities, all of whom were members of the universal Church, members of the Body of Christ. They were under the central control of the Holy Spirit and the Apostles and persons designated by them (1 Corinthians 12:28).

It was not until the sixth century that political authority was fully centered in Rome and with the ascension of Gregory I, or Gregory the Great, what is now called the Roman Catholic Church as an organized body came into existence. This is proven by an unbiased study of church history. The popes were not declared infallible until the Council of 1870. Up until 1870 there was no unquestioned infallibility. If a Roman Catholic says to you:

"Look how old our churches: look how old the Vicar of Christ is - he goes all the way back to Peter," you can say:

"The Vicar of Christ reigns in place of Christ, does he not? Well, he has only been reigning since 1870. His authority dates from that Council when he declared himself to be infallible when speaking on 'faith and morals.' We deny, then, the assumption that the Roman Catholic Church was the central governing body of Christendom or that she ever had any real power until the union with Constantine in the third century which gave the Bishop of Rome prestige enough to exalt himself as a 'pope.'

"Traditional truth was confided to the Church as a deposit which it would guard and faithfully transmitt as it had received it, without adding to it or taking anything away." (Catholic Encyclopedia)

The truth of the matter is, however, that they have added to and taken away from the traditions of Christianity for many, many centuries. They claim that they have always maintained their same teachings, but let us briefly go back into church history and trace some of the interesting things concerning the Roman Catholic Church's doctrines. They say they have remained the same since the days of the apostles. Well, here are a few facts which I think might prove interesting to the average Christian:

Prayers for the dead and the making of the sign of the cross were instituted in 330 A.D., 300 years after Christ; the worship of Mary as the Mother of God began about 431 A.D. The Roman church was at that time emerging as a central power. They later consolidated their power in the year 590 A.D. with the ascension of Gregory I. In 600 A.D. they confirmed Latin as the language of worship. In 610 A.D. they instituted the homage and kissing of the feet of the Pope. (See Acts 10:25). They have also instituted other pagan customs in the Church.

For instance, you can go into a certain church in Rome and you will see statues of pagan gods and goddesses. You say to the guide: "What are these things doing in a Catholic Church?" He will then take you over to the statues and say, "This one here is St. John, and this one is St. James."

You may protest, "But it is Apollo or Zeus not St. John. How do you arrive at this?" "Well," the guide explains, "they were baptized and cleansed by the Church and renamed." The statues were baptized! This is a fact doubted by no informed traveler who has been there. Dr. Donald Grey Barnhouse has personally visited this place and vouches for the accuracy of the facts.

Now all these various concepts are taught as part of the church's "tradition." We know about the teaching of the splinters of the "true cross" and how when it was revealed that if all the wood purported to be from the "true cross" were put together it would build a house, a pope declared it had power to "miraculously reproduce itself." We know that the blood of Christ allegedly dropped from Jesus' wounds down through Calvary and touched Adam's remains and supposedly cleansed him from Original Sin. These are traditions carried through the Roman Church for centuries. This tradition is still repeated by guides in Jerusalem today.

Notice, however, how things have been added: the Pope took his temporal power (that is, he believed and still believes he had the right to govern the affairs of nations) in the year 750 A.D. - a strange procedure if he was always the Vicar of Christ; the adoration of Mary and the Saints was popularized in 788 A.D.; the adoration of the cross, images and relics took place in 789 A.D.; the blessing of bells took place in 965 A.D.; fasting, lent, advent and abstinence from meat on Friday took place in 998 A.D.; the blessing of Holy Water took place in 1220 A.D., and even the forbidding of priests to marry was only declared in 1079, almost a thousand years after Christ! For a thousand years then Christian leaders were permitted to marry and have families and had no difficulty; then in 1079 authority was exercised and it was declared that they should no longer have wives. This is how modern celibacy came into the clergy; prior to that time it was not a universal mandate.

Rosary beads, sale of indulgences and the sacrifice of the Mass were elevated between 1090 and 1215 A.D.; the doctrine of the actual body and the blood of Christ being present on the altar (transubstantiation), was pronounced in 1215 A.D.; auricular confession of sins to a priest was decreed in 1216 A.D.; the cup of wine at Communion was forbidden

to the people in the year 1414 A.D. Up until that time, everybody could take bread and wine. Now a Catholic can only take bread. In a Catholic Church, you cannot receive wine - the priest drinks the wine.

Catholics believe that the wafer which they receive on their tongue and which the priest holds in his hand is the actual body of Christ. The Catholic takes it into his mouth - (he is not supposed to chew it) - where it is supposed to dissolve and slip down the throat. No wine is given. Jesus, it will be remembered, said: "Except ye eat the flesh (the bread) of the Son of man and drink his blood (the wine), ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day" (John 6:53-54).

Therefore, in 1414 A.D., the papacy contradicted the teachings of Jesus Christ who said that you must take both bread and wine. Catholics get only the bread; they do not get the wine anymore; yet the Roman Catholic Church says she has never changed! The argument that one cannot take Christ's body (literally) without His blood is fallacious for He Himself gave both Bread and Wine, (Matthew 26:26, 29) and His blood was shed but once for all sin, (Hebrews 9:26).

Purgatory is another doctrine proclaimed by the Catholic Church and officially pronounced in 1438 A.D. Tradition became equal to the Bible by authority of the Council of Trent. Incidentally, the same Council of Trent (1546-1565) put back into the Bible the apocryphal books. These extra books which the Catholics have in their Bible were rejected by the Jews before Jesus was born. These extra books which the Catholics have in their Bible were rejected by the Jews before Jesus was born as not being Scripture, but were put back into the Bible by the Catholic Church at the Council of Trent. The Jewish Council of Joppa (first century A.D.) also rejected them as noncanonical.

Therefore, when a Catholic shows you his Bible and says: "Look, we have more books than you have and you have left out part of the Word of God," you just pleasantly tell him his church put back into the Word of God what the Jews were inspired to take out. You might also ask him where the church got the authority to do this. There is no authority, however, unless you assume authority contrary to Scripture, (see Revelation 22:18).

Relative to certain other practices of the Roman Catholic Church all of which are traditional in nature, I want to quote from Cardinal Newman, a great Catholic Church historian, because I think he said something most enlightening:

"Temple, incense, oil, lamps, votive offerings, holy water, holy days and seasons of devotion, processions, the blessing of fields, sacerdotal vestments (worn by the priests), tonsure of priests and monks and nuns, images – (Religion, p. 359). This is an admission by a noted historian all are of pagan origin." (The Development of the Christian Religion, p. 359). This is an admission by a noted historian of the Roman Catholic Church that many of their practices, some of which were enumerated by him, are derived from pagan sources. This is a provocative fact all by itself ... A fact the Catholic Church seldom discusses.

These are only some of the things which comprise the traditions of the Roman church and which Catholics are commanded to believe on equal authority with Scripture.

Turn, however, in your Bible to 2 Timothy 3:15-16, and see the pronouncement of the Holy Spirit concerning the only real authority that the Christian needs. When we deal with the subject the way the Holy Spirit deals with it, we do not have nearly as many difficulties as our Roman Catholic friends do. I quote from the Roman Catholic edition of the New Testament:

"For from thy infancy thou hast known the sacred writings which are able to instruct thee into salvation by the faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in justice that the man of God may be perfectly equipped to do every good work."

Notice that the only mention of authority in the Bible is authority derived from God, the Holy Spirit, and it is in reference to the writings of the prophets and the apostles which make up the Scriptures. Let us repeat this for emphasis: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." The Greek word that is used in the context and translated "inspired," - theopneustos - literally means "God breathed." Every Scripture is filled with the Spirit of God; every Scripture brims over with the Spirit of God, the Divine Interpreter Who leads believers but who has also guarded Scripture from error and ensured its authority and transmission by His power and presence.

The Roman Catholic Church, as we have seen previously, says that the Pope who ascends the alleged throne of Peter, reigns "in the place of Christ," is Vicar of Jesus Christ. However, the Word of God teaches us in the 14th, 16th and 17th chapters of John, that the Holy Spirit of God is the One Who alone reigns in the absence of Jesus Christ.

Jesus said: "When the Holy Ghost shall come, he will bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you," (John 14:26). That includes even traditions, does it not? "He (the Holy Spirit) will bring all things to your remembrance," and "He will guide you into all truth." We are not led by shifting papal dogmatism or tradition; we are led by the authority of Scripture. We say to our Roman Catholic friends who question which came first, the Scripture or the church? The Christian Church came first and produced the Scriptures; the Roman Catholic Church came even later and confiscated the Scriptures. The proof of this is that until a comparatively few years ago the average Roman Catholic was not encouraged, yes, even forbidden to read his Bible. He still cannot interpret it apart from supervision.

Seventy-five years ago in the United States, the cardinals and bishops who reigned in the Roman Catholic Church declared that it was against the wishes of the Church that the people should have the Bible, and that they should be instructed solely by the priest. The pages of Catholic literature 100 years ago confirms this beyond dispute. However, when the American Bible Society and the English Bible Society began to print Roman Catholic translations of the Bible without the official "imprimatur" and distributed them to the

Catholic people, then and only then in the United States did the Roman Catholic Church mass-produce their own Bibles and put their imprimatur on them so that their people could have them. Even then, however, the people were cautioned that they were never to interpret. "The Church, the Holy Mother, is the sole interpreter of the Scriptures," they declare and still do. Any Roman Catholic who opens the Bible and sees therein that his religion is contradicted by the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles is not free to question or interpret. He must go to the priest and ask the priest to interpret for him.

Some time ago a young Catholic girl raised and educated in the Roman Catholic Church, came and asked me some questions about Purgatory. She was troubled and had no peace. I spoke to her at great length and gave her a number of verses from her own Bible to take to her priest. The results were quite typical. The priest unable to answer her questions, especially the Scriptures, became angry with her and told her she must believe what he told her even if it appeared contradictory to reason, logic and the Bible. The Church, he said, was its interpreter, not she.

Needless to say, she rejected his words and ceased believing in Purgatory. One day, I trust she will see the errors of her Roman Communion and come out of it to find her fellowship around the Word of God and the soul interpretational office of the Holy Spirit.

But such is Rome's position, in effect - "Give us your mind and soul, we will think for you - obey us and there is a good possibility you may be saved."

This was further pointedly brought home through an experience I had about seven years ago while living on Long Island. A young couple came to see me. The boy was a devout Roman Catholic and had been all his life. The girl was an Episcopalian. They were very much in love and wanted desperately to be married. They wanted the Roman Catholic priest in the boy's parish to perform the ceremony but he refused to do it unless the girl became a Roman Catholic or signed her children over to the Roman Catholic Church. She would not do this.

The boy asked, "What do you want to do?"

She said, "Let's get Mr. Martin and ask him to go with us to talk to the priest."

The boy said that, "I would not dare to do it."

She said, "Let's ask him."

He came to me and asked: "Will you go and talk with my priest?"

I said, "I would be delighted to."

Well, that boy couldn't believe his ears. He asked incredulously, "You mean you're going?"

I said, "Certainly. Warm up the car, I'll be right out."

So we all want to visit the priest: the young couple, a Baptist minister friend of mine who lived nearby, and I.

I shall never forget the priest of that parish. He was a very amiable fellow but an addicted chain smoker. We sat down and started to discuss the problem of mixed marriages. The young lady turned to him and said:

"Father, would you tell Mr. Martin what you told me yesterday about the Catholic Church - that his church and all of our churches are wrong and in heresy, and that your church is the only true church - would you explain that?"

He leaned back and said: "Christ came to found a church."

I leaned over and said to him, "What chapter and verse states this, please sir."

He said, "What do you mean, 'chapter and verse'?"

I said, "Where in the Bible does it say Christ came specifically to find a church?"

I asked, "Doesn't it say, 'the Son of man came to seek and to save that which was lost'?"

He said, "Yes, yes, it does say that."

I said, "Where does it say He came to build a church?"

He smiled and said: "'I say unto thee, thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.'"

I then took out my Greek New Testament and said, "Please turn to that passage of Scripture." He turned to the text in his Catholic Bible. I said to him, "Now, you keep your finger there and you turn over to 1 Peter," and he did.

I said, "Now, read what Peter has to say about what Jesus said," and he read it. I said, "Well, if we are all little rocks and we are built up in the same temple, and Jesus is the cornerstone, then your church is not built on Peter. It should be built on Jesus Christ."

He rubbed his head and said, "You have had your Greek recently, haven't you?" I said, "Yes." (At that time I was beginning my third year of Greek.)

He frowned and said: "It won't do us any good to argue this thing. This is the teaching of our church and that's the way it has to be."

I said, "Well, we're over here merely to ask and answer questions. You can ask anything you want to and we'll seek no other authority than the Bible."

I took his Bible from the table and was led at the moment to bring to him a point about his own spiritual condition and so we talked about the blood of Jesus Christ and the necessity of regeneration, pointing out that Christ could save from sin and that there was no need for a priest - Christ was the only priest. I read out of the book of Hebrews. He then slammed his hand down on the desk and said: "Young man, you are trying to convert me!"

I said, "I am not trying to convert you, sir, to anything; I am only trying to tell these young people what the Bible teaches, and I don't see where you have any right to oppose Scripture. You are a priest and I am a minister: you have no authority over anyone. You say you are consecrated to serve Mass, but where Scripture is concerned that carries no Divine authorization - All believers are a 'kingdom of priests,' (Revelation 1:6) and Christ is our High Priest, consecrated forever. We need no other priest."

"What you need," I said, "is to understand justification by faith." He said, "Luther!" I said, "No, Paul!"

We then turned to the Book of Romans and read: "therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," and I said: "You apparently do not understand that the teaching of church tradition is opposed to the teaching of the Bible. You have accepted the traditions of the Church, but you have not accepted the teachings of the Bible."

He said, "I don't want to discuss it anymore. We are not getting anywhere and I think you had better leave." We did, but the evening had been well spent.

Driving home, the young boy said, "I told you if the priest couldn't answer your questions I wouldn't be a Roman Catholic. Well, he did not have the answers." I never saw anybody quite so shaken in his belief. We went to his home and began talking about the things of the Lord and both he and his wife-to-be professed to accept the Lord. They got down on their knees and professed faith in Christ as Savior. Later, I understand, he went to his family and told them of his decision based upon what the Bible teaches. His parents virtually disowned him. But he still stuck to his decision. He would have no part of Roman Catholic theology.

The answer to this amazing turnabout was that in an instant he had seen the difference between accepting the traditions of men and the doctrines of the Word of God. He had made his choice.

To close this lecture, I want you to turn in your Bible to the seventh chapter of the Book of Mark and look at the first five verses. I shall be teaching from the Roman Catholic Bible. The Lord Jesus Christ dealt with the problem of tradition and I want to show you what the Son of God had to say about the traditions of men. When we understand this, we understand that we cannot have any fellowship with tradition which contradicts the Bible.

Mark, the seventh chapter, beginning at verse 1: "And the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered about him and when they saw that some of his disciples were eating with defiled, that is, with unwashed hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews do not eat without frequently washing their hands, holding to the traditions of the ancients. And when they come from the market they do not eat without washing first, and there have been handed down to them many other things to observe."

Now, the words "handed down" and "tradition" are identically the words quoted in the Catholic Encyclopedia, so it is exactly the same type of thing that Jesus Christ is talking about. Whether it is the traditions of the Jews or the traditions of a church, the principle is still the same. We have already established that traditions insofar as they do not contradict the Scriptures, are acceptable, but we reject any traditions which contradict the Scriptures.

Here we are dealing with Jesus Christ and tradition and we ought to listen to Him. There had been handed down to the Jews many things to observe, i.e. the washing of cups and pots and vessels and beds, etc. The Pharisees and scribes asked Christ, "Why do not the disciples walk according to the traditions of the ancients?"

The same question is asked of us by Roman Catholics today. They ask, in effect, "Why don't you obey the traditions of the Church as we do?" Jesus said to the Pharisees and scribes: "Well, did Isaiah, the prophet, prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written: The people honor me with their lips but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me (notice what kind of worship it is - vain worship) teaching for doctrine the commandments of men."

This is precisely what we have today where Roman Catholicism is concerned. Scores of the teachings taught by Rome, which Catholics are obliged to believe under penalty of excommunication, have no foundation. They derive their authority from Roman pontiffs. They too, "teach for doctrine (or precepts) the commandments of men," even as Jesus said. The Catholic Bible, which is a clearer translation than our own on these particular verses reads "... For letting go the commandment of God, you hold fast the traditions of men. The washing of pots and cups and many other things like these you do, and he said to them, well do you nullify the commandments of God that you may keep your own traditions," (Mark 7:8).

Friends, this is as true today as it was when it was spoken by the Lord Jesus Christ. The Roman Catholic Church has elevated tradition upon which all of this is based to an equal plane with Scripture. This is what Jesus is talking about here in Mark 7:8: "You do nullify the commandments of God that you may keep your own tradition." The Roman Church in effect nullifies the good doctrine of the Gospel by adding the traditions or commandments of men. Herein lies the deadly parallel to Judaism mentioned by our Lord in Mark 7.

I could take you to St. Patrick's Cathedral here in New York and show you where a number of the leading pamphlets based solely upon similar traditions and bearing the imprimatur of prominent churchmen say such things as: "To Jesus through Mary." However, Jesus said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father, but by me," (John 14:6). Jesus said, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest," (Matthew 11:28). The Roman Catholic Church then is "teaching for doctrine the commandments of men," and "nullifying the commandments of God" that they may keep their own traditions. In verse 13, Jesus stated: "You make void the command of God by your tradition which you have handed down, and many such like things you do."

Friends, the parallel holds, it is the same type of thing we have been discussing. The Jews passed down traditions which were inculcated into the minds of their people and received authority on an equal plane with the Old Testament. The Roman Catholic Church has taken its traditions, placed them on an equal footing with Scripture, and brought the two of them together (the Council of Trent) and declared that a Catholic in order to be obedient must obey the traditions of the Church just as he obeys the teachings of the Bible.

It would be possible to turn to many passages in the Scripture to see what the Holy Spirit has to say about tradition. There is sound tradition (2 Thessalonians 3:6) and there is unsound tradition. The unsound tradition is that which turns away from the authority of the Word of God and this is the tradition that the Roman Catholic Church has enshrined and canonized with the halo of papal authority.

In conclusion, the final test for tradition is this: does tradition of the Roman Catholic variety in any way find its support in the Bible? The answer is no - in not one verse.

God nowhere in the Bible authorizes anyone to place faith in tradition which is contrary to His Word. Secondly, the Roman Catholic Church has scores of traditions within its framework which are diametrically contradicted by explicit passages in the Word of God. The important thing to remember in dealing with Roman Catholic tradition, is that we do not make the mistake of denying that tradition itself exists. Admit that it exists. Admit that you are willing to accept it so long as it does not contradict the teaching of the Scriptures, and you are safe because the tradition of the Roman Catholic Church, almost without exception, is in direct contradiction to the Word of God.

Let us listen to the Holy Spirit: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction and instruction in righteousness," (2 Timothy 3:16).

Once again: "You let go the commandments of God and you hold onto the traditions of men, well do you nullify the command of God that you may keep your own tradition, you make void the commandment of God by your tradition which you have handed down and many such like things you do."

With the psalmist we can all say: "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against thee ..." (Psalm 119:11). "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path ..." (Psalm 119:105). "Forever, O Lord, thy word is settled in heaven," (Psalm 119:89).

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