

Catholicism Violently Assaults Scripture Alone Because the Bible Exposes Rome

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Bible Text: Acts 17:11, 1 Corinthians 4:6
Preached on: Thursday, July 18, 2019

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Christian Answers would like to announce a conference called "Former Catholics for Christ Conference" in Springfield, Illinois. The conference will cover "In Defense of Sola Scriptura (Scripture alone), Sola Fide (Faith alone), Sola Christo (Christ alone), and Sola Gratia (Grace alone)." Four guest speakers: Robert M. Zins, Director of A Christian Witness to Roman Catholicism, author, conference speaker and apologist; Mike Gendron, Director of Proclaiming the Gospel, author, conference speaker, evangelist and apologist; Tim Kauffman, author, conference speaker and apologist; Cecil Andrews, Director of Take Heed Ministries from northern Ireland, conference speaker and apologist.

Christian Answers
of Austin, Texas
presents
Former Catholics for Christ Conference
Springfield, IL
May 2019
Scripture Alone, Faith Alone, Christ Alone, Grace Alone

Part 3
Cecil Andrews
Director – Take Heed Ministries
Conference Speaker and Apologist

Cecil Andrews. 2017 was for me probably one of the busiest years I've ever had in ministry and there was a special reason for that which was that it marked the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, and as a result of that, I did a lot of extra talks in churches looking at the Reformation, and I considered the Reformation under four

headings: reasons for the Reformation; reaction to the Reformation; reversal of the Reformation; and rejoicing in the Reformation.

The Reformation was a tremendous move of God because it recovered five great truths concerning salvation as salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, according to the Scriptures alone, and all to the glory of God alone. In 1 Timothy 3, Paul wrote this, "The house of God which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of truth," and I watched a video a few months ago of Steve Lawson talking and he talked about the church and he described it like this, he says there are three upright pillars in it, grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone, and those three pillars are supporting a roof and on the roof it says, to the glory of God alone, he says, but underneath there is a great foundation from which those truths spring and it is Scripture alone because these other truths all spring from the Scriptures. The church is to be the location and the support of God's truth. It's not to be the supposed originator of divine truth. The church is there to proclaim the truth that God has revealed to us, not to come up with it's own ideas of truth.

So with my topic tonight which is Sola Scriptura, the Scriptures alone, I think it's very fitting that I want to read some Scriptures as a basis for my talk, so I want to read some verses from the Old Testament and then the New Testament. If you'd like to turn to Psalm 19, this is a Psalm which David glories in the revelation that God has given. The opening verses glory in the general revelation in creation that God has given, but then we come to verse 7 and that's where I want to pick up the reading. So verse 7 of Psalm 19,

7 The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple. 8 The statutes of the LORD are right, rejoicing the heart: the commandment of the LORD is pure, enlightening the eyes. 9 The fear of the LORD is clean, enduring for ever: the judgments of the LORD are true and righteous altogether. 10 More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb. 11 Moreover by them is thy servant warned: and in keeping of them there is great reward.

And then if you want to turn over to the New Testament to Paul's second letter to Timothy, Paul's second letter to Timothy and I want to read from verse 13 through to verse 17. This, of course, we believe were the last inspired words that the Apostle Paul was moved to write. So 2 Timothy 3, beginning at verse 13.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived. 14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned them; 15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: 17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

These two Scriptures from the Old Testament and the New Testament, they lay what I believe is a rock-solid foundation, that Sola Scriptura is the instrument that God and the power of the Holy Spirit uses for every aspect of a Christian life.

I want to consider the topic tonight under two headings. The first is the positive effects of accepting Sola Scriptura, and then, secondly, the negative defects of abandoning Sola Scriptura. So first the positive effects of accepting Sola Scriptura and what I want to do is I want to go back to those verses in Psalm 19, if you want to keep them open in front of you, and I'm gonna select a few statements from the different verses and then I'm going to quote some extracts of what C. H. Spurgeon wrote on those verses because I think they're very helpful.

So beginning at verse 7, I'll read the statement and then Spurgeon's comments. "The law of the LORD is perfect." He means the doctrine of God revealed by God, it is a crime to add to it, treason to alter it, and felony to take from it. "Converting the soul." The great means of the conversion of sinners is the word of God. "The testimony of the Lord is sure." God's witness in his word is so sure that we may draw solid comfort from it. "Making wise the simple." Humble, candid, teachable minds receive the word, and are made wise unto salvation.

Moving to verse 8, "The statutes of the Lord are right." As a physician gives the right medicine, so does the Book of God. "Rejoicing the heart." There is no cordial of comfort like that which is poured from the bottle of Scripture. "The commandment of the Lord is pure." No mixture of error defiles it, no stain of sin pollutes it. "Enlightening the eyes." Scripture is a skillful oculist, that's an eye surgeon. The purity of God's truth cures the natural blindness of the soul.

Moving to verse 9, "The fear of the Lord is clean." The doctrine of truth cleanses out the love of sin. "Enduring for ever." The grace of God in the heart is also an abiding and incorruptible principle "The judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether." The judicial decisions of Jehovah are truth itself, their justice is unimpeachable.

Verse 10, "More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold." Bible truth is enriching to the soul in the highest degree. "Sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb." The pleasures arising from a right understanding of the divine testimonies are of the most delightful order.

Verse 11, "Moreover by them is thy servant warned." The Bible should be our Mentor, our Monitor, and the Keeper of our Conscience. "In keeping of them is great reward." The main reward is yet to come, and the word here used hints as much. Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, is not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. Then shall we know the value of the Scriptures if we commit ourselves to them.

So in this Psalm, David points to Scripture alone as being the necessary spiritual food from conversion to glorification and every stage in between. Psalm 19 outlines the

positive effects of accepting Sola Scriptura and many of those positive effects are also echoed in Psalm 119 which Spurgeon believed David also wrote. If you look at 130, verse 130 of Psalm 119, it says, "The entrance of thy words give light; it give understanding to the simple." Verse 160, "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever" Verse 30, "I have chosen the way of truth: thy judgments have I laid before me." I like what Spurgeon said about Psalm 119. He says, "This sacred ode is a little Bible, the Scriptures condensed."

Staying still in the Old Testament, the part of Sola Scriptura has the potential to change the national life of a nation for the better. In 2 Chronicles 34 we read of King Josiah who became king at the age of eight. Then at age 16, we are told that he sought the God of David, in other words, the true God of the Bible. He destroyed the idolatrous shrines that were erected to Baal worship and at age 26 he ordered the restoration of the temple and during that restoration, the high priest, Hilkiah, he found a book of the law of the Lord given by Moses, in other words, he found a copy of the Torah that had survived previous attacks upon the word of God, and the scribe, he brought and read that book to King Josiah and how did he react to that? He rent his clothes. That was a sign of grief and of mourning. He was grieving and mourning over the sinful history of the nation. So what did he do? He assembled the leading lights, he got them all together in the temple and he read that book to them and the result was that he and the leading lights, they covenanted to obey and to do all that God commanded.

So the national life of a whole nation was transformed and the instrument that was used in that national transformation was the Scriptures, Sola Scriptura. It was a tremendous testimony to Josiah in 2 Kings 23:25, "And like unto him was there no king before him, that turned to the LORD with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his might, according to all the law of Moses; neither after him arose there any like him." So the secret of his greatness was the fact that he was a Sola Scriptura king.

That was the cause of that great national reformation in his days and it was also the formal or the principal cause of the great Reformation 500 years ago. It was the cause of the rediscovery of the great truths, including the four other Solas, and of course, the doctrines of grace. So Sola Scriptura, in the power of the Holy Spirit it is God's means and instrument in salvation, in sanctification, and in service, in other words, everything that pertains to leading a Christian life. 2 Peter 1, Peter wrote of "all things that pertain unto life and godliness," as being, "through the knowledge of him," that is God. And how is such knowledge obtained? Well, earlier in 1 Peter 2, Peter wrote that believers, "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby." Peter doesn't point to any extra-biblical source for spiritual growth, he points to Sola Scriptura.

You know, dreams and visions had their place in the days of Joseph and Ezekiel, Peter himself could have gloried in the great experience he had of being there for the transfiguration, but he doesn't and instead he points his readers in 2 Peter 1, he says, "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place." Peter ranked Scripture way above any claimed experience and the truth is that the days of revelatory dreams and visions and

experiences, they have passed as Hebrews 1:1-2 explain. It says there, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son." And his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, was of course, the promised prophet of Deuteronomy 18, the one whose words people were to hearken to.

Matthew Henry commenting on the first two verses of Hebrews 1, he says, "Now we must expect no new revelation. The excellency of the Gospel is the final, the finishing revelation to which nothing is to be added so that now the minds of men are no longer kept in suspense by the expectation of new discoveries. A revelation which God has made by his Son far superior to all the ancient prophets by whom God communicated his will to his people in former times."

But there are people who would expect new revelations and new declarations. Let me give you one example. There was an article published in "Christian News Network" on the 15th of February, 2017 and this is what it said. "The International Marian Association has requested that Pope Francis refer to Mary as co-Redemptrix with Jesus, the Redeemer during the 100th year anniversary of the supposed apparitions of Mary in Fatima in Portugal." The article then says, "Mike Gendron of Proclaiming the Gospel Ministries told Christian News Network, 'Nowhere in Scripture is Mary referred to as co-Redeemer or co-Mediatrix. It was the Lord Jesus, not Mary, who gave his life as a ransom for many. For anyone to refer to Mary as co-Redemptrix not only violates the truth of God's word, it also dishonors the Lord Jesus Christ and robs him of the glory, honor and praise that he alone deserves.'"

In these particular last days since Christ's ascension back to glory, Sola Scriptura is our highway code for Christian living and, you know, there's a great biblical symmetry between Peter and the Psalmist. Earlier I said that Peter pointed to a light that shines in a dark place and what does the Psalmist say in Psalm 119:105, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

So Christian growth and development is by imbibing and ingesting Sola Scriptura. A Baptist pastor, W. Graham Scroggie, who died in 1958, he trained in Spurgeon's college in London when it was a sound organization. Sadly back in 2000, they endorsed and expressed their liking for a document called "Dominus Iesus" which was dreamt up by Joseph Ratzinger who became Pope Benedict XVI. But Mr. Scroggie wrote this, he said, "Divine knowledge leaves no man stationary." In other words, the more you imbibe and ingest the Scriptures, you will be moving forward.

I want now to consider the other Scriptures that I read. Psalm 19 was written to glorify God's revelation of himself in creation and in his written word, the Scriptures, but Paul's motive for writing to Timothy was different, it was to guide Timothy in the battle against error. In fact, in the following chapter in 2 Timothy 4, he was quite explicit to Timothy, he simply said, "Preach the word." But I want to look at the verses that I read here tonight, so if you have your Bible, open to 2 Timothy 3:13 and I'll just work through the verses that I read.

In verse 13 we see the sources of error that are identified. Paul refers to evil men and seducers. So having identified the source of error, he now prescribes the antidote. In verse 14, he tells Timothy to hold fast to his godly heritage, not just what he learned from the Apostle Paul but from others, and I think he's probably referring to his granny Lois and his mom Eunice who got a mention a few chapters earlier. And then in verse 15, Paul speaks of the Scriptures that Timothy was exposed to from childhood and they also alerted him to his sin and his need for salvation and it secured a course only through faith alone, in Christ crucified. Then in verse 16, we learn that the Scriptures are not human wisdom, they are the breathed out words of God. Doctrine, that means divine truth. Reproof, they can expose wrong belief and behavior. Correction, they could get people back onto the right path. Instruction in righteousness, they give positive training and instruction for godly behavior. And verse 17, the upshot of all of this is that the servant of the Lord, who would be Timothy, will be fully equipped for service and sanctified living.

So just like Psalm 19, these verses declare that Scripture alone meets every spiritual need for salvation, sanctification and service. As we read, they're God's words are breathed out and God's penmen are Spirit propelled. In 2 Peter 1, Peter wrote, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." And the illustration I usually remember is that these men were moved just as the wind fills the sails of a yacht and it goes over the sea, so these men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit. I could add another illustration. Margaret and I, that's my wife, we were on holiday some weeks ago and the hotel we were staying at, there was a pool area and there were plastic recliners beside it, and on one particular day there was a real gale blowing, the result was that there was nobody around the pool area. But we were looking out and here were these plastic recliners being blown along beside the pool. Well, that's how the men of God were moved by the Holy Spirit to write down the inspired words of God and these words that they were moved to write, Peter says in 2 Peter 1, that they contain all things that pertain unto, in other words, are relevant to life and godliness.

So from the Scriptures alone, both Psalm 19 and 2 Timothy 3, despite differing motives, Psalm 19 was the rejoicing in God's revelation through creation and his word, and 2 Timothy 3, Paul was giving guidance to a young pastor but through both of those portions of Scripture we learn the positive effects of accepting Sola Scriptura. All of the Puritans, Thomas Brooks, he said this, "The word of the Lord is a light to guide you, a counselor to counsel you, a comforter to comfort you, a staff to support you, a sword to defend you, and a physician to cure you. The word is a mine to enrich you, a robe to clothe you, and a crown to crown you." And if you have the Scriptures and it does all that, when then what else do you actually need?

So those are the positive effects of accepting Sola Scriptura but let's move now to the negative defects of abandoning Sola Scriptura. Paul in Colossians 2:4 he said this, "And this I say, lest any man should beguile you with enticing words, and then in verse 8 he says, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." The imprisoned

Paul had learned from Epaphrus who was the pastor of the church at Colossae, that false teachers were poisoning the spiritual understanding of the believers there, particularly concerning the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul had also warned believers in Ephesus of such potential dangers. He warned in Acts 20 of grievous wolves speaking perverse things. And Peter likewise also warned in 2 Peter 2 of false teachers who will bring in damnable heresies by using feigned words. The word "feigned" simply means to take a word and stretch the meaning out of it out of all proportion to suit particular false teachings.

But going back where Paul says about to beguile, to beguile is to deceive with false reasoning and there's a classic example in Roman Catholicism and it relates to their teaching on the Immaculate Conception of Mary. This is their reasoning: if Christ is to be immaculately sinless, then the earthly mother Mary needs also to be immaculately sinless. Of course, that is totally false reasoning because Christ's conception through the Holy Spirit and not through male human generation meant that at his birth he was immaculately sinless and not subject to the condemnation of original sin because he was not in Adam as all of us were when we were born, and so under the condemnation of original sin.

Paul also warned of people being spoiled. To spoil is to carry off, to lead captive. You know, it's like the spoils of war. Well, you know, people can be imprisoned like prisoners of war through unscriptural teachings of religious systems like Roman Catholicism. Here are some examples of how I believe Rome spoils people.

Pope Innocent III. "By the heart we believe and by the mouth we confess one Church, not of heretics but the Holy Roman Catholic and Apostolic Church outside which we believe that no one is saved."

Pope Boniface VIII. "Every human creature is subject to the Roman Pontiff. This we declare, say, define and pronounce to be altogether necessary to salvation."

Vatican II. "This sacred synod turns its attention first to the Catholic faithful. Basing itself upon sacred Scripture and tradition, it teaches that the Church now sojourning on earth as in exile is necessary for salvation. Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ would refuse to enter Her or to remain in Her could not be saved."

But then Vatican II also goes on to say, "Those who through no fault of their own do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart and moved by grace try in their actions to do as well as they know it through the dictates of their conscience, those two may achieve eternal salvation."

So here we see fully demonstrated the negative defects of abandoning Sola Scriptura. Roman Catholics are being spoiled, they're being imprisoned, held captive to their Church just like prisoners of war if they want to be saved. Then false hope is held out to

other people that they can be saved by conscience and not by Christ. These teachings represent unscriptural and extra-biblical beguilings and spoilings.

Acts 4:12 says, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Christ said in John 14:6, "no man cometh unto the Father but by me." The Apostle Paul in Romans 10:13, he says, "whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" If Paul had only known that these people if they'd had a good conscience they would have been alright, he wouldn't have written that. He made it clear we need to send people to those who have never heard so that they may hear the truth of the Gospel.

Since I established the ministry of Take Heed back in 1990, I have warned against many religious cults, many of them claiming to be Christian, and I have pointed out that there are four features that are common to cults. First of all, you have an earthly head or founder. Second, they have an authority in addition to or in place of the Bible. Thirdly, they have a wrong view of the person and work of Christ. And fourthly, they have a wrong view of salvation. And those four points are like links in a chain. They have an earthly founder who says, "I've got this extra revelation apart from the Bible," and it usually does damage to the person and work of Christ, and as a result of that, it does damage to the truth of salvation. And you could apply those four points to groups like the Mormons with Joseph Smith and their Book of Mormon, and the Doctrine and Covenant and the Pearl of Great Price and their Jesus is the first spirit child to a man who became a god, and they believe that salvation, well, they believe the death of Christ means everybody will one day be resurrected but as for getting forgiveness of sins, well, you have to follow the system through. And you could apply it to the Jehovah's Witnesses. You could apply it to Seventh Day Adventism.

But what about Rome? Point 1: an earthly head or founder. The Catechism in Ireland, the Catholic Catechism called Butler's and in Lesson 11, Question 2, it says, "Who is the visible head of the Church? Answer, "The Pope who is Christ's Vicar on earth." Well, those two statements are wrong. The only head of the church is the Lord Jesus Christ as we learn in Colossians 1:18. And secondly, the pope is not Christ's vicar. A vicar is a personally appointed substitute or representative and that vicar is the Holy Spirit personally appointed by the Lord in John 14.

What about an authority in addition to or in place of the Bible? 1994 Catholic Catechism, paragraph 97, "Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture make up a single deposit of the word of God." Paragraph 100, "The task of interpreting the word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the Bishops in communion with him." So neither the Scriptures nor sacred tradition are the ultimate authority, the ultimate authority is the Pope and the Bishops. They will tell you what the Scriptures mean and they will tell you what constitutes sacred tradition.

So those are the first two features of a cult and they apply to Rome, and I'll not go through the other points because I could apply them to Rome as well. But with this authority that Rome claims for the magisterium, there is no room for the indwelling Holy Spirit to monitor what believers are taught. There's no scope for a Roman Catholic to be a good Berean. You know, Paul was very happy for those believers in Berea to check out what he said against the Scriptures, but the Catholic Catechism, paragraph 882 says this, "The Roman Pontiff by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ and as Pastor of the entire Church, has full supreme and universal power over the whole Church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered." Well, you know, a secular dictator would love to have such powers but imagine such powers, so poor Roman Catholics have no scope whatsoever to challenge anything that they are taught.

Now in matters of faith, in Vatican I in the 19th century, they came up with some new declarations. One was, of course, the Immaculate Conception of Mary, but they also declared papal infallibility when the pope spoke on matters of faith, but actually at Vatican I, there was a dissenting voice, Bishop Josip Strossmayer of Croatia and I want to read just some of the things that he said in his presentation at Vatican I.

He said this, "I have set myself to study with the most serious attention the writings of the Old and New Testament. I have then opened these sacred pages. I find in the apostolic days no question of a pope, successor to St. Peter, and vicar of Jesus Christ. Now, having read the whole New Testament, I declare before God, with my hand raised to that great crucifix, that I have found no trace of the papacy as it exists at this moment. Reading then the sacred books with that attention with which the Lord has made me capable, I do not find one single chapter, or one little verse, in which Jesus Christ gives to St. Peter the mastery over the apostles, his fellow-workers. It is wonderful that he had not said, 'When I have ascended to my Father, you should all obey Simon Peter as you obey me. I establish him my vicar upon earth.' The more I examine, the more I am convinced that in the Holy Scriptures the son of Jonas," that's Peter, "does not appear to be first. The Apostle Paul makes no mention in any of his letters directed to various churches of the primacy of Peter. If this primacy has existed, if in one word the Church had in its body a supreme head, infallible in teaching, would the great apostle of the Gentiles have forgotten to mention it? Neither in the writings of St. Paul, St. John, nor St. James have I found a trace or germ of the papal power. St. Luke, the historian of the missionary labors of the apostles, is silent on this all-important point." That was a Bishop of the Roman Catholic Church at Vatican I.

I believe that two important people, Mary and the Lord himself, have suffered huge negative defects through Rome abandoning Sola Scriptura because of Rome's traditions. Christ has been robbed and Mary has been robbed and both results constitute negative defects. In Colossians 2:8 Paul warned against the tradition of men and I like these helpful comments that are found in the Reformation Study Bible. "Tradition of man refers to the customs and opinions of man that are not revealed by God. Paul sometimes describes the good news of Jesus Christ as a tradition that can be received, but his use of tradition does not refer to human custom or historical opinion but to the apostolic passing down of a divine message from God. Apostolic tradition consists of the preaching and

application of the Gospel and it is codified in the New Testament, the only infallible source of the apostles' witness, and along with the Old Testament the only infallible rule for the church." Those notes refer to human custom or historical opinion.

Many years ago, a former Roman Catholic, Jim MacCarthy, made a great video called "Catholicism: Crisis of Faith," and many former priests and nuns appeared in it. One of the former priests was Bart Brewer, a friend of mine. He's now in glory. They were talking about what Rome teaches about Mary and Bart said this, "The perpetual virginity of Mary, the immaculate conception of Mary, the assumption of Mary, these are mandatory teachings. The Catholic people may not reject those teachings. If they do, there's a curse for any Roman Catholic who would reject an official dogma regarding Mary. Catholic priests will be honest in telling us that indeed this teaching has no foundation in Scripture." The teaching he was talking about was the bodily assumption and in the video the narrator puts this question to a Jesuit theologian, he says, "And what is the source of the doctrine of Mary's assumption?" And Father John Boyle says this, "You don't see anything definitive in Scripture on that but you find a kind of basis, but I would say the doctrine of the assumption has its origin in the piety of the people down through the centuries." So if the people think it's a good idea and a lot of them rally to that particular belief, then Rome is quite happy to incorporate it into its beliefs.

Alphonsus di Liguori was a so-called Doctor of the Roman Catholic Church and the official definition of a doctor is: a title given to certain saints whose writings or preaching are outstanding for guiding the faithful in all areas of the Church's history. So these men have to be listened to and Liguori was, I think, besotted by Mary. He wrote a book called "The Glories of Mary," and in it he has a number of prayers and here are some extracts from one of his prayers. "My Mother Mary, the queen of the world, the advocate, the hope and the refuge of sinners." While every believer's hope is that they have been set free from the condemnation of their sin, and the Lord said in John 8:36, "If the Son," not my mother, "If the Son therefore shall make you free," and that's from sin's condemnation, "you shall be free indeed."

Liguori goes on, "I venerate you, O great Queen. I thank you for the grace of being delivered from hell. I promise to serve you always. I place in you all my hopes for salvation." Well, I've already quoted Acts 4:12, "Neither is there salvation in any other." Then he says, "Shelter me under your mantle." Well, the Lord told believers that if we were in his hand, "neither shall any man pluck you out of my hand." He says, "You are so powerful with God." Well, if we're in Christ's hand, we're also in the Father's hand. That's where power to save us is found.

Then he goes on, "Through you I hope to die a holy death. Help me at all times but especially at the last moment of my life." Well, the first Christian martyr, Stephen, he looked up and he didn't appeal to Mary. He said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."

Then Mr. Liguori goes on, "Safe in heaven, I can bless you and sing your mercies for all eternity. This is my hope." There's a lovely hymn called "The Sands of Time are

Sinking," and it says, "The Lamb is all the glory in Emmanuel's land." Not Mary. The Lamb of God, the Lord Jesus Christ.

That was Liguori, then Pope John Paul II in the Jubilee Year 2000, he first of all arranged for the statue of Mary in Fatima to be flown over and put on display in St. Peter's Square, and then he stood before it and he made a prayer to this lump of statue. He says, "We stand before you to entrust to your maternal care ourselves, the Church, the entire world. We entrust to you all people. We entrust to you all troubled families." Well, Psalm 24:1 says, "The earth is the LORD'S, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." We don't entrust ourselves to Mary, we are entrusted to God.

The prayer went on, "come to the aid of your children in the daily trials which life brings to each one." Well, the Lord's prayer says we are to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," so we pray to, "Our Father, who art in heaven."

Then he says, "To you, Dawn of Salvation, we commit our journey through the new Millennium," remember this was 2000. Well, I don't commit my daily pilgrimage to Mary. I remember that the Lord says to his saved people, "I will never leave you nor forsake you." Colossians 1 tells us that, "by him," that is Christ, "were all things created and by him all things consist." Everything was created by Christ and he holds everything together, not Mary.

Rome refers to Mary as Holy Mary Mother of God and they go on to say, "By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the Mother of Mercy, the All Holy One." But when Mary was receiving the news that she was going to give birth, she was told, "That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God," and in 1 Samuel 2, Hannah also echoed that prayer, she said, "There is none holy as the Lord." And Mary in Luke 1:49 said, "He that is mighty hath done to me great things and holy is his name." So Mary is not all holy, only God alone is holy. Peter said, "As he who has called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation."

Then there are roles that Rome ascribes to Mary. Listen to the Catechism 969, "Taken up to heaven, she," that's Mary, "continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation, therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, Mediatrix." Advocate? My Bible tells me, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous one." Mary, the helper? Hebrews 13:6 says, "The Lord is my helper." Benefactress, one who supports and helps us? My benefactress is not Mary, Psalm 28 says, "The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart trusteth in him and I am helped." Mediatrix? No, my Bible tells me, "There is one God and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." In that paragraph in the Catechism, Rome is robbing Christ and robbing Mary and, of course, we are told that she will bring salvation to people but only the Holy Spirit brings salvation.

Pope Pius XII made this statement, "She," that is Mary, "was who immune from all sin personal or inherited and evermore closely united with her son, offered him on Golgotha

to the eternal Father." Mary didn't offer Jesus on Golgotha. The book of Hebrews tells us that Christ through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot unto God. About 20 years ago, I debated a Jesuit priest on television and it was on the subject of Mary and he was saying, "There was Mary at Calvary and there she was saying to God, 'Here's my son. Take him. I'm offering him to you.'" I said, "Where is that in the Scriptures?" He says, "It's not in the Scriptures." I said, "Precisely," and I quoted Hebrews, "Through the eternal Spirit Christ offered himself."

Then they claimed too that they want Mary to be a redeemer and a joint redeemer, a co-mediatrix, a co-redemprix. John Paul II said this, "It was on Calvary that Mary's suffering beside the suffering of Jesus reached an intensity which was mysteriously and supernaturally fruitful for the redemption of the world." Now in the book of Revelation we read in chapter 5, "Thou," that's Christ, "art worthy for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood." To redeem means to pay a price to wipe out a debt, if you like. I used to work, it's a building society back in Ireland, you would call them Savings & Loan, and I would give mortgages to people to help them buy their house. Maybe some years later they would come in and say, "I want to pay off my mortgage," maybe some aunt had died and left them a lump sum or something, but anyhow they would come in and they would pay off the mortgage and once the money had been paid, once the debt had been cleared, on the top of their file we had a rubber stamp, "Redeemed." The mortgage was redeemed. A price had to be paid. Mary didn't pay any redemptive price, it was Christ for we were not redeemed with corruptible things but with the precious blood of Christ.

I believe that Mary looked to Scripture alone both to guide and to guard her life. Referring again to the annunciation, Gabriel told her, he says, "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Jesus." Now a couple of verses later, what does Mary say? She said, "How shall this be seeing I know not a man?" Now for most of my Christian life, I thought there was one reason that motivated Mary to say that and that was basically to defend her maidenly honor, and I certainly believe there was an element, a large element in that, but I think there could also have been another reason she asked that, I think she could have been checking out to see if this angelic being was truly from God because she, like young girls of her age in those days, they would have been aware of the prophecy in Isaiah 7:14, "Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." I believe that she was testing this spirit being to see whether he was truly of God. So she exhibited a Berean attitude and it was not based on feelings or emotions, but I believe it was based on the Scriptures.

I think there's more evidence that Mary's whole being was saturated and satisfied with Scripture alone. The Apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 4:6, he wrote, "learn in us not to think of men above that which is written," and Rome has certainly done that where Mary is concerned at the expense of Christ. I believe that Mary would have been horrified or would be horrified about what Rome has done to her and I want to give you an example of where I believe Mary was a Sola Scriptura lady and it's in her magnificat, the reaction to the news that she was going to bear the Messiah. In Luke 1, I'll quote Mary and then

I'm gonna quote some Old Testament Scriptures. Mary said, "My soul doth magnify the Lord." Psalm 34, "My soul shall make her boast in the LORD... O magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt his name together." Mary, "And my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." Hannah in 1 Samuel 2, "My heart rejoiceth in the LORD... because I rejoice in thy salvation." Mary, "For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden." Hannah again, "look on the affliction of thine handmaid, and remember me, and not forget thine handmaid." Mary, "For he that is mighty hath done to me great things; and holy is his name." Hannah, "There is none holy as the LORD." Psalmist in Psalm 111, "holy and reverend is his name." Mary, "He hath shewed strength with his arm." Isaiah 40, "the Lord GOD will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him." Mary, "He hath filled the hungry with good things." Psalmist in Psalm 107, "he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness." Mary, "As he spake to our fathers, to Abraham, and to his seed for ever." Genesis 17, "I will establish my covenant between me and thee," that's Abraham, "and thy seed after thee... to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." When you look at Mary's magnificat, it is absolutely laced through with Old Testament Scripture. She was a Sola Scriptura lady.

The Lord himself condemned human traditions in both Mark 7 and Matthew 15. He turned his fire on the Pharisees for substituting their traditions for God's word and Rome is guilty of doing exactly the same thing. Because of Rome abandoning Sola Scriptura where Mary is concerned, millions are being robbed of biblical salvation in the biblical Christ. Not only was Mary a Sola Scriptura person, but the Lord also his whole life was a fulfillment of Old Testament Scriptures. His birth in Bethlehem fulfilled Micah 5:2. We learn in John 19:36 the fact that not a bone of his body was broken at Calvary that the Scriptures should be fulfilled. Matthew and John regularly refer to incidents in his life that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

Now if we think of the story that the Lord told about the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16 where the rich man who had died and, of course, Lazarus had died too, but the rich man wanted Abraham to send Lazarus back to warn his five brothers but Abraham declined and instead he directed his attention and focus to Moses and the prophets. In other words, the Scriptures alone would be all-sufficient.

After his resurrection, Christ again demonstrated his Sola Scriptura credentials. Remember he joined two downcast disciples on the road to Emmaus and in Luke 24:27 it says, "And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself." And how did those downcast disciples describe their reaction to it? "Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way and while he opened to us the scriptures." The experience of those disciples reflects the truth of Hebrews 4:12 which says this, "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow." God's word can butcher us, it can penetrate deeply, and it's a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. What does it mean to be a discerner? It means it critiques, it criticizes and it passes judgment on our very thoughts and feelings. A man called F. B. Hole, he wrote about that verse like this, "It is not man's business to criticise the Word of God, but to let the Word criticise him." So God's word,

it forensically analyzes our innermost spiritual being and it is the only instrument that God uses in the power of his Spirit for such a purpose.

In certain circumstances, some Roman Catholic apologists like to appeal to the early church fathers if they feel it's gonna help their case and so on, but sometimes they don't accept what the church fathers clearly said. I think of a man called Robert Sungenis, supposed former evangelical who became a Roman Catholic. I remember Rob and I debated with him on another convert the other way, a man named Scott Butler in Fresno about 20 years ago, and after the debate they gave us each a copy of their latest book and the book by Sungenis was not by Scripture alone and in it he seeks to debunk and dismiss clear statements made by some of the early church fathers.

Let me just give you a couple of them. Irenaeus, "We have received the disposition of our salvation by no others but those by whom the Gospel came to us which they then preached and afterwards by God's will delivered to us in the Scriptures to be the pillar and ground of our faith."

Hippolytus, "There is one God whom we do not otherwise acknowledge, brethren, but out of the sacred Scriptures. Whosoever will exercise piety towards God can learn it nowhere but from the Holy Scriptures."

Origen, "In the two testaments, every word that pertains unto God may be sought and discussed and out of them all knowledge of things may be understood. No other third scripture ought to be received to authorize any knowledge."

Finally, Athanasius, "The holy and divinely inspired writings are sufficient of themselves alone to make known the truth. In the Holy Scriptures alone is the instruction of religion announced to which let no man add and from which let no man detract."

So for me, these well-known early hearers of the faith are promoting the positive effects of accepting Sola Scriptura and warning of the negative defects of abandoning Sola Scriptura.

The motto text of the ministry I have is taken from Matthew 24:4 which says, "Take heed that no man deceive you," and I want to give you what I believe is a good illustration of how people can easily be deceived. Someone posted this on Facebook recently. It was a statement attributed to Mr. Ratzinger who was Pope Benedict XVI. This is what he said, "We must never forget that the word of God transcends time. Human opinions come and go. What is very modern today will be very antiquated tomorrow. On the other hand, the word of God is the word of eternal life, it bears within it eternity and is valid forever." That was Benedict XVI, that was posted on Facebook and that was amazing the number of professing Protestant Christians and like who thought this was a wonderful statement but, friends, that was classic Roman Catholic double-speak and it's directed to those who don't know what Roman Catholicism teaches. But as the Catechism that I quoted earlier says, "Sacred tradition and sacred Scripture make up a single deposit of the word of God." So Pope Benedict and Roman Catholicism do not adhere to Sola Scriptura and they

often negate the sacred Scriptures by their sacred traditions just as the Pharisees did at the time of the Lord.

Now Rome does endeavor to make a case for the authority of their sacred tradition and they base it on 2 Thessalonians 2:15, Paul wrote, "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle." Matthew Henry comments, "The Thessalonians are exhorted to hold fast to traditions which they had been taught or the doctrine of the Gospel which had been delivered by the apostle by word or epistle. As yet the Canon of Scripture was not complete and therefore some things were delivered by the apostles in their preaching under the guidance of the infallible Spirit which Christians were bound to observe as coming from God. Other things were afterwards by them committed to writing and these epistles were written as the writers were moved by the Holy Ghost. Note, there is no argument hence for regarding oral traditions in our days now that the Canon of Scripture is complete as of equal authority with the sacred writings. Such doctrines and duties as were taught by the inspired apostles we must steadfastly adhere to but we have no certain evidence of anything being delivered by them more than what we find contained in the Holy Scriptures."

Rob Zins in his book on Romanism, he writes this, "The verse itself organizes the content of the traditions to be in concert with the teaching of Paul whether spoken or written. The fact that something is given orally by the apostles does not substantiate the Catholic notion of tradition outside the Canon. It simply does not follow that oral transmission of the truth of the Gospel of Christ is a compelling reason to suppose a body of tradition which is allegedly separate from the Bible itself."

The aim of this conference is to demonstrate that according to the Scriptures alone, biblical salvation is by biblical grace alone, through biblical faith alone, in the biblical Christ alone, and all to the glory of the biblical God alone, and all such saved can then in power of the Holy Spirit be sanctified by the Scriptures alone, and equipped for service by the Scriptures alone.

Let me quote two great Sola Scriptura men separated by many centuries. John Wycliffe, "Not the church speaking through the pope but the voice of God speaking through his word is the only true authority." John MacArthur, "When the Lord speaks to his church, it is unmistakable. His voice thunders over the church through the divine authority of Holy Scripture."

Let me finish just with a few Scriptures. When the Lord was tempted in the wilderness in Matthew 4:4 he said this, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." In Psalm 12:6-7, "The words of the LORD are pure words: as silver tried in a furnace of earth, purified seven times. Thou shalt keep them, O LORD, thou shalt preserve them from this generation for ever." God's words are pure and they are preserved in the Scriptures. Proverb 30:5-6, "Every word of God is pure: he is a shield unto them that put their trust in him. Add thou not unto his words, lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar."

Sola Scriptura rebuffs liars. And I finish with this, if the Lord was physically present here tonight, he would hold up this book and he would say, "These are they which testify of me." Sola Scriptura.

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