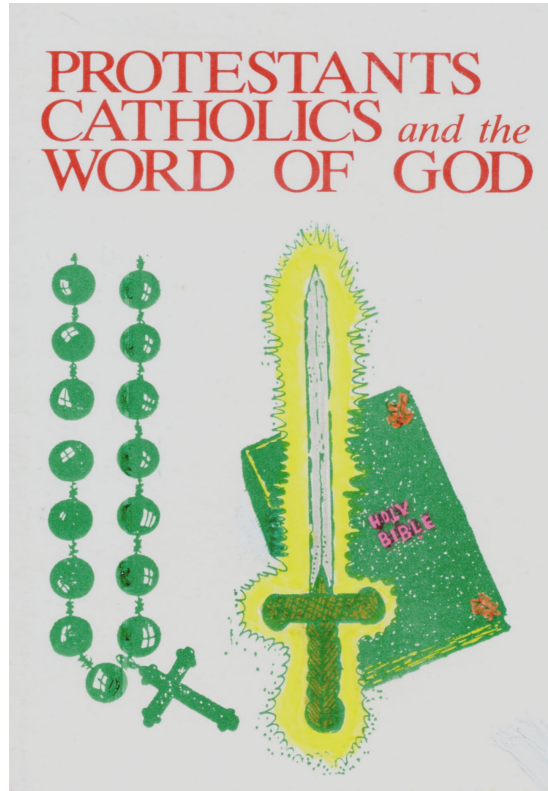


MM 39 – PROTESTANTS, CATHOLICS AND THE WORD OF GOD



“Prove yourselves doers of the word,  
and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”

(James 1:22)

Maranatha Revival Crusade  
Western Australia

# **CONTENTS**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Word of God

## **PROTESTANTS v CATHOLICS**

The Infallibility and Headship of the Pope

Transubstantiation

The Veneration of Mary

The Doctrine of Purgatory

The Reformation

## **WHAT THE CATHOLIC BIBLE SAYS**

The Bible is the only Infallible Authority

What does the Catholic Bible teach about Mary?

Is the Catholic Pope Infallible?

What does the Catholic Bible teach about Priests marrying?

Is the Sacrifice of the Mass Scriptural?

What Mediator Can a Sinner Have?

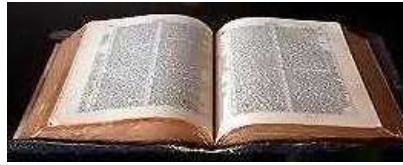
How to be saved according to the Catholic Bible?

## **THE PRIEST WHO FOUND CHRIST**

## **WAS PETER THE FIRST POPE?**

## **BE DOERS OF THE WORD!**

## INTRODUCTION



## THE WORD OF GOD

We live in a world of turmoil, a world of confusion. Society and people are confused — about most things — where we came from, where we're going, and why we're here! We are perplexed because of our problems, and we are usually so taken up with our immediate tasks and entanglements that we have little time to reflect on the past, or to contemplate the future. We're concerned more about the present. Fair enough! For we are here right now. and before we get to tomorrow, we have to live today. But we often forget that how we live today, affects our tomorrow. It affects our future, our destiny, our eternity.

Our real problem often, is that we don't know how to live the present. We bustle along, take foolish chances, listen a little to the variety of voices that trumpet their philosophies, advertisements and advices in our ears, till we become more confused than ever. Nothing, we conclude, is very definite, nothing is really final; so we program our minds to accept relatives — relative standards, relative behaviour, and relative truth —no absolutes, no conclusions, no dogmas. And the world encourages us in this philosophy, and tells us we are right!

Our real problem, although we don't like to admit it, is that we are lost! Lost to the present, lost to the future; we are a loss, many of us, to ourselves, to our society, and to God. And unfortunately we are at a loss to know how to be found, or how to find a way out of our maze of dead-end alleys.

Yet there is a way, there is a definite guide, there is an absolute, there is "a lamp to my feet and a light to my path." (Psalm 119:105). It is the sure Word of God, the Holy Bible.

The Bible, far from being an ancient history book, is a direct revelation from God to us, today. It is a prophetic message to the world. True, it does include some historical events, and that, for the sake of our learning. It shows us where we came from; it shows the right way to God; and the experiences of others who have either found or missed the way. The whole Book relates to this problem of why we are here, and where we are going.

True Bible prophecy is God speaking through chosen human vessels, to provide a guide for the present, as well as for the future. The Bible itself says:

"We have the prophetic word made more, to which you do well to pay attention as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star arises in your hearts. But know this first of all, that no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God." (2 Peter 1:19-21)

The Bible is not the private philosophies or interpretations of the men who wrote it. It is God-given, God-breathed. It is the Word of God to lead us out of our ignorant, confused darkness, and into "the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." (2 Corinthians 4:4)

The true Light of the World is the Lord Jesus, and true illumination is the Lord, and His Word, shining into our hearts.

“For God, who said, ‘Light shall shine out of darkness’, is the One who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.” (2 Corinthians 4:6)

We cannot divorce the Lord Jesus and the Word of God, for Jesus Himself is called “the Word of God.”

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” (John 1:1, 14)

And it is the Word of God, implanted in our hearts, that saves us, guides us, and sanctifies us; that is, that separates us unto God, makes us acceptable unto God, and will also present us before the Father with exceeding joy.

“In humility receive the word implanted, which is able to save your souls. But prove yourselves doers of the word, and not merely hearers who delude themselves. For if any one is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his natural face in a mirror; for once he has looked at himself and gone away, he has immediately forgotten what kind of person he was. But one who looks intently at the perfect law, the law of liberty and abides by it, not having become a forgetful hearer but an effectual doer, this man shall be blessed in what he does.” (James 1:21-25)

To be a “doer of the Word” means to be obedient to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is not enough to be a mere reader of the Bible. We must follow its instruction. It is not enough to believe about the Lord Jesus, we must follow Him, and obey His commands. He says:

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.” (John 14:15)

Much of the confusion in the religious world today — and I’m thinking particularly of the confusion in the professing Christian world, is due to the fact that many do not read and obey the Word of God. Many people want a man-made religion. Many want a philosophical religion that tallies with their own blinded intelligence. Many want to add or to take away from the Word of God.

The tragedy in much of Protestantism today is that it has [taken away](#) from the Scriptures. The tragedy of Roman Catholicism is that it has [added](#) to the Bible. Both the taking away, and the adding to what God has given in His written Word, are wrong, and are condemned in the strongest terms. This is because the Word has been given as our guide; and God does not want His revelation tampered with. Anyone who does so, brings God’s curse upon himself.

“I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book (the Word of God); if anyone adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues which are written in this book ; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life and from the holy city, which are written in this book.” (Revelation 22:18-19)

A danger of evangelical Christians — people who claim to follow the Bible — is that of accepting the Bible, and the Bible only, as the authority for faith and practice, and yet, not actually [practising](#) the Word they believe in.

Another danger is of “interpreting” the Bible, and making it say what we want it to say, so that our own ideas and violations are justified.

We do indeed need a correct interpretation of the Word. And the Lord Jesus said:

“But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you ... When He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth.” (John 14:26, 16:13)

The Holy Spirit guides us in understanding the Scriptures, when we sincerely seek the knowledge and will of God. The Bible is its own commentary, so our understanding increases through continuous and diligent study of the Word, and not what philosophers and sceptics may say about the Bible. We are exhorted to study the Word itself!

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the Word of truth.”  
(2 Timothy 2:15)

This does not mean we should refuse or despise the teachings of true men of God who have also studied the Word — maybe for much longer than we have. God has specially gifted different ones, to minister to the needs of others, and to teach the Word.

“And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, for the equipping; of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God.” (Ephesians 4:11-13)

Let us learn then, from godly, Bible-based teachers, recognising, however, that the final authority is not a man, or even a church, but God’s Word. And let us make the Bible our guide, and our authority.

“Continue in the things you have learned and became convinced of, knowing from whom you have learned them ; and that from childhood you have known the sacred writings which are able to give you the wisdom that leads to salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness; that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work.” (2 Timothy 3:14-17)

## **PROTESTANTS v CATHOLICS**

Many people ask me, “What’s the difference between Catholics and Protestants? Which is the true Church? And what about the ecumenical movement — the attempt to unite all churches into a one-world super-church? Why the divisions in the first place?”

These questions are very relevant today, in view of unity moves, such as the meeting between the Pope and the Archbishop of Canterbury (the head of the Anglican Church), and their eagerness to establish a “full communion” between the two churches.

Basically, Catholics and Protestants differ on the following four major issues :

## 1. The Infallibility and Headship of the Pope

Catholics recognise the Pope as the head of the church, and are bound to accept the decrees of the Pontiff, as law. Protestants maintain that only the Word of God is authoritative, and recognise the Lord Jesus as Head, in accordance with Scripture.

“Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Saviour of the body.” (Ephesians 5:23)

Protestants also object to the title of the Pope — Vicarivus Fileii Dei, which means, “Substitute for the Son of God.” The Lord has ambassadors, evangelists, shepherds and teachers, but no substitutes.

Many Catholics today reject the absolute authority of the Pope, and demand more freedom of conscience. Many Protestants, on the other hand, are now rejecting the Bible as their authority. They base their “faith” upon “reason” — the product of the human intellect, rather than upon God’s revelation.

## 2. The Doctrine of Transubstantiation

The Catholic church says that the bread and wine used in the Mass, are sacraments that, when consecrated, become the actual flesh and blood of Christ. Protestants have steadily maintained that the bread and wine are SYMBOLS of the body and blood, and that the eating and drinking of literal flesh and blood is not required. We partake of Christ through faith. We eat His “flesh” and drink His “blood” through feasting upon Him in a spiritual way — by receiving the Lord as our personal Saviour, and through meditating on Him. Jesus Himself, when He initiated the Lord’s Supper, said :

“This is my body, which is broken for you; do this in REMEMBRANCE of Me.” (I Corinthians 11 : 24)

## 3. The Veneration of Mary

The Catholic Church has proclaimed Mary, the mother of the Lord, as the Queen of Heaven. Catholics are encouraged to pray to Mary, believing she is a mediator between men and Christ.

Protestants highly regard Mary as a chosen vessel, but not as a Queen or a mediator, for the Scripture says:

“For there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all.” (1 Timothy 2:5, 6)

Protestants have also deplored the practice of setting up statues of Mary and the Lord, or of saints, in the church.

## 4. The Doctrine of Purgatory, and Masses or Prayers for the Dead

Catholics teach that people go to a place of purging after death, and that prayers and masses said for those people will enable them to reach heaven.

Protestants maintain there is no such place as Purgatory. When a person dies, his soul and spirit go either to heaven or to hell. For a true believer in Christ, there is the assurance that his sins have been forgiven, and he has been justified by the grace and mercy of God, on the basis of the cross of Calvary.

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.” (Romans 8 :1)

There are other differences between Catholics and Protestants, of course, but the above four points are fundamental. The real issue comes down to this: Do we accept the Bible as the sole authority, or not?

## THE REFORMATION

Protestantism began in the 16th century, when Catholic men such as Martin Luther, William Farrel, and others such as John Knox, Bishop Riley, Swingli and Calvin discovered the truths in the Bible, and realised that the Roman Church had become far removed from those truths. These men began to preach against the apostasy. They claimed that only the Bible was to be accepted as authority. Some of them sought to reform the Catholic church, but were soon branded as heretics, and cast out. Many were burnt at the stake. But soon the Reformation swept over much of Europe. The division has remained till this time.

Protestantism has never been a single church. Being non-conformist, it has believed in freedom of conscience and expression. Some groups have taken the name of the Reformer that has influenced them most, such as the Lutherans. Others have taken the name of their country, such as the Church of Scotland, the Anglicans, and the Dutch Reformed Church. Others have used a name which describes some major emphasis or practise, such as the Presbyterians and Baptists.

Protestantism today, however, is not what it was in the Reformation when men believed the Word, and separated from apostasy. Much of Protestantism today, is far more removed from the Bible than the Catholics were in the 16th century.

To some extent the Catholic Church has changed since that time. And now the climate is one of change and accommodation; fervent efforts are being made on both sides, to unite all “Christians” into a one-world Church.

Many Protestants who no longer hold to the Word of God as their authority, feel that dogma or doctrine is not important, as long as “we are one.” Some maintain that they can continue to express any differences of thought and expression, within the framework of a unified church.

Today, many Protestants do not protest at anything except the hindrances to the formation of a super-world church. Many would be glad to rid of the misnomer as early as possible. In fact some of them emphatically deny that they are “protestants” (protesters).

There is now a very definite effort being made to “re-define” the doctrine of both sides, to make them compatible with each other. Provision is being made also, for the Bible to be interpreted in various ways, so as to avoid any conflict.

Naturally there can only be one “head” to a united church. The Pope is already recognised as head by the largest “Christian” group in the world, and as there is no single leader for the Protestants who are interested in uniting, and have signalled their willingness to accept the Pope as Head of the united church.

The present Pope, John Paul II, has made great strides in influencing the “Christian world” towards unification. He has presented a charming appearance to many nations and churches, as well as to other religions, and it could be that he will become the head of the World Church in the very near future.

Even well-known evangelists have heralded Pope John Paul II, as “the moral leader of the world,” and have sung his praise.

The World Council of Churches, which is made up of nearly 300 denominations worldwide, representing more than 500,000,000 people, is working rapidly towards unity. It is already co-operating with Rome in every way, and wooing others who are not yet involved.

The Bible Society, a Protestant organisation which was created to print Bibles for the world, has over the last 20 years accommodated Catholic requirements by including the Apocrypha, which is a set of books written during the 400 years between Malachi and Christ. Protestants have never accepted the Apocrypha as inspired, God-given revelation, and have rejected these writings as part of the Bible. But now an “accommodation” has been made.

Now the question comes up ...

### “WHICH IS THE TRUE CHURCH?”

The true church, which is called the Body of Christ, and which the Lord recognises as His own, is the company of believers who have trusted in the Lord and have been born again by his Spirit. They are “doers of the Word,” and have been justified by grace. There are millions of them — those already with the Lord in heaven, as well as many scattered throughout the nations on earth. This church is neither Catholic nor Protestant, although there are, no doubt, many members from both those churches in the “true church.”

Another question that naturally comes up for believers in the Lord Jesus, who hold to the Bible as authority, who believe that nothing should be added, and that nothing should be taken away from the Holy Scripture, who find themselves caught up in a system that is denying the Scriptures in various ways; what should we do? Should we go along with the unity moves of our churches, or is there an alternative?

Well, if the union churches would actually comprise the true church, and the Lord could commend and bless it, we would definitely support the union. But it is becoming more and clearer, that the union being built today is merely an organisation that, although it takes the name of Christ, is not built upon the Rock — Christ Jesus. This organic union is not acknowledging the Word of God and the authority of Christ, but includes communists, modernists, liberals and unbelievers of many kinds. This is not by accident.

Many theological seminaries have been highly infiltrated by men dedicated to the destruction of the Holy Bible; men who deny the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and God. Members of the Illuminati, the Conspiracy to bring the Antichrist into world power, have infiltrated the churches also, and have taught modernistic theology with a view to breaking down true faith in Christ. This modernism has now captured large parts of the mainline denominations. A Bible-believing believer will naturally feel compelled to come out from such churches and to protest against their apostasy, even as believers did in the Reformation.

The protest today is not only against the additional teachings of the Roman Catholics — the veneration of Mary, and teaching of purgatory, etc., but also against the false, Christ-denying, Bible-rejecting teachings of modern Protestants — against the Illuminati doctrine in both churches. It is a shocking fact that in some mainline “Protestant” churches, up to 90% of the leaders deny the Bible as the inspired Word of God, and a large percentage also deny other fundamentals such as the virgin birth of Christ, His atoning death of Calvary, His physical resurrection and His literal future return to earth.

What is the believer to do in the face of this apostasy? Is there an alternative to compromise? Yes, there is! The believer may meet with others who maintain a separation from apostasy. There are still many churches that have not joined the apostate union. And there are small groups who gather in the Name of the Lord Jesus without denominational affiliation; often gathering in homes to [worship](#) the Lord, and seeking whole-heartedly to follow the Bible.



The most essential thing for us as individuals is to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Saviour by faith; to follow His Word; to turn from our own sin, unbelief and false ways; and to be separate from apostasy wherever it occurs. The Word of God is the **absolute** standard, and all religious systems can be tested by that Word. Are they based on what God says, or on what man says? As for us, we must be doers of the Word!



## WHAT THE CATHOLIC BIBLE SAYS

BY DR. JOHN R. RICE

Dr Rice was a well-known 20<sup>th</sup> century American evangelist. He was editor for many years of *The Sword of the Lord* magazine.

I hold in my hand the new Confraternity edition of the New Testament which is translated from the Latin Vulgate by Catholic authorities. It has on the title page the following:

The NEW TESTAMENT of Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Translated from the Latin Vulgate. A Revision of the Challoner-Rheims Version.

Edited by Catholic Scholars Under the Patronage of THE EPISCOPAL COMMITTEE of the CONFRATERNITY OF CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE. St. Anthony Guild Press, Paterson, New Jersey, 1941.

It is copyrighted by the "Confraternity of Christian Doctrine." It has "Nihil obstat (nothing against) it by Rt. Rev. Msgr. Henry J. Grimmelsman," Rev. John F. McConnell, and Rev. Joseph J. Tennant and the Imprimatur of Most Rev. Thomas H. McLaughlin, Bishop of Paterson, New Jersey. It is the official Catholic translation. Eugene Cardinal Tisserant, President of the PONTIFICAL Biblical Commission (the Catholic Cardinal), has his letter of approval in it.

I will read a little from the foreword, an introduction, to this Catholic translation under the heading, "On the Reading of Holy Scriptures." I want you to see what Catholic authorities say about reading the Bible. Now our Catholic friends do not always do what their Bible says, just as we Baptists and Methodists and Presbyterians and Lutherans and Episcopalians and Pentecostal people and others do not always do what our Bible says. But it would be well for you to know what Catholic authorities say about reading the Bible. Then we will show what the Catholic Bible says about many, many very interesting subjects.

"On the Reading of Holy Scriptures" — this is from the Encyclical Letter, the "Spiritus Paraclitus," which is the Catholic Encyclical designated by those first two Latin words.

" 'Since the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, had bestowed the Scriptures on human race for their instruction in Divine things, He also raised up in successive ages saintly and learned men whose task it should be to develop that treasure and so provide for the faithful plenteous "consolation afforded by the Scriptures." (Rom. 15:4)' ."

Then he goes on to say, “ ‘The responsibility of our Apostolic office impels us to set before you his wonderful example (that is, of St. Jerome) and so promote the study of Holy Scripture in accordance with the teachings of our predecessors, Leo XIII and Pius X.

“ ‘And none can fail to see what profit and sweet tranquility must result in well-disposed souls from such devote reading of the Bible. Whoever comes to it in piety, faith and humility, and with a determination to make progress in it, will assuredly find therein and will eat the “bread that comes down from heaven.” (John 6:50)’ ”

A little further down the same passage continues, “ ‘We confidently hope that his example will fire both clergy and laity with enthusiasm for the study of the Bible. [The Catholic clergy and Catholic laity, he is saying, ought to be inspired to a study of the Bible] ... So convinced indeed was Jerome that familiarity with the Bible was the royal road to the knowledge and love of Christ that he did not hesitate to say: “Ignorance of the Bible means ignorance of Christ.”’” And then the reference for that statement from Jerome is given.

Then further, “ ‘Our one desire for all the Church’s children [the children of the Catholic church] is that, being saturated with the Bible, they may arrive at the all-surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ. Pope Leo XIII granted to the faithful who shall read for at least a quarter of an hour the books of the Sacred Scripture with the veneration due to the Divine Word and as spiritual reading, an indulgence of 300 days’ .”

That is the introduction that our Catholic friends have to their new Confraternity edition of the New Testament, a Catholic Bible.

There is a further preface which I will not take time to read.

Tonight I want it to be understood that I will not preach about Catholics, nor attack them. I have many Catholic friends, and as far as that is concerned, I love Catholic friends as I love others. I think I ought to say also that I have found a good many Catholics whom I believe to be very earnest and sincere, born-again Christians. I do not say that every Catholic is a born-again Christian. I could not say that every Protestant is a born-again Christian. No, no! Only those who have personally come to trust in Jesus as Saviour are born-again Christians. Membership in a church, a Protestant church, does not make you a Christian. Membership in a Catholic church does not make you a Christian. Neither does it prevent your being a Christian.

However, I should like for you to see tonight what the Roman Catholic Bible, the newest and best translation of the Catholic Bible, has to say on several important doctrines. And, by the way, I would like to say that this is an interesting translation and it is true to the originals. You would be safe in reading it. I would not be embarrassed or afraid at all for Protestants to have this Bible and read it. Though some of the notes in it I would not agree to, the translation itself is an honest and good translation. And the surprising and happy thing about it is that, this coming through the translation of the Latin Vulgate which was translated by St. Jerome, and the King James translation which came from the original Hebrew and Greek and copied manuscripts, come out almost word for word the same.

There are a few words different, but there is no special difference in meaning when there is a slight difference in the English wording. You can put it down now that all good translations of the Bible come out alike and teach the same doctrines exactly. And a Catholic Bible can be relied upon to teach the truth, and so, of course, can the King James or Revised Versions or the New American Standard Bible.

## 1 The Bible is the Only Inspired, Infallible Authority

First, what does the Catholic Bible say about the Bible? What does the Catholic Bible say about the authority of the Word of God? There are some Protestants who do not believe in the authority of the Word of God. There are modernists, there are unbelievers in the churches, there are blind leaders of the blind, there are wolves in sheep's clothing in Protestant churches who do not believe the Bible, who do not believe it is the authority of God. There are some Catholics who do not accept the Bible very much and who do not follow it; but I want to remind you that the Catholic Bible has a clear teaching about its own authority.

### A. Traditions of Men Not Authoritative

Some of our Catholic friends would tell you that we are to go by the traditions of the church. Suppose we read in this Catholic translation of the Bible, the words of Jesus Christ on that matter. I turn to Mark, chapter 7, and from this modern Catholic Bible, translated by Catholic scholars, I read the words of Jesus Christ.

“Jesus and the Pharisees” is the heading here. I begin with verse 5:

“So the Pharisees and Scribes asked him, ‘Why do not thy disciples walk according to the tradition of the ancients [In our translation it says, ‘the elders’. You see, there is not much difference], instead of eating bread with defiled hands?’ But answering He said to them, ‘Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, “This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines precepts of men”.’”

Now in this Catholic Bible Jesus quotes Isaiah, and says that some people in vain worship God because they teach the precepts of men for doctrines instead of teaching the Bible.

I read on in this Catholic Bible about whether the Bible is the only authority, or whether one can accept the traditions of the church. Jesus goes on speaking in St. Mark 7:8.

“For, letting go the commandment of God, you hold fast the tradition of men, the washing of pots and of cups; and many other things you do like to these.”

And now verse 13:

“And you do not allow him to do anything further for his father or mother. You make void the commandment of God by your tradition, which you have handed down; and many such like things you do.”

This Catholic Bible, quoting Jesus Christ, says that it is wrong to go by handed-down traditions, and that, instead, everybody ought to go by the Bible itself. You see, the Catholic Bible says exactly what we should say in our churches, and not the popes, not Baptist seminaries, not denominational headquarters. No! No! Not traditions of men, but the Word of God is the only authority on earth that tells us what God would have us do.

### B. May the Church Add to or Take From the Bible ?

Now let us see what this Catholic version says about adding to and taking from the Word of God. Some people say. “Brother Rice, don't you think it is all right to change things if we find it does not fit for this age ?” Some people say, “Well, never mind what they did in Bible times. Let's change it to fit our plans today.”

And some of our Catholic friends in practice have changed. For instance, there was a time when the Catholic people had what they call the mass, the Eucharist, what we call the Lord's Supper, in "two kinds" which means that they originally gave both bread and wine, or grape juice, to all the worshippers who took part, as we do. But they changed that and now the priest drinks the wine and gives the bread to the people. I am not criticizing; I just want to show you the danger here. What does the Bible say about adding to or taking from or changing the Word of God?

Now listen very carefully. Suppose the Bible says preachers should marry. Should the church change that? Would a church have the right to say that priests ought not to marry and change what the Bible said, if the Bible commanded them to marry? We will read in the Apocalypse 22:18-19. If you have a Protestant Bible it is the book of Revelation. If you have a Catholic Bible the same portion of Scripture is called Apocalypse. In Revelation, chapter 22, or the Apocalypse, chapter 22, I read to you, beginning with the verse 18.

"I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book. If anyone shall add to them, God will add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if anyone shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God will take away his portion from the tree of life, and from the holy city, and from the things that are written in this book."

Oh, may we then with a holy reverence handle this Word of God, for if we add to the Word of God we add to ourselves the plagues written in the book! If we take from the Word of God by our traditions, then the Scripture says that God will take away from us our part from the tree of life and from the holy city and from the things that are written therein. So you see, then, what the Catholic Bible says about the Bible — that we are not to go by any tradition handed down from the ancients or elders, but that we are to go by the Word of God itself, by the Bible, and that anyone who adds to the Bible or takes from the Bible is under a terrible curse from God !

Oh, then, to reverence this Bible, the Holy Bible! That is the teaching of the Catholic Bible, everywhere accepted among Catholics. And of course it is the teaching of the Protestant Bible, too. All of us alike, then, Catholics and Protestants, should have a holy reverence for the authority of the Word of God and follow that and not what any man's tradition or church's tradition may say.

## **2 What the Catholic Bible Teaches About the Virgin Mary**

Here is another interesting question. What about the Virgin Mary? There are modernists who are infidels in the churches, as well as infidels and atheists on the outside of the churches, who make fun of the virgin birth of Christ. I make bold to say now that our Catholic friends have done a real service in insisting on the virgin birth of our Saviour. I join them in that insistence. Mary was a virgin when the Saviour was conceived. She was still a virgin when He was born. Jesus had no human father. I join my Catholic friends in doing honor to her as the virgin mother of our Saviour.

### **A. The Virgin Birth of Christ**

But now then, I say, the infidel does not believe in the virgin birth. Now let us see what the Catholic Bible says about it. I am glad to say that I believe what the Catholic Bible says, and I know you will be greatly impressed and interested in it, as I am. In St. Luke, chapter 1, beginning with verse 30; an angel came to Mary to announce the birth of the Saviour:

“And the angel said to her, ‘Do not be afraid, Mary, for thou hast found grace with God. And behold, thou shall conceive in thy womb and shall bring forth a son; and thou shall call his name Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give him the throne of David his father, and he shall be king over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.’

“But Mary said to the angel, ‘How shall this happen, since I do not know man?’

“And the angel answered and said to her, ‘The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee; and therefore the Holy One to be born shall be called the Son of God’.”

Thank God, the Catholic Bible teaches that Jesus was born of a virgin and is therefore the very Son of God! On that we can agree certainly. All true believers, all true Christians must acknowledge that Jesus was born of a virgin as no one else was ever born, just as the Bible — the Catholic Bible and the Protestant Bible alike — teaches.

### **B. Was Mary Sinless?**

Was Mary herself a sinless and perfect woman? Would she be worthy of our worship? Was she herself immaculately conceived? What about Mary? Well, let’s see what the Catholic Bible says - not what vain men say, but what the Bible says. Verses 46 and 47:

“And Mary said, ‘My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Saviour; because he has regarded the lowliness of his handmaid’.”

What is that? Mary said, “Oh, my soul magnifies the Lord and my spirit is rejoicing.”

“Are you rejoicing about the Baby, God has given to you ?”

“Yes,” Mary said.

“What is that you called Him, Mary?”

“My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God **my Saviour**.”

Did Mary believe that Jesus who was conceived in her was God Almighty, God incarnate? Yes. Do you mean that Mary needed a Saviour? Surely! What was she praising God for? For a Saviour! That is what the Catholic Bible says. The Catholic Bible teaches, as all good translations teach, that when Mary learned she was to be the mother of the Saviour she called Him “God my Saviour” and said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices.”

I will read you what St. Augustine said of that very matter as quoted in a footnote in this same Catholic New Testament, page 100: “St. Augustine says that Mary was more blessed in that she believed in Christ, than in that she had given Him birth. (‘De virginibus,’ III).”

So what about Mary? Mary was a sinner, as we all are, and she was saved by faith in Christ. Mary was a good woman, a virgin; but she was saved and called Jesus her Saviour. She trusted Him, was born again and rejoiced in God her Saviour. She needed to be saved just as anybody else. She was not then sinless; she was not worthy of worship. She was good woman by human standards, but in God’s sight, as every other good woman, she needed saving. And she rejoiced in Christ her God and Saviour, so says the Scripture. Isn’t that interesting ?

### C. Jesus said all who do the Will of His Father are as good as Mary

Here is another thing about Mary in which you will be interested, I know. Let us read in Mark, chapter 3, and see further what this Catholic translation says about Mary, whether we can go to her in prayer, whether she will get God to do things, whether she will get Christ to do things. Can we pray to her better than to Jesus? Listen now to Mark, chapter 3, beginning with verse 31: “Jesus and His Brethren” is the heading here.

“And his mother and his brethren came, and standing outside, they sent to him, calling him. Now a crowd was sitting about him and said to him, ‘Behold, thy mother and thy brethren are outside, seeking thee.’ And he answered and said to them ‘Who are my mother and my brethren?’ And looking round on those who were sitting about him he said, ‘Behold my mother and brethren. For whoever does the will of God, he is my brother and sister and mother’.”

What is that He is saying? He says, “Anybody who does the will of God is as good as My mother, as good as My brothers or as good as Sisters.” Of course the brothers He had in mind there, are His half brothers born of Joseph and Mary, but the point here is that according to this Catholic Bible it is clearly taught, as it is in all good translations, of course, that Mary was no different in the sight of Christ from others who do the will of God.

“She said, ‘Tell Jesus I want to see Him. Tell Him we are out here waiting’.

“They said, ‘Master, Your mother and Your brethren are outside’.

“He said, ‘Who is My mother? Who are My brothers? These are My mothers and brothers and sisters. Whoever does the will of God is My mother and brother and sister’.”

Oh, don’t you see that you could not get any more by going to Mary than you could by getting any other good Christian to pray for you? That is what the Catholic Bible teaches. Some false ideas have gotten abroad. They did not start in the Catholic Bible. Let us remember that. This is a good Bible and all good Catholics ought to read it, and Protestants would do well to read it too, or your own Bible, because there would be no essential difference in it at all. Jesus said, “Whoever does the will of God he is my brother and sister and mother.” Remember these words of Jesus Christ in Mark 3:35.

Let me also read from this Catholic New Testament on “[The praise of Mary](#)” from Luke 11:27-28:

“Now it came to pass as he was saying these things, that a certain woman lifted up her voice from the crowd, and said to him, ‘Blessed is the womb that bore thee, and the breasts that nursed thee.’ But he said, ‘Rather, blessed are they who hear the word of God and keep it’.”

It is more blessed for a woman to put her trust in Jesus, be saved, read the Word and follow it, than it would be to be even the mother of Jesus Christ!

### 3 Is the Catholic Pope Infallible?

Here is another thing. Somebody now says, “Well the pope is infallible.” Let us see what the Catholic Bible says about it. We do not want to go by what some man says. Let us see what the Catholic authority, the real Catholic authority and the authority of all other true Christians, says. Turn to Galatians, chapter 2, and begin with verse 11. The heading in this Catholic Bible is, “[Paul Reproves Peter.](#)”

“But when Cephas came to Antioch, I withstood him to his face, because he was deserving of blame. For before certain persons came from James, he used to eat with the Gentiles; but when they came, he began to withdraw and to separate himself, fearing the circumcised. And the rest of the Jews dissembled [that means they deceived or played the hypocrite] along with him, so that Barnabas also was led away by them into that dissimulation. But when I saw that they were not walking uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said to Cephas before them all: ‘If you, though a Jew, live like the Gentiles, and not like the Jews, how is it that you dost compel the Gentiles to live like the Jews?’”

Paul says, “I withstood him to his face.” The heading in this Catholic Bible is, “Paul Reproves Peter.” And Peter dissembled, that is, he made out like he would not have anything to do with Gentile converts; he was too good a Jew. Then Paul rebuked him and said right to his face, “You are wrong.”

Was Peter, then, infallible? Was he infallible in doctrine? Was he infallible in life? Was he infallible in leadership? No, not according to the Bible. Not according to the Protestant Bible or the Catholic Bible. Peter was a good man; he was saved; he loved the Lord, but he was a little hotheaded and he made mistakes. Popes are human beings. Some of them have been very good human beings; some of them have been pretty sorry. We could say the same thing for some Protestant preachers, of course.

No, there was no inherent righteousness or authority in a Catholic pope, nor in a Protestant bishop — both of them are human beings; both need to be saved by the blood like anybody else. Incidentally, that is the reason that the Pope at Rome in the Vatican has a private father confessor to whom he may confess his sins. That is not a joke. All good Catholic leaders know that. What I am saying is, then, that this is the Catholic Bible’s teaching about papal infallibility.

#### **4 What Does the Catholic Bible Teach About Priest’s Marrying?**

Next, should preachers marry, or priests marry? That is an interesting question. Suppose we turn to the case of Peter. Our Catholic friends say that Peter was the first pope. You must not be angry with them. You probably misunderstood what our Catholic friends mean. All they really mean, I should think, is that Peter was the first of the twelve apostles. And they think — and here we differ with them — that these twelve apostles were the starting of a human organization that was handed down, becoming, they say, the Roman Church. In that sense they say that Peter was the first pope. That is generally what Catholic scholars mean when they talk about it.

##### **A. Was Peter Married?**

Now let us see about Peter. Was Peter married? That would be interesting, wouldn’t it? What would you think about a Catholic pope that was married? Well, let us see about Simon Peter. Turn to Mark, chapter 1, verse 29 and following:

“And as soon as they came out of the synagogue, they, with James and John, came to the house of Simon [that is another name for Peter, you know] and Andrew. Now Simon’s mother-in-law [in our Bible it says, Simon’s wife’s mother. This is a little neater, don’t you think?] was keeping her bed sick with a fever, and they immediately told him about her. And drawing near, he took her by the hand and raised her up; and the fever left her at once, and she began to wait on them.”

Isn’t that interesting? Simon Peter was married. His mother-in-law lived with them. She was sick and Jesus healed her. Simon Peter, then, was married, wasn’t he?

## B A Priest Should Be “Married but Once,” “Keeping His Children Under Control”

Should preachers marry? We found that Peter had a mother-in-law. He had a family. Now preachers or priests today — should they marry or not? In I Timothy, chapter 3, we read in the Catholic translation, under the heading ...

### “Qualities of a Bishop”

“This saying is true: If anyone is eager for the office of bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then, must be blameless, married but once, reserved, prudent, of good conduct, hospitable, a teacher, not a drinker or a brawler, but moderate, not quarrelsome, not avaricious. He should rule well his own household, keeping his children under control and perfectly respectful. For if a man cannot rule his own household, how is he to take care of the church of God?”

Notice that this Bible says that a bishop should be married (should have but one wife at a time). He should be married, he should have children, he should mark them to obey him respectfully, the Scripture says.

Now there is a note at the bottom of the page in the Catholic Bible which says:

*“Bishop: represents a Greek word meaning ‘overseer’, and ‘presbyter’ another Greek word meaning ‘elder.’ In St. Paul’s epistles, ‘bishop’ and ‘presbyter’ seem to be used convertible, and probably priests are here included under the term ‘bishops’.” “Married but once: priestly celibacy as a law is of later ecclesiastical institution.”*

What do the Catholic translators mean? They mean that it was not found in the Bible. “Ecclesiastical” means “of the church.” It was an institution the church founded later, to have priests be celibate, that is, they are not to marry. In other words, that is a human tradition. But the Bible plainly says that priests are to marry, or bishops are to marry. “A bishop then, must be blameless, married but once.” The bishop or priest, says this Catholic Bible, “should rule well his own household, keeping his children under control.”

## 5 Is the Sacrifice of the Mass Right and Scriptural?

Our Catholic friends would be interested, and everybody else who makes a study of comparative religions, and comparison of Catholicism and Protestantism, in the question of the mass. Our Catholic friends are reverent, and I may say now, I want to thank God that our Catholic friends have made much of the bleeding wounds of Christ. I thank God they believe in the blood. On some things I differ with them, but I want to give honor to whom honor is due. A Catholic priest, or a Catholic teacher, for example, who honors the blood of Christ, and believes the blood of Jesus was poured out to pay for sin, I honor far more than a modernist in a Protestant pulpit who does not believe in the blood.

Now let us see what the Catholic Bible says. Our Catholic friends in the mass ‘elevate the host.’ That means, as I understand them, that the priest elevates the bread and wine. After the prayer of the priest and the consecration, this bread actually becomes the body of the Lord Jesus and this wine actually becomes the blood of the Lord Jesus, they say, and then they offer it as a sacrifice again. Every time the mass is said, there is a new sacrifice made of the body and blood of Christ.

If I understand my Catholic friends correctly, and I think I do, that is just about their position, that is, actually converting the bread into the body of Jesus and the wine into His blood, and whether one can tell the difference in the taste or not, or by chemical analysis or not, in God’s sight, and for its practical efficacy, they say, it



actually becomes the body and blood of Jesus, and it is offered anew every time the mass is said.

Now what does this Catholic Bible say about it? Is there a need for more sacrifices day by day? If someone dies shall we have masses said for his soul? Shall we have more masses said as a new sacrifice for sin? What about that? I turn in this Catholic Bible to Hebrews chapter 10, verses 10 to 14:

“It is in this ‘will’ that we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”

How many times? “Once for all,” this Catholic Bible says. Now listen:

“And every priest indeed stands daily ministering, and often offering the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but Jesus, having offered one sacrifice for sins, has taken his seat forever at the right hand of God, waiting thenceforth until his enemies be made the footstool under his feet. For by one offering he has perfected forever those who are sanctified.”

Let us read verse 18:

“Now where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer offering for sin.”

What does the Catholic Bible say about a need for new mass or new sacrifice? “That we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all.**” And again, that “Jesus, having **offered one sacrifice for sins,** has taken his seat forever at the right hand of God.” And again, “For by **one offering** he has perfected forever those who are sanctified.” And again it says, “**Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer offering for sin.**”

What is the teaching of the Catholic Bible, then? That when Jesus died, there was no more need for a priest and sacrifices.

My friends, some here will not quite understand why I am called a preacher, and if it were a Catholic man as the head of his church, he would be called a priest. Now what is the difference? This is it: that I come and take my stand on this Catholic Bible or on all Bibles, for it is the Word of God the same, and I take my stand that when Jesus died, you do not need any more priests. Jesus Christ is the one Priest who settled everything. What I mean is this: the only sacrifice, the only official sacrifice that is ever needed to pay for sin has now already been offered. Now we need preachers to proclaim it. We do not need priests to make sacrifices.

That is the point of the Catholic Bible here. I am not saying anything unkind; I am saying what the Roman Catholic translation of the Bible clearly teaches, that Jesus Christ is the only hope, and when He pays the price, it is all paid forever. And one ought to trust in Jesus Christ and have it settled on His blood that paid the whole debt for mankind forever when He died on the cross. Do you see what I mean, and what the Catholic Bible teaches here? The death of Christ ended all sacrifices for sin. There is room for the Lord’s supper as a memorial, an object lesson, but it should not be made as a sacrifice for sins.

## **6 What Mediator Can a Sinner Have?**

Let us see another thing that will be of interest. To whom shall we go for pardon? We come close to the plan of salvation, and that is the most “important matter for a Catholic. It is the most important matter for a Protestant. How can I be saved? A Catholic friend who has a rosary — some beads on a string — does not mean that rosary to be idolatry. No, that is not the point. These beads are only a convenient reminder to say a prayer for this, that or the other; a particular kind of prayer; to say

so many prayers. We are not discussing the use of beads. That is not the point. The point is: to whom shall I pray? Shall I pray to Mary the virgin? Or shall I pray to the saints? Or shall I go and confess to a priest? Who can be a mediator? Can the priest go into the matter and offer some mass for me, or say some prayers for me? Shall I pray to the saints? Or shall I pray to the Virgin Mary?

Or are there some good people who are called saints, who have been canonized? They have done a super abundance of good works and they have some credit left, it may be thought — should I go and pray to them? Our Catholic friends think so. Now what does the Catholic Bible say about to whom I should pray, and how I should come to God?

Now this is interesting. Aren't you finding the Catholic Bible wonderfully interesting? Aren't you enjoying the Word of God in this Catholic Bible? I do. Bless God for it! The Word of God is sweet anywhere. And I would have you come to the point where, when it is the Word of God, it is sweet to you. What if it does come from a Catholic printing house? What if they were Catholic priests who translated it? Just so long as they reverently bring to us the very Word of God, then we should so regard it and should live by it, shouldn't we?

I turn to 1 Timothy, chapter 2 and begin with verse 5:

“For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, bearing witness in his own time.”

Now let me give it to you in the King James Version from which I usually preach, and you will find a difference in only a word or two:

“For there is one God (exactly the same), and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus (The Catholic translation says: ‘himself man, Christ Jesus.’) ; Who gave himself a ransom for all, to be testified in due time.” The Catholic translation says: “Who gave himself a ransom for all, bearing witness in his own time.”

It is exactly the same. How do I come to God, then?

“There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” Or “there is one God and one Mediator between God and man, himself man, Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, bearing witness in his own time.”

I was in Washington, D.C. and preached in the Non-sectarian Tabernacle one morning on, “Ye Must Be Born Again.” I could have preached it from a Catholic Bible, but I didn't. I will read it to you in a moment. I remember that in the service a number of people were saved. One woman who seemed deeply concerned whispered to her friend. This friend came up to see me and she said, “Brother Rice, the lady with me wonders if you would be willing to talk to her after the service.”

“Surely I would,” I said.

When the service was dismissed, she came forward and we sat to one side. She said, “Dr. Rice, I have two things I want to say. The first one is an apology. I owe you and everybody here an apology.”

“I didn't see anything wrong,” I said. “What have you done?”

She said, “I didn't believe God was in this place. I had never been to a Protestant service and I did not believe God would be in it. But He is. God is here this morning. And you are God's man. And these are good people here. God is here for He talked to my heart. I know God is in this place and I want to apologize that I

ever felt God would not be in a Protestant service, that God would not talk through a Protestant preacher.” She said, “I know I was wrong, and I am sorry.”

“Well,” I said, “that is all right. I am glad you felt that God was here and that He spoke to your heart. Now what is the other thing?”

She said, “The other thing is, what do you mean about being born again? I have never been born again. I pray. I go to confession. I go to mass. I do whatever they tell me. I say my prayers. But, she said, “I have never been born again.” I did not know that you had to be born again. How would you go about getting born again?”

I said, “I will tell you. There is a verse I think you would like.” I turned to this verse I have just read to you in the Catholic Bible, and read it. I said, “Now you look on with me,” and she did. “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; Who gave himself a ransom for all.” I said, “Now I will tell you what to do: you look at that verse. You want to know really what it takes to come to God?”

“Yes.”

“All right. You look at that verse, and I will ask you a Bible question.”

She said, “But I don’t know much about the Bible.

I said, “You don’t need to. You just look on and read, and answer from the Bible. Don’t try to make up your own answer. How many Gods are there?”

She smiled. “That was easy. There is just one God.”

I said, “I know there is, but I want you to look on, and read it in the words of the Bible.”

So she read it: “For there is one God.”

That was easy, I said, “Now here is another Bible question. Look at this verse, 1 Timothy 2:5. How many mediators are there between God and men?”

She began to knit her brows. I said, “Never mind. I don’t want you to think about it and decide for yourself. Look and see what God said.”

So she read it. “For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men.”

“Just one Mediator?”

“Yes,” she said, “just one.”

“All right. Now listen. Here is another question, and this one is very important. There is just one Mediator. Who is that? Is that a preacher like I am, a minister?”

She was a little puzzled, but she looked at the Scripture. She said, “No, it is not a preacher.”

I said, “Is it a priest?”

“No, it isn’t a priest.”

I said, “Is it the saints?”

She said, “No.”

She was getting a little uneasy. I said, “Is it the Virgin Mary? Is she one Mediator?”

She said, “No, no, it is not the Virgin Mary.”

By this time her lips were quivering. I said, “Well, who is it?”

She read it from the Bible: “The man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all; He is the only Mediator.”

I said, “Do you see what I mean about how to come to God? A preacher cannot do it for you. A priest cannot do it for you. The saints cannot do it for you. The Virgin Mary cannot do it for you. There is just one go-between, just one Conciliator, there is just one Priest, or Lawyer, or Mediator. Who is that one?”

She said, “The man, Christ Jesus.”

By this time it was all very plain.

“Don’t you see? You know that He died for sinners?”

“Surely.”

“And He is ready to go to God for you. You do not have to go to the priest to get him to do it. You do not have to come to me to get me to do it for you. You do not have to go to the Virgin Mary. You just go to Jesus Christ. He died for you. He loves you. He will forgive you.”

She was ready then. We bowed our heads and asked Jesus Christ to come in and forgive her and to be her Mediator, her Redeemer; to be her peacemaker with God; to be her Advocate with the Father; to be her High Priest. And she let Jesus come into her heart. We had a joyful time! She had her handkerchief drying her tears. She said to me, “You know, I would never have believed that if you had not shown it to me in the Bible.”

Well, I am showing it to you in the Catholic Bible. Do you want to know how to get to God? I would not say one word against the Virgin Mary. Bless God, she was the most blessed among women because she was the mother of our Lord! But she called Him “Saviour.”

I will read you again what St. Augustine said. It is copied here in the footnote in this Catholic Bible, page 100. Thank God for St. Augustine, that great doctor of Hippo, a real earnest man he was, a father in the Roman Church. If you have read St. Augustine’s Confessions, you have found that they are very sweet and good. Now listen: “St. Augustine says that Mary was more blessed in that she believed in Christ than in that she had given Him birth. (‘De virginibus’ III).” Mary trusted in Christ as her Saviour, and so must you, if you would be saved.

## **7 How to be Saved According to the Catholic Bible?**

How can a person be saved according to the Catholic Bible? Let us turn to the first chapter of the Gospel of John, verses 11, 12 and 13:

“He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But to as many as received him he gave the power of becoming sons of God; to those who believe in his name; who were born not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

What does the Catholic Bible say? “He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But to as many as received him he gave the power of becoming sons of God.” Everybody who would receive Jesus, He would make sons of God, even to those who believe in His name. And they were born, He said, of God.

Now turn to the third chapter of John. In our Bible the first verses say:

“There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night, and said unto him, ‘Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do this miracles that thou doest, except God be with him’.”

The Catholic translation reads:

“Now there was a certain man among the Pharisees, Nicodemus by name, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus at night, and said to him, ‘Rabbi, we know that thou hast come a teacher from God, for no one work these signs that thou workest unless God be with him.’ Jesus answered and said to him, ‘Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.’ “

The Catholic Bible says that unless you get born again, you can never see the kingdom of God. You must have a new heart, you must be born from Heaven. You must be born of the Spirit of God or you cannot get to Heaven. I read on:

“Nicodemus said to him, ‘How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother’s womb and be born again?’”

“Jesus answered, ‘Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God’.”

There is a note here that the Clementine Vulgate says: The word ‘Holy’ is added to ‘spirit’. “Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Spirit [that is the marginal reading here in this Catholic Bible] he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Do not wonder that I said to thee; ‘You must be born again’.”

Listen to me: “Is there a Protestant reading who is not converted? You may be a member of a church — that is not enough. You must be born again.”

Is there a Catholic friend reading who is not converted? You say, “Well, I go to church. I go to confession. I go to mass.” Never mind. Let me ask you this: Have you been born again? This Catholic Bible and the Protestant Bible — suppose we quit saying Catholic Bible and the Protestant Bible — and say, this Word of God says, “You must be born again.” Do not wonder that I said to thee, “You must be born again,” “Amen, amen, I say to thee, unless a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” That is what Jesus said in the Holy Bible. That is what He has said in the Catholic translation, in the King James translation and, in all the other translations.

Now I would like to read you the sweetest verse in the Bible. I suppose it is that. More people love it, more people have been led to Heaven by it, maybe, than any other. Here it is as we have it in this lovely Catholic translation:

“For God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that those who believe in him [whosoever in ours] may not perish, but may have life everlasting.” (John 3:16)

You say it in the King James Version:

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

Oh, may God make these words clear on how to be saved! Whether Protestant or Catholic — don’t you see the church will not do it? Don’t you see a Baptist church will not do it? A Methodist church will not make you a Christian. An Episcopal church will not make you a Christian. A Lutheran church cannot save your soul. A Catholic church cannot save your soul. Christ must do it. How does He do it?

“For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.”

That is the way to be saved.

Do you want to be saved? God loves you. Isn't that good news? I like for anybody to love me. I am glad I have some friends who love me and pray for me every day. But thanks be to God, He loves me and He gave His Son for me. He gave His only begotten Son for you, too, "that whosoever," or that "those that believe in him may not perish, but may have life everlasting."

Do you want to have that life in your heart, a new heart, be born again? Do you want to be God's own child? Don't you see we preachers and priests cannot make that? Don't you see that Protestant churches cannot do that, and Catholic churches cannot do it? Jesus Christ, the one Mediator between God and men, has to do that. He will change your heart tonight and give you peace and set a song ringing in your heart, and you can go home happy in Jesus. Don't you want that tonight?

Let me ask you a question. I am not asking what church you belong to; I am asking how many can say, Brother Rice, one time I saw I was a sinner, and I came to God and confessed it. I saw I was a sinner, and I believed that Jesus died for me on the cross and I trusted Him to save me and He did save me. I know in my heart I believed in Jesus as the Catholic Bible says we must do, and I have this everlasting life. I put my trust in Jesus as I would in a doctor when I am sick, as one would risk a bank with his money. I have put my trust in Jesus and so I was born again and got a "new heart."

How many can say, "Thank God I have been converted or born again, or I have personally trusted Jesus to be my Saviour to take my sins away?" How many can say, "I thank God I know I have been"? (Many raise hands). Isn't that good? Catholics, Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, and — all just as long as you honestly have come to Jesus and trusted Him, you are saved. Thank you. God bless you.

### **DECIDE FOR JESUS CHRIST NOW!**

No matter whether you are a Protestant or Catholic, if you have not personally put your trust in Jesus Christ, depending on Him to save you once for all, you have no right to say you are a Christian. The Catholic Bible and the Protestant Bible alike say that you must be born again, you must have a new heart. And the Scriptures say that if you will personally trust Christ as your own Saviour, He will forgive you and give you everlasting life. Will you trust Christ this very moment to be your own Saviour and give Him your heart forever?

### **The Lord Jesus must be received as Saviour and Lord**

It is the LORD JESUS who is the Way, and the Entrance into the kingdom. It is into His kingdom that we must be transferred. Look at the following Bible verses very carefully and you will see that Jesus MUST become our PERSONAL Saviour.

"And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved."  
(Acts 4:14)

"But as many as RECEIVED Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name." (John 1:12)

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life."  
(John 3 :16)

"He who believes in-the Son has eternal life; but he who does not obey the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."  
(John 3: 36)

“That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.”  
(Romans 10:9)

It was the Lord Jesus who died for us. It is He who paid the penalty for our sins. It is only on the basis of His sacrifice at Calvary that our sins can be forgiven. So it is essential that we receive Him, accept His sacrifice for us, and trust Him to save us.

What does it mean to receive Christ as Saviour and Lord? There are three steps you must take.

**1. CONFESS** your sin to God, and ask His forgiveness. This means also an attitude or willingness to forsake sin.

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (I John 1:9)

**2. ASK** the Lord Jesus to come into your heart and life, to be your Saviour and Master. This is more than merely

**3. TRUST** Him to fulfil His promises — to forgive you; to make you His own ; to come into your heart; to deliver you from Satan’s kingdom; implant you in the kingdom of Light; to make you a genuine child of God; to do the miracle of New Birth in you; to put His Holy Spirit within you; and to keep you as His own; and to write your name in the “Book of Life.”

It is by faith — by SIMPLE TRUST in the Lord, that He becomes real to us. It is simple trust that the Lord honours. He is waiting and knocking at the door of your heart, just wanting to come in to fulfil His word:

“Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any one hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him, and will dine with him, and he with Me.” (Revelation 3: 20)

Will you open the door and do your part, right now? If you do your part, He will definitely do His.

Just come to Him in prayer, just where you are. Kneel if you can, and take these 3 steps. **Confess, Ask, and Trust.**

When you have done that, then THANK HIM for answering. For if you have been sincere in your heart, He will immediately answer but you may or may not have new feelings immediately, the peace and joy of the Lord will follow in the days ahead.

“And it shall be, that every one who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2 : 21)

We will be glad to hear from you if you have received the Lord Jesus today. Write a short line, and tell us of your decision; and request some literature to help you grow in the Lord.

## THE PRIEST WHO FOUND CHRIST

I was born in Venice, north of Italy, on March 22, 1917. At the age of ten I was sent to a Roman Catholic Seminary in Piacenza, and ordained a priest, after 12 years of study, on October 22, 1939.

Two months later Cardinal R. Rossi my superior, sent me to America as assistant pastor of the new Italian Church of Blessed Mother Cabrini, in Chicago. For four

years I preached in Chicago, and later in New York. I never questioned if my sermons or instructions were according to the Bible. My only work and ambition was to please the Pope.

It was on a Sunday, February, 1944, when I turned on the radio and accidentally turned in on a Protestant church program. The pastor was giving his message. I was going to change the program because I was not to listen to protestant sermons, but interested, I do not know why — I kept listening.

My old theology was shaken by one text from the Bible I heard over the radio: “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved.” Therefore, it is not a sin against the Holy Spirit to believe that one is saved.

I was not yet converted, but my mind was full of doubts about the Roman religion. I was beginning to worry about the teachings of the Bible more than about the dogma and decrees of my Pope. People were giving me, every day, a generous offering for thirty minutes of ceremony called Mass, because I promised them to relieve the souls of their relatives from the fires of purgatory. But every time I looked at the big crucifix upon the altar it seemed to me that Christ was rebuking me, saying:

“You are stealing money from poor, hard-working people by false promises. You teach doctrines against my teaching. Souls of believers do not go to a place of torment, because I have said, ‘Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord, from henceforth now says the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours’. (Rev. 14:13). I do not need a repetition of the sacrifices of the cross because My sacrifice was complete. My work of salvation was perfect and God has sanctioned it by raising Me from the dead. ‘For by one suffering He has perfected forever those who are sanctified’ (Heb. 10:14). If you priests and the pope have the power of liberating souls from purgatory with Masses and indulgences, why do you wait for an offering?”

I could no longer face Christ on the altar. When I was preaching that the pope is the vicar of Christ, the successor of Peter, the infallible rock upon which Christ’s church was built, a voice seemed to rebuke me again:

“You saw the Pope in Rome; his large, rich palace; his guards; men kissing his feet. Do you really believe that he represents me? I came to serve the people; I washed men’s feet; I had nowhere to lay my head. Look at me upon the cross. Do you really believe that God has built His church upon a man when the Bible clearly says that Christ’s Vicar on earth is the Holy Spirit, and not a man? (John 14:26). ‘And that rock was Christ’. If the Roman Church is built upon a man then it is not my church.”

I was teaching my people to go to Mary, to the saints, instead of going directly to Christ. But a voice within me was saying: “Who has saved you upon the cross? Who paid your debts by shedding His blood? Mary, the Saints, or I, Jesus? You, and many other priests do not believe in scapulars, novenas, rosaries, statues, candles; but you continue to keep them in your churches because they are a good source of income. But I do not want any merchandising in my church. My believers should adore me — spirit and truth. Destroy these idols.”

Where my doubts were really tormenting me was inside the confessional box. People were coming to me, kneeling before me, confessing their sins to me. And I, with a sign of the cross was promising that I had the power to forgive their sins. I, a sinner, a man, was taking God’s place, God’s right and that terrible voice was penetrating me, saying, “You are depriving God of His glory. If sinners want to obtain forgiveness of their sins they must go to God and not to you. It is God’s law



they have broken. To God therefore, they must make confession; to God alone they must pray for forgiveness. No man can forgive sins, but Jesus can and does forgive sins.”

“You shall call his name JESUS, for He shall save His people from their sins.” (Matthew 1:21)

“There is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” (1 Timothy 2:5)

I could not stay any longer in the Roman Catholic Church because I could not continue to serve two masters, the Pope and Christ. I could not believe two contradictory teachings, tradition and the Bible. I had to choose between Christ and the Pope; between tradition and the Bible; and I have chosen Christ and the Bible. I left the Roman priesthood and the Roman religion in 1944 and now I have been led by the Holy Spirit to evangelize Roman Catholics and urge, with lectures in churches, colleges and public places, Christians to witness without fear in order to gain their Roman Catholic friends to Christ.

Friend, if my testimony has touched your heart, and you realize your need of Christ’s salvation from sin, as I did, and His forgiveness and peace, will you with a broken heart call upon the Lord Jesus Christ to save you now, for He said: “Him who comes to me, I will not cast out.” (John 6:37)

— Joseph Zacchallo

## WAS PETER THE FIRST POPE?

By Dr. R. L. MOYER

(Quotations in the article are from the Douay-Roman Catholic translation of the Bible)

We are here concerned with the claim made by the Roman Catholic church concerning Peter. Was he the first pope?

*“The pope is the bishop of Rome, supreme pontiff and visible head of the Roman Catholic Church, accounted by that church the vicar of Christ and successor of St. Peter, formerly temporal ruler also of the states of the church, and still recognized as dependent sovereign prince. He is elected by the college of cardinals and usually from their own number.” (New Standard Dictionary)*

The word “pontiff” means a high priest of any religion, and is used by the Catholics for the supreme or sovereign, Pontiff. The word “vicar” means one who is appointed to perform functions in the place of another.

We believe that we can show from the Roman Catholic Bible that the claims made by the church are without scriptural foundation, and that Peter was never pope.

It is amazing what Roman Catholics would learn if they would read their own Bibles.

### Peter Is Never Called Pope

The word “Pope” is not found in the Bible. As far as that is concerned, neither are such titles as cardinal, archbishop, archpriest, archdeacon, or many other titles in current Christendom.

Furthermore, W. H. Withrow, in his "Catacombs of Rome," page 509, declares that the word "pope" does not occur in the Catacombs until at least the latter part of the fourth century. We believe that title was first given to the bishop of Rome in 610 A.D. by the wicked emperor, Phocas.

### **Peter is Never Called the Bishop of Rome**

The Catholics so claim, but we challenge them to produce proof for the claim. In all of the New Testament, not a single word proves it. Indeed, there is not one word in Scripture to prove that Peter ever was at Rome. The new Testament tells us that Peter went to Antioch, to Samaria, to Joppa, to Caesarea, but not to Rome ; a strange omission in the light of the claim that for twenty-five years he was in Rome as the bishop of Rome.

The Roman Church claims that he suffered martyrdom there with Paul after a pontificate of twenty-five years. If we accept 66 A.D. as the date of Paul's martyrdom, that would mean that Peter was in Rome from 41 A.D. to 66 A.D., but about 44 A.D. he was in the council in Jerusalem (Acts 15). About 53 A.D. Paul joined him in Antioch. (Galatians 2: 11)

About 58 A.D. Paul wrote his letter to the Romans in which he sent greetings to twenty-seven persons, but does not mention Peter. In none of the church epistles written from Rome is Peter mentioned.

Paul's last letter from Rome was 2nd Timothy. In it he says, "At my first answer no man stood with me, but all forsook me." (4:16). Where was Peter if he was in Rome? In the same epistle, just before his martyrdom, Paul said, "Only Luke is with me." (4:11)

Paul had written to Rome, he had been in Rome and he wrote from Rome, but he never mentioned Peter. Instead of that he wrote, "only Luke is with me." Peter may never have been in Rome. He was never pope.

### **Peter Was A Married Man**

He lacked papal celibacy. (Mark 1:30): "And Simon's wife" Matthew 8:14: "And when Jesus was come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother lying, and sick of a fever."

Peter was a married man. Why should Romanists damn Luther because he married? Why shouldn't they all marry? Still it remains that one cannot be married and be a bishop, or priest, or cardinal, or pope — but Peter WAS MARRIED.

The Roman Catholic Church explains this by saying Peter ceased to live with his wife. Now, if Peter ceased to live with his wife, either she left him or he left his wife. Did Peter's wife leave him? If so why? Incompatibility? Maybe she didn't leave him; maybe he left her. If so, he was a wife deserter. In either case, he was a poor foundation for a church.

Look at I Timothy 3:2, "It behoveth, therefore, a bishop to be blameless, the husband of one wife." A note in the Douay version says, "The meaning is that every bishop should have a wife." I think that is right, but Rome won't let any bishop have a wife, and Peter HAD a wife.

A priest, a bishop must be a celibate. Why can he not marry? Apparently, in order to be holy. Is it holier to be single and called "father" than to be married? It seems that it is holier to be unmarried than married and yet the Roman Catholic Church calls marriage a sacrament.

## Peter's Supremacy is Not Scriptural

Peter had certain characteristics which made him a leader, true enough, but Jesus refused to recognize any pope among His disciples. Matthew 23:8-12:

“But you do not be called Rabbi. For one is your master; and all you are brethren. And **call none your father** upon earth; for one is your father, who is in heaven. Neither be called masters; for one is your master, Christ. He that is the greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be humbled; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted.”

The above Scripture does not mean that you cannot call the one who begat you, “father.” This is done over and over in Scripture.

It does mean that no one should call a man “father” as is done in Catholicism. A man who assumes this title arrogates to himself the title and prerogative of God. It is not the title itself that is of supreme importance. The Lord is forbidding the recognition of any man’s power to impart by ceremony or in any other way, spiritual life to any fellow man.

The father is the one who begets, the one from whom life comes. You should never recognize any man who claims to be able by sacramentarian grace, or any other thing, to communicate life to your soul. The life of God in the soul of a man must come by the begetting of God. We must be careful not to give to any man, place and honor which does not belong to him.

We must not allow any man to come between ourselves and Christ. There are no priests who can atone for us. There are no mediators who can undertake to manage our souls with God.

Acts 15 reports a church council in Jerusalem, discussing the relation of the Gentiles to the law, to circumcision, etc. In this council, Peter, Barnabas and Paul gave reports: then James rendered the decision — NOT PETER. Read Acts 15:13-20:

“And after they had held there peace. James answered saying: ‘Men, brethren, hear me, Simon hath related how God first visited to take of the Gentiles a people to his name’ ...” (13, 14 and 19)

Again, in Galatians 2:11, Paul rebukes Peter openly because of blame-worthy actions. Certainly Paul took a privilege which no one would take toward the pope today. In Galatians 2:8-10, Peter is named with others as a pillar of the church, but no supremacy. In Acts 8:14, we are told that Peter was sent by others to preach and help in the work of the Lord.

Rev. M.D. Forrest, M.Sc., in “Who Is The Pope ?” emphasizes the primacy of Peter in John 21:15, 17, saying that Christ addressed Peter only when He said, ‘Lovest thou me more than these? Feed ‘my lambs.’ “ The reason Christ addressed Peter only is not supremacy of Peter but that Peter alone denied his Lord.

Over against his threefold denial we have the Lord’s threefold question concerning the love which Peter declared to be greater than that of the other disciples. We repeat, this is not a question of primacy but one of confession in the light of his awful denial.

## Peter Was Not Infallible

We are sure that there are some other things Rome claims for Peter that he would never and could never claim for himself.

We have just mentioned a church conference in Jerusalem to decide certain Gentile relationships. Why was such a discussion necessary if the pope of that day was infallible and knew the truth? Why didn't they refer the whole matter to Peter and let him define and settle the duties of the Gentiles ?

If the pope is infallible, were all the popes infallible, or just certain ones? R. Ditterich, in his book "Protestantism" states: "It is argued that infallibility is necessary to keep the church's unity. Did Rome preserve unity in the eleventh century when there were three rival popes at the same time, all of whom were deposed by a council convened by the Emperor Henry III?

"Was there unity later on in the same century, when over and over again there were rival popes? Clement III was opposed by Victor III and afterwards by Urban II.

"Or was there unity in the twelfth century, when the 'Great Schism' took place and lasted for fifty years? Italians elected Urban VI and the French cardinals chose Clement VII. Popes cursed each other year after year, until a council deposed both and elected another.

"If infallibility makes for unity, where was infallibility then?" Rome explains away all these difficulties by drawing a distinction between the pope's private views and his utterances 'ex cathedra,' that is, official utterances as sovereign pontiff. That is only a poor, weak, pitiful presence. There is no more sense to that than to say that a priest can sin as a man, but he cannot sin as a priest.

The only infallibility we have is the Book — the grand and glorious old Bible! The infallible guide to life and Heaven is not the pope nor the church, but the old Book, the Book Divine.

Romanists do not believe that, however. In the "Confessio Romani-Catholica in Hungaria Evangelicis publicis publice prescripta et proposita," Art. IV runs thus:

*"We confess that whatsoever new thing the Pope of Rome may have instituted, whether it be in Scripture or out of Scripture, is true, divine and salvific; and therefore ought to be regarded as of higher value by lay people than the precepts of the living God."*

Art. 1— *"We confess that the Pope has the power of altering Scripture, or increasing and diminishing it, according to his will."*

Art. XXI— *"We confess that Holy Scripture is imperfect and a dead letter, until it is explained by the Supreme Pontiff and permitted by him to be read by lay people."* From Libri Symbolici Eccl Cath. editi a Streitwolf (a Romanisto) Getting, 1838, Tom. 2, p. 343.

By the way, had Peter been infallible he never would have known it until July 18, 1879. How did he become infallible? He was pronounced so by the pope in 1879. Of course it would take infallible authority to pronounce infallibility upon a man. As F. C. Jennings says, "The pope's infallibility depends on his own word and his word depends on his infallibility."

Today a man automatically becomes infallible by being elected pope by the college of cardinals.

### **Peter Was Not the Head of the Church**

Take the Word of God in this matter.

"And he hath subjected all things under his feet, and hath made him head over all the church, which is his body, and the fulness of him who is filled all in all." (Ephesians 1:22, 23)

This plainly states that Christ is the head of the church. No man on earth today is the head of the church.

Note also Ephesians 5:23:

“Because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the head of the Church and he is the saviour of the body.”

Ephesians was written probably thirty years after Pentecost and Christ was still the Head of the Church.

### **Peter Never Accepted Worship**

“And it came to pass that when Peter was come in, Cornelius came to meet him, and falling at his feet adored. But Peter lifted him up, saying: Arise, I myself am a man.” (Acts 10 : 25, 26)

Neither did Paul. Neither did Barnabas. (Read Acts 14:12-14). There is no record that anybody ever kissed either Peter’s hands or his feet.

### **Peter Never Had a “Treasury”**

I have never read that Peter asked and accepted gifts of many to gather unto himself a treasury of silver and gold, to be called, “The Treasury of St. Peter” in Scripture! In Acts 3:6 Peter said, “Silver and gold have I none.” In Acts 8 : 20 Peter refused to sell a gift for money — “keep thy money to thyself, to perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money.” Rome sells gifts.

### **Peter Never Sat on a Throne**

The throne of Pius XII and Paul VI is not the throne of Peter. Peter got a cross instead of a throne.

### **Peter Never Wore a Crown**

Coronation day is crowning day. Peter’s coronation day was never during his earth life, nor since his earth life. He will receive a crown when the Lord comes again.

“All when the prince of pastors shall appear, you shall receive a never-fading crown of glory.” (I Peter 5:4)

The Catholic Dictionary says, concerning the crowning of the pope :

*“The earliest representation of the tiara with three crowns is found in an effigy of Benedict XII (died in 1342). The first circlet symbolizes the Pope’s universal episcopate, the second his supremacy of jurisdiction, and the third his temporal supremacy. It is placed on his head at his coronation by the second cardinal deacon, with the words ‘Receive the tiara adorned with three crowns and know that thou art Father of princes and kings, Ruler of the world, Vicar of our Saviour Jesus Christ!’”*

Is this not blasphemous arrogance?

### **Peter Was Not the Foundation of the Church**

“Simon Peter answered and said: ‘Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God.’ And Jesus answering, said to him: ‘Blessed are you, Simon Bar Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed it to you, but my Father who is in heaven. And I say to thee: That thou art Peter; and upon this rock will I 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 whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, it shall be loosed also in heaven.’” (Matthew 16:16-19)

Rome teaches, of course, that Peter is the rock upon which the church is built. Let us see exactly what we have. The Lord said to Peter:

“Thou art Petros (a small stone, a rolling stone): and upon this PETRA (a great rock) I will build my church.”

Our Lord clearly drew a distinction between Petros and Petra. He did not say, “Thou art Petros and on thee I will build my church,” as He might easily have done.

When Peter tried to turn Christ from the thought of dying upon the cross, He said, “Thou art Petros; Go behind me Satan, thou art a scandal unto me.” We are sure that Christ did not in one moment call Peter the rock upon which the church was to be built, and at the same time its satanic opponent.

It was this apostle, reproved by the Lord, and publicly by Paul, who was the first infallible pope.

Peter himself tells us the rock upon which Christ built the church.

“Unto whom coming, as a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen and made honorable by God: ... Wherefore it is said in the Scripture: Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, elect, precious. And he that shall believe in him, shall not be confounded. To you, therefore that believe, he is honour (precious), but to them that believe not, the stone which the builders rejected, the same is made the head of the corner: And a stone of stumbling, and a rock (Petra) of scandal, to them whom stumble at the word, neither do believe, whereunto also they are set.” (I Peter 2:4, 6-8)

There can be no doubt as to the foundation of the church. Paul says:

“For other foundation no man can lay. but that which is laid; which is Christ Jesus.” (I Corinthians 3:11)

Paul also says “The Rock (Petra) was Christ.” (I Corinthians 10:4)

Hear Peter’s word also, as recorded in Acts 4:11-12. Christ is called the Rock because He is God. That word ‘Rock’ is used for God over forty times in the Old Testament. Christ was speaking to Hebrews who were familiar with the Old Testament. They knew the Rock of Israel. Peter’s confession, “Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God,” sets forth Christ as the Son of the Rock for Christ Jesus is the living God manifested in time in His Son, the Messiah.

I like what Dr. W. B. Riley says:

“The Church of God rests upon the Divine Christ. It was not Peter upon whom the church was built, or it would have crumbled when they crucified Christ. It was not even on Peter’s confession, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,” for a mere statement is not a sufficient foundation stone.

There is nothing mysterious about the keys. A key opens a door.

We call attention to the fact that these keys were not given to Peter alone, but to all the disciples. See Matthew 18:18. A key throws open the door of faith. Peter used the key on the day of Pentecost, and again when he visited Cornelius. In fact, since a key opens a door, if you have ever led anyone to Christ, you have used a key in exactly the same way.

### **Peter Never Forgave Sins**

We quote here Matthew 16:19:

“And whatsoever you shall bind upon earth, it shall be bound also in heaven: and whatsoever you shall loose on earth, it shall be loosed also

in heaven.” And also John 20:23, “Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.”

These verses are constantly quoted as though they gave to the priesthood exclusively the power of remitting and retaining sins. This is a complete perversion of the words. In Matthew 18:18, we find that the privilege of binding and loosing is given, not only to Peter, but to all the apostles, while the words in John 20:23 are spoken, not only to the apostles, but to disciples as well. Luke 24:23 verifies this.

The power to forgive sins is always spoken of in Scripture as the special prerogative of God. In the healing of the man sick of the palsy, the Lord said, “Son, thy sins are forgiven thee” (Mark 2:5). Then the question came to the scribes, “who can forgive sins, but God only?” Mark (2:7). There is only one answer to that question: No one. The Lord Jesus alone had power on earth to forgive sins because He was God.

It is blasphemy for any so-called priest or ministerial dignity to assume God’s prerogative in pronouncing absolution to a fellow man. You will look in vain to find any one of the apostles using such a phrase as, “I forgive thee all thy sins.” The utmost any of them could do was to introduce the sinners to the Saviour. Only then was forgiveness possible.

One of the clearest examples of this is seen in the statement of Paul:

“Be it known, therefore, to you men, brethren, that through Him forgiveness of sins is preached to you.” (Acts 13:38)

The words spoken to the apostles can mean only that they were to be instruments in the remitting of sins, or the retaining of them. If men believed in Him, their sins were remitted. If certain refused to accept Him, their sins were retained — not by the apostles, but through the apostles’ preaching.

As the Old Testament priest declared authoritatively whose leprosy was cleansed, so the apostles were instructed to declare whose sins were forgiven. Any minister, or believer, can do as much. The absolution of an impenitent man by a priest is nothing but mere invalid pretense. If that man be penitent he is forgiven though all the priests in the world were to refuse him absolution.

A former Roman Catholic came into my office. A young man twenty-three years of age, he desired to enroll in the school to prepare for the ministry. He related that when his mother died, the priest asked for two hundred fifty dollars for the masses for his mother. Two months later a demand for five hundred dollars was made that his mother might be released from purgatory. When he declared that he did not have the five hundred dollars, the priest said, “Well, then, your mother is doomed.”

This is not the meaning of the words of our Lord concerning the forgiveness of sins.

Certainly a Roman Catholic will search his Bible in vain for any evidence that Peter claimed ability to forgive sin.

In the house of Cornelius, Peter said:

“By His Name all receive remission of sins, who believe in Him.” (Acts 10: 43)

— The Sword of The Lord. Used by permission

## BE DOERS OF THE WORD



“Prove yourselves doers of the word,  
and not merely hearers who delude themselves.”  
(James 1:22)

THE BIBLE was not written as a history book, even though it does contain history. It is not a poetry book, although it does contain poems. It is not intended to be a collection of wise sayings and precepts, although it does contain both. The Bible is first and foremost, **God’s revelation**. It is God speaking to the sincere reader, giving him direction and guidance, so that he might be clear about the Narrow Way that he should take, the type of life he should live, and the dangers he should avoid along the way. It also reveals the ultimate blessedness of those who enter the Way. But it is essential that the reader becomes a **doer** of the Word, and not merely a reader.

When you want to go to a new city, you read the instructions, and then follow them, don’t you? When you come to a junction, you look at the signposts and then proceed in the right direction. You don’t take a chance and say, “Well, this other road is likely to take me to my destination also,” or, “Let me take a wild guess and take any one of the roads” No! You must take the right road.

If you are ordered by a doctor to take 2 tablets of medicine at 6-hour intervals do you decide to take 16 tablets all at once, every second day? Or if your boss orders you to send out 100 invitations to a special breakfast to his 100 most important business contacts, would you decide to send the invitations, instead, to the first 100 people whose names and addresses are listed in the telephone directory? Surely not! You must obey your instructions, otherwise you are liable to loose your job.

And the Bible must be obeyed, not merely listened to. We must follow its instructions, otherwise we might loose the way, or lose our own souls. The Bible says :

“Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!”  
(2 Corinthians 13 : 5)

To be in the faith, is to be in Christ, and to have Christ in us. This is the first essential, for every one of us. Religion is not enough. Being a member of a church, or being sprinkled as a baby is not enough. Even to merely read the Bible and to intellectually believe in Christ is not enough. We must have Christ in us.

The Lord Jesus Christ is the Creator, the Saviour of the world, the Head of the Church, and the Bible is His Word. If any man is to be saved, no matter whether he is from Protestant, Catholic, Hindu, Moslem, Buddhist or any other religious background, he must come through the Lord Jesus. He is the only way to God.

We say that so, emphatically, not because Jesus is “the best” of the religious leaders or prophets, but because He Himself is the Son of God, the Creator. He is inseparable from the Father. It is because of who He is, that He could say what He said. It is because He was eternally co-existent and equal with the Father, that He could say what He said living on earth as a Man:

“I and the Father are one.” (John 10:30)

“He who has seen Me has seen the Father.” (John 14:9)



“The Father is in Me, and I in the Father.” (John 10:38)

“I am the way, and the truth, and the life; no one comes to the Father, but through Me.” (John 14:6)

Salvation is received through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. He will come into us, and will make us new people; He will save us, if we ...

1. Confess to Him that we are sinners, turn from our sin, and ask Him to forgive us.
2. Ask the Lord to come into our life. We need simply to trust Him to do it.

The Scriptures make it quite clear what we are to believe, and what we should do:

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

Jesus promises, “Behold, I stand at the door and knock! If any one hears My voice and opens the door, I will come into him, and will dine with him, and he with Me” (Revelation 3 :20)

“And it shall be, that every one who calls on the Name of the Lord shall be saved.” (Acts 2:21)

“Repent and let each one of you be baptized in the Name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins ; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” (Acts 2 : 38)

My reader, if you have no assurance of salvation, and that Christ lives in you, why don't you pray to the Lord Jesus right now, and ask Him to come into your heart. Ask Him to forgive your sins, and to make you a new person from this day on. Just talk to Him, and trust Him. He's waiting to hear your prayer. He will save you today, if you will call Him. And then, go on to follow the Lord. Listen to His words, as recorded in the Bible:

“Then Jesus said to His disciples, ‘If any one wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. For whoever wishes to save his life shall lose it: but whoever loses his life for My sake shall find it. For what will a man be profited if he gains the whole world, and forfeits his soul? Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?’ (Matthew 16:24-26)

This denial is not merely a foregoing of a few questionable pleasures. It is a denial of oneself. It means no to self, and yes to God, all along the way. “Taking up the cross” is not merely an attitude that accepts the frailties and problems in good spirit. No! To take up the cross means death to my selfish own desires ; it means embracing God's will in me. To save our souls, we must deny those things which would destroy our souls. To follow Christ means discipline, it means a surrender of our bodies, our souls, our wills, to Him.

Paul could say, “I die daily,” (1 Corinthians 15:31), not only in relation to the constant dangers he faced, but as a principle of discipleship. He wrote of this principle in the following verses :

“I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and delivered Himself up for me.” (Galatians 2: 20)

Baptism which the Lord Jesus commanded, is not a ritual that saves, but it is an outward testimony of this new life that Jesus gives to us. It is a testimony that my

old self has been crucified with Christ, and that I am a new person by His grace. (Romans 6:3-9). And that's why the Scripture says:

“I urge you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.” (Romans 12 : 1-2)

This may seem to be asking a lot of us, but it is the principle of, “not I but Christ.” It's no longer I that lives, but Christ that lives in me. The only way to live a blessed life, is to present ourselves entirely to the Lord, to be His vessels, His instruments. But so often we want to plan our own lives, and we get caught up in desires to live according to our **own** ways -the way **we** feel will bring us happiness. We often give mental assent to the Word of God, and then go and do as we please. Tragic!

The Word of God must be our authority. We must do what it says ! There are things we must do, and other things that we must not do ! Take for example, the commands concerning **our relationship with others**, and ask yourself, Do I do what these Scriptures command?

“This is My commandment, that you love one another, just as I have loved you ... This I command you, that you love one another.” (John 15: 12,17)

“You call Me Teacher, and Lord ; and you are right; for so I am. If I then, the Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you.” (John 13:13-15)

“And this commandment we have from Him, that one who loves God should love his brother also.” “We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren.” (1 John 4:21, 3:16)

“Above all, keep fervent in your love for one another, because love covers a multitude of sins. Be hospitable to one another without complaint.” ( 1 Peter 4:8-9)

“But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you.” ( Matthew 5:44)

“Do not speak against one another, brethren ... do not complain, brethren, against one another, that you yourselves may not be judged.” (James 4:11; 5:9)

“Do not let the sun go down on your anger, and do not give the devil an opportunity.” (Ephesians 4:26-27)

“Therefore, putting aside **all** malice and **all** guile and hypocrisy and envy and **all** slander ... grow in respect to salvation.” (1 Peter 2:1-2)

“See that no one repays another with evil for evil, but always seek after that which is good for one another and for **all** men.” (1 Thessalonians 5:15)

“Put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against any one; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.” (Colossians 3:12-13)

**Concerning riches and earthly wealth.** Here are some important words to heed:

“Do not lay up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal; but lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys, and where thieves do not break in or steal; for where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” (Matthew 6:19-21)

“But those who want to get rich fall into temptation and a snare and many foolish and harmful desires which plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all sorts of evil, and some by longing for it have wandered away from the faith, and pierced themselves with many a pang. But flee from these things, you man of God; and pursue after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, perseverance and gentleness.” (1 Timothy 6:9-11)

**Concerning our tongues,** there are definite commands:

“Guard what has been entrusted to you, avoiding worldly and empty chatter and opposing arguments of what is falsely called ‘knowledge’.” (1 Timothy 6:20)

“But avoid worldly and empty chatter, for it will lead to further ungodliness.” (2 Timothy 2:16)

“If any one thinks himself to be religious, and yet does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this man’s religion is worthless.” (James 1:26)

“But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him.” (Colossians 3:8-10)

**Concerning our bodies**

“Do you not know that your **body is a temple** of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price; therefore GLORIFY GOD in your body.” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

“Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.” (Colossians 3:5)

“For this is the will of God, your sanctification; that is, that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in sanctification and honor, not in lustful passion.” (1 Thessalonians 4:3-5)

**Concerning the World**

“Do not be conformed to this world.” (Romans 12:2) “Do not love the world, nor the things in the world. If any one loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the boastful pride of life, is not from the Father, but is from the world.” (1 John 2:15-16)

## Concerning the work of God

“Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth.”

(2 Timothy 2:15)

“Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction . . . be sober in all things, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, fulfil your ministry.”

(2 Timothy 4:2, 5)

“Suffer hardship with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus.”

(2 Timothy 2:3)

“Give attention to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation and teaching ... Take pains with these things; be absorbed in them, so that your progress may be evident to all. Pay close attention to yourself and to your teaching; **persevere** in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you.”

(1 Timothy 4: 13-16)

“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19-20)

The Word of God gives us much direction, and clear guidance for our lives and for God’s work. But we must be on guard lest we add to the Scriptures, or take away from them. We must be wary of practices and rituals, which seem to be harmless, but which have not authority in Scripture.

Where is the authority for “Father Christmas,” and for Easter eggs? Where is the authority for putting statues in churches? Where is the authority for holding elections for church leadership, like a political campaign? Where is the authority for churches to take loans for building elaborate chapels, especially in view of Romans 13:8, which says, “Owe nothing to anyone.”

The Reformation began with men who would judge everything by the Bible. It is certainly time that we did likewise, in view of the very imminent return of the Lord Jesus, it is time to examine ourselves, and be actually doers of the Word and not hearers only. Here is one more exhortation in view of the present times:

“Be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, **making the most of your time**, because the days are evil. So then do not be foolish, but **understand** what **the will of the Lord** is. And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but **be filled with the Spirit.**” (Ephesians 5:15-18)

To redeem the time, to know the will of God, and to be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must be doers of the Word. If we have failed, we must confess it; if we have been holding anything back from the Lord, we must surrender it to Him; if we have become ensnared by worldly pleasures, it is time to cry to the Lord to set us free; if we are busy building our OWN little kingdoms, it is time to seek the Lord and His righteousness, and to dedicate ourselves to building HIS kingdom. If we have been sleeping, it is time to wake up; if we have been lukewarm, it is time for us to be revived, for the coming of the Lord is at hand.

“Blessed is he who READS and those who HEAR the words of the prophecy, and HEED the things which are written in it; for the time is near.” (Revelation 1:3)

“He saved us,  
not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness,  
but according to His Mercy, by the washing of regeneration  
and renewing by the Holy Spirit.”

(Titus 3:5)

