

am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?

- 0. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
- 0. Do I confidentially pass on to another what I was told to me in confidence?
- 0. Can I be trusted?
- 0. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work or habits?
- 0. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
- 0. Did the Bible live in me today?
- 0. Do I give it time to speak to me every day?
- 0. Am I enjoying prayer?
- 0. When did I last speak to someone else of my faith?
- 0. Do I pray about the money I spend?
- 0. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
- 0. Do I disobey God in anything?
- 0. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy.?
- 0. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
- 0. Am I jealous impure, critical, irritable, touchy or distrusting?
- 0. How do I spend my spare time?
- 0. Am I proud?
- 0. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisees who despised the publican?
- 0. Is there anyone I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
- 0. Do I grumble or complain constantly?
- 0. Is Christ real to me?

asked to believe in nonsense. God gave us a heart and brains, We strive to use both.

WE BELIEVE IN the Bible as the guide and "measurement" of our beliefs and actions. We have different ideas about how the Scriptures are divinely inspired. But whatever we believe, we are not satisfied until the Bible connects with THE Word of God -- Jesus Christ. We have found that theories do not save, Christ does.

WE BELIEVE IN certain means of grace. That is, we find that God continually uses some familiar ways to give us gifts of the Spirit: such as Holy Communion, Baptism, prayer, reading the Bible, fellowship and the acts of service. Yes, God is in everything, but we are more likely to encounter God when we are praying (for instance) than when we are not.

✓ WE BELIEVE IN tradition. The Church has learned deep truths over the centuries and we receive these lessons gratefully. Meanwhile, we are called to interpret the "old story" in new ways for today (just as our grandparents did in their day).

WE BELIEVE IN disciplined living. We "press on" to ever more faithful and courageous lives. This does not happen if we pay attention to God only when the whim hits us. If we fail to be committed, we remain shallow in our personal lives and fearful in our public witness."

✓ In his book Why I am a United Methodist, William Willimon writes: "I find that United Methodism has five great gifts to offer our troubled, but still blessed and beloved-by-God world:

"(1) Stress on the need for a personal, engaging, experienced relationship with Christ. (We can know Christ, not just know about Christ.)

"(2) The need for structure, discipline, and form in meeting the challenges of living a Christian life today. (Some things are too important to be left to chance.)

"(3) The importance of lifelong journey and self-examination, assisted by others, in developing our lives in Christ. (We can actually grow and be better people than we are right now.)

"(4) The refusal to separate spiritual needs from human, material needs. (God loves whole persons, not just detached "souls".)

"(5) The stress upon the church, its proclamation, sacraments, and other "ordinary means of grace" against our rampant individualism and subjectivism. (Religion - the Christian one, that is - is not a private affair.)"

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The Twenty-two Questions Members of  
John Wesley's Holy Club Asked  
Themselves Every Day In Their Private  
Devotions More Than 200 Years Ago.

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better than I really



## A STUDY OF METHODISM

2 Peter 2:1

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Christians are instructed to study carefully the word of God. Mt. 5:6; 2 Tim. 2:15; I Pet. 2:1,2; 2 Pet. 3:18.
2. Christians are to strive to instruct those that are in error that they may acknowledge the truth. 2 Tim. 2:24-26.
  - a. Jesus said the Pharisees taught for doctrine the commandments of men. Mt. 15:9.
  - b. Peter said there would be false teachers, even in the church. 2 Pet. 2:1.
3. Believing that the Bible is the word of God (I Thess, 2:13), that it is the truth (John 17:17) and that it is perfect (2 Tim. 3:16,17) we must examine all teachings in the light of God's word.

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. SOME ESSENTIAL FACTS ABOUT METHODISM.

##### A. The origin of the Methodist Church.

1. "This church is a great Protestant body, though it did not come directly out of the Reformation but had its origin within the Church of England (Discipline, p. 3, 1952).
2. "It's founder was John Wesley..."
  - a. He was born June 14, 1703, in a parish of Epworth Lincolnshire.
  - b. He was a clergyman in the Church of England.
  - c. He died in 1791.
3. It was born in the University of Oxford, England.
4. It's history actually began in the year 1729, although the real turning point in Wesley's life came at a prayer meeting May 24, 1738, when he "heard the preacher read Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans and felt his heart strangely warmed as the meaning of the reformer's doctrine of 'justification by faith' sank into his soul." (Handbook of Denominations, Meade, p. 147).
5. The first Methodist Society was attached to a Moravian congregation in 1739.
6. The first Methodist Society in America was organized in 1766 by Philip Embury.
7. The first Methodist Church was built on John Street in New York in 1768.
8. The first Annual conference was held in 1773.
9. The official organization of the Methodist Episcopal church in America, was December 24, 1784.

##### B. The official organization and law-making body of the Methodist Church.

1. "The general conference is the law-making body of the Methodist church; it consists of not less than 600 and not more than 800 delegates, half laymen and half ministers elected on a proportional basis by the annual. (Handbook in Denominations, Meade, p. 150 Discipline, p. 10 1952).
2. A Judicial Council has been created to determine the constitutionality of any act of the general conference, made up of 5 ministerial and 4 lay members. It has become so important that it is called "the Supreme Court of the Methodist Church" as its decisions are final.
3. The Bishop who are elected for life with retirement at 72 constitute the council of bishops and meet once, sometimes twice a year "for the general oversight and promotion of the temporal - and spiritual affairs of the church." This is the chief executive body of the Methodist Church.
4. Quarterly, annual and general conferences are held for setting pastors salary, budget, elect officers, etc.

- C. There are 22 separate Methodist bodies in the United States. There are over 11,000,000 members in the U. S.



II. THE OFFICIAL TEACHINGS OF THE METHODIST CHURCH COMPARED WITH THE BIBLE.

A. What do they teach about the Bible?

1. "The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proven thereby, is not to be required as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation..." (Discipline, Article of Faith, No. V, p. 26).

a. "The Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation..."  
Why the Discipline, then?"

b. "so that whatsoever is not read therein nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. By their own statement then whatever is not according to the scripture in this book doesn't need to be accepted.

2. In the Episcopal Greetings of the Discipline we read, "In such a process of adjustment, the Discipline, became not a book of definite rules, not yet a formal code, but rather a record of successive stage of spiritual insight by Methodists under the grace of Christ. We have therefore expected that the Discipline would be administered, not merely as a legal document, but as a revelation of the Holy Spirit working in and through our people." (Discipline, 1952, p. 1).

B. What do they teach about reconciliation to God?

1. "...whereof is one Christ...who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father unto us (Emphasis mine, J.M.) and to be sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men." (Discipline, 1952, article, II, p. 26).

2. The Bible teaches that Christ died to reconcile us to God. 2 Cor. 5:19.

C. What do they teach about sin.

1. "Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but it is the corruption of the nature of every man, that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and of his own nature inclined to evil and that continually." (Ibid, 1952, p. 27).

2. The Bible teaches:

a. "The son shall not bear the iniquity of the Father..." Ezek. 18:20.

b. Sin is transgression of God's law, not something inherited. I Jn. 3:4.

c. We are the offspring of God and therefore could not have a corrupted nature by birth. Acts 17:28,29; cf. Mt. 18:3; Heb. 12:9.

D. What do they teach about the free-will of man.

1. "The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such that he cannot turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works... without the grace of God by Christ preventing (going before and helping J.M.)..." (Ibid, 1952, Article VIII, p. 27).

2. The Bible teaches:

a. That man does have the power to repent without any direct intervention of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38; 26:20.

b. In the parable of the sower Jesus said, "But that on the good ground are they, which in an honest and good heart, having heard the word, keep it, and bring forth fruit with patience." (Luke 8:15) Why didn't he say those whose heart is good and honest because already prepared by the Holy Spirit can receive the word?

E. What do they teach about God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit? Articles of Faith, I, II, III, IV, seem to teach the truth about all three as far as their nature and unity.

F. What do they teach about admission into the Methodist Church?



1. Anyone presenting himself seeking to be saved and desiring to be Christian in practice shall be instructed in Methodist history, baptismal and membership vows, receive the rite of baptism, have vow administered, and received and duly enrolled in the membership. (Discipline, 1952, p. 38,39).
  2. "A member in good standing in any Christian denomination who has been baptized and who desires to unite with the Methodist Church may be received into membership by a proper certificate of transfer from his former church, or by his own declaration of Christian faith..." (Ibid. 1952, p. 39).
  3. The Bible teaches that the Lord adds to his church (Acts 2:4) those that obey. (Acts 2:41).
- G. What do they teach about justification?
1. "...Wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." (Ibid, 1952, Art. IX, p. 28).
  2. The Bible says "ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." (Jas. 2:24).
  3. "The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church."
    - a. This is assuming what cannot be proven - that such was ever in the church.
    - b. Penitent believers are subjects of baptisms. Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38.
  4. "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion." (Discipline, 1952, p. 519).
    - a. God gives man a choice -to obey or disobey - but not a choice as to what he will obey.
    - b. Baptism is a burial. Rom. 6:3,4; Acts 8:38,39; Col. 2:12.
  5. "Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized."
    - a. The Bible nowhere speaks of baptism as a profession or mark.
    - b. The Bible teaches that baptism is the final act in becoming a Christian, not something one does as a Christian, Mk. 16:16; Gal. 3: 26,27).
  6. Baptism "is also a sign of regeneration or the new birth."
    - a. The Bible teaches that baptism is a part of the new birth. Jn. 3:5.
    - b. The Bible nowhere teaches that one is regenerated and then baptized but it does speak of "the washing of regeneration." Titus 3:5

CONCLUSION:

1. Since nearly all the articles of faith of the Methodist Church are not in the Bible, then, by their own Discipline, they are not essential to salvation.
2. The Bible clearly reveals the characteristics of Christ's Church and what one does to become a Christian.

2. All Presbyterian groups practice infant baptism and sprinkling (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
3. The Presbyterian Church in the United States has been a leader in the Ecumenical Movement.

### Study Questions

1. Who are the two men mainly responsible for the Presbyterian Church?
2. What is the historic creed of Presbyterians? When was it revised?
3. What are the five major points of Calvinism (T U L I P)?
4. Who led the fight against liberalism among the Northern Presbyterians?
5. What is the view of inspiration held by most Presbyterians today?
6. What is the Presbyterian teaching on salvation?
7. What does the word "presbyterian" mean?
8. Do Presbyterians have a Scriptural form of government? Why or why not?

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## Chapter Fourteen

*Bob Rutherford*

### The Methodist Church

#### Introduction:

1. There are several Methodist denominations in the United States.
2. The Methodists have long been a large and influential movement.
3. Though begun in England, Methodism has had its greatest growth and influence in the United States.
4. Because of liberal theology and a "social gospel" emphasis, Methodism is a dying faith today.
  - a. Recent reports indicate that Methodists are losing thousands of adherents every year.
  - b. Methodists have been very active in the Ecumenical Movement.
  - c. Some Methodists have also been in the forefront of those accepting female and homosexual ordination to the clergy.



## Discussion:

### I. Origin and History:

- A. John Wesley is the founder of the Methodist movement.
  - 1. He was an Anglican (Episcopal) clergyman, the son of an Anglican minister.
  - 2. John and his brother, Charles, and George Whitehead, formed the "Holy Club" at Oxford University in 1729.
  - 3. They were called "Methodists" by other students in derision.
- B. In 1735, the Wesley brothers came to America to Georgia.
  - 1. Charles was secretary to General Oglethorpe.
  - 2. John came to evangelize among the Indians, but was unsuccessful.
  - 3. They came in contact with the Moravians and were impressed by their piety.
  - 4. They returned to England in two years.
- C. In 1739, as John sat in a religious service and heard the preface to Luther's commentary on Romans read, his "heart was strangely warmed within him;" he took this as an assurance of his salvation.
- D. The Wesley brothers and Whitehead began preaching to the common people wherever people would listen to them.
  - 1. The Church of England did not accept them.
  - 2. They tried unsuccessfully to revive the Church of England.
  - 3. The first Methodist congregation was formed in 1739 in London, England.
  - 4. The Methodist Church was not officially recognized until 1791.
- E. After the American Revolution, Wesley appointed Francis Asbury and Thomas Coke superintendents of the Methodist Church in America.
  - 1. The Methodist Church grew rapidly on the frontier as a result of circuit riding preachers, simple theology, and great revivals.
  - 2. In the early days, Methodists were known for their emotionalism.
- F. The Methodist Church divided in 1845 over slavery.
  - 1. In 1939, the Northern and Southern branches reunited to form the

- 10).
  - b. Works of man's devising (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:4-5).
2. The Bible teaches some works are essential to salvation because they are required of God (Acts 10:34-35).
  - a. We must obey (Matt. 7:21-23; Luke 6:46; Heb. 5:8, 9; Rom. 6:16-18).
  - b. The faith that saves expresses itself in works (Jas. 2:14-26; Gal. 5:6).
  - c. Faith itself is called a work (John 6:29).
- E. Methodists teach that the church has many branches of which they are one: "The Methodist Church is a church of Christ. . . . This church is a great Protestant body. . . . Its founder was John Wesley." (Book of Discipline of UMC, 1976, 7).
- F. Methodists wear an unscriptural name (Isa. 62:2; Acts 4:12; 11:26; 26:2; Rom. 16:16; I Pet. 4:16).
- G. Methodists "baptize" infants (pp. 63, 67, Discipline of the UMC, 1992).
  1. One must hear, believe, repent, and confess Christ before baptism, none of which an infant can do (Rom. 10:17; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:10; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30, 31; Acts 8:12).
  2. Infants are **not** lost, never having sinned, but are **safe** (Matt. 18:1-3; Matt. 19:13-15).
- H. Methodists will sprinkle, pour, or immerse for baptism, but the most common practice is pouring; the Bible teaches that only immersion true baptism (Rom. 6:4-5; Acts 8:36-38; Col. 2:12). [See Mead, p. 163].

### Conclusion:

1. The Methodist Church has the wrong founder, place, and date of founding, doctrine name, organization, and terms of membership to be the true church of the Bible; therefore, it has no right to exist (Matt. 15:13).
2. One today can believe almost anything and still be a Methodist in good standing.

### Study Questions

1. Where did the Methodist Church have its beginning?
2. Where has it had its greatest growth?
3. Why is the Methodist Church dying today?



## Methodist Beliefs

Some Methodist beliefs which are important because of their emphasis within the Methodist tradition are:

**Christian Perfection:** Though the Methodists never claimed that a perfect, sinless life was ever attained, they taught that it was attainable. The Methodists taught that every Christian must strive for perfection and should evidence some progress in that direction.

**Universal Redemption:** The universal redemption proclaims that Jesus Christ died for all people and that all people can be saved - not just a select few. It also declares that acceptance by Jesus Christ has nothing to do with one's status in life or with one's position or possessions.

**Justification by Faith:** The belief that one is saved by faith in the saving grace of Jesus Christ alone is central to Methodist Doctrine. The service of the Christian life is an expression of one's faith - not the faith. It is because of the grace, the unmerited love of God in Jesus Christ, that men and women are saved - not because of anything they do.

**The Witness of the Holy Spirit:** The inner certainty which each Christian can have that he/she is a child of God as well as the conviction that God is at work in the world and in the life of the believer bringing about His Kingdom gives credence to the witness of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

**Falling from Grace:** Emphasis upon the real possibility that a Christian can live in such a way that he/she will reject God's grace even though it was once accepted.

**The Sacraments:** Methodists believe that a sacrament is a "visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace" instituted by Jesus Christ. There are two sacraments observed by Methodists: Baptism and The Lord's Supper. (For more detailed information on each, see the heading titled **Sacraments**.)



## Basic Methodist Beliefs

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism under God, was essentially a practical leader and preacher and not a classical, systematic theologian, like say Calvin, or even Martin Luther. He was saturated in his knowledge of the Bible and had an analytical and scholarly mind, but his prime concern after his conversion experience in 1738, was to take the good news of the Gospel to every living creature, with his famous saying, The world is my parish. His sermons, though Biblical and learned, had also a strong direct common touch and were aimed at the heart and will, as well as the mind. So he could preach in the open air to the uneducated and coarse coal-miners of Bristol and cause tears of penitence to appear on their grimy faces. Not many Anglican clergymen of the 18th century could have done that!

But for all that Wesley did have some basic and emphatic beliefs – completely orthodox, but which he reiterated and regarded as important to practical Christianity. There are three in particular which are neatly summed up in this well-known statement entitled the **Four Alls**. All need to be saved; All can be saved; All can know they are saved, and All can be saved completely. By saved Wesley means, in orthodox Christian terms, being saved from the present and future consequences of our human sinfulness inherited from Adam, by the atoning death of Christ upon the cross and the consequent sharing of a new and eternal life with God made possible by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. All this may sound to some, an old-fashioned mouthful, but it simply means that the love of God, through faith in Jesus can transform our lives for time and eternity.

So with the first two Alls that all need to be saved and that all can be saved, John Wesley is asserting, in the strongest possible way, that God's saving love or grace, is for all people whatever their colour or culture or creed and also whatever their depth of sin or evil might be. No single creature, however depraved, is beyond God's saving grace, and what is more God yearns that all human beings **should** be saved. This alas does not mean that all **will** be saved – God's grace can be resisted and, instead of salvation, judgement will be the lot of those who defy the Lord to the end.

Wesley, in his lifetime, clashed with many otherwise fine Christians who took the Calvinist view that as God is all sovereign in His creation, and consequently His grace is resistless, those who refuse His grace must do so because they have been predestined by God to damnation instead of salvation. Whilst Wesley conceded that in the Bible there is a doctrine of divine election and that God being God knows the end from the beginning, he felt, as most Christians do, that this is a monstrous notion and that one of God's great gifts to us, as human beings, is the ability to make a free and responsible choice. There is, of course, the underlying assumption that God in one way or another makes this choice possible for all human beings whatever their state of heart or mind.

So Methodists have long held to this belief in the universal offer of God's salvation through Christ. As Charles Wesley wrote in one of his memorable hymns:

O for a trumpet voice  
On all the world to call!  
To bid their hearts rejoice  
In Him who died for all; for all, for all my saviour died.



~~Secondly Wesley held firmly to the belief that all can know they are saved.~~ This is the belief that, as Christians, we can be assured that God has forgiven our sins, reconciled us to Himself and given us the gift of eternal life. ~~At his conversion whilst attending a Moravian Bible Study group in London on the 24th May 1738, Wesley in his journal speaks of feeling his heart strangely warmed,~~ as he realised, presumably for the first time in his life, that ~~Christ had actually died for him and for his salvation.~~ This for Wesley was a moment of complete assurance that he was, to use his own expression, an altogether Christian. Wesley later picked up the words of the apostle, Paul from Romans 8 verse 16, that the Holy Spirit Himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children...

John Wesley's assertion in his early ministry: that every truly born-again Christian receives this inner assurance of their own personal salvation – is not merely a matter of intellectual conviction, or a fond hope that one is saved of God, but a heartfelt experience possibly of healing by the power of the Holy Spirit. Some Christians, both in Wesley's day and today, would describe this as being Baptised in the Holy Spirit. Again brother Charles articulated the assurance of faith in the words of a hymn:

Inspire the living faith,  
Which whosoe'er receives,  
The witness in himself he hath,  
And consciously believes;  
The faith that conquers all,  
And doth the mountain move,  
And saves whoe'er on Jesus call,  
And perfects them in love.

~~Forgive the awkwardness of the words but you see the point.~~ However, as Wesley grew older and more mature, he did concede that this inner, somewhat mystical, sense of assurance might not be the experience of some genuine Christians. It is analogous to some charismatic Christians of today who insist that unless one can testify to an experience of the infilling of the Holy Spirit with the attendant gift of speaking in tongues, or the other gifts of prophesy, discernment or healing, one is only, as it were, only half-a-christian.

Surely the more reliable proof of one's faith lies not in the exhibition of signs and wonders, but in the presence in one's life of an increasing love for God and of His Son, Jesus, and an active, practical love for others, whoever or whatever they may be. Does not John in his first letter in the New Testament write, We know that we have come to know God, if we obey his commands .... and we know that we have passed from death to life, because we love one another.. ?

~~Thirdly the final all is that all can be saved completely (or to the uttermost).~~ John Wesley also believed and taught his people that ~~God's plan was not only to save us from our sins, but to make perfect our lives by the power of God's love.~~ Wesley declared in many sermons that God can, here and now take from our lives not only our sin, but also the desire to sin. In other words God can bring our love to a point of perfection, but Wesley had to concede that this perfection is impeded by the limitations of our mortal flesh. However for Wesley this perfecting or maturing of our faith and love is something for which we should continually aim, and like the Apostle Paul, we should run that straight race for love and holiness. Again the sentiment finds its strongest expression in the hymns of brother, Charles, for example:

That I thy mercy may proclaim,  
That all mankind thy truth may see,  
Hallow thy great and glorious name,  
And perfect holiness in me.

Or to take another example from the closing verse of Wesley's famous hymn: **Love divine, all loves excelling.**

Finish then thy new creation,  
Pure and spotless let it be;  
Let us see thy great salvation,  
Perfectly restored in thee:  
Changed from glory into glory,  
Till in heaven we take our place,  
Till we cast our crowns before thee,  
Lost in wonder, love and praise.

Finally it should be noted that this holiness, or perfect love which the Wesleys taught was essentially a social as well as a personal holiness – it should find its reflection in the way we treat each other in church, and indeed beyond its bounds. For Wesley, true Christian love found its best expression in terms of caring, compassion and justice. And so Methodism at its best, is a scripturally based experience of God's saving love poured out for all, an experience that finds its assurance and confidence in the inner presence and power of that love of God in one's life, and an experience whereby one's life is gradually transformed by that love and thus becomes a practical witness to God's glory.

**Douglas Graham**



# METHODISTS & BAPTISTS

by Mitchell Williams, Senior Pastor,  
Aldersgate United Methodist Church,

When comparing Baptists with Methodists, the first question is, of course, Which Baptists? Not only are there different denominations of Baptist heritage but also individuals can differ greatly, even on matters that some consider to strike at the core of belief.

For instance, if I understand recent controversy among Southern Baptists, some who are called fundamentalist have gained control in order to stop what they see as the erosion of... well, fundamentals of the faith. They have sought tighter control of denominational institutions, requiring belief in the inerrancy of scripture. Those who are called moderates argue for what they consider to be the traditional Baptist defense of the individual's right to interpret the Bible without official church creeds.

Some former Baptists who have joined our church have explained that part of the reason for their changing was to avoid that struggle over dogma. I developed this brochure in response to their questions.

DO I HAVE TO LEAVE BEHIND MY BELIEFS? Many have shared that they appreciated not being asked to abandon "treasures" from their upbringing when they joined us: they weren't asked to 'view their former churches as "wrong." I personally welcome the gifts Baptists bring to the larger Body of Christ. Baptists typically enrich us with their devotion to Bible study, dedication to missions, and an aim toward personal conversion.

In the United Methodist Church there is also significant diversity that most of us are very comfortable with. This tolerance of differences is sometimes criticized as apathy: "It doesn't matter what you believe if you're a Methodist," some criticize. But we do hold vital core beliefs (perhaps common to most Christians). It is only that we find nothing essential except that which is found in scripture. Nowhere does any part of the Bible speak of how the whole of the Bible is to be interpreted. Each theory of inspiration relates to unique personal experiences. Peter and Paul were fine Christians despite not having a New Testament. Theories do not save: Jesus does.

THEN HOW DO WE APPROACH THE BIBLE? Methodists generally read the Bible in order to encounter THE living Word of God - namely Jesus Christ - and let the theories sort themselves out (John 1:14-18; Hebrews 1:1-2). Christianity is more than a list of beliefs: it is a relationship with God through Christ. And that relationship grows and changes.

For instance, some quote Bible verses against allowing women to instruct men. But United Methodists ordain women- We do so because of scriptural examples of women deacons and "co-apostles" who worked with Paul (Acts 18:26, Romans 16:1, I Corinthians 16:19, Galatians 3:28), and because we have witnessed the gifts of the Holy Spirit for leadership in women. For most Baptists and all Catholics, women pastors are some of the most noticeable differences between us.

United Methodists value our evangelical heritage and our Catholic heritage. (We are considered "evangelical Catholics" or "catholic evangelicals." Like many Baptists, we look to the scriptures and our own life experience with God in order to judge what is true. But we also trust (within limits) the workings of reason. The mind is a gift from God and should be used to the fullest for the glory of God. And like our Catholic brothers and sisters, we respect the wisdom represented in the tradition of the Church- Each new generation does not have to "re-invent the wheel" religiously.

WHAT ABOUT BEING "BORN AGAIN?" Many Christians stress, as an absolute need, the "born-again" experience. Methodists welcome that gift from God. But, once again, what we seek is not a particular experience or feeling: what we seek is a relationship. So we include many who cannot point to a particular point in time when they received God's love decisively.

And we believe that faith is a continuous process of choosing God's way. If humans are free to choose God - and we do believe in "free will" - then they are also able to reject God. True, we have such a small part to play in our salvation. And yet, no one else can do it for us; it is our part. As opposed to those who believe in predestination, we don't think God makes our decisions for us. That robs all the meaning out of the word "decision" and turns God into a capricious bully.

In addition to receiving God's love, we are given the demand to act out of that love through works of piety and mercy. These in turn open us up to more love as we grow in the faith.

In other words, we hold together Paul's emphasis on faith (Romans 2:27-28) and James' emphasis on works (James 2:24).

HOW ARE THE CHURCHES ORGANIZED? Some differences are due to our two histories. Baptists are descended from various groups who found themselves as persecuted minorities in communities with "official churches." A distrust grew toward central organizations. Therefore an association developed linking independent congregations.

Methodists had a different history of persecution. We support the independence of heart and mind of each believer, but we find a strength and correction when we are connected. In fact, we are organized very much like the American government - a legislative branch, a judicial branch and an executive branch (the bishops). The bishops appoint pastors to churches. This guarantees the freedom of pastors to preach the truth with love - without fear of dismissal- and guarantees that every church will have a pastor.

WHAT ABOUT WORSHIP? Our worship descended from the liturgy of the Church of England (the Episcopal Church) and was adapted to the American frontier during the great revival period. We have "high" churches and "low" churches. But all of us love to sing. We pray spontaneously as well as use the great prayers of Jesus and of the saintly of every age. And we expect sermons to relate the Bible to our every day lives.

We also celebrate Baptism and the Lord's Supper, but we view them differently than Baptists. As best as I understand it, Baptists generally do not view the sacraments (or "ordinances") as a new event in the spiritual lives of Christians. They are educational symbols to remind us of, Jesus' sacrifice and to give public testimony to our conversion experience.



But United Methodists believe we receive a new gift (grace) from God in these special moments. God uses common, material things to convey the holy - as God has always done.

It's like this: a kiss is not just a symbol of love, it helps create and sustain love.. Smoke is not just a "symbol" or "reminder" of fire, it is evidence Of fire. The sacraments are not just symbols, they are evidence of God doing something to us and for us and in us. Breaking bread and washing people are actions which speak (louder than words) of the love of God. We at enjoy these special times of grace as often as possible,

HOW AND WHEN DO WE BAPTIZE? How much water should one use in baptism? Full immersion is a vivid representation of our "dying and being raised in Christ Romans 6:4)." The old self is "drowned" and the new is born. Pouring water over the head reminds us of how our sins are washed away. And a handful of water on the head represents our anointing ("Christ"-ing) as a royal priesthood.(I Peter 2:9-10). Methodists baptize all these ways. And, since baptism is the initiation rite into the Body of Christ, the church is always present - no private baptisms.

At what age is it appropriate to baptize? As I understand it, Baptists view baptism as a response to a conversion experience. Therefore, they await a profession of faith and belief before baptizing, This is frequently called "adult" baptism, although each year several thousands of six year-old children are baptized in Southern Baptist churches.

Methodists do not think God requires abstract understanding for salvation. Faith is not primarily a mental agreement to certain propositions - for even the demons believe - it is a relationship of trust and loyalty. And even babies can have that. Baptism is not a reward for having "arrived" or a graduation exercise. It is the beginning of your growth in Christ. In fact, God probably sees all people being baptized as "babes in Christ."

The church opens its membership to believers and their households, but that is not the same as salvation, There is a need for decisions all along the way of our lives. Moments or seasons of renewal can be celebrated with a "reaffirmation of baptism," but we do not re-baptize.

Because infants can be baptized, they are welcome to share in the Lord's Supper - as is anyone seeking to love the Lord and follow his ways.

"YOU PREACH IN A DIFFERENT WAY" I'm very unsure about this next part. Some who have joined our church have commented that they were glad to get away from preachers who "yelled" and who try to "scare" people into heaven. I don't know how much that stereotype fits your experience - either Methodist or Baptist - but I do know that we try to bring people into the kingdom through the doors of Hope and Love rather than through Fear and Guilt.

If we are only trying to escape hell, then "any port in the storm" will do - God is just the lesser of two evils. We'd rather be drawn by the gift of God's love presented by Jesus: "Fear not, little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom," (Luke 12:32).

## 2. Annulment - Catholic Doctrine

1. An annulment is a "declaration by a Tribunal to the Church that a marriage never legally existed."
2. What is the difference between an Annulment and a Divorce?
  - a. A divorce is a dissolution by a civil court of an existing union.
  - b. An annulment declares that there never was a valid union."
  - c. In 1968 only 338 annulments were granted
  - d. In 1978 some 27,670 were granted



WHAT DO THE CATHOLICS TEACH ABOUT PURGATORY?

A. The doctrine of purgatory originated about the year 598 A.D. Although Origen (230 A.D.) "seems to have been the first to pave the way for the evolution of purgatory" it was Gregory the Great who "developed and popularized" the doctrine of purgatory. (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 4, p. 398)

B. The actual teaching on the subject:

- 1. "There exists in the next life a middle state of temporary punishment allotted for those who died in venial sin, or who have not satisfied the justice of God for sins already forgiven . . . The souls consigned to this intermediate state, commonly called purgatory cannot help themselves, they may be aided by the sufferages of the faithful on earth." (James C. Gibbons, Faith of Our Fathers, p. 210)
- 2. "Catholics believe that the generality of mankind are neither so obstinately wicked as do deserve everlasting punishment, nor so good as to be admitted into the society of God and His blessed spirits, and therefore that God is gracious to allow a middle state where they may be purified by certain degrees of punishment." (Truth About Catholics, p. 12)
- 3. Catholics admit: "The notion of purgatory cannot be found explicitly in Scripture, but tradition, the living experience of the Church with the word of God, discovered that it must be presumed from other truths clearly contained in the Bible." (National Catholic Register, August 27, 1980---In answer to a question asked Roman Catholic theologian, Raymond Bosler: "Does the Catholic Church still teach there is a purgatory?")

C. The doctrine of purgatory is anti-biblical for several reasons:

- 1. The Catholic Church admits that it has been invented. It cannot be found in the scriptures, but tradition and the living experience of the church presumes it to be true.
- 2. It denies the all-sufficiency of the blood of Christ to completely purify man of his sins so as to be prepared to enter God's presence. Col. 1:13, 14; Heb. 9:12-14; 10:14
- 3. It contradicts the principle of personal preparation. Rom. 14:12; 2 Cor. 5:10
- 4. It ignores the scriptural teaching that all preparation must be made before a person dies. Matt. 25:1-13.
- 5. It is contrary to the truth that neither righteousness nor wickedness can be transferred from one person to another. Ezek. 18:20b.
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- Prayers for the dead . . . . . A.D. 300
- Making the sign of the cross . . . . . A.D. 300
- Veneration of angels and dead saints, use of images . . . . . A.D. 375
- Beginning of the exaltation of Mary "Mother of God" first applied . . . . . A.D. 431
- Priests dress differently than laymen . . . . . A.D. 500
- Extreme Unction . . . . . A.D. 526
- Prayers to Mary and dead saints . . . . . A.D. 600
- Title of pope, or universal bishop . . . . . A.D. 606
- Kissing the pope's foot . . . . . A.D. 709
- Holy Water . . . . . A.D. 850
- Canonization of dead saints . . . . . A.D. 995
- Celibacy of the priesthood . . . . . A.D. 1079
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# CATHOLICISM VS THE BIBLE

No. 1

I Timothy 4:1-6

## INTRODUCTION:

1. A study of Catholicism vs the Bible will naturally mean study of past history to see its development and origin.
2. A lesson of this kind is very vital and important to us in "a very vital way because every generation is a part of what has gone before." (Frank Van Dyke).
3. We can fully appreciate what we now enjoy only by an understanding of past events and trials that make them possible.
4. Since Catholicism grew out of the church of the Lord, it is very vital that we spend a little time talking about the church, some prophecies of departure, some actual departures and present conditions.

## DISCUSSION:

### I. WHY DO WE HAVE THE CHURCH OF THE NEW TESTAMENT?

- A. Latourette, in "Expansion of Christianity" says, "The church came about as the result of an impulse on the part of Christ, which his apostles took and brought the church into existence."
- B. Humanism says there is no divine element involved in anything - this would include the church.
- C. Many historians say that Christ came to this earth, lived, and died, and his followers took his teachings and started the church.
- D. Some say Christ came to this earth to set up his kingdom, but when the Jews rejected him, he set up the church instead - in other words, the church is an afterthought on God's part.
- E. The Bible teaches that we have the church because:
  1. God planned it. The mystery hid in the mind of God before the foundation of the world (Rom. 16:25) and revealed unto the apostles (Eph. 3:1-5) included the church in which both Jew and Gentile are invited (Eph. 2:14-16; 3:8-11).
  2. The Lord established it.
    - a. Isaiah and Daniel had prophesied about the church. Isa. 2:2,3; Dan. 2:44.
    - b. During his personal ministry it was preparatory. Matt. 4:17; Matt. 10:5-7.
    - c. During his personal ministry, he promised to build it. Mt. 16:18.
    - d. The church was actually established on Pentecost. Acts 2.

### II. WHAT FORM OF GOVERNMENT DID THE EARLY CHURCH HAVE?

- A. Since it was in the government of the church that the departure took place it is most essential to clearly understand this - part.
- B. In every fully-developed church in the apostolic age, there was a plurality of elders.
  1. On the return part of Paul's first missionary journey, he ordained elders in every church. Acts. 14:23.
  2. From Miletus, Paul called the elders from Ephesus. Acts 20:17.
  3. There were elders in the church at Phillippi. Phil. 1:1
  4. Elders, bishops, overseers, pastors, shepherds all referred to same men.
    - a. The elders at Ephesus were also called overseers (Acts 20:28) and pastors. Eph. 4:11.
    - b. Paul told Titus to ordain elders in every city (Titus 1:5) but he called the same men bishops. (Tit. 1:7).
- C. In every fully-developed church in the apostolic age, there was a plurality of deacons. Phil. 1:1.
- D. In every fully-developed church in the apostolic age, the elders were the overseers, rulers, directors of the activities of the church.
  1. "Feed the church" - Acts 20:28
  2. "Labour among you and are over you in the Lord." I Thess. 5:12.



3. "Rule over you - watch for your souls" -Heb. 13:17.
4. Tend and shepherd - I Pet. 5:1-4.
5. They ruled and directed according to God's rules, not some they decided themselves.

III. THERE ARE NUMEROUS BIBLE PROPHECIES CONCERNING THE CHURCH'S DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH.

- A. Paul warned the elders from Ephesus. Acts 20:28-32.
  1. Grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock.
  2. Also of your own selves shall men arise speaking perverse things.
- B. In Paul's letter to Timothy, he wrote, "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith..." I Tim. 4:1a.
  1. "Giving heed to seducing spirits." I Tim. 4:1b.
  2. "Giving heed to doctrines of devils." I Tim. 4:1a.
  3. Speaking lies in hypocrisy" I Tim. 4:2a.
  4. "Having their conscience seared with a hot iron." I Tim. 4:2b
  5. "Forbidding to marry." I Tim. 4:3a
    - a. After 1074 A. D. Roman Catholic Clergy were forbidden to marry.
    - b. "Clerics in major orders are forbidden to marry, and are so bound by the obligation of observing chastity, that sins against chastity are sacrilege." (Practical Commentary on Code of Canon Law, Waywood and Smith, p.66).
  6. "Commanding to abstain from meats." I Tim. 4:3b.
    - a. Catholics were at first commanded to abstain from meats on Friday and during Lent.
    - b. Now they are allowed to eat at such times if they are unwilling to sacrifice.
- C. In Paul's letter to the Thessalonians, he wrote, "For that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the Son of perdition." 2 Thess. 2:1-9.
  1. "Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth, in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." 2:4
    - a. Notice the claim of the Catholic Church in an article in the Spanish Bishop's Magazine, Perseverancia - Revista De O. E. P. Barcelona, issue of March, 1950: "12th of March, anniversary of the coronation of his holiness our Lord Pope Pius XII. I believe in the Pope! To believe in the Pope expresses more than to believe in the church; more than to believe in the very existence of God."
    - b. "The priest has power over the souls of men. Only he can confer pardon. Priests, you are prayers in yourself; you are one with God and one with men. You command God, you make him and you have him at your disposal." (Converted Catholic Magazine, April, 1953, p. 11).
  2. The departure was already at work even in the days of Paul. He said "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work..." 2 Thess. 2:7.

CONCLUSION:

1. "Men often depart from God's way" is a theme seen through the Bible.
2. As seen in this study the Holy Spirit told the apostles that such would be true and we are now prepared to see how it took place.

## CATHOLICISM VS THE BIBLE

I Jn. 4:1

No. 2

### INTRODUCTION:

1. Numerous prophecies in the Bible clearly reveal there would be a departure from the faith. I Tim. 4:1; 2 Thess. 2:lff.
2. Paul told the elders from Ephesus that "even among your own selves" (Acts 20: 29-31) there would be some to depart.
3. In our first lesson, we observed why we have the New Testament church, the form of government God set up and the prophecies of departure.
4. In this study, let's observe:

### DISCUSSION:

#### I. WHAT BROUGHT ABOUT THE DEPARTURE FROM THE FAITH AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MONARCHIAL EPISCOPACY?

- A. It arose out of a very definite need, at the end of the first century and beginning of the second, due to outward circumstances.
- B. Roman Catholicism says the church is made up of the Episcopacy. The church is in the bishop and the bishop is in the church. When the priest gives the rules a man is in the church and they are saved. Cyprian states that the people realizing the need caused the development of the Monarchical Episcopacy.
- C. The Catholics say the bishop is the go-between God and men and must have some authority.
- D. Worldliness demanded one with some authority and as the church became more worldly the Episcopacy developed.
- E. Secularism (worldliness) and the Episcopacy developed together and they go hand in hand.

#### II. WHAT OF THE STAGES OF THE DEPARTURE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE EPISCOPACY?

- A. First stage - appears in the writings of Ignatius, 115 A.D.
  1. The Episcopal was developed as an office of a local congregation. (One man called bishop over the elders).
  2. Ignatius never mentions the bishop of the church over any but just one congregation.
  3. Ignatius wrote a letter to Onesiphorus, the bishop of the church at Ephesus, and told the people to listen to their bishop and follow his dictates.
  4. Ignatius pictures the bishop as the Vicar of Christ and not the successors of the apostles. To Ignatius, Christ was head over the local congregation.
  5. Ignatius made no distinction between the bishops, but placed them all on the same level.
- B. Second stage - Exemplified in writings of Irenaeus, 185-190 A. D.
  1. Irenaeus used the terms bishops and elders with same meaning as Ignatius, but at other times he used the term bishop as head over a diocese. (Explain diocese).
  2. A definite trend is seen in the stage of this age of bishop being head over a diocese, not just one congregation.
- C. Third stage - In writings of Cyprian, 250 A.D.
  1. Episcopacy is fully developed in this stage.
  2. Cyprian states that your bishop is the one that has the Holy Spirit in him and he is the successor of the apostles.
  3. Cyprian is quoted by the Roman Catholics for this remark, "The church is in the bishop and the bishop is in the church." No salvation outside of the bishop.
  4. Cyprian speaks of the bishops over the diocese as being equal, although the episcopacy has fully developed.
  5. Out of all this developed the Metropolitan Episcopal.



- a. Bishops in the large cities and cities of the apostles were given the preeminence.
  - b. Such cities as Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople, and Rome came to the front.
  - c. Finally it narrowed down to Constantinople and Rome.
- D. Finally the development of the Pope.
1. Rome, by about 600 A.D. had forged to the front, although not recognized by Constantinople.
  2. There was a desire, a lean toward the idea of an outward symbol, something they could see, on the part of the people and this desire played a prominent part in the development of the Pope.
  3. The bishop of Rome was given preeminence because Rome was head of the Roman Empire.
  4. Finally in 440 A.D., Pope Leo I suggested that Matt. 16:18 (first time used) gave Peter preeminence over the other apostles and since Peter was bishop in Rome then the bishop in Rome ought to have the title of Universal Bishop.
  5. Philip Schaff calls Gregory the Great "the last of the Latin Fathers and first of the Popes." (Although Gregory claimed the office, he rejected the title Universal Bishop).
  6. Boniface III, in 606 A.D. was really the first pope to claim both the office and the title Universal Bishop or Pope.

### III. WHAT WERE SOME OF THE PRACTICES INTRODUCED AND WHEN?

#### A. Holy Water. 120 A. D.

1. Holy water was used by the heathen at the entrance of their temples to sprinkle themselves, "Hence, was derived the custom of Holy Church to provide purifying or holy water at the entrance of their churches." (History of Apostasies, Rowe, p. 5).
2. It seems that its first use was to be placed at the doors of the buildings and the members of the church would dip their hands upon entrance into the building.
3. Whatever may have been its use at first, many spiritual virtues are now attributed to its use.
  - a. To frighten away devils.
  - b. To remit venial sins.
  - c. To cure distractions,
  - d. To elevate the mind.
  - e. To dispose it to devotion.
  - f. To obtain grace.
  - g. To prepare for the sacrament.

#### B. Purgatory. 593 A.D.

1. Although Origen (230 A.D.) "seems to have been the first to pave the way for the evolution of purgatory" it was Gregory the Great who "developed and popularized" the doctrine of purgatory. (Philip Schaff, History of the Christian Church, Vol. 4, p. 398).
2. The Catholic Church's teaching about purgatory is this:
  - a. "There exists in the next life a middle state of temporary punishment allotted for those who died in venial sin, or who have not satisfied the justice of God for sins already forgiven."
  - b. "The souls consigned to this intermediate state, commonly called purgatory, cannot help themselves, they may be added by the suffrages of the faithful on earth."
  - c. "This naturally implies the correlative dogma - the utility of praying for the dead." (Faith of Our Fathers, James C. Gibbons, p. 210).

3. Bro. Earl West summed up the Catholic Doctrine of Purgatory, about like this: "A Catholic dies who is not a wicked man, but he lacks a little being good to go to heaven. He is sent to purgatory "where the soul is purified by some kind of fire." Other Catholics who have died before him had more good works than they really needed to get to heaven. These extra works are placed in a 'good works bank.' The friends of the departed one in purgatory pay the priest, the priest prays and some good deeds are added to the man's soul and little by little he is good enough to go to heaven. The amount of time generally depends on the wealth of the family."

C. Instrumental music.

1. The only music in the early church was vocal. Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16.
2. The use of the organ in churches is generally ascribed to Pope Vitalian about 666 A. D. (History of the Christian Church, Schaff, Vol. 4, p. 439). Didn't have widespread use until about 8th Century.
3. Along about the 13th Century the organ and other instruments began to be used freely.

D. Indulgences. 1016 A.D.

1. Indulgences were first limited "to the remission of venial sins by the payment of money and on the condition of contrition and prayer."
  - a. It was justified by the idea that the extra works of saints constitute a treasury of good works in the hands of the pope.
  - b. Hence the pope could grant indulgences or remission of sins upon payment of money, and this power was extended even to benefit the dead in purgatory.
  - c. Indulgence "simply means that God in His mercy will accept the satisfactory works of some members of the church for the benefit of others" (National Catholic Register, August 31, 1958).
2. John Tetzel even went beyond that and told the people "Come and I will give you letters, all properly sealed, by which even the sins that you intend to commit may be pardoned." (History of the Reformation of the 16th Century, Vol. 1, D'Aubigne, p. 241).

E. Penance. 1215 A.D.

1. "This idea that when a man sins he repents and prays to God to be forgiven is too simple." (Acts 8:22).
2. Penance includes three acts:
  - a. Attrition-Sorrow for past sins and determination to do better.
  - b. Confession and absolution.
    - (1) Must privately confess every type of sin to the priest.
    - (2) The priest then says "I absolve thee..."
  - c. Satisfaction - Some work imposed on the penitent. (History of the Christian Church, Schaff, Vol. 4, p. 382-83).

F. Sprinkling.

1. The Catholic Church admits that "for several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion... Faith Of Our Fathers, James C. Gibbons, p. 277).
2. In 251 A. D. Novation had water poured over him in bed. Became known as "clinical baptism."
3. In Ravenna, Italy, in 1311 A. D. the pope and his cardinals made sprinkling a law.
4. The highest authority for sprinkling and pouring is the Roman Catholic Church.

Iv. WHAT ARE SOME BELIEFS AND PRACTICES OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH TODAY?

- A. What does she believe about the pope?



1. "The Catholic Church teaches also, that our Lord conferred on St. Peter the first place of honor and jurisdiction in the government of His whole Church, and that the same spiritual supremacy has always resided in the Popes, or Bishops of Rome, as being the successors of St. Peter. Consequently, to be true followers of Christ, all Christians both among the clergy and the laity, must be in communion with the See of Rome, which Peter rules in the person of his successor." (Faith Of Our Fathers, p. 95).
2. The Catholic Church believes the Pope is infallible. "It simply means that the pope, as successor of St. Peter, Prince of the Apostles, by virtue of the promises of Jesus Christ, is preserved from error of judgement when he promulgates to the Church a decision on faith or morals." (Ibid, p. 123).
3. "The whole structure of the Roman Catholic Church is built on the assumption that in Matt. 16:13-19, Christ appointed Peter the first pope and so established the papacy. Destroy the primacy of Peter, and the foundation of the papacy is destroyed. Destroy the Papacy, and the whole Poman hierarchy topples with it." (Roman Catholicism, p.105)
  - a. Matthew 16:13-19 does not teach that Jesus appointed Peter the first Pope.

(1) In the Greek, the word Peter is Petros, a person, masculine, while the word "rock, petra is feminine and refers not to a person but to the declaration of Christ's deity that Peter had just uttered.

(2) The authority to bind and loose was given to all the apostles and not just to Peter. (Matt. 18:1,18).

b. There is no proof that Peter was ever in Rome at least at the time he was supposed to be Pope (42-67 A.D., they claim).

(1) The word Rome occurs nine times in the Bible, and Peter is never mentioned in connection with the city.

(2) In Paul's letter to the Romans, he mentions 27 names, but Peter is not among them.

(3) In Paul's four letters - Ephesians, Philippians, Collossians, and Philemon - written while Paul was in prison at Rome never mentions Peter.

(4) In 2 Tim. 4:10,11, Paul, in prison at Rome, said all his friends have forsaken him except Luke. Where was Peter?

(5) Furthermore the apostles were witnesses (Acts 1:8) and witnesses can not have successors.

B. What Does she believe about the Bible?

1. "We must therefore, conclude that the Scriptures alone cannot be a sufficient guide and rule of faith because they cannot, at any time, be within the reach of the inquirer; because they are not of themselves clear and intelligible even in matters of highest importance, and because they do not contain all the truths necessary for salvation." (Faith of Our Fathers, p. 89,90).

2. The Roman Catholic Church claims three sources of authority - The Bible, the sayings of the Pope, and teachings of the Church Fathers.

3. The Bible claims to be sufficient guide. 2 Peter 1:3,4; 2 Tim. 3:16,17.

CONCLUSION:

1. It is easy to see that the Roman Catholic Church is a "far cry" from the church one reads about in the Bible.
2. The Roman Church down through the years has added and changed God's word.
3. Our plea is for each one to get back to the Bible and the New Testament Church.



THE CATHOLICS  
WORSHIP AND DOCTRINE

①

MASS

I. THE MASS.

A. What Do Catholics Mean By The Mass?

1. "The word Mass is derived by some from the Hebrew term Missach ( Deut. 16:) which means a free offering." ( Gibbons), " Faith of our Fathers, P. 311)
2. "The sacrifice of the Mass is the consecration of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and the oblation of this body and blood to God, by the ministry of the Priest, for a perpetual memorial of Christ's sacrifice on the cross. The Sacrifice of the Mass is identical with that of the cross, both having the same victim and High Priest - Jesus Christ." (Faith of Our Fathers, p. 311)
3. In the O.T. there were different kinds of sacrifices offered for different purposes -
  - (1) Sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving, (2) Sacrifice of propitiation to ask his blessings for the sins of the people, and (3) sacrifices of supplication to his blessing and protection.
  - a. " When a Priest celebrates Mass he honors God, he rejoices the angels, he edifies the church, he helps the living, he obtains rest for the dead, and makes himself a partaker of all that is good." ( Gibbons, p. 317)
  - b. "First, the Mass is a sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.
  - c. "Second, The Mass is also a sacrifice of propitiation.
  - d. "Third, the Sacrifice of the Mass is, in fine, a sacrifice of supplication," ( Gibbons, p. 319)
4. "In the New York Catechism we read: "Jesus Christ gave us the sacrifice of the Mass to leave to His Church a visible sacrifice which continues His sacrifice on the cross until the end of time. The Mass is the same sacrifice as the sacrifice of the cross (italics ours). Holy Communion is the receiving of the body and blood of Jesus Christ under the appearance of bread and wine." (Roman Catholicism, p. 168)
5. " The Creed of pope Pius IV, which is one of the official creeds of the Roman Church, says: " I profess that in the Mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice ( that is, a sacrifice which satisfies the justice of God and so offsets the penalty for sin) for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist there is truly, and substantially, the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is a conversion of the whole substance of the bread INTO the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which the Catholic Church calls Transubstantiation." ( Roman Catholicism, p. 169)
6. "The Council of Trent declared: " The sacrifice ( in the Mass) is identical with the sacrifice of the Cross, inasmuch as Jesus Christ is a priest and victim both. The only difference lies in the manner of offering, which is bloody upon the cross and bloodless on our altars." ( Roman Catholicism, p. 169)
7. "A Roman Catholic, John A. O'Brien, whose books are widely read, says: "The Mass with its colorful vestments and vivid ceremonies is a dramatic re-enactment in an unbloody manner of the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary." ( R.C. p. 169)



3. The Altar boys.

- a. Ring the bell three times to warn congregation of this solemn part because up to this point most if may be in Latin.

D. The Different kinds of Mass.

"One very prominent feature of the mass as conducted in the Roman Church is the financial support which it brings in. It is by all odds the largest income producing ceremony in the church. An elaborate system has been worked out. In the United States low mass, for the benefit of a soul in purgatory, read by the priest in a low tone of voice and without music, costs a minimum of one dollar. The high mass, on Sundays and holydays, sung by the priest in a loud voice, with music and choir, costs a minimum of ten dollars. The usual price for high mass is twenty-five to thirty-five dollars. The high requiem mass (at funerals), and the high nuptial mass (at weddings), may cost much more, even hundreds of dollars, depending on the number and rank of the priests taking part, the display of flowers, the music, candles, etc. Prices vary in the different dioceses and according to the ability of the parishioners to pay. No masses are said without money. The Irish have a saying: High money, high mass, low money, low mass; no money, no mass.

In regard to the various kinds of masses, there are: (1) Votive masses, made for various purposes, such as relief of one suffering in purgatory, recovery from sickness, success in a business venture, a safe journey, protection against storms, floods, drouths, etc; (2) Requiem or funeral masses, in behalf of the dead; (3) Nuptial masses, at marriages; and (4) Pontifical masses, conducted by a bishop or other dignitary. Each of these is available in high or low mass, and at various prices.

On Purgatory Day, November 2 of each year, three masses are said, two for the souls in purgatory and one for the "intentions" of the pope. which "intentions", we may assume, are directed for the good of the offerer. Every member of the church is urged to attend on that day. The priest of a church of 500 members may reasonably expect to take in from \$500 to \$5000 on that day.

The most popular mass is that to alleviate or terminate the suffering of souls in purgatory." (Roman Catholicism, p. 185)

E. Answers To The Mass.

1. The Apostle Paul says that by one sacrifice he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified Heb. 10:10-14. Catholics are still doing what Paul said was completed 2,000 years ago!

a. Objections: It is true that one bloody sacrifice but our is an unbloody sacrifice and needs to be done over and over.

b. Answer to objection: You say that this unbloody sacrifice takes away sin, but Paul says without shedding of blood there is no remission ( Heb. 9:22) Since there is no blood in this sacrifice it cannot be for sin.

2. Under the Levitical law a sin offering was not be eaten. If the Mass is a sin offering then you are eating that which God forbids.

3. The Lord's Supper is an memorial. The memorial is not the real thing, but serves only as a reminder of the real thing. In your doctrine it becomes the real thing.

II. CATHOLIC PLACE MUCH EMPHASIS ON GOD'S GRACE WHICH COMES TO MAN THROUGH PRAYER AND SEVEN SACRAMENTS.

A. What Is A Sacrament?

5/20/12



## E. Penance.

1. " Penance is a sacrament in which the sins committed after baptism are forgiven by means of the absolution of the priest.....The priest gives a penance after confession that we may satisfy God for the temporal punishment due to our sins. We must accept the penance which the priest gives to us." ( Roman Catholicism, p. 191 )
2. One receives additional grace for actual sins committed after baptism through the sacrament of penance. " According to Roman teaching a person can commit two kinds of sin against God: mortal and venial. By mortal sin is meant a grave offense against the law of God or of the church. It is called 'mortal' because it kills the soul by depriving it entirely of sanctifying grace. Venial sin is a small and pardonable offense against God and the laws of the church. Then, this confusing and unscriptural doctrine continues: Two kinds of punishment are due to mortal sin, eternal ( in hell forever), and temporal ( in purgatory). Eternal punishment is cancelled by the sacraments of baptism and extreme unction, or by an act of perfect contrition with promise of confession. Temporal punishment is not cancelled by these sacraments, but by works of penance, by almsgiving, by paying the priest to say mass, by indulgences, etc. Which reduce the temporal punishment for mortal sins that would have to be suffered in purgatory. Thus even if all mortal sins of a Roman Catholic are forgiven in confession by a priest, and he does not perform enough of these 'good works', he will go to purgatory and remain there in torture until his soul is completely purified." ( Roman Catholicism, p. 218)
3. Penance Includes:
  - a. Contrition - " Genuine sorrow and firm resolution to change.
  - b. Confession - " Confession is the telling of our sins to an authorized priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness." ( Roman Catholicism, p. 196) - Defined by the Baltimore Catechism.
    2. The New York Catechism says: " I must tell my sins to the priest so that he will give me absolution. I shall go to confession often...to fulfill a condition for gaining certain indulgences.....A person who knowingly keeps back a mortal sin in confession commits a dreadful sacrilege, and he must repeat his confession...The sacrament of penance remits the mortal sins and their eternal punishment; it revives the merits annulled by the mortal sins, and gives a special grace to avoid sin in the future."
    3. A book " Instruction for Non-Catholics" says: " The priest does not have to ask God to forgive your sins. The priest himself has the power to do so in Christ's name. Your sins are forgiven by the priest the same as if you knelt before Jesus Christ and told them to Christ Himself." ( Roman Catholicism, p. 197)
  - c. Absolution - Once the priest is convinced of the two above he says " I absolve thee in the name of the Father and the Son, and the Holy Ghost". ( Father of Our Fathers, p. 359)
  - d. Penance involves certain acts or deeds designated by the priest according to nature of the sin.



## SOME MORE BELIEFS OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

### A. What do Catholics believe about Mary?

1. They believe Christ was born of the Virgin Mary. (Catechism of the Catholic Church p. 122).
2. Immaculate Conception.
  - a. She was redeemed from the moment of her conception. (p. 123)
  - b. “The most “Blessed Virgin Mary, from the moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of Almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, presumed immune from all stain of original sin.” (p. 124)
  - c. “By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long.” (p. 124)
  - d. “Hence the Church confesses that Mary is truly, “Mother of God.” (p. 125)
  - e. Mary remained an eternal virgin. She never had any more children.
    - (1) The Bible teaches she had other children. (Matt. 13:55-56)
    - (2) The Catholic Church “has always understood these passages as not referring to other children of the Virgin Mary. . .but another Mary. . .” (p. 126)
2. Assumption
  - a. “. . .when the course of her earthly life was finished, she was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things . . .” (p. 252)
  - b. She continues to make intercession. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. . .” (p. 252)

### B. What do they believe about the interpretation of scripture? (II Pet. 1:20-21)

1. “the task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been instructed solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him.” (p. 32)
2. “this means that the task of interpretation has been entrusted to the bishops in communion with the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome.” (p.27)
3. “It (Holy Spirit, J.M.) transmits it to the successor of the apostles so that, enlightened by the Spirit of truth, they may faithfully preserve, expound, and spread it abroad by preaching.” (p. 26)



- \_\_\_ Its purpose is to give strength to the body and soul at the point of death.
- \_\_\_ It can also be given to one who has just died.
- \_\_\_ It is also believed that sins are forgiven by the ritual of last rites even though one has not repented or asked forgiveness.

E. The Catholic Church also teaches celibacy for the “clergy.” It is sinful for them to marry.

1. Marriage between an eligible man and woman is not sinful. (Heb. 13:4)
2. The Bible teaches that bishops must be married. (I Tim. 3:1ff)
3. Forbidding to marry is a doctrine of devils. (I Tim. 4:1-3)
4. Recent sex scandals in the Catholic Church proves this idea of man is faulty.

*next page*

F. Many Catholic ideas have influenced non-Catholics:

1. Christmas as the birthday of Christ.
2. Lent –fasting before Easter.
3. Easter as the resurrection day of Christ.
4. Only especially good people are “saints.” (I Cor. 1:2; 6:11)

G. Many changes are taking place in the Roman Catholic Church.

1. Cardinal Gibbons said of the Catholic Church, “She is the one institution that never changes.” (Faith of Our Fathers, p. 83)
2. Masses are now said in the language of the people.
3. Laymen may choose to confess sitting down with the priest rather than in the confessional.
4. There is a large charismatic movement involving thousands of Catholics.
5. There is widespread criticism of celibacy, birth control, and abortion.
6. Both the bread and the wine are now given to the “laity.”
7. “St.” Christopher has been “de-sainted.”
8. Abstaining from meat eating on Fridays is no longer required.



\*"9,13: Saints: those separated from other men and united to Christ. THEY are sanctified by the presence in Him of the Holy Spirit."

-Footnote, Acts 9:13  
-C. O. C. D. E.(1941)

\*"PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is at Corinth, with ALL THE SAINTS that are in the whole of Achaia. . ." 2 Cor. 1:1

\*"1,1: The Saints: cf. Glossary." Footnote, 2 Cor. 1:1

\*"SAINTS. A common term in the Old Testament to designate those who belong to God, it was applied in the New Testament to those WHO BELIEVED IN CHRIST. It first occurs in Acts 9,13, and is frequent in the writings of St Paul. THOSE ARE SAINTS who are separated from other men, are attached to the glorious Christ, and are sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

- GLOSSARY  
C.O.C.D.E.(1941)

"In the exposition of her Creed the Catholic Church weighs her words in the scales of the sanctuary with as much precision as a banker weighs his gold."

-Gibbons  
Faith Of Our Fathers

PRIESTLY CELIBACY:

"CELIBACY of the clergy. The law of the Western Church forbids persons living in the married state to be ordained, and persons in holy orders to marry. . .

"The principles which have induced the Church to impose celibacy on her clergy are (a) that they may serve God with less restraint, and with undivided heart (see I Cor. VII.32); and (b) that, being called to the altar, they may embrace the life of continence, which is holier than that of marriage. . . . the Council of Trent, sess. XXIV. De Matr. can. 10, anathematizes those who deny that 'it is more blessed to remain in virginity or in celibacy than to be joined in marriage.' Thus ALL CATHOLICS ARE BOUND TO HOLD THAT CELIBACY IS THE PREFERABLE STATE, and that it is SPECIALLY desirable for the clergy."

Scripture:

"And when Jesus had come into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law. . ."  
Matt. 8:14

"ST PETER. . . WAS MARRIED." "THE CATHOLIC ANSWER"  
-OUR SUNDAY VISITOR PRESS

"St. Jerome says that if any were married they certainly separated from their wives after they were called to the Apostolate. Even St. Peter, after his vocation, did not continue with his wife, as may be inferred from his own words: 'Behold, we have left all things, and followed thee.'"

MT. 19:27

-Gibbons  
Faith Of Our Fathers



## 2. Annulment - Catholic Doctrine

1. An annulment is a "declaration by a Tribunal to the Church that a marriage never legally existed."
2. What is the difference between an Annulment and a Divorce?
  - a. A divorce is a dissolution by a civil court of an existing union.
  - b. An annulment declares that there never was a valid union."
  - c. In 1968 only 338 annulments were granted
  - d. In 1978 some 27,670 were granted



Chapter Eleven  
*ROD RUTHERFORD*  
**The Roman Catholic Church**

**Introduction:**

1. The Roman Catholic Church bears five distinctions:
  - a. It is the oldest denomination in the world.
  - b. It is the mother of all other denominations.
  - c. It is the largest denomination in the world.
  - d. It is the most powerful denomination in the world.
  - e. It is the most corrupt denomination in the world.
2. It is as much a political organization as it is a religious organization.

**Discussion:**

**I. The Origin and History of the Roman Catholic Church.**

- A. Jesus, Paul, Peter, and the other new Testament writers foretold a great apostasy from the faith (Matt. 7:13-23; Acts 20:28-32; 2 Thess. 2:1-12; 1 Tim. 4:1-5; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; Jude 3,4).
- B. Paul spoke of a falling away and the rise of "the man of sin" (2 Thess. 2:1-12).
- C. The Holy spirit testified that some would:
  1. Forbid marriage.
  2. Command abstinence from meats (1 Tim. 4:1-5).
- D. The Roman Catholic Church grew out of the New Testament church and is a corruption of it.
- E. It divided in 1054.
  1. The division, brought about by the Iconoclastic Controversy, was over the use of images in worship.
  2. The Eastern Church opposed images while the Western Church supported their use.
  3. The Eastern Church became known as the Greek Orthodox Church.
- G. The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century broke the stranglehold Roman Catholicism had on the Western world.

1. Catholics who are not good enough to go to Heaven at death go to a temporary place to be purged of their sins.
  2. Purgatory is nowhere taught in the Word of God.
  3. Catholics say indulgences can be bought to bring early release of souls from Purgatory.
  4. The Bible teaches that there is no second chance; one's destiny is sealed at death (Heb. 9:27; Luke 16:19-31).
- J. They teach that the bread and fruit of the vine become the actual body and blood of Jesus in the Mass, **transubstantiation**.
1. When Jesus said, "This is my body. . . This is my blood," He was using a metaphor.
  2. He was in His body with His blood flowing in His veins when He instituted the supper.
  3. The Lord's supper is a memorial, not a sacrifice ( I Cor. 11:24).
- K. They do not teach the plan of salvation.
1. They believe in original sin (Deut. 24:16; Ezek. 18:20; I John 3:4; Jas. 4:17).
  2. They "baptize" infants (Rom. 10:17; John 8:24; Matt 10:32; Luke 13:3; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12).
  3. They commonly sprinkle for baptism (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12; Acts 8:36-39).

**Conclusion:**

1. The Council of Trent which met from 1545 to 1563 "solidified" Catholic doctrine.
  2. The Syllabus of Errors in 1870 made official a doctrine Catholics had taught for centuries--that when the pope was speaking **ex cathedra** (from the papal throne), he could not err.
- F 3.** Many Catholic ideas have influenced non-Catholics:
- a. Christmas as the birthday of Christ.
  - b. Lent--fasting before Easter.
  - c. Easter as the resurrection day of Christ.
  - d. Only especially good people are "saints" (I Cor. 1:2; 6:11).
4. The membership of the Roman Catholic Church is approximately one billion!

3. We must not add to, take from, or go beyond the Bible (Deut. 4:2; Prov. 30:6; 2 John 9-11; Rev. 22:18,19; Gal. 1:6-9).
  4. Following the doctrines, commandments and traditions of men makes void the Word of God (Matt. 15:9,13,14).
  5. One can read and understand the Bible for himself (John 5:39; Acts 17:11; Eph. 3:3,4).
- D. They believe the church is founded upon Peter, "the rock" (Matt. 16:16-19).
1. Peter (Cephas) is a **rock** (John 1:42).
  2. In Matt. 16:18, two words are used for "rock."
    - a. "Petros," a small stone, is transliterated as "Peter."
    - b. "Petra," a ledge of rock, is the rock upon which the church is built.
  3. The "rock" in Matt. 16:18 upon which the church is built is the truth that "Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Matt. 16:16; cf. Acts 4:11,12; I Cor. 3:11; 10:4; Eph. 2:19-22; I Pet. 2:3-8).
- E. They teach that Peter was the first pope and had the power to forgive or retain sins as have all succeeding popes.
1. Peter was promised the "keys of the kingdom" and he used them to open the kingdom to Jews on Pentecost and to Gentiles at the house of Cornelius (Matt 16:19; Acts 2; Acts 10).
  2. The power to bind and loose was given to the other apostles as well as to Peter (Matt. 18:18).
  3. There are seven reasons why Peter could not have been a pope:
    - a. He was "an elder," not "**the** elder" (I Pet. 5:1).
    - b. He was a sinful, fallible man (Matt. 26:31-35; 69-75; Gal. 2:11-14).
    - c. He refused homage and worship (Acts 10:25, 26).
    - d. He was a married man (Matt 8:14,15; I Cor. 9:5).
    - e. Christ is the head of the church (Eph. 1:22,23; Col. 1:18).
    - f. There is no historical proof that Peter was ever in Rome.
      - 1) It is strange, if Peter were in Rome, that Paul did not mention him when writing to the Romans (Rom. 16).



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CATHOLICISM  
(From Catholic Authorities)

APOSTOLICITY:

"The Roman Church is Apostolic, because her doctrine IS THE FAITH ONCE REVEALED TO THE APOSTLES, which faith she guards and explains, without adding to or taking from it; because the orders of her clergy COME by unbroken succession FROM THE APOSTLES: . . ."

Article, "Church of Christ"  
--A CATHOLIC DICTIONARY  
By Wm. E. Addis and Thos. Arnold  
Imprimatur: John Cardinal McCloskey  
Archbishop of N. Y.

"The true Church MUST BE APOSTOLICAL. . . .  
"This attribute or note of the Church implies that the true Church must always teach the IDENTICAL DOCTRINES ONCE DELIVERED BY THE APOSTLES. . . .

"Consequently, no church can claim to be the true one WHOSE DOCTRINES DIFFER FROM THOSE OF THE APOSTLES. . . .

"To discover therefore, the Church of Christ among the various conflicting claimants we have to inquire, first, which church teaches WHOLE AND ENTIRE THOSE DOCTRINES THAT WERE TAUGHT BY THE APOSTLES; . . .

"The Catholic Church ALONE teaches doctrines which are IN ALL RESPECTS IDENTICAL WITH THOSE OF THE FIRST TEACHERS OF THE GOSPEL."

--THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS  
by James Cardinal Gibbons  
Archbishop of Baltimore  
(Chapter V: Apostolicity)

"The true church of Christ must be APOSTOLIC; that is she must be a church which did not spring up in modern times, or ever separate herself from any other church, but is the very Church once founded by Jesus Christ and the apostles, although now become more unfolded, a nobly spreading tree which was once but a small plant."

--CATHOLIC BELIEF  
by Very Rev. Joseph Fai di Bruno, D. D.  
Imprimatur: His Eminence Cardinal  
Manning, Archbishop of Westminster

(Note: That the ROMAN CHURCH is NOT "the true church of Christ," DOES NOT TEACH "the identical doctrines once delivered by the Apostles" "without adding to or taking from" will be proved BY HER OWN AUTHORITIES AND ADMISSIONS---DMN)

BAPTISM--THE ACT:

Scripture: "Buried with him in baptism" - Rom. 6:3; Col. 2:12  
"Planted with him" - Rom. 6:5

Lexicons: All define it "to dip, plunge, submerge, overwhelm, immerse" etc.; none pouring, infusion, or aspersion.

Catholic Authorities:

". . . the Church exercises her discretion in adopting the most convenient mode, according to the circumstances of time and place, FOR SEVERAL CENTURIES AFTER THE ESTABLISHMENT OF CHRISTIANITY BAPTISM WAS USUALLY CONFERRED BY IMMERSION; but since the twelfth century the practice of baptising by infusion has prevailed IN THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, AS this manner is attended with less inconvenience than Baptism by immersion."

--THE FAITH OF OUR FATHERS  
by James Cardinal Gibbons  
Archbishop of Baltimore  
(Chapter XIX, p 266)

"It is a fact most certainly avowed in the Reformation, although at present some will cavil at it, that baptism was instituted by immersing the whole body into water; that Jesus Christ received it so, and caused it to be so given by his apostles; that the scriptures know no other baptism than this; THAT ANTIQUITY SO UNDERSTOOD AND PRACTICED IT: THAT THE WORD ITSELF IMPLIES IT, TO BAPTIZE BEING THE SAME AS TO DIP. . . ."

--HISTORY OF THE VARIATIONS OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES  
by Jacques Benigne Bossuet  
Bishop of Condom and Meaus, and  
Privy Counselor of Louis XIV

"When entering the water, we make profession of the Christian faith  
". . . .  
". . . .the act of baptism itself is carnal, in that WE ARE PLUNGED  
IN WATER, but the effect is spiritual, in that we are freed from  
sins."  
"DE SPECTACULIS"  
"ON BAPTISM"

by Tertullian  
--ANTE-NICENE FATHERS  
Vol III, pp 81, 672

". . . because he who is baptized IS PUT UNDER THE WATER, and by this bears a likeness of him that was buried, who is put under the earth."  
"ANNOTATIONS," Rom. VI, 4  
Cajetan (Cardinal)  
by ("Opera Amnia," Lyons 1639

"For as Jesus. . .so thou also, by descending into the water; and in some sense BEING IN THE WATERS BURIED, as he was in the Rock, are raised again, to walk in newness of life."

--CACHETICAL LECTURES  
by Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem,  
4th Century  
(Lecture III; par 12)

"For immersion represents to us Christ's burial, and so also his death, since none but the dead are buried. Moreover, the emersion which follows the immersion, has a resemblance to the resurrection. WE ARE THERE IN BAPTISM CONFORMED NOT ONLY TO THE DEATH OF CHRIST, as he has just said, BUT ALSO TO HIS BURIAL AND RESURRECTION."

"COMMENTARY ON ST. PAUL'S EPISTLES"  
(Rom. VI. 3)  
by D. Guillemo Estius,  
Chancellor of the University of  
Douay, France

"The church has always been tender towards the sick; she has always hastened to confer baptism upon them, because it is necessary to salvation; and for that reason SHE INTRODUCED CLINICAL BAPTISM."

--HISTORY OF THE COUNCILS OF THE CHURCH  
by Karl Joseph Hefele  
Bishop of Rottenburg

"In Apostolic times the body of the baptized person was immersed, for St. Paul looks on this immersion as typifying burial with Christ, and speaks of baptism as a bath. (Rom. 6:4; Eph. 5:26)

--A CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

#### BAPTISM-SUBJECTS.

Scripture: (Scripture references given herein are from the Catholic Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Edition of the Bible) (1941)

"Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, . . ." Matt. 11:28  
"No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draw him, and I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they all shall be taught of God.' Everyone who has



listened to the Father , and HAS LEARNED, comes to me;..."

John 6:44-45

". . .and without faith it is impossible to please God. FOR HE WHO COMES TO GOD MUST BELIEVE THAT GOD EXISTS and is a rewarder of those who seek him."

Hebrews 11:6

"Go, therefore, and MAKE DISCIPLES of all nations, baptizing THEM in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, TEACHING THEM to observe all that I have commanded you. . ."

Matt. 28:19-20

"Go into the whole world and preach the gospel TO EVERY CREATURE. He who BELIEVES and is baptized shall be saved."

Mark 16: 15-16

"REPENT and be baptized every one of you. . ."

Acts 2:38

Catholic Authorities

"On this account therefore our Savior did not simply command to baptize, but FIRST says, TEACH; AND THEN 'Baptize into the name of the Father, and Son and Holy Ghost;' that the right faith might follow upon learning, and together with faith MIGHT COME TO THE CONSECRATION OF BAPTISM."

- "SELECT TREATISES, IV"  
Disc. II., Chapter XVIII  
-Athanasius

"And so, according to the circumstances and disposition, and even age, of each individual, the delay of baptism is preferable; PRINCIPALLY, however, IN THE CASE OF LITTLE CHILDREN. . .let them become Christians WHEN THEY HAVE BECOME ABLE TO KNOW CHRIST."

"ON BAPTISM," Chapter XVIII

-Tertullian  
(Ante-Nicene Fathers, Vol. III., p 678)

\*\*\*\*\*  
\* "The earliest definite mention of the Baptism of Infants is at \*  
\* the close of the second century by Tertullian at Carthage." \*  
\* "Tertullian is the first writer in the Church who makes any ex- \*  
\* press mention of the custom of infant baptism. Before his time, \*  
\* A. D. 200, there is not an allusion to the custom from which \*  
\* its existence may be fairly inferred." \*  
\* -Joseph A Beet, Wesleyan Methodist, Theological College, \*  
\* Richmond, England (1885-1905); Albert T. Bledsoe, Methodist \*  
\* \*\*\*\*\*

IMMACULATE CONCEPTION:

"The Catholic Church teaches that in all other human beings descended from Adam, the soul, when created, and united by God to the infant body yet unborn ( . . . ) necessarily contracts, by thus becoming a child of fallen Adam, the stain of original sin, which can afterwards be washed away by having the merits of Jesus Christ applied to it; but that, with the Blessed Virgin Mary it was otherwise, for, at the very instant in which her soul was created and infused into her body, she was preserved from contracting the stain of original sin, by having sanctifying grace bestowed upon her in the very first moment of her existence, and this through the foreseen merits of Jesus Christ, her Son, which were applied to her in the way of prevention, and, therefore, in a special and more perfect manner."

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

Scripture Offered: (Gen. 3:15. Only one)

"I will put enmities between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed."

Argument: "Woman", Mary; "Seed," Christ. Enmity between Christ and Satan "perpetual. . . and excludes sin of all kind."

"But the same enmity, it is here declared by God, should exist between the woman (that is, the Blessed Virgin Mary) and the evil spirit."

"Therefore it follows that the enmity which exists between the-

Virgin Mary and the devil must be a perpetual one, necessarily excluding all sin, and therefore, also original sin, which of itself suffices to enslave a person to the devil."

-CATHOLIC BELIEF

Scripture:

"And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women."

Luke 1:28

"And the angel said unto her, Fear not. Mary: for thou hast found favor with God."

Luke 1:30

"St Thomas. . . argues that if the Virgin had not incurred the stain of original guilt, she would have stood in no need of being saved and redeemed by Christ, whereas Christ, as the Apostle declares, is the savior of all men." (in 13th century)

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

Catholic Authorities:

"It is true that before the solemn definition of this doctrine a diversity of opinion WAS TOLERATED BY THE CHURCH, and maintained by some Catholic theologians, who were not on that account accused of heresy, but this diversity was because the Church had not yet given an explicit definition on the subject, and some of the terms employed in debate in the divinity schools of that time were not sufficiently precise and definite, and a clear distinction between active and passive conception was not made."

"The doctrine was solemnly defined as an article of faith by Pope Pius IX., speaking ex cathedra on the 8th. December, 1854, as follows: 'By the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed apostles Peter and Paul, and BY OUR OWN AUTHORITY, we declare, pronounce and define that the doctrine, which holds that the most Blessed Virgin Mary, in the first instant of her conception, by a special grace and privilege of Almighty God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of mankind, was preserved free from all stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, (?) and, therefore, is to be firmly and steadfastly believed by all the faithful."

"Wherefore if any shall presume, which may God avert, TO THINK IN THEIR HEART OTHERWISE than has been defined BY US, let them know, and moreover, understand, THAT THEY ARE CONDEMNED by their own judgment, that they have made shipwreck as regards the faith, and HAVE FALLEN AWAY FROM THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH."

--CATHOLIC BELIEF

(Before 1864 they could believe and teach otherwise without being guilty of heresy! ACCORDING TO A POPE! See below.)

"The controversy, so far as we know, began in the twelfth century."

"... Gregory XV., in 1622, strictly forbade anyone to maintain, even in private discussions, that the Blessed Virgin was conceived in original sin. He made an exception, however, in favor of the Dominicans, to whom he granted leave to maintain their own opinion in discussions held within their own order, and he was careful to add that he in no way meant to decide the theological question, but on the contrary, FORBODE ANYONE TO ACCUSE THOSE WHO DENIED THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION OF HERESY OR MORTAL SIN."

--CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

(Now 'taint (1622). Now 'tis (1854)!)

"A Catholic is bound to hold that the doctrine recently defined was contained in the faith once delivered to the saints BY THE APOSTLES. On the other hand, he is under no obligation to produce cogent historical proof (OVER AND ABOVE THE CHURCH'S DECISION) that THE DOCTRINE WAS SO CONTAINED."

--CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

ORDERS (Holy):

"BISHOP. I. Meaning of the name and Divine Institution of the office.- The word bishop is derived from the Greek episcopos, which latter occurs in writers of the earliest age in the general sense of 'overseer,' and was specially applied in later Greek to the officers whom the Athenians sent to subject states. In the LXX episcopos is used for an officer or prefect of any kind. The Christians adopted the word as the title of an ecclesiastical dignitary who has received the highest of the sacred orders and is invested with authority to rule a diocese as its chief pastor.

"A bishop, therefore, is superior to simple priests, and the Council of Trent defines that this superiority is of divine institution. 'If any one deny,' says the council, 'that there is in the church a hierarchy instituted by divine ordinance, which consists of bishops, presbyters, and ministers, let him be anathema;' and again, 'if any one affirm that bishops are not superior to presbyters, or that they have not the power of confirming and ordaining, or that the power which they have is common to presbyters also, let him be anathema.'"

--CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

Scripture:

"From Miletus, however, he sent to Ephesus for the presbyters of the church; and when they had come to him and were assembled, he said to them: . . .

"Take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock in which the Holy Spirit has placed you as bishops. . ." Acts 20:17, 18, 28.

"For this reason I left thee in Crete, that thou shouldst set right anything that is defective and shouldst appoint presbyters in every city, as I myself directed thee to do. They must be blameless, married but once, having believing children who are not accused of impurity or disobedience. For a bishop must be blameless as being the steward of God, . . ." Titus 1: 5-7

--Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Edition (1941)

Catholic Authorities:

"If anyone is eager for the office of bishop, he desires a good work." \* I Tim. 3:1

\*"3:1: Bishop: represents a Greek word meaning 'overseer,' and 'presbyter' another Greek word meaning 'elder.' IN ST. PAUL 'BISHOP' AND 'PRESBYTER' SEEM TO BE USED CONVERTIBLY, . . ."

--Footnote on I Tim. 3:1

Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Edition (1941)

"We first find the word episcopos in the Acts of the Apostles, XX. 28. 'Take heed,' St. Paul says, to the clergy of Ephesus, 'take heed to yourselves and to the whole flock, in which the Holy Ghost made you bishops.' It is plain, however, (so it is urged), that these 'bishops' were presbyters, so that 'bishop' and 'presbyter' in the New Testament language are synonymous, for St. Luke tells us at the beginning of the same chapter that the Apostle was addressing 'the presbyters of the church' whom he had summoned to Miletus. Towards the close of the Apostle's life the Church was STILL WITHOUT BISHOPS IN THE MODERN SENSE, FOR ST. PAUL ADDRESSED AN EPISTLE TO THE FAITHFUL AT PHILIPPI 'with the bishops and the deacons.' Here the plural number and the fact that no allusion is made to presbyters as distinct from the 'bishops' are said to prove that in that age episcopos or 'bishop' meant presbyter. Later still, St. Paul wrote to Titus that he left him in Crete to 'appoint presbyters in every city,' and continues - "for the bishop must be irreproachable,' etc." . . . . . It is right to add that Clement of Rome, writing towards the end of the first century, does not seem to recognize any distinction in meaning between the two words."

--CATHOLIC DICTIONARY



## ORDERS (Holy)

"PRIESTS, CHRISTIAN. The priesthood is the second in rank among the holy orders. It is the office of a priest, according to the Pontifical, 'to offer, bless, rule, preach, and baptise.' First, he is empowered to offer that sacrifice of the Mass. . . Next, the priest, standing between GOD AND HIS FELLOWMAN, blesses the people in God's name."

--CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

### Scripture:

"Be you yourselves as living stones, built thereon into a spiritual house, a HOLY PRIESTHOOD, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." I Peter 2:5

"You, however, are a chosen race, A ROYAL PRIESTHOOD, a holy nation, a purchased people; . . ." verse 9

"For there is one God, and ONE MEDIATOR between God and men, himself man, Christ Jesus, . . ." I Timothy 2:5

(2:5: This insistence on the universal mediatorship of Christ as man is against the separatist tendencies." (AND FOR HIS EXCLUSIVE MEDIATORSHIP) )

Scriptures from Confraternity of Christian Doctrine edition (1941)

### Catholic Authorities

"The words 'priest,' 'priesthood,' (hiereus, hierateuma) are never applied in the New Testament to the office of the Christian minister. ALL CHRISTIANS ARE SAID TO BE PRIESTS. . .

"The Apostolic Fathers ALSO ABSTAIN FROM ANY MENTION OF A CHRISTIAN PRIESTHOOD; at least the single reference in St. Ignat. (Phil. 9, kaloi oi hierais) is very doubtful."

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

## SAINTS

"There are three recognised degrees of sanctity--that of Venerable, that of Blessed, and that of Saint."

"BEATIFICATION"

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

"After various ceremonies, the postulator of the cause. . . asks twice that the name of the servant of God whose cause he pleads may be enrolled in the catalogue of the Saints. . . . A solemn Mass. . . is then celebrated, in honour of the new Saint."

"The actual procedure will be more clearly understood if we describe and partly translate some Papal Bull of Canonisation; and, for this purpose, we will take the Bull of Alexander VII. concerning St. Francis de Sales, dated April 19, 1665. . . . We have decided and defined the Blessed Francis de Sales, Bishop of Geneva, TO BE A SAINT, and have inscribed him on the catalogue of the saints. . . ."

"CANONISATION"

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

### Scripture (Apostolic Teaching)

"But Anania's answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many about this man (Saul), how much evil he has done to THY SAINTS in Jerusalem.'" -Acts 9:13

"And it came to pass that Peter, while visiting ALL THE SAINTS, came to those living at Lydda." -Acts 9:32

"Then Peter gave her his hand and raised her up (Tabitha, Dorcas); and calling the SAINTS and the widows, he gave her back to them alive." -Acts 9:41

"Paul, . . . to all God's beloved who are in Rome, CALLED TO BE SAINTS: . . ." -Rom. 1:1-7

"Paul, . . . to the church of God that is at Corinth, with ALL THE SAINTS that are in the whole of Achaia. . . ." -2 Cor. 1:1,2

"Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brethren with me here greet you. ALL THE SAINTS greet you, especially those of Caesar's household!" -Phil. 4:21,22

Scriptures from:

--Confraternity of Christian Doctrine Edition (1941)

Catholic Authorities

\*"But Annanias answered, 'Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to thy SAINTS in Jerusalem.'" Acts 9:13

\*"9,13: Saints; those separated from other men and united to Christ. THEY are sanctified by the presence in Him of the Holy Spirit."

-Footnote, Acts 9:13  
-C. O. C. D. E. (1941)

\*"PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST by the will of God, and Timothy our brother, to the church of God that is at Corinth, with ALL THE SAINTS that are in the whole of Achaia. . . ." 2 Cor. 1:1

\*"1,1: The Saints: cf. Glossary." Footnote, 2 Cor. 1:1

\*"SAINTS. A common term in the Old Testament to designate those who belong to God, it was applied in the New Testament to those WHO BELIEVED IN CHRIST. It first occurs in Acts 9,13, and is frequent in the writings of St Paul. THOSE ARE SAINTS who are separated from other men, are attached to the glorious Christ, and are sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit."

- GLOSSARY  
C.O.C.D.E. (1941)

"In the exposition of her Creed the Catholic Church weighs her words in the scales of the sanctuary with as much precision as a banker weighs his gold."

-Gibbons  
Faith Of Our Fathers

PRIESTLY CELIBACY:

"CELIBACY of the clergy. The law of the Western Church forbids persons living in the married state to be ordained, and persons in holy orders to marry. . . .

"The principles which have induced the Church to impose celibacy on her clergy are (a) that they may serve God with less restraint, and with undivided heart (see I Cor. VII.32); and (b) that, being called to the altar, they may embrace the life of continence, which is holier than that of marriage. . . . the Council of Trent, sess. XXIV. De Matr. can. 10, anathematizes those who deny that it is more blessed to remain in virginity or in celibacy than to be joined in marriage." Thus ALL CATHOLICS ARE BOUND TO HOLD THAT CELIBACY IS THE PREFERABLE STATE, and that it is SPECIALLY desirable for the clergy."

Scripture:

"And when Jesus had come into Peter's house, he saw Peter's mother-in-law. . . ." Matt. 8:14

"ST PETER. . . WAS MARRIED." "THE CATHOLIC ANSWER"  
-OUR SUNDAY VISITOR PRESS

"St. Jerome says that if any were married they certainly separated from their wives after they were called to the Apostolate. Even St. Peter, after his vocation, did not continue with his wife, as may be inferred from his own words: 'Behold, we have left all things, and followed thee.' "

-Gibbons  
Faith Of Our Fathers

" . . . not I, but the Lord commands that a wife is not to depart from her husband, . . . And let not a husband put away his wife."  
1 Cor. 7:11

"Art thou bound to a wife? DO NOT SEEK TO BE FREED."

1 Cor. 7:27

" . . . let each man have his own wife, . . ." 1 Cor. 7:2

"A Bishop then, MUST BE . . . married but once. . . . He should rule well his own household, keeping his children under control and perfectly respectful."  
1 Tim. 3:2-4

"They (presbyters) MUST BE blameless, MARRIED BUT ONCE, having believing CHILDREN. . . . For a bishop must be blameless. . . ."  
Titus 1:5-7

Scriptures from: C. O. C. D. E. (1941)

#### Catholic Authorities:

"There does not seem to have been ANY APOSTOLIC LEGISLATION ON THE MATTER, except that it was required of a bishop that he should have been only once married."

"But about this time A CHANGE DID OCCUR in the canon law."

"CELIBACY"

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

\*"A bishop then, must be blameless, married but once, . . ."

\*"3,2: Married but once: priestly celibacy as a law IS OF LATER ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTION!"

- Footnote, 1 Tim. 3,2  
C. O. C. D. E (1941)

"Although celibacy is not expressly enforced by our Saviour, it is, however, commended so strongly by Himself and His Apostles, both by word and example, that THE CHURCH FELT IT HER DUTY TO LAY IT DOWN AS A LAW."

-FAITH OF OUR FATHERS

"We have just said that the Church's infallibility in articles of faith DOES NOT EXTEND BEYOND the truths contained in THE ORIGINAL REVELATION.

"Clearly, neither Pope nor Church can put forth new dogmas for acceptance. The faith has been 'once delivered to the saints.'

The Vatican Council lays down this point with great lucidity. . . . The Church, then, has no inspiration: she cannot receive fresh revelations; to be imposed on the belief of the faithful. Her office is confined to expounding THE ORIGINAL REVELATION."

"CHURCH OF CHRIST? CATHOLIC CHURCH"

-CATHOLIC DICTIONARY

#### CONCLUSION

These Catholic AUTHORITIES admit that THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST MUST BE APOSTOLIC. "APOSTOLIC" is according to the teaching of the Apostles of Jesus Christ.

If there is a DOCTRINE, PRACTICE, or FORM OF ORGANIZATION that was not taught by the Apostles it does not belong to the TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST. If a church has such a DOCTRINE, PRACTICE, OR ORGANIZATION then that church is not THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

The Apostles gave the teaching contained in "THE SCRIPTURE INSPIRED OF GOD." THE BIBLE. If a church teaches contrary to that teaching it



is not APOSTOLIC and cannot be, therefore, THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

But these CATHOLIC AUTHORITIES clearly admit that these items of their doctrine, practice, and organization were not taught by the Apostles. They therefore ARE NOT APOSTOLIC and the CATHOLIC CHURCH CANNOT BE THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THEY ADMIT that on the act of baptism the apostles taught and practiced IMMERSION. They did not teach or practice affusion - sprinklings or pouring. The CATHOLIC CHURCH DOES NOT TEACH AND PRACTICE APOSTOLIC IMMERSION, but practice NON-APOSTOLIC AFFUSION. It is, therefore, NOT APOSTOLIC and NOT THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THEY ADMIT that the APOSTLES TAUGHT AND PRACTICED BAPTISM FOR THOSE WHO WERE ABLE AND DID BELIEVE AND REPENT. The apostles DID NOT TEACH or PRACTICE INFANT BAPTISM. Infant baptism is NON-APOSTOLIC. The CATHOLIC CHURCH teaches and practices NON-APOSTOLIC INFANT BAPTISM, it is therefore NOT APOSTOLIC, NOT THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THEY ADMIT that the doctrine of THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION was NOT TAUGHT BY THE APOSTLES; that a POPE defined it NON-HERETICAL to teach to the contrary, but that another later defined it HERETICAL TO TEACH TO THE CONTRARY. The apostles DID NOT TEACH THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION. IT IS NOT APOSTOLIC. THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHING IT IS NON-APOSTOLIC and therefore CANNOT BE THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THEY ADMIT that the apostles (Peter in particular) taught that ALL CHRISTIANS ARE PRIESTS: that Bishops and Presbyters were the same office and that according to the teaching and practice of the apostles that there was a plurality of Bishops, Pastors, elders or presbyters in every church where any such were appointed. The CATHOLIC CHURCH teaches a NON-APOSTOLIC distinction between the laity and a clergy of priests, presbyters, and bishops. On this point the CATHOLIC CHURCH admits that its teaching and practice was not that of the apostles and therefore it CANNOT BE THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THEY ADMIT that Priestly Celibacy was not a teaching or law of the Apostles; that it is of "LATER ECCLESIASTICAL institution." But they ADMIT that neither the Pope nor Church has any authority to lay down a new law to be imposed upon the church. Therefore, such a law "OF LATER ECCLESIASTICAL INSTITUTION" has no authority behind it and is NON-APOSTOLIC. The church which instituted it "later" is NON-APOSTOLIC therefore, NOT THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

THEY ADMIT that according to APOSTOLIC TEACHING "SAINTS" "was applied to those who believed in Christ," "those separated from other men and united to Christ," ALL CHRISTIANS. Their teaching that "saint" is the third degree of Beatification, and the process of such "Cannonisation" is therefore NON-APOSTOLIC and the church which practices, admitting that it is NON-APOSTOLIC, thus testifies that she is NOT THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

WE HAVE NOT TAKEN RUMORS, OR WHAT OTHERS HAVE SAID ABOUT CATHOLICISM but herein have LET CATHOLICS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES and our conclusion is evident to any who will read with unbiased and unprejudiced mind - ACCORDING TO HER OWN AUTHORITIES, TEACHINGS AND ADMISSIONS, THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IS NOT THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

"THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST" (Romans 16:16) of today are the same as those of the NEW TESTAMENT, teaching "whole and entire those doctrines that were taught by the Apostles;" "doctrines which are in all respects identical with those of the first teachers of the gospel;" they are identical in NAME, ORGANIZATION, DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE and any person who will read that "taught by the Apostles" as it is found perfect and complete in the NEW TESTAMENT, can see for himself the IDENTITY of "CHURCHES OF CHRIST" then and now. We invite such a study and investigation and propose to show that in NAME, ORGANIZATION, FAITH AND PRACTICE, "THE CHURCHES OF CHRIST" ARE APOSTOLIC, as is NECESSARY to be THE TRUE CHURCH OF CHRIST.

-Denton M. Neal

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**AN HISTORICAL EVALUATION OF THE QUESTION:  
WAS PETER ACTUALLY THE FIRST POPE?**



Steven C. Hunter  
New Concord Church of Christ  
Minister  
December 30, 2009

## Was Peter Actually the First Pope?

### Introduction

Some may ask, “What’s the point in such a study?” If Peter was in fact the first pope, as the Catholic Church insists, then we would have reason to believe that we are members of the wrong body of believers, and maybe even rebelling against God’s will.

The question that hasn’t been thoroughly defended and researched is one to which attention must be rendered, and a conclusion found. Catholicism has a rich history dating back to the days of the apostles; however, is it true or must there be an explanation? This is the purpose of such an undertaking.

In approaching such a study we must,

1. Determine what is authoritative
2. Follow such an authority
3. Establish the history of the claim
4. Answer the question

Only until these criterions have been met can we know without hesitation the answer to the question posed.

### ***What is Authoritative?***

Most Western Christians believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God. The first issue to be addressed is the canonization of the New Testament as we have it, as well as the Old Testament, and the need for such a work.

#### I. The Old Testament Canon

As a literary gathering of writings written over a period of 1600 years by many authors, there is seldom the lack of a critic who doesn’t question the validity of the Bible as we have it. The Catholic Church and Eastern Church refer to the Bible composed of 66 books as the Protestant Bible. The reason for such a distinction stems from the lack of the apocryphal (or Deuterocanonical, “second canon”) books from our Bible. These books were not originally contained in the Jewish Bible (Tanakh), and so they are omitted from our gathering of accepted writings. Several testimonies omit these books from the Old Testament,

“We have not an innumerable multitude of books among us, disagreeing from and contradicting one another, but only twenty-two books, which contain the records of all times past; which are justly believed to be divine...”<sup>1</sup>

The most ancient list of the Old Testament was made by Melito of Sardis (cf. A.D. 170), and none of the apocryphal books are included in this list.<sup>2</sup> In fairness, Melito doesn’t mention Lamentations, Nehemiah or Esther. Lamentations is a writing of Jeremiah and believed to have been included in

<sup>1</sup> Josephus, *Against Apion*, 1.8.

<sup>2</sup> Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, 4.26.14.



his prophecy, while Nehemiah is believed to have been included in Ezra (Esdras). Athanasius (293-373 A.D.) is one who is deemed a “Doctor of the Church,” and contended with Arianism at the Council of Nicaea. As a prominent figure to Catholics, he never mentions these books. He does substitute Esther for Baruch.

One cause for these books is their inclusion in the LXX (Septuagint, Greek translation of the Old Testament); however, it isn’t believed that they were present when it was originally written in the 3<sup>rd</sup>-1<sup>st</sup> centuries B.C. Jesus and the writers of the New Testament never quote one of these writings as authoritative. Even the translator of the Latin Vulgate (5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), Jerome, refused to include them in the Vulgate; however, after his death they were added. The Council of Trent (Session IV, 1546) is the first point in which these books were formally recognized by the Catholic Church as scripture. Following the earliest copy of the LXX we have in existence (5<sup>th</sup> century A.D.), they included and recognized them although the Jews did not. The Ecumenical Patriarch of the Orthodox Church<sup>3</sup>, Timothy Ware, concedes that they were not included in Hebrew Scriptures, but were declared “genuine parts of Scripture” by the Councils of Jassy (1642) and Jerusalem (1672).<sup>4</sup>

Both Protestants and Pre-Denominational (churches of Christ) bodies seek to follow the canon which is void of these books just as Judaism did in the days of the apostles, and does today.

## II. The New Testament Canon

The New Testament as we have it is accepted by Western and Eastern Christianity. However, the view is held that since the church formed the canon, it may also determine historical or traditional means whereby the church is to be governed, and the interpretation of the scriptures.

“It is important to note that the church did not create the canon; it did not determine which books would be called Scripture, the inspired Word of God. Instead, the church recognized, or discovered, which books had been inspired from their inception. Stated another way, ‘a book is not the Word of God because it is accepted by the people of God. Rather, it was accepted by the people of God because it is the Word of God.’”<sup>5</sup>

In addressing the Christian dispensation we must ask why, if there’s a Supreme Pontiff, there needs to be a canon of collected writings.

When you read the New Testament, the synagogue was in operation and readily accepted by the time of Christ. Although we don’t read of synagogues in the Old Testament<sup>6</sup>, Jesus taught in the synagogue esteeming the scriptures (Mt. 13:54; cf. Jn. 6:28-59). While the religious leaders of the day sought to invest their traditions with Scripture, Jesus warned sternly of such dangers (Mk. 7:1-13; Mt. 15:1-9). This very danger of man’s tradition mixing with scripture is really what is under discussion.

## III. The Need for a Canon

<sup>3</sup> The Ecumenical Patriarch is the equivalent to the Pope of the Eastern Church in a more humble manner. However, he does not assert that he is infallible as the pope does in speaking *ex cathedra*, or out of the church. The Eastern and Western churches split as a result of the pope asserting his headship over the entirety of Christianity as a monarch.

<sup>4</sup> Timothy Ware, *The Orthodox Church*, (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 200.

<sup>5</sup> Josh McDowell, *The New Evidence That Demands A Verdict*, (Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1999), 21.

<sup>6</sup> Synagogues originated during the exile, and “the house of the people” (Jer. 39:8) is interpreted in a Midrash as being a synagogue. Synagogue is a Greek transliteration of συναγωγή.

In the early days of the church, most of the writings that were present from the apostles were being circulated.

“Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.” (Col. 4:16)<sup>7</sup>

To further stress this point, the Revelation of John was written to the churches of Asia Minor (Rev. 1:4).

When Peter wrote his second epistle to those of Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia (cf. 2 Peter 3:1) he was mindful to give recognition to Paul’s epistles as Scripture,

“...as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you, as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, **as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.**” (2 Peter 3:15b-16; emphasis mine)

Paul also lent authority as Scripture to Luke’s gospel when he quoted Luke 10:7 in 1 Timothy 5:8 (the laborer is worthy of his wages). These examples go to show that due to the inspiration of the Spirit given to the apostles, and since Luke was a companion of Paul there was already a recognized source of authoritative writings for the New Covenant when Paul penned 2 Timothy 3:16-17 as his death was nearing.

As far as church history goes, Clement of Alexandria quoted the Apostle Paul’s letter to Timothy<sup>8</sup> and 2 John.<sup>9</sup> Church historian Eusebius in quoting Clement recognizes Jude, Hebrews and the General Epistles (referred to as the Catholic Epistles); also he recognizes Mark and John’s gospel.<sup>10</sup> Studying through church history you would find all the books we have as quoted, alluded to or recognized by the early church fathers. Since there were some writings already recognized and circulated, there was not a huge problem; however, heresies arose that required action.

The New Testament had not yet been canonized, and with the absence of a printing press, some churches did not receive these writings to distinguish truth from error. With the apostles now dead, there must be some sort of authority to carry on their teachings. Ignatius of Antioch proposed a way to answer these problems, and this answer was to make a local bishop the point of unity in the late 2<sup>nd</sup> century. This served its purpose for a while, but as time went on the weapon of defense would be a canonization of apostolic writings which would make the New Testament.

Up until this time there was only the circulated letters and oral tradition serving as the churches authority. The LXX was the Bible used to the Greek speaking world, and authority was recognized in this and the words of the Lord. As late as the close of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the oral tradition and the gospels had not yet been enjoined. As this distinction was apparent, the Gnostics and Marcion began to distort the oral tradition and assert their traditions as sound. Marcion denounced the entire Hebrew Bible, which up to this time was ½ the source of authority for the church. He taught that God the Father and God the Son were two separate gods, and not one in the same, which to the church smelled of polytheism. He gained an enormous following which created a divide in the church. Branded as the first heretic of the church, he was the first one to propose a New Testament

<sup>7</sup> Some believe Paul is speaking about his epistle addressed to the Ephesians.

<sup>8</sup> *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 2.359.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, 2.567-77.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid*, 2.579-80.

canon for his followers. As an apostate bishop<sup>11</sup> he led astray many, and created that which God hates- discord among brethren (Prov. 6:16, 19). His canon is not the canon we follow today.

Origen (185-232) was the first to assert the canon of the New Testament that we have today. Prior to this Marcion, Irenaeus, and the Muratori Canon had been proposed. Origen met with many disputes over several of the general epistles, but finally in 367 A.D. Athanasius (Doctor of the Church and defender of faith against Arianism) declared these books "canonized."<sup>12</sup> Although Protestant reformers questioned certain books of the New Testament, this doesn't take away from the historicity of the New Testament canon that has been accepted since the days of Origen, and solidified during the days of Athanasius.

Marcion (c.140)	Irenaeus (c. 180)	Muratori Canon (c. 200)	Eusebius (c. 325)	Athanasius (367 A.D.)
	Matthew	(Matthew)	Matthew	Matthew
	Mark	(Mark)	Mark	Mark
Luke	Luke	Luke	Luke	Luke
	John	John	John	John
	Acts	Acts	Acts	Acts
Romans	Romans	Romans	Romans	Romans
I Cor.	I Cor.	I Cor.	I Cor.	I Cor.
II Cor.	II Cor.	II Cor.	II Cor.	II Cor.
Galatians	Galatians	Galatians	Galatians	Galatians
Ephesians (Laodiceans)	Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians	Ephesians
Philippians	Philippians	Philippians	Philippians	Philippians
Colossians	Colossians	Colossians	Colossians	Colossians
I Thess.	I Thess.	I Thess.	I Thess.	I Thess.
II Thess.	II Thess.	II Thess.	II Thess.	II Thess.
	I Timothy	I Timothy	I Timothy	I Timothy
	II Timothy	II Timothy	II Timothy	II Timothy
	Titus	Titus	Titus	Titus
Philemon			Philemon [?]	Philemon
			Hebrews [?]	Hebrews

<sup>11</sup> Optatus of Mileve, 4.5.

<sup>12</sup> David Brakke, "Canon Formation and Social Conflict in Fourth Century Egypt: Athanasius of Alexandria's Thirty Ninth Festal Letter," in *Harvard Theological Review* 87 (1994) pp. 395-419.



	James [?]		James [?]	James
	I Peter		I Peter	I Peter
			II Peter [?]	II Peter
	I John	I John	I John	I John
		II John	II John [?]	II John
			III John [?]	III John
		Jude	Jude [?]	Jude
	Revelation of John	Revelation of John	Revelation of John [?]	Revelation of John
	Shepherd of Hermas	Wisdom of Solomon (Apocrypha)		
		Revelation of Peter		

13

With the New and Old Covenants canonized, there is now a gathering of inspired, God-breathed writings which would ward off all heresy and defend the faith without question.

***Following Said Authority***

“And these words which I command you today shall be in your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, when you walk by the way, when you lie down, and when you rise up. You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes. You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.” (Deut. 6:6-9)

As Moses stood with the congregation of Israel before the Jordan, he reminded them of God’s laws which were to be kept upon entering the land. In these particular words he expressed the importance of God’s holy law and how it was to be treasured and never forgotten. In having a completed canon of God’s requirements, we believe that God has spoken all He intends to speak, so we know how to conduct ourselves as His people and follow His statutes which grant us heaven when we die. Furthermore, when God has finished speaking, we also believe we too must finish speaking. While we may have unanswered questions, we know what is expected of us,

“The secret things belong to the LORD our God, but those things which are revealed belong to us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law.” (Deut. 29:29)

As Moses had previously recalled the commandments given on Sinai, he concludes by saying,

“These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly, in the mountain from the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; **and He added no more.**

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<sup>13</sup> Roy W. Hoover, "How the Books of the New Testament Were Chosen," (*Bible Review*, April 1993).

And He wrote them on two tablets of stone and gave them to me.” (Deut. 5:22; emphasis mine)

When God has added no more, we too should not presume to add to what He has given. Such presumption is condemned by God. It was to be by this that a false prophet would be identified (Deut. 18:21-22).

There are two readily accepted principles of interpretation amongst believers in Christ: 1) If God commands anything it is essential, 2) if God condemns anything it is forbidden, but 3) what if God doesn't say anything about it? The third principle of interpretation is debated and disagreed over while the previous two are accepted, so it is this principle we shall examine.

We must first ask what is commanded and condemned on the subject, and what is seen through Biblical examples.

### I. What is commanded and condemned in silence?

“But Balaam answered and said to the servants of Balak, “Though Balak were to give me his house full of silver and gold, I could not go beyond the command of the Lord my God to do less or more.” (Num. 22:18)

“You shall not add to the word that I command you, nor take from it, that you may keep the commandments of the Lord your God that I command you.” (Deut. 4:2)

“Everything that I command you, you shall be careful to do. You shall not add to it or take from it.” (Deut. 12:32)

“Do not add to his words, lest he rebuke you and you be found a liar.” (Proverbs 30:6)

“I have applied all these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers that you may learn by us not to go beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up in favor of one against another.” (1 Cor. 4:6)

Within each of these passages represented, there is exclusion upon believers to,

1. Not go beyond the commandment of the Lord
2. Not add to the commandments of the Lord
3. Observe everything that IS commanded
4. Not to take away from any commandment

There must be a distinction between ways of fulfilling commandments, and additions to the commandments. For instance,

1. Moses wasn't told what tools to use to build the ark (Gen. 6:14-16), but his using tools didn't contradict the keeping of God's command to build the ark.
2. Bezalel and Oholiab too were told to construct the tabernacle, but not what tools to use (Ex. 39:32, 43).
3. Jesus told His disciples to “go and make disciples of all nations,” but He didn't say how to go. We go by television, car, plane, boat, etc. When we disciple (make followers) people we

use Sunday school, Bible study in the home, pamphlets, etc. None of these contradict the “go and make” of Christ’s commandment, but these are ways we fulfill His commands.

## II. Biblical examples of silence

At that time the LORD separated the tribe of Levi to bear the ark of the covenant of the LORD, to stand before the LORD to minister to Him and to bless in His name, to this day. (Deut. 10:8)

Often the common argument is, “Well God didn’t say not to...” This is a bad argument. You see, God had consecrated the Levites to bear the ark, and only the Levites were to bear the ark. Rather than God telling us all we don’t need to do, sometimes He just tells us what we DO need to do.

Later when David was king he sought to bring back this very ark to God’s people and set it up in Jerusalem. David was unaware of how God wanted him to transport the ark, so he had it on a cart pulled by oxen, but when the cart became unsettled an honest, sincere man tried to steady it and here’s the consequence,

And when they came to Chidon's threshing floor, Uzza put out his hand to hold the ark, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzza, and He struck him because he put his hand to the ark; and he died there before God. (1 Chr. 13:9-10).

God never said anyone else couldn’t touch the ark, but He did say that the Levites **were to bear the ark**. It’s plain to see that the silence of God in this matter prohibited action. When God is silent, we must not think this is license for us to create sub-commands or act as we please. After all, these traditions should not replace God’s command, nor should they be added to it.

These [commandments of man] indeed have an appearance of wisdom in self-imposed religion, false humility, and neglect of the body, but are of no value against the indulgence of the flesh. (Col. 2:23)

Clement of Alexandria summed up the search for any question or proof of authority when he said,

Those who are ready to toil in the most excellent pursuits will not desist from the search after the truth until they get the demonstration from the Scripture themselves.<sup>14</sup>

### ***History Surrounding the Papacy***

With the move towards one bishop as the focal point of unity in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century, the church began a departure from the apostolic teachings regarding the presbytery. Up until this time, historically, the church was composed of bishops (presbyters) and deacons.

1. Paul recognized a multiplicity of bishops in Philippi (Phil. 1:1)
2. The apostles appointed elders in every city (Acts 14:23)
3. Paul and Barnabas went before the apostles and elders at Jerusalem (Acts 15:2)
4. Paul called for and admonished the elders in Ephesus (Acts 20:17)

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<sup>14</sup> *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, 2.550.



5. Titus was to appoint elders in every city (Titus 1:5)

Therefore, appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord. *Didache*

...the apostles appointed the first-fruits of their labors to be bishops and deacons of those who would afterward believe. *Clement of Rome*

..being subject to the presbyters and deacons, as unto God and Christ. *Polycarp*<sup>15</sup>

You see the terms bishops and presbyters used interchangeably. What happened to this line of government? When Ignatius speaks of the single bishop, he does so as if it is something new. He does address Polycarp as the “bishop of Smyrna.” Polycarp is a disciple of the apostle John, so this brings some sort of validity to the bishopric as being separate from the presbytery right? Phillip Schaff in his church history says,

The express testimony of the learned Jerome [composed the Latin Vulgate for the Catholic Church and regarded a scholar of antiquity], that the churches originally, before divisions arose through the instigation of Satan, were governed by the common council of the presbyters, and not till a later period was one of the presbyters placed at the head, to watch over the church and suppress schisms. He traces the difference of the office simply to “ecclesiastical” custom as distinct from divine institution.<sup>16</sup>

It apparently became the presiding elder/bishop who was at one point made the head over the episcopacy. As Christianity grew, there arose bishops of cities who were between the bishops of country congregations and presbyters. Among city bishops were men named metropolitans who were over capital cities and provinces. As the metropolitans arose, those churches that were apostolic were given higher esteem because they were supposed to bear the most pure form of apostolic tradition. The most prominent of these were Rome, Antioch and Alexandria; although, Jerusalem, Ephesus and Corinth enjoyed a degree of reverence too. The bishops of these cities received the honorary title of Patriarch. At the Council of Nicaea this form of government is assumed to be in operation. Later added to the most prominent list of patriarchs were Constantinople and Jerusalem. These were added to the formerly mentioned Rome, Antioch and Alexandria. Constantine moved the head of his rule to modern day Istanbul, Turkey. He named the city after himself (Constantinople), and the world recognized it as the head of Roman rule, and it was also dubbed the “New Rome.” However, Old Rome didn’t recognize this relocation, so you have one church believing they still have the prominence, and the relocated church believing it followed the emperor and had the prominence.

Old Rome was gradually adopting the Latin language in place of the Greek, so in Rome the Patriarch began to be called *papa* (Pope) after the Latin. In Latin he would later be called *summus pontifex*, *vicarius Christi* (supreme pontiff, the Vicar of Christ; or, supreme bridge builder, in the person of Christ). Due to heresy, Clement of Rome wrote to Corinth to answer some questions they had posed about issues they faced. Since Peter and Paul were last at Rome before their execution, and since many remaining Christians had communion with these esteemed apostles, it was assumed that a more pure apostolic tradition rested in the Roman church. This gave way to Rome’s prominence before the church universal. The Eastern Church called this bishop Pope, and in any

<sup>15</sup> David Bercot, ed., *A Dictionary of Early Christian Beliefs*, (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 156.

<sup>16</sup> *History of the Christian Church*, 2.4.44.

writing where an Eastern clergyman speaks of the western bishop, they will call him Pope. However, the Bishop of Rome wasn't called this until 400, but even then he wasn't regarded head of the church.<sup>17</sup>

### *Answering the Question*

What we must do is look at the claim that Peter was the first Pope and its assumptions, then answer the question from a Scriptural perspective, and finally defend possible objections to the claim.

#### I. The claim, their assumptions, and the answers to such

Looking at the Papacy today, we can assume,

1. Peter must have been celibate

While it was the council of Elvira that imposed celibacy (canon 33, early 4<sup>th</sup> century), Peter was married (Matt. 8:14; Mark 1:30; Luke 4: 38). Paul asked in 1 Cor. 9:5, "Do we not have a right to take along a believing wife, even as the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?"

2. It assumes a supreme honor and jurisdiction

If Peter was the first bishop of Rome, why didn't Paul address him in the Roman letter? The church was already established by this time, and Paul greets many Christians in chapter 16 of which Peter is absent. Secondly, Paul later rebukes Peter for his conduct toward Gentiles (Gal. 2:11-12).

3. The privileges of this supremacy are transferrable upon the succeeding bishop of Rome

Peter would have had appointed a successor before death, and the modern day practice is for the College of Cardinals to elect by vote the next Pope. It would stand to reason that the predecessor would need to appoint and ordain his successor. Furthermore, there is no historical evidence of this taking place.

4. Peter was infallible

This doctrine wasn't established until 1870 when Pope Pius IX declared the immaculate conception of Mary. Peter denied Christ and was rebuked by Jesus on another occasion, so he was hardly infallible.

#### II. Answers from a Scriptural perspective

1. Peter didn't render the decision at the Jerusalem Council.

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<sup>17</sup> Stafford North, *Handbook on Church Doctrines*, (Nashville: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Christian, 2007), 14.

While Peter helped introduce the problem at the Jerusalem Council in Acts 15, James actually rendered the decision. James said, "Therefore it is my judgment..." (Acts 15:19-20) and attributed his authority to the Holy Spirit (15:28). If Peter were Pope, he would have had the final word.

2. There was equality among apostles

When James and John asked for the left and right side of Christ for their honor (Matt. 20:20-28), He told them it wasn't His to give. Plus, if Peter had been given pre-eminence as suggested in Matt. 16:18-19, why wouldn't Christ rebuke them for seeking to usurp His elect?

3. Peter would not accept worship

When Peter entered his house, Cornelius fell at his feet and worshiped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, "Stand up; I too am *just* a man" (Acts 10:25-26). The Pope today receives bows, kisses to his ring, and other forms of worshipful gestures.

4. None of the other writers of the NT hinted that he was the supreme pontiff.

### III. Common objections

1. Jesus named Peter head of His church (Matt. 16:18)

Henry Chadwick in his book on the early church remarks,

[This text] cannot be seen to have played any part in the story of Roman leadership and authority before the middle of the third century when the passionate disagreement between Cyprian of Carthage and Stephen of Rome about baptism apparently led Stephen to invoke the text as part of his defence against Cyprian. But it was not until Damascus in 382 that this Petrine text seriously began to become important as providing a theological and scriptural foundation on which claims to primacy were based.<sup>18</sup>

2. Jesus told Peter to shepherd His flock (John 21:15-17)

As an elder speaking to other elders, Peter said to shepherd the flock of God among those to whom he was writing (1 Peter 5:2). In establishing the church Peter wanted the church to be autonomous, and we see this same admonition from Paul in establishing the churches he did.

3. Peter acted as spokesman for the apostles at Pentecost.

Up until the conversion of Paul did Peter occupy a space in Acts, but most of the book is about the apostle Paul who rebuked Peter later on. If Peter was the head, he wouldn't have needed to be rebuked- being endowed by Christ as the claim is.

4. Church Bishop Irenaeus lists the succession of Peter.

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<sup>18</sup> Henry Chadwick, *The Early Church*, (London: Penguin Books, 1993), 237-38.



The blessed apostles [Peter and Paul], then, having founded and built up the Church, committed into the hands of Linus the office of the episcopate. Of this Linus, Paul makes mention in the Epistles to Timothy. To him succeeded Anacletus; and after him, in the third place from the apostles, Clement was allotted the bishopric. . . . . To this Clement there succeeded Evaristus. Alexander followed Evaristus; then, sixth from the apostles, Sixtus was appointed; after him, Telephorus, who was gloriously martyred; then Hyginus; after him, Pius; then after him, Anicetus. Sorer having succeeded Anicetus, Eleutherius does now, in the twelfth place from the apostles, hold the inheritance of the episcopate. In this order, and by this succession, the ecclesiastical tradition from the apostles, and the preaching of the truth, have come down to us. And this is most abundant proof that there is one and the same vivifying faith, which has been preserved in the Church from the apostles until now, and handed down in truth.<sup>19</sup>

In refuting Gnosticism, Irenaeus points out the succession for the purpose of establishing sound doctrine in the church. This was done because the Gnostics had no claim of succession. He also points out in the previous verse that both Peter and Paul established the church, and they handed over the episcopate, not Peter only as the claim is.

### *In Summary*

When Ignatius addressed the church at Rome, he never mentioned a bishop. When Clement and Hermas wrote to Rome, they concur that this particular church had a plurality of presbyters-bishops at the beginning of the second century.<sup>20</sup>

By the time of the Patriarchs there had been a peaceful union within the church whereby doctrinal matters were settled by councils. These patriarchs were seen as equal bishops over the respective heads of their territories.

When the government of church changed and heads of areas were named Patriarchs, there were originally three (Rome, Alexandria and Antioch). When Constantine moved the Roman Empire's headquarters to Turkey, he named the capital city after himself (Constantinople). As was previously pointed out, this capital was called "New Rome;" however, as the church grew so did the appetites of the Patriarchs for power. Before long the bishops of Jerusalem and Constantinople were named Patriarchs. The Council at Nicaea gave greater honor to Rome and Constantinople, not authority. At the Council of Chalcedon in 451, equal privileges were given to Constantinople as that of Rome. After this in 595 the Patriarch of Constantinople, John the Faster, assumed the title of Ecumenical Patriarch. Gregory the Great, or Pope Gregory I, wrote to the emperor begging him to not acknowledge it. As John assumed it, the Emperor Maurice acknowledged it.

A few years later, the Emperor Maurice was slain by a usurper- Phocas. Pope Gregory sent letters of praise to the new emperor. However, in 606 Phocas transferred the title of "universal bishop" to Boniface III the bishop of Rome, thus establishing the modern day Catholic Church of Rome. As Pope, Boniface III became the head of the church with the backing of the emperor.<sup>21</sup> The succession till today is what remains.

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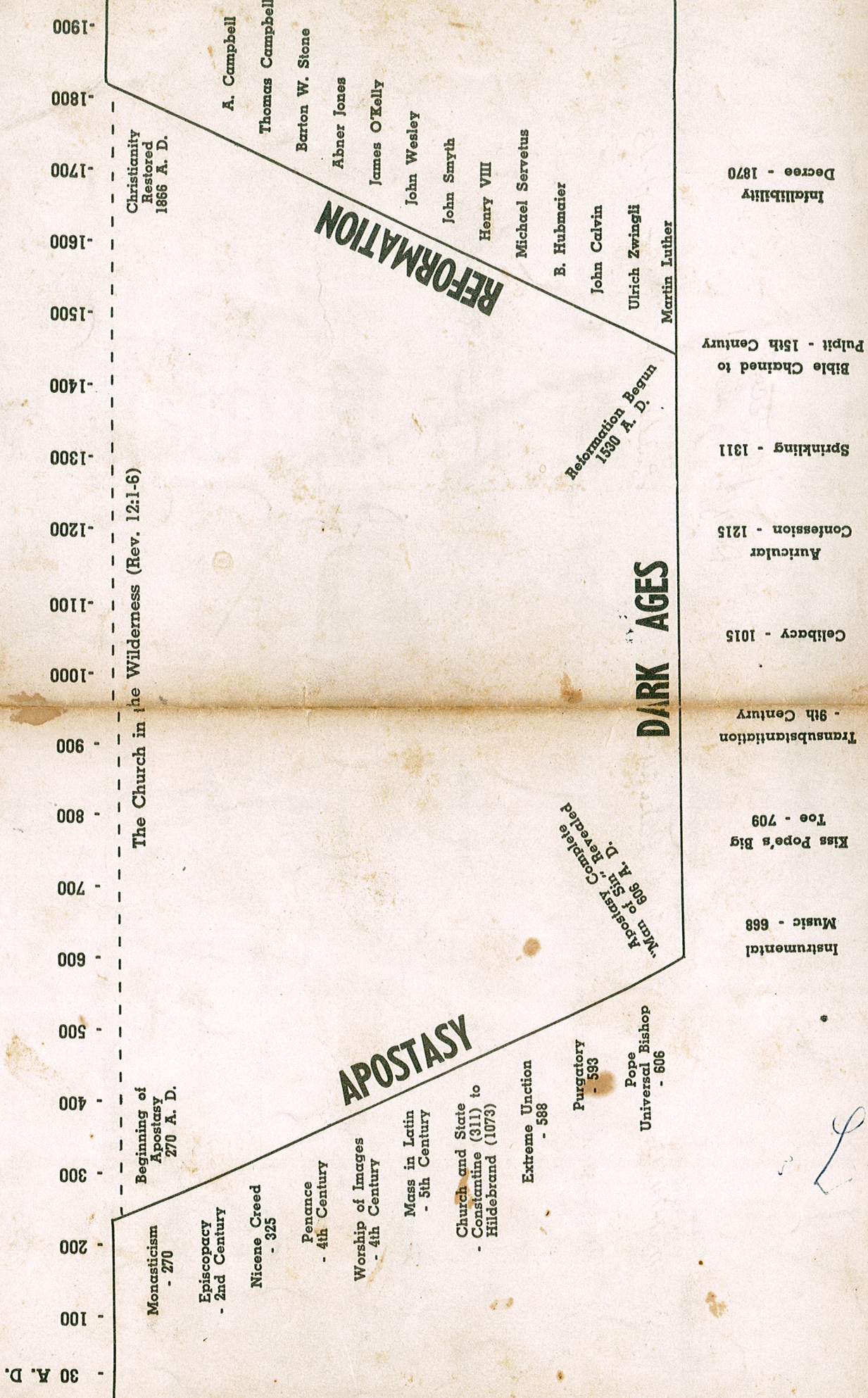
<sup>19</sup> *Against Heresies*, 3.3.3.

<sup>20</sup> Everett Ferguson, *Early Christians Speak*, (Abilene: Abilene Christian University Press, 1999), 170.

<sup>21</sup> George Klingman, *Church History for Busy People*, (Nashville: Gospel Advocate, nd.) 21-22.



# The Church -- The Faling Away -- The Restoration



Instrumental Music - 668

Kiss Pope's Toe - 709

Transubstantiation - 8th Century

Celibacy - 1015

Articular Confession - 1215

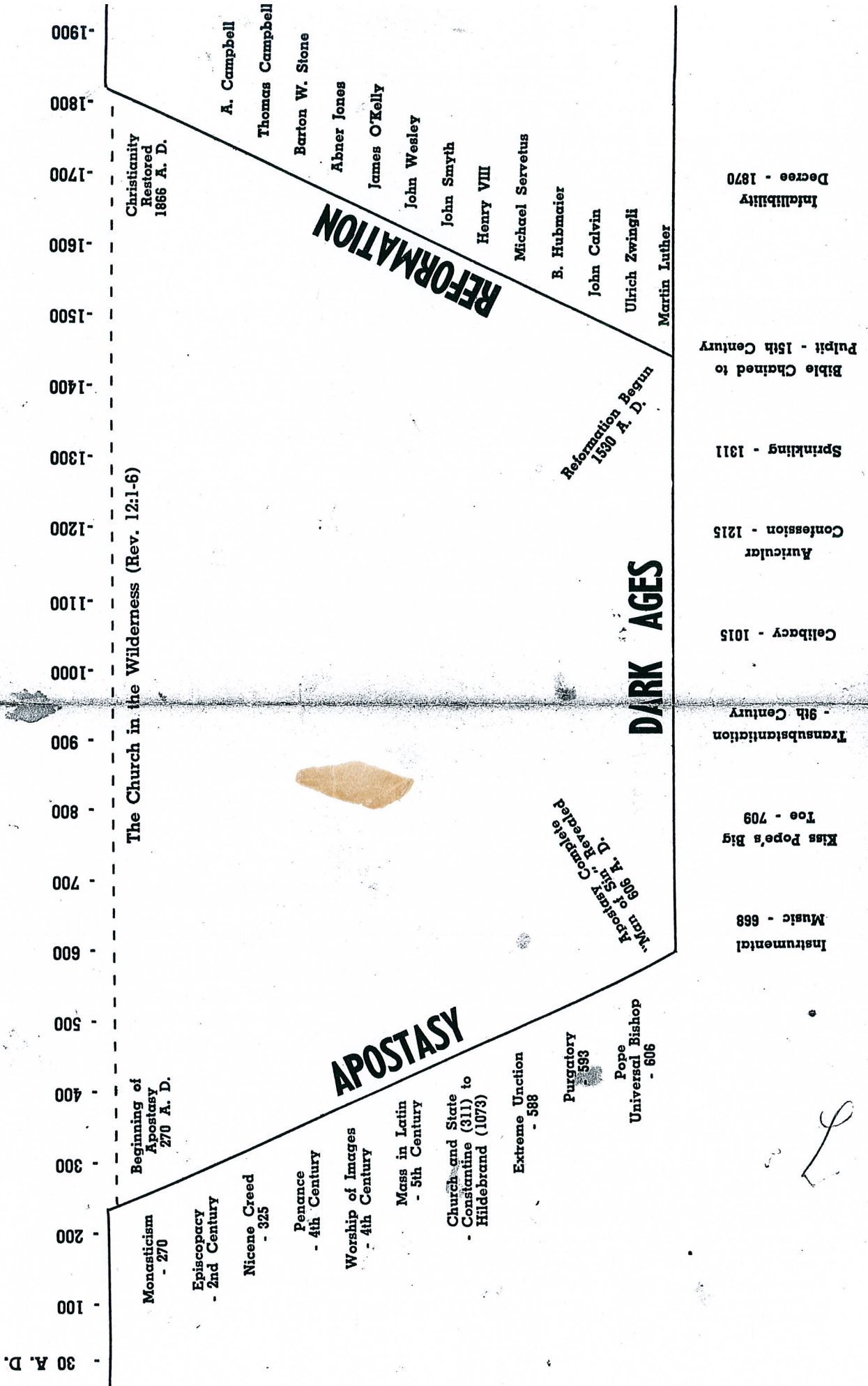
Sprinkling - 1311

Bible Chained to Pulpit - 15th Century

Infallibility Decree - 1870



# The Church -- The Falling Away -- The Restoration





# The New Testament Church

(The Divine Pattern)

**Founder** Christ Matt. 16:18  
*Matt 14:17*

**Where** Jerusalem Acts 2:5-47  
*Acts 2:1-47*

**When** A. D. 33 Acts 2  
*Day of Pentecost*

**Head** Christ Eph. 1:22  
*John 17:1-13*

**Organization** Phil. 1:1  
*Elders Tit. 1:5; 1 Pet. 5:1-3; Acts 20:28; 1 Tim. 3:1-7; Heb. 1:1-3  
Deacons Acts 6:1-6; 1 Tim. 3:8-13  
Evangelists Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:5  
Members Acts 2:41-47; Col. 1:13; 1 Cor. 1:2*

**Organization**  
Church of God 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Tim. 3:5  
Church of Living God 1 Tim. 3:15  
Body of Christ Col. 1:24; Eph. 5:23; 4:12  
Church of Christ Matt. 16:18; Rom. 16:16

**Name**  
Disciples Ino. 15:8; Act 11:26  
Saints Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:2  
Brethren Lu. 8:21; Gal. 6:1  
Children Gal. 3:26; 1 Ino. 2:1  
Christians Acts 11:26; 26:28; 1 Pet. 4:16

**Creed** Jesus Christ Matt. 16:18; 10:32; Heb. 6:17-18; Acts 8:37  
**Rule of Faith** All Power Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 1:16; Heb. 4:12; Mk. 16:15-16  
Church Gov't 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:3  
Seed of the Kingdom Mt. 13:3; Lu. 8:11  
Sword of the Spirit Eph. 6:17

**Law of Entrance** Faith Heb. 11:6; Acts 16:31  
Repentance Acts 2:38; 17:30  
Confession Matt. 10:32; Acts 8:37  
Baptism Acts 2:38; 10:48; Gal. 3:27

**Worship** Teaching Acts 20:7; 2 Tim. 2:2  
Contribution 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:6  
Praying 1 Thess. 5-17  
Communion Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:23  
Singing Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19

**Mission** Saving Souls Eph. 3:10; Ino. 6:45  
**Warning** Gal. 1:6-8; Rev. 22:18-19; Mt. 15:9;



# SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES



“Judge not according to the appearance,  
but judge righteous judgment” (John 7:24).

Published by the South Seminole Church of Christ  
5410 Lake Howell Rd. Winter Park, FL 32792-1097  
Office: (407) 657-0657 Home: (407) 681-8807

## ERRORS TAUGHT BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (PART 1)

Nelson Greene and Gary W. Summers

[Editor's note: Brother Nelson Greene was raised as a Roman Catholic. After various changes in church laws (eating meat on Friday, changing the mass from Latin to the language of the people, etc., he started to question things. After learning something about various religious groups, some friends put him in touch with Roanoke Bible College in Elizabeth City, North Carolina (which was then a conservative Christian Church college). He was taught that the non-instrumental congregations had caused the split over a subject that could not be proven from the Bible. Eventually, he found his way to the Lord's church. Someone asked him to prepare the following material, which he did. The claim of the Catholic Church is in italics; brother Nelson's comments follow; mine will be in brackets.]

1. *Papal Infallibility* was proclaimed by the Vatican Council of 1870. This culminated in the authority of the church for the traditions of the hierarchy. Some doctrine and proclamation is in direct violation of Matthew 15:7-9, in which Jesus denounced the "doctrines and commandments of men." [People may have assumed that the Catholic Church has always taught this doctrine, but it has been in effect only since 1870. When Alexander Campbell debated the Roman Catholic Bishop Purcell in Cincinnati in 1837, Purcell said the concept of papal infallibility would never become part of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church; 33 years later it did.]

The reader must realize that all else that Catholicism teaches hinges on this one point. If the pope is truly infallible, then a Catholic has no choice but to abide by every tradition he institutes, since his word would be equally valid with the Scriptures. This is a dangerous doctrine, depending on what he says, but one thing it does—it allows a multitude of teachings to be regarded as from God though they have their origin from man. Nothing could more clearly fit the concept of adding to the Word of God (Deut. 4:2.)

2. *Authority and The Bible: Tradition is to be held as the highest authority in the church, even above the Bible.* Deuteronomy 4:2 and Isaiah 8:20 warn that man must not add to nor take away from the Scriptures inspired of God. Matthew 15:3, 6, 7-9 warn man that traditions of men make void the Word of God and make worship based on tradition vain. 2 Timothy 3:15-17, Revelation 22:18-19, and 1 Corinthians 4:6 state that the Scriptures are alone sufficient for the man of God. [Many of the traditions were introduced in the second, third, and fourth centuries—far too late to be authorized by the New Testament.]

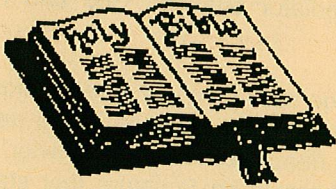
3. *The founder and head of the church is Peter.* In 1 Peter 2:4-8, Peter denied the church was built by him or on him. Peter was not superior to the other apostles (see 1 Peter 5:1; 2 Cor. 11:5; Acts 15:13-19; Matt. 20:25-26). To be a successor to an apostle one must have the same qualifications as the apostle, which no man after Peter's death could claim (not even Benedict XVI). See Acts 1:21-22. When James was beheaded, no one was selected to succeed him as in the case of Judas. See Acts 1:15-26, 29.

[The church was built by Jesus (Matt. 16:18), and He purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Furthermore, the Scriptures clearly claim that Jesus is the Head of the church, which is His body (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). Sometimes Catholics will say, "Jesus is the head of the church in heaven, but the pope is the head of the church on earth." Yet in Matthew 28:18, Jesus said: "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth."

Furthermore, where is the Scripture that talks about a pope? It does not exist. The only organization for the church involves elders and deacons, and they are to be in every congregation (1 Tim. 3:1-7.)



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## ERRORS TAUGHT BY THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH (PART 2)

Nelson Greene and Gary W. Summers

[Editor's note: This is the conclusion of the material prepared by former Catholic, brother Nelson Greene. The Catholic doctrine appears in italics; his comments follow; mine are in brackets.]

11. *Holy Eucharist*: The doctrine of *transubstantiation* refers to the bread and fruit of the vine **changing** into the *actual* body and blood of Christ, performed at the consecration of the mass (adopted at the Lateran Council in 1215). One must remember that Christ Jesus was materially present at the Last Supper with His disciples when He gave the bread and fruit of the vine and said, "This is my body," and, "This is my blood." This is obviously a figure of speech (a metaphor), the same as when Christ Jesus referred to Himself as a "door" and as a "vine." Christ Jesus was not literally a vine or a door (John 10:7, 15).
12. *Holy Communion* (Eucharist) is an "unbloody" sacrifice performed during a **mass** by a priest. The Scriptures teach that Jesus was offered once for all—not that He would continually be sacrificed (Heb. 9:25-26; 10:11-12). Hebrews 6:6 does say that those who have fallen away crucify Him afresh, but this is figurative rather than literal.
13. *The Last Rites* (used to be known as *Extreme Unc-tion*) is a tradition involving holy oil, blessed candles, and a priest; its purpose is to give strength to the soul and body at the point of death. It can also be given to one who has just died. It is also believed that sins are forgiven by the ritual of Last Rites even though one has not repented nor asked to be forgiven. 1 Corinthians 4:6 teaches that one must not go beyond what is written in God's word. There is no such ritual/practice/tradition in the Bible. (See Deuteronomy 4:2, Isaiah 8:20, Matthew 15: 3, 6, 7-9. Also see 2 Timothy 3:15-17, Revelation 22:18-19 and 1 Corinthians 4:6.)

14. *Doctrine of Holy Orders*: One of the seven sacra-ments involves *Holy Orders*, which is the means of ordaining bishops and priests. The word *sacra-ment* is not in the Word of God. It is difficult for all of us to speak the same thing when some are us-ing vocabulary words not in the Scriptures (1 Cor. 1:10).

[*Sacrament* is a word used by church leaders in the early centuries after Christ to refer to religious ordinances which were obligatory to Christians, and they conferred grace to the recipients of it.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, published in 1994, defines *Holy Orders* as "the sacrament which the mission entrusted by Christ to his apos-tles continues to be exercised in the church until the end of time. It includes three degrees: episco-pate, presbyterate, and diaconate" (383).]

These orders involve special attire (known as "hab-its"), which distinguish those individuals from oth-ers. Matthew 7:20 teaches that by **fruits** (not white collars or robes) we shall be known.

15. *Sacrament of Matrimony*: Marriage is void unless performed by a catholic priest. All married non-Catholics are living in "concubinage" (sin) instead of Christian Matrimony because their marriage was not performed by a catholic priest. One might ask: Where was the priest at the wedding of Cana that Jesus attended? (John 2:1-11). Marriage is nei-ther a "church ordinance" nor a *sacrament*, accord-ing to the Bible. Children born in "concubinage" are not considered legitimate.

[Marriage was established in the Garden of Eden, and no special group of men conducted marriage ceremonies in the Old Testament. Jewish priests did not perform weddings. Jesus gave no instruc-



Something this big would no doubt have been included to the congregations in the letters. Thus it would have been in the Bible, but it is totally silent on the matter.

[For this reason it was noted at the outset of these two articles that, once the words of the "pope" (who likewise is **not** mentioned in the Scriptures) are regarded as infallible and traditions and legends are regarded as equal with the truth, any doctrine could be established. What would prevent a person with this kind of power from claiming that the apostle John lived another century after the first one and was given seven truths to guard which a band of followers have through the millennia preserved, which can now be revealed in our day? The point is that, once the authority of the Scriptures is undermined, any doctrine or practice is permissible.]

(g) Mary had an "Immaculate Conception": This doctrine originated in England. Mary was born without the stain of "original sin," concerning which the Bible says nothing. [Augustine invented the doctrine of *original sin* in the late fourth century; it was adopted by Luther 1100 years later and refined and popularized by Calvin—so much so that most of us refer to the doctrine as Calvinism.

Of course, if all people come into the world tainted (rather than pure), then Jesus, as a human being, had to be born with original sin also. Nobody wants to draw that conclusion, but there is no way around it. Some Protestants simply say that, as the Son of God, Jesus did not come into the world with original sin upon Him, but this explanation does not suffice. Jesus was *fully* human as well as fully Divine. If babies enter the world with original sins, then Jesus entered the world that way, also.

Catholicism thinks they have a way around this predicament. By Mary having a miraculous conception, their theologians argue, Jesus was able to be born without original sin. Of course, this rationale fails because it is not found in the Scriptures. Although theologians today scramble to rid Jesus of this problem, the gospel writers never saw a problem because none of them believed in the manmade doctrine of *original sin*. For that reason one will never find a single reference to Jesus either having original sin or needing to be absolved from it.

Making Mary's birth "immaculate" is totally without Scriptural warrant. It was not prophesied; neither is it mentioned by any New Testament writer. Mary was a spiritual woman; Jesus loved her and made provision for her—even on the cross. She deserves respect and admiration; so do all the obedient (Matt. 12:46-50).]

22. "Limbo": this doctrine teaches that infants and those not baptized (christened) pass into a state of Bliss called Limbo. The doctrine declares that God does not reside in Limbo. There is no punishment and no presence of God. In the latter part of the twentieth century, this doctrine was downplayed to the point that it is rarely mentioned. There is no Scripture for this doctrine.

[Since brother Greene assembled this material, the Roman Catholic Church has changed its view. On April 21<sup>st</sup> she made an announcement regarding the doctrine: "According to a Reuters news story, written by Philip Pulella, "the Church's International Theological Commission said limbo reflected an 'unduly restrictive view of salvation.'" (For more information see "Limbo No Longer Rocks" in the May 7, 2007 *Spiritual Perspectives*.) The reason this doctrine was invented in the first place was because, once again, of *original sin*. If babies inherited Adam's sin and were never "baptized," they could not be allowed to enter heaven. Yet, obviously, they had done nothing worthy of torment in hell; so *limbo* became the place for those souls to inhabit. The Bible teaches that hell is a place without the presence of God (2 Thess 1:7-9).]

[The reader is encouraged to study these 21 points in connection with the Scriptures. We thank brother Greene for putting together this material, and we ought to be sufficiently warned concerning what happens when we depart from the Scriptures God gave to us.]

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

## THE MASTER'S GARDEN

Hope C. Oberhelman (edited slightly)

Help me cultivate Thy garden;  
Help me plant, Lord, row by row;  
Keep me sowing, gracious Master,  
That ev'ry seed may thrive and grow...

Help me cultivate Thy garden;  
Help me plant each precious seed;  
Hope and faith and love and mercy—  
Items that my soul doth need.

Help me cultivate Thy garden;  
Blessed Master, stay Thou near;  
Help me water it and watch it  
As each seedling doth appear.

Help me cultivate Thy garden;  
Keep me sowing, oh, my Lord—  
Help me labor in Thy garden  
Where each flower's a reward!

## INFLUENCE (Anonymous)

Whatever dims thy sense of truth  
Or stains thy purity,  
Though light as breath of summer air,  
Count it as sin to thee.



# SPIRITUAL PERSPECTIVES



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## THE POPE AND “THE CHURCH”

Gary W. Summers

No sooner had last week's article about the pope's views on baptism been completed than people were buzzing about his comments concerning “the church.” The information in this article comes from an Associated Press story by Nicole Winfield, which was published on page A2 of the *Orlando Sentinel* on July 11<sup>th</sup>.

According to the first paragraph of the story, Benedict XVI (aka Joseph Ratzinger) has affirmed that “Orthodox churches are defective and that other Christian denominations are not true churches.” Although members of various religious denominations act horrified at such a pronouncement, the head of the Roman Catholic Church is absolutely right on this point—but not for the reason that he gives. Consider his rationale:

“Christ ‘established here on earth’ only one church,” the document read. The other communities “cannot be called ‘churches’ in the proper sense” because they do not have apostolic succession—the ability to trace their bishops back to Christ's apostles (all quotations marks theirs, gws).

### Christ Established Only One Church

The first line is true; the entire paragraph needs to be examined. It is true that Christ established only one church. This church (or kingdom) was foretold by prophets such as Isaiah (2:2-4) and Daniel (2:44-45). When one reads these prophecies carefully, one can see that they were not speaking of a physical kingdom. Isaiah speaks of the Lord's house being established. Although Israelites probably envisioned a physical kingdom, the Lord's house in the New Testament refers to the church (1 Tim. 3:15; 1 Peter 2:5, 9). Christians are the spiritual stones in the Lord's house, the New Testament temple (1 Cor. 3:16-17). The church is also the body of people who have come out of the darkness of the world into the light of the kingdom (compare 1 Peter 2:9 with Colossians 1:13-14).

Matthew emphasizes the spiritual nature of the kingdom prophesied of old by designating it as the kingdom of heaven. John proclaimed that this kingdom was **at hand** (Matt. 3:2), as did Jesus (Matt. 4:17). The Lord further said that some in His presence would not die until they had seen the kingdom come with power (Mark 9:1). That one kingdom or church was established on the day of Pentecost when Peter preached salvation through Jesus Christ (Acts 2:22-41).

Jesus had promised to build His church (Matt. 16:18). He also purchased it with His own blood (Acts 20:28), and John refers to Jesus in Revelation as one who “washed us from our sins in His own blood” (1:5). Jesus kept His Word. The church (kingdom of heaven) was established shortly after its prophetic announcement by John and Jesus, and those who repented of their sins and were baptized for the forgiveness of them became Christians and were placed into it (Acts 2:47).

Paul makes it clear that Christ is the Head of His body, the church (Eph. 1:22-23) and that there is only one church (body) (Eph. 4:5). Furthermore, Paul points out what should at this point be obvious—that Jesus will save only one body—His (Eph. 5:23). Christ neither established, nor in any way authorized Orthodox churches nor religious denominations. None of them are approved in the pages of the New Testament, nor are they even discussed—unless it be under the general principle of Matthew 15:13: “Every plant which My heavenly Father has not planted will be uprooted.”

People need to ask themselves, “Why am I a member of a church not found in the Bible?” Anyone who knows even a little bit about church history knows that the Protestant denominations did not exist until 1,500 years after Jesus shed His blood for His church. The Greek Orthodox Church is usually traced to 1054 A.D., which makes it 1,000 years too late to be the Lord's church. The Roman Catholic Church is not it, either!



The reason that the pope gives for these churches being "defective" is erroneous. The **Scriptures** teach there is one church; manmade religions cannot therefore qualify as the church Jesus established. Benedict says that the reason they are not **the** church is they "do not have apostolic succession." What Scripture says that apostolic succession is needed? This is the problem with the Roman Catholic Church; their hierarchy does not believe that the Scriptures are sufficient.

Authority must be determined **from** the Scriptures. Someone claiming to be an authority can say anything he wishes. Joseph Smith can claim to speak for God in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Mary Baker Eddy claims to have Divine insight, as did Aimee Semple McPherson, Ellen G. White, the pope, Sun Myung Moon, and about anyone else who claims to have had a Divine revelation.

One of the reasons that the Bible was written was so that people need not fall prey to all of these self-proclaimed spokesmen. Jesus promised the apostles that the Holy Spirit would enable them to recall accurately all that Jesus had taught them, teach them all things (guide them into all truth), and show them things to come (John 14:26; 16:13). Even though they recorded His life 30 years after His death, burial, and resurrection, they nevertheless recorded precisely what Jesus had taught. Furthermore, they received all the spiritual truth that God wanted mankind to have. At the end of his life, Peter verified that God had given to them "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (2 Peter 1:3). Jude stated the same fact (v. 3).

All of this revelation is found in the pages of the New Testament. What need is there for papal, apostolic, pastoral, or any other kind of succession? We have in written form all that we need, and it was confirmed by the Holy Spirit (Mark 16:20). The high priesthood continued through Aaron's descendants down to the captivity by Babylon. Could they change the law of Moses because they were descended from his brother? No, the law was still the law regardless of any kind of succession. At the time of Christ the high priest was selected by political appointment, but the lack of Aaronic succession did not change the words and teachings that God gave through Moses.

Jesus said: "He who rejects Me and receives not My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day." Jesus does not say that people will be judged by the teachings of a succession of popes over the centuries. We will be judged by His words and those of His apostles, to whom the Holy Spirit revealed all things. No line of succession was ever mentioned or prophesied of. The revelation of God to man is complete.

The Catholic Church tries to trace its line of authority back to the first century, but such efforts are vain and useless because the Roman Catholic Church of today is nothing like the church in the first century.

First of all, the Bible never teaches that Christ is the head of the church in heaven but that the pope is the head down here. What He did tell His apostles was: "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth" (Matt. 28:18). Nowhere does the New Testament proclaim two different heads over the church; the only head over it is the One Who shed His blood and died for it (Col. 1:18).

Church structure is defined in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, and it provides for a plurality of elders (also referred to as bishops or pastors, Acts 20:17, 28-29; 1 Peter 5:1-4). Deacons serve under these men (1 Tim. 3; Phil. 1:1). There is no one-man control over one church and no group of men over several churches—let alone cardinals or a universal bishop over everything. These are **not** known in the Bible either by name or concept.

In God's system, there is no priest who mediates between God and men; Christ is sufficient for that work (1 Tim. 2:5), and all Christians are priests (1 Peter 2:5). Christianity recognizes that the bread and the fruit of the vine symbolize the body and blood of Jesus and that Jesus used a metaphor concerning them—they do not literally turn into the body and blood of Christ.

Not only has the Roman Catholic Church changed worship drastically; it has changed baptism (immersion) to sprinkling. Furthermore, the church sprinkles infants who have never committed sin. If Peter had fallen asleep in the first century only to awaken now and walked into a Catholic Cathedral, he would be shocked at the worship being conducted, the teaching on salvation, and the church hierarchy that had developed since the first century. Most of all, he would be mortified to know that a mere human being had been elevated to such an exalted position of authority—and that he himself was called the first pope! His protests would immediately earn him the epithet of *heretic* for questioning "the church's teachings."

### The Truth

Those who follow the teachings of the Bible, who simply call themselves Christians, and who follow what the New Testament teaches about salvation, worship, and church organization are today part of the church for which Christ died. Christ still adds those who are cleansed of their sins to His body, the church (Acts 2:47). The church was not founded by men for men; it was founded by God for men to be redeemed and to glorify God.

No religious group needs to trace its history back to the first-century. The Catholic Church claims to do so, but they bear no resemblance to the churches in the New Testament. The churches of Christ do. We stand ready to demonstrate at any time that we teach what the Bible teaches and that we are the one church that Jesus established.



# Seek The Old Paths

*"Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths...and walk therein."*  
(Jeremiah 6:16)

Vol. 21, No. 2

February 2010

## PUBLIC CONFESSION OF SINS VERSUS THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

Victor M. Eskew

**"C**onfess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much" (James 5:16). The inspired writer, James, teaches us the necessity of confessing our sins "one to another." This verse is the authority behind what is often called "a public confession." When the invitation is extended at the close of a sermon, often a member of the church will come forward and confess his/her sins. Once the confession is made, the church as a whole prays for God's forgiveness on the sinner's behalf.

There are some who have likened this practice to "The Sacrament of Penance" as practiced by the Catholic Church. However, there are some major differences that exist between the two practices. In the remainder of this article, we will examine these distinctions.

**First**, the Catholic Church lists "Penance" among the sacraments. A sacrament is a religious symbol or rite "which conveys divine grace, blessing, or sanctity upon the believer who participates in it" (wikipedia.com, "Sacrament").

The Bible, however, nowhere refers to sacraments. The confession of sins is considered part of the divine process whereby sins are forgiven by God (I John 1:9).

**Second**, the "Sacrament of

**Penance**" demands that confession be made before an official, duly ordained priest of the Catholic Church. One who is considered a layman in the Catholic Church cannot hear the confession of the penitent believer.

In the Lord's church, anyone is free to hear the confession of the penitent. In most cases, the first to hear is the preacher. He, then, tells the entire church about the sins being confessed. This writer has seen elders and other members of the church listen to the confession first. The Bible does not teach that confession must be taken by a duly ordained priest of the Catholic Church. James 5:16 teaches that confession is to be made "one to another."

**Third**, "Penance" or "Reconciliation" as practiced by the Catholics is done in private. The confession involves the sinner and the priest only.

This is not the case when a public confession is made by a member of the church. The sin may be revealed to the preacher first, but it is ultimately made known to the entire congregation. Since the sin involved the entire church, the entire congregation offers a prayer on the individual's behalf. When one offers the prayer, all the church is being led in the prayer.

**Fourth**, "Penance" as taught by the Romans Catholics involves all

the sins one has committed since one's last confession. These sins are both public and private transgressions. They can involve behavioral sins and sins one commits within the heart.

This is not the case when a member of the church comes forward confessing his sins. He comes only when his sins are of a public nature. These sins have adversely impacted the members of the body of which he is a part. Private sins and sins between brethren can be dealt with in a private setting (Matt. 18:15; Luke 17:3-4).

**Fifth**, the Catholic doctrine of *Auricular Confession* gives the priest the ability to absolve or remit the sins of the penitent. The priest will often make this statement during the confession: "God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "The sacrament of forgiveness," 1449, p.404). Note the words: "I absolve you from your sins." The

(Continued on page 12)  
**Public Confession...**



# LAW AND GRACE

Franklin Camp, deceased

A major problem in religion today is a misconception of law and grace. This has been a stumbling block from the time sin entered the world.

A failure to grasp the subject is fatal to the soul. Grace is the foundation of redemption. The one who errs here will miss heaven (Eph. 2:8-10).

A cardinal fallacy is the doctrine that law excludes grace. This position creates paramount issues. If grace excludes law, it excludes obedience. Law is essential to obedience. One must have something to obey. One cannot obey nothing.

The religious world generally denies the necessity of obedience in becoming a Christian. Some equate obedience with works that do not save. But James 2:14-26, along with other passages, cannot be harmonized with the doctrine of "faith alone."

Others know obedience is essential, yet struggle in trying to exclude law, but not obedience. If grace excludes all law, no door is open for obedience.

If law excludes grace, one of two things must follow: either there is no room for obedience, or if obedience is essential, one must explain what must be obeyed. One may say "commandments" must be obeyed, but this will not resolve the issue. A difference in "command" and "law" cannot be explained by those who reject law but want to retain commands. "*Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord. ... Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments*" (Psalm 119:1,6). Law and commandments are synonymous terms throughout the Bible.

Does grace exclude obedience to the commands of the Gospel? The Gospel has commands (I Cor. 14:37). God would not provide salvation by grace and give commands that conflict with grace.

Some say grace and commands harmonize. If grace and commands harmonize, grace and law also harmonize. The exclusion of law excludes commands. There is no way one can exclude law and include commands.

Denominational preachers try to

avoid the problem by teaching obedience is not essential in becoming a Christian, but is necessary for the Christian. When pressed, they will deny that one's obedience has anything to do with salvation, but they refuse to teach their members obedience is not important. Thus, they find themselves in a strange situation — obedience is important, but not required.

Some say, "But a Christian will want to obey." Why obey something that has no relationship to going to heaven?

Let me raise some questions for those teaching that grace excludes law. Is grace no longer essential *after* becoming a Christian? When one is saved by grace, does he then live the Christian life by law without grace? Surely not. Does it not follow that one obeys after becoming a Christian and that obedience does not conflict with grace? When the Christian obeys, what is obeyed? If commands, it is law.

One not only becomes a Christian by faith, but the Christian lives by faith (Gal. 2:11,20). One cannot live the Christian life by faith alone — that is, faith minus obedience. Then why think one may become a Christian by faith minus obedience?

No one denies a Christian must be obedient (Heb. 5:8,9). What does the Christian obey? Is it law? If not, what does he obey? If law, then law does not exclude grace. Christians are not sinlessly perfect. That kind of imperfection requires grace.

There is the second law of pardon for the Christian. I do not hesitate to refer to it as the law of pardon for a Christian. When a Christian sins, he must repent (Acts 8:22). He must confess his sin and pray (I John 1:7-9; Acts 8:22).

Would one deny that a Christian must obey these commands? When one obeys them, is it submission to law? Does one's obedience cancel out grace?

When one is forgiven, it must be in one of two ways: merit or grace. Forgiveness by merit is an impossibility. Pardon is extended only through grace. When a Christian sins, repents, confesses it, and prays, he has submitted to law and receives pardon. Obedience is necessary, but it does not earn pardon.

If the second law of pardon does

not conflict with grace, why would the first law of pardon, the one for the alien?

Grace does not exclude law if correctly interpreted.

## Public Confession...

(Continued from page 9)

word "I" refers to the priest. The Catholics believe that a priest has the power to forgive sins.

In the Lord's church, when prayer is offered for the penitent, God is addressed. The one praying asks the Father in heaven to forgive the one who has come confessing his/her sins.

Sixth, the Catholic Confession also involves what is referred to as "satisfaction." In the *Catechism*, we read the following: "Absolution takes away sin, it does not remedy all the disorders sin has caused. Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for sin: he must 'make satisfaction' or 'expiate' his sins. This satisfaction is also called 'penance' (p.407). Mere confession, therefore, is not enough according to Catholics. There must be a payment. "It can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all patient acceptance of the cross we bear" (*Catechism*, p.407).

The public confession in the Lord's church **never** involves satisfaction or penance. The penitent is never told that he must do something more after repentance and confession in order to be right with God.

The six things we have discussed show that a great gulf exists between our public confession and the Auricular Confession of the Catholic Church. To make the claim that they are similar is a false claim. The confession of sins as practiced in the church of Christ harmonizes with James 5:16. The Sacrament of Penance contains much that is man-made. May each of us be pleased to "confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another." We do this because of God's promise that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

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MY PROFILE OFFERS SITEMAP

From The Times

July 11, 2007

## If it isn't Roman Catholic then it's not a proper Church, Pope tells Christians



Richard Owen and Ruth Glechill

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Christian unity.

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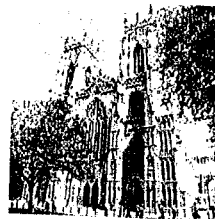


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July 11, 2007

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Richard Owen and Ruth Gledhill

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Father Augustine Di Noia, a senior doctrinal official at the Vatican, insisted that the Catholic Church was not "backtracking on ecumenical commitment. But it is fundamental to any kind of dialogue that the participants are clear about their own identity. That is, dialogue cannot be an occasion to accommodate or soften what you understand yourself to be."

Vatican officials insist that the Pope's attachment to bedrock traditional values is compatible with dialogue with other Christians. Yesterday's document said that such dialogue remained "one of the priorities of the Catholic Church".

The document said that the Second Vatican Council's opening to other faiths – including "ecclesial communities originating with the Reformation" – had recognised there were "many elements of sanctification and truth" in other Christian denominations, but had also emphasised that only Catholicism was fully Christ's Church.

The document said that other Christian faiths "lack elements considered essential to the Catholic Church".

The disappointment of the Anglicans was evident in the response of Canon Gregory Cameron, Dr Williams's former chaplain in Wales and a leading canonical lawyer and scholar who is now ecumenical officer of the Anglican Communion.

Canon Cameron said: "In the commentary of this document we are told that 'Catholic ecumenism' appears 'somewhat paradoxical'. It is paradoxical for leaders of the Roman Catholic Church to indicate to its ecumenical partners that it no longer expects all other Christians merely to return to the true (Roman Catholic) Church, but then for Rome to say that it alone has 'full identity' with the Church of Christ, and that all others of us are lacking."

He said Anglican bishops had indicated in 1997 that such a position constituted "a major ecumenical obstacle".

The Rev David Phillips, General Secretary of the Church Society, said: "Nothing new is said, but it does clarify the way in which the Vatican has torn apart Christianity because of its lust for power. They remind us that in their view that to be a true church one has to accept the ludicrous idea that the Pope is in some special way the successor of the apostle Peter and the supreme earthly leader of the Church.

"These claims cannot be justified, biblically, or historically, yet they have been used not only to divide Christians but to persecute them and put them to death.

"We are grateful that the Vatican has once again been honest in declaring their view that the Church of England is not a proper Church. Too much dialogue proceeds without such honesty. Therefore, we would wish to be equally open; unity will only be possible when the papacy renounces its errors and pretensions."

- HAVE YOUR SAY

This is the same thing all churches accept as true of them self, other wise they would be in union with each other. We must remember the bible does not state that there are thirty thousand churches not twenty two Churches only one Church, which ever that maybe. (1T im 3:15 - "the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of truth ") (the = one (one church))

Reynaldo, Miami, Florida

"If ye be lukewarm..."

Martin, Wyoming,

Janet,

I and other will pray for you. The Catholic Church may not be perfect, but it is the only Church that can be traced back to the time of Christ, no other Church can trace their origins back that far in time.

God Bless,

Ken, Minnesota, USA

Ken, Hermantown, USA / MN

Yippee!!!!!! about time the Vatican expresed this.....

Maybe we can now dismantle the deforms of the Second Vatican Council

It is good that we start bee n rpoud again of a strong church and a strong faith, without compromising our teachings ...nobody else does.....why should Catholics be required to do so?

If you disagree, then join another faith .....

Barbara, NYC, USA

I am not religious but this just sums up the medieval power mad Papal attitude. It is power politics at its most corrupt. It is no different to the backward Papal attitude to contraception. Millions are in poverty in catholic dominated third world countires and why? Because the Pope says they cannot use contraceptives. Just like in Europe, people will stop going to catholic churches and join other more enlightened progressive churches. Wake up Mr. Pope and enter the modern world before you have no-one left to give communion too.

Roger, Baguio City, Philippines



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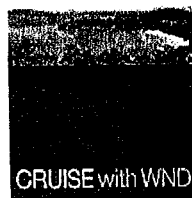
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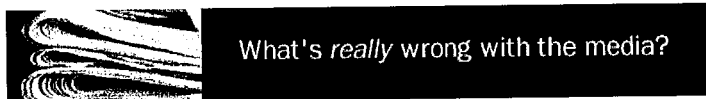


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### FAITH UNDER FIRE

## Pope: So, you're not Catholic? Then you're not in true Church

Benedict ignites holy war of words by stating other groups 'defective'

Posted: July 11, 2007  
3:31 a.m. Eastern

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Pope Benedict XVI

Pope Benedict XVI has ignited controversy across the world by approving a document saying non-Catholic Christian communities are either defective or not true churches, and the Roman Catholic Church provides the only true path to salvation.

"Christ 'established here on earth' only one church," said the document, reasserting the primacy of Catholicism.

It said other Christian communities such as Protestants "cannot be called 'churches' in the proper sense" since they don't have what's known as apostolic succession – that is, the ability to trace their bishops back to the original 12 apostles of Jesus.

*(Story continues below)*

The document said the Orthodox church suffered from a "wound" because it did not recognize the primacy of the pope, adding the wound was "still more profound" among Protestant denominations.

It was "difficult to see how the title of 'Church' could possibly be attributed to them," said the statement from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, purporting Roman Catholicism was "the one true Church of Christ."

"These separated churches and communities, though we believe they suffer from defects, are deprived neither of significance nor importance in the mystery of salvation," the document read. "In

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fact the Spirit of Christ has not refrained from using them as instruments of salvation, whose value derives from that fullness of grace and of truth which has been entrusted to the Catholic Church."

The document, formulated as five questions and answers, repeated sections of a 2000 text the pope wrote when he was prefect of the congregation, "Dominus Iesus," which angered Protestant and other Christian denominations because it said they were not true churches and did not have the "means of salvation."

The Vatican's statement, signed by American Cardinal William Levada, was approved by Benedict June 29, the feast of Saints Peter and Paul in the Catholic faith.

Protestant leaders wasted no time attacking the statement.

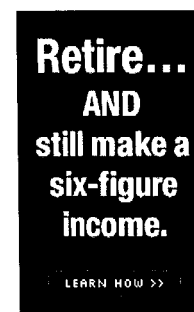
"It makes us question whether we are indeed praying together for Christian unity," said the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, a group of 75 million Protestants in more than 100 countries. "It makes us question the seriousness with which the Roman Catholic Church takes its dialogues with the reformed family and other families of the church."

Today's edition of the London Times gave the story prominence with a headline reading: "If it isn't Roman Catholic then it's not a proper Church, pope tells Christians."

Its online edition also features a messageboard where readers from all over the world are reacting to the pronouncement, including:

- The pope is being honest in saying what all right thinking Catholics believe. (Brian O Cinneide, Durban, South Africa)
- The Roman Catholic Church IS the true Church, all others are "off shoots," "break away" or denominations. (Connie, Billings, Montana)
- I guess the crux of it is that if you don't accept the pope as your leader, then the church you are in is illegitimate. This is most offensive and insincere considering the Roman Catholic Church keeps telling us that it wants to reach out to other Christian and non-Christian faiths. I would say that the Catholic Church is "not proper" for issuing this provocative article not the Christian churches. (Niki Saliba, Melbourne, Australia)
- I am embarrassed to be Catholic. I feel as if a major part of my ongoing and increasingly difficult decision to remain in the Church has been excised. The pope is going to take the Church back to a time when it was populated by only a hard-core, self-congratulatory few. I guess that will mean fewer parishes to keep open and more donations per capita. (Janet, Ohio)
- Just shows why it is almost impossible to remain a practicing Catholic. The medium is more important than the message. Do you really think Christ would think it was more important to belong to one brand of Christianity than to live by his teachings? (Maria, Sydney, Australia)
- The early Christians set a bad example for everyone. They

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prayed in other tongues, engaged in prophesy, laid hands on the sick, cast out demons and met in services in the catacombs. They stuck together even until death and crucifixion. They acted like they were in love with God as a result of a supernatural experience through the Holy Spirit as a result of Christ's death of redemption. Those improper Christians never did get it right with their early Church practices! (Mark, Houston, Texas)

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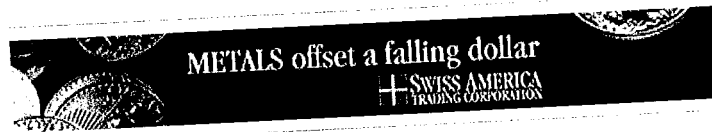
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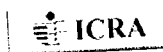
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# What About “The Eucharist”?

by Steve Gibson (March 2005)

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Scriptural Designations and Warnings

The New Testament tells us about “the Lord’s Supper” at the “Lord’s Table” (1 Cor. 11:20; 10:21). The same service is also referred to as the “breaking of bread” (Acts 2:42; cf. 20:7). The Lord’s Supper is said to be a “communion” (1 Cor. 10:16) observed “in remembrance” of the death of Jesus (1 Cor. 11:24-25). The Scriptures admonish us to “speak as the oracles of God” (1 Pet. 4:11). They also warn of a time when men would “depart from the faith,” and “be turned unto fables” (or, myths), being deceived by “signs and lying wonders” (2 Ths. 2:9; 1 Tim. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:4).

### B. Catholic Terms and Concepts

Roman Catholic tradition refers to the Lord’s Supper as “the Eucharist.” It is also termed “The Sacrifice of the Mass.” When an ordained Catholic priest says the magic words of consecration, *transubstantiation* occurs and the bread and wine are miraculously changed into the actual body and blood of the Lord. The result of transubstantiation is “the real presence” of Christ. But the key distinctive of the Roman Catholic Eucharist is that it is regarded as a new *sacrifice*, not just as a remembrance of Christ’s prior sacrifice on the cross.

## DISCUSSION

### **I. The concept of Eucharistic Sacrifice emerged in the third century, as an effort to conform and present Christianity in terms of the religions round about it.**

“Sacrifice was so much part of the mental and spiritual furniture of the people of the ancient world that it was a feature rather taken for granted. [Apostolic Christianity was] novel in comparison with other current forms of sacrifice. The pagans in fact were commenting upon this curious phenomenon when they accused the early Christians of atheism” (R. P. C. Hanson, *Eucharistic Offering in the Early Church*, p. 28).

“Why then did the early church so quickly adopt the term [sacrifice] for the eucharist? Rowan Williams sets out very clearly the process. Christians needed to rebut the charge that they were irreligious, and without religious rites. The popular terms for a cultic act was ‘sacrifice’ and so Christians applied the term to the eucharist” (Michael Vasey, “Eucharist, Sacrifice, and Scripture,” p. 7).

In other words, Christians were ridiculed for promoting a “religion” that, unlike others, did not have a special priesthood designed to offer a special sacrifice in a special place. Some Christians began defending themselves by calling elders “priests,” the Lord’s Supper a “sacrifice,” and treating their meeting place like a sacred temple.

### **II. Eucharistic Sacrifice developed largely based on Cyprian’s uncritical application of Old Testament teaching about “priests” to the elders of the church.**

The first major proponent of eucharistic sacrifice was Cyprian of Carthage, who was “converted” from paganism in A.D. 246, and quickly became an elder about 248. “Cyprian, in the third century, was the first to coordinate a specific sacrifice, namely, the Sacrifice of the Eucharist, with a specific priesthood” (Elmer S. Freeman, *The Lord’s Supper in Protestantism*, p. 48).

Both “Jewish influence” and pagan likely account for Cyprian’s “great stress on the role of the Christian bishop as *sacerdos*” (Latin for “priest”) (p. 144). “His general understanding of the ministry” was “fulfilling the precise role laid down for the Old Testament priesthood” (p. 146). His understanding of “the Eucharist” represented “a radical change of emphasis of the highest significance” (p. 147). He says “that in the eucharist we offer the body and blood of Christ as our sacrifice”(p. 148). “The primary influence is likely to have been the direct application of Old Testament ideas to Christian practice” (p. 148). M. F. Wiles, “The Theological Legacy of St. Cyprian,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*.

“The writings of St. Cyprian are full of allusions to the Eucharist as a sacrifice. The priestly terms for the ministry, *sacerdos* for the bishop, *sacerdotium* for his office, are found. To celebrate the Eucharist is to ‘offer’ and to ‘sacrifice.’ The Eucharist itself is the ‘sacrifice’ or the ‘oblation,’ or ‘the sacrifice of the Lord,’ or ‘the victim of the Lord.’ The place where it is offered is the ‘altar’” (Darwell Stone, *A History of the Doctrine of the Holy Eucharist*, p. 48).

### **III. Eucharistic Sacrifice arose based on the assumption that God wanted the NT church to display more physical splendor and glory than the OT temple.**

“The new law would be more imperfect than the law of nature and the old law if it did not have an external and visible priesthood with corresponding sacrifice . . . . The fulfillment of nature and of the old law in Christ and in the church were taken to be a perfecting of the religious system, a more perfect sacrifice and a more perfect priesthood” (David N. Power, *The Sacrifice We Offer*, pp. 91, 98).

“Inasmuch as the idea of sacrifice is so deeply rooted in human nature . . . it was meet, nay, it was even necessary, that Christ should institute in His Church a holy and divine oblation as a visible service, whereby the faithful should give to God the glory which is his due, and express their own subjection to Him. No sensible man could imagine that Christ, Who ordained everything in His Church in the most perfect manner, should have omitted this highest act of worship, and left it wanting in so all-important a matter. Were it so, the Christian religion would be inferior to Judaism, for the sacrifices of the Old Testament were so glorious that heathens of distinction came from distant lands to assist at them” (Father Martin von Cochem, *Explanation of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass*, p. 13).

“All who have been present at the dedication of a church cannot find words to express their surprise at the number of different ceremonies, anointings, benedictions, and prayers that appertain to the ritual. What is the object of all of these? It is in order to render the church a temple meet for the great and holy sacrifice offered up therein to the most high God, and to hallow and consecrate the altars whereon the spotless Lamb of God is to be slain in a mystical manner” (Father Cochem, p. 30).

“If God gave to the stiff-necked Jews so efficacious a sacrifice of propitiation, will He not have given to Christians one far more powerful? If under the Old Covenant a lamb, immolated as a peace-offering, was the means of procuring for those who offered it many blessings from God, what will not the sacrifice of the Lamb of God avail when, under the New Dispensation, it is offered an innocent victim upon our altars, and with it an inexhaustible store of merit?” (Father Cocham, p 176).

“If the Old Law, which was but a shadow of the New, appointed an expiatory sacrifice for the consolation and spiritual welfare of the Jews, how much the more needful that the Church should provide a sacrifice of atonement for her children—a new sacrifice, as far superior to the old as the Christian Church is to the Jewish Synagogue. The sacrifice of blood, offered upon the cross, was once offered, and could not be repeated; it was therefore necessary to institute another, which should be offered daily for our daily transgressions” (Father Cocham, pp. 186-187). [*Contrast Heb. 10:11-14! SDG*]

#### **IV. Eucharistic Sacrifice grew into an elaborate superstition underpinning the entire Roman Catholic system of religion.**

“The idea of a sacramental change after consecration, that is to say, a conversion of the nature of the elements, entered the West through the writings of Ambrose (A.D. 340-397). The liturgical evidence itself points to the fact that this notion was not primitive” (C. W. Dugmore, “Sacrament and Sacrifice in the Early Fathers,” *Journal of Ecclesiastical History*, p. 26).

“This sacrificial intention is given ever greater precision, until in the fourth century it attains complete expression. [In the Liturgy of John Chrysostom] the deacon comes to the celebrant saying: ‘It is time to sacrifice to the Lord!’ After the censuring of the Elements the celebrant prays: Grant us to obtain grace in Thy sight, that our sacrifice may be acceptable unto thee” (Evelyn Underhill, *Worship*, p. 56).

“Transubstantiation. Certainly by the year 750 it is definitely a part of the doctrine of the Church” (Freeman, p. 50). “The moment of consecration only became of supreme importance later, especially from the twelfth century onwards” (Dugmore, p. 27). The Fourth Lateran Council pronounced transubstantiation an essential dogma in A.D. 1215.

“He Whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain is confined, imprisoned, as it were, in a little wafer. He Who is seated at the right hand of the Father lies upon the altar bound as a sacrificial lamb, ready to be slain anew in a spiritual manner as a victim for our sake. Christ becomes subject in holy Mass to the officiating priest . . . to appease the wrath of an angry God” (Father Cocham, p. 95). “St. Bonaventure places these words on the lips of both priest and people: ‘Behold, O Eternal Father, this Thy only-begotten Son, Whom all the world cannot contain, is now a prisoner in our hands. We will not surrender Him to Thee until for His sake Thou grant us what we earnestly request from Thee’” (Father Cocham, p. 341).

“Would that every sinner would lay this to heart, and, if he should fall into sin, hasten to church, hear Mass piously, and offer it to God to obtain forgiveness of sin, remission of its penalty, and amendment of life” (Father Cocham, p. 212).

#### **V. The doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice became the primary basis of financial support for Roman Catholic priests.**

“The mediaeval doctrine of priesthood was very largely based upon the power of the priest to consecrate the bread and the wine in the Mass” (Hanson, p. 24).

When a Roman Catholic Bishop ordains a new priest, he says “Receive power to offer sacrifice to God and to celebrate Mass, as well for the living as for the dead, in the name



of the Lord. . . . Mayest thou be blessed in the order of the priesthood, and mayest thou offer pleasing victims for the sins and offences of the people to Almighty God” (Father Cochem, pp. 34-35).

“The capacity to celebrate the Eucharist depends on the availability of an ordained priest. Where there is no priest there can be no celebration of the Eucharist. The availability of a priest is the *sine-qua-non* for the formation of a truly Eucharistic community. The missionary apostolate of the Church is therefore not only concerned with the formation of new local churches, but also with the selection and training of indigenous priests to guide these communities” (p. 30). “The law of the church prescribes celibacy and a full seminary training for all priests” (p. 31). “Only an ordained bishop or priest has the power to celebrate the Eucharist. And it is the *celebration* of the Eucharist which is the hinge of a build-up Christian community. Neither a deacon nor a catechist can fulfill the function of a priest in a local church for the simple reason that they cannot celebrate the Eucharist” (Raymond Hickey, *A Case For An Auxiliary Priesthood*, pp. 30-31).

“The customary offering of money must not be withheld, for, as St. Paul reminds us: ‘They that serve the altar partake with the altar’ (1 Cor. 9:13)” (Father Cochem, p. 40).

“137. Value of the Mass; Offerings. WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A MASS?  
A Mass has infinite value, because it is the renewal of the sacrifice of the cross. . . . There is no more holy and divine act that can be performed on earth than the sacrifice of the Mass.” Therefore, it is proper “to make a money offering” in the form of a “stipend” to the priest who provides this great value to us (Louis Laravoire Morrow, *My Catholic Faith: A Manuel of Religion*, pp. 290-291).

## **VI. In course of time, many Roman Catholics were forced to admit that Eucharistic Sacrifice was merely a teaching of Church Tradition, rather than Scripture.**

The Protestant Reformer Ulrich “Zwingli in his *Sixty-seven Theses* (January, 1523) said, ‘Christ, who offered Himself once on the Cross, is the sufficient and eternal sacrifice for the sins of all believers. Therefore the Mass is no sacrifice’ . . . (Article 18).”

Eucharistic Sacrifice presumes upon the silence of Scripture. “We look in vain for any New Testament statement to the effect that we ‘offer Christ.’ The Book of Revelation does not suggest that ‘the Lamb’ is still being offered” (Gustaf Aulen, *Eucharist and Sacrifice*, pp. 166-167).

At the Council of Trent (A.D. 1545-1563), the Roman Catholic Church’s primary response to the Protestant Reformation, a Roman Catholic speaker “Franciscus Herrera scattered the scriptural arguments to the winds. He refuted the proofs from the words of Christ at the supper [and said] it is not from scripture but only from tradition that the church knows that the mass is a sacrifice. Didacus de Paiva [said] that Christ had not established the mass as a sacrifice, but only as a sacrament. If this hypothesis were to be granted, he said, it was within the power of the church to establish the eucharist as a sacrifice” (David N. Power, *The Sacrifice We Offer*, pp. 99-100).

“The Lord’s Supper Becomes A Sacrifice. Whether or not Jesus had any concept of sacrifice in his mind when he instituted the Lord’s Supper does not matter, in the view of those who would read a sacrificial significance into it. The ‘doctrine of development’ can be applied to put it there. Canon Oliver C. Quick thus explains the doctrine of

development: ‘We need not maintain that everything we read into the Eucharist was actually in Jesus’ mind. The doctrine of development can be applied and his authority claimed for those developments, provided they are self-consistent with his words and acts at the time’” (Freeman, p. 45, citing Quick, *The Christian Sacraments*, p. 193).

“It is alleged against us as a reproach by non-Catholics that the word Mass is not found in the Bible. This is unquestionably true, but the same may be said of the word Trinity, yet we are bound to believe that sacred mystery. We are not commanded by Holy Scripture to sanctify Sunday or to baptize infants, yet we know both one and the other to be our solemn duty” (Father Cochem, p. 18).

## **VII. There is a logical link between the Catholic doctrine of Eucharistic Sacrifice and Rome’s eventual adoption of Instrumental Music in worship.**

Since trumpets announced and accompanied Israel’s sacrifices (Num. 10:1-10; 2 Chron. 29:26), the Roman Catholic Church invented a comparable practice of ringing church bells in order to announce the Sacrifice of the Mass. “And what are those to do who are not present in the church? For their benefit the custom of ringing the church bell at the elevation was introduced, as a signal to all who heard it that their Lord and God was lifted up in holy Mass. At the sound of this bell we ought to kneel down, look in the direction of the church, and adore our Lord God in the hands of the priest. This is a good and salutary practice” (Father Cocham, p. 345).

In 1700, Henry Dodwell made an interesting defense of instrumental music in the Church of England. Based on common beliefs about “the Eucharist,” he argued that instrumental music was needed to accompany the church’s “sacrifice.” It is important to grasp the place of Eucharistic Sacrifice in Dodwell’s rationale. Dodwell argued that Christian priests offering Eucharistic Sacrifice in the church had replaced Jewish priests offering sacrifices at the Temple. It was therefore lawful “to *communicate* in the *Sacrifices* and *Sacrificial Hymns*, Sung to the *Instruments* appointed for that Service” (Henry Dodwell, *A Treatise Concerning the Lawfulness of Instrumental Music in Holy Offices*, p. 2). In Dodwell’s mind, he was simply “reasoning from the abolished Constitution of the Law, to that which answered it under the Gospel” (p. 25). Thus he concluded, “Because Instrumental Music was used then in their Temple Sacrifices, therefore, it should still be at least fit and acceptable in our present Eucharistical Sacrifices” (p. 28).

DOES HISTORY NOT SHOW THAT INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC WAS INTRODUCED INTO THE CHURCH BASED UPON THE FALSE PREMISE OF ROMAN CATHOLIC PRIESTCRAFT AND ITS FALSE DOCTRINE OF “EUCHARISTIC SACRIFICE”?

### CONCLUSION

#### A. Some Scriptural Thoughts and Considerations

1. *Hebrews*. The writer of the Book of Hebrews stresses the importance, in Christ’s sacrifice, of his death (2:9, 14; 9:15-17, 22, 25-28; 13:12, 20), and the fact that his sacrifice is over (1:3; 7:27; 9:12, 25-28; 10:10, 12-14, 18). By no means do Christians need a “daily” sacrifice, such as the Mass purports to be (Hebrews 10:11-14)!

2. *Communion*. To commune in the Lord’s Supper is to partake of the sacrifice of Christ (1 Cor. 10:16). The supper is, in a sense, a feast upon Christ’s sacrifice, in that it is an evidence of man’s fellowship with God that has resulted from that sacrifice (1 Cor. 10:20). But while the Lord’s Supper recalls the sacrifice of Christ, it is not itself a

sacrifice. To make the Lord's Supper a sacrifice is, at the very least, to confuse the sign with the thing signified.

3. *Time Element*. "The Eucharist" confuses the "time" and place where Christians meet Christ. The Lord's Supper does not bring Christ forward to be re-sacrificed again in the present, rather it takes the Christian's mind back in remembrance to Calvary, so that he can mentally "be" where Christ was sacrificed in the past (1 Cor. 11:24-25).

4. *Passover*. The Lord's Supper is like the Passover meal in this respect. The annual Passover was a memorial of the first Passover in Egypt, designed to remind the Jews of the original event (Exodus 12:27, 43-49). The Lord's Supper is a weekly memorial of the true Lamb's death on the cross, designed to remind Christians of the original event (John 1:29; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 5:7).

#### B. Some News That Causes Concern

Dan Dozier, an elder at the Woodmont Hills Church of Christ in Nashville, has suggested in print that it would be permissible to refer to the Lord's Supper as "the Eucharist." In 1994, Dozier wrote "The Supper is also called the *Eucharist*, a word which means thanksgiving (1 Cor. 14:16)" (*Come Let Us Adore Him*, p. 257). However, the passage he cites does not specifically concern the Lord's Supper. While Dozier notes that brother D. R. Dungan "objected to the word *Eucharist* to describe the Lord's Supper," Dozier himself concludes, "Whether we ever use the term *Eucharist* or not is unimportant" (*Come Let Us Adore Him*, pp. 258-259). This in itself is a violation of the great restoration principle of speaking "as the oracles of God" and using only scriptural language (1 Pet. 4:11). It is noteworthy that Dozier's book was published by College Press of Joplin, Missouri, a Christian Church publishing company that defends the use of instrumental music in worship. Is it not more than coincidence that the related concepts of Eucharistic Sacrifice and Instrumental Music in Worship are once again seen together?

#### C. Perspectives On Catholicism

"Let our reader enter a Romish chapel. A basin of water stands at the entrance, at the further end of the chapel is an altar, behind that altar a crucifix, and beside that altar a priest. Suppose we take an intelligent Romanist by the hand and ask him a few questions. Friend, why this basin at the door? Good reason for this, have you forgotten the laver at the tabernacle door? But why the altar, and the official in priestly robes? Good reason for this too, our Mass is a sacrifice and we need an altar and a priest, as they had in the Temple. But why that statuary there and that painting of Jesus? Why indeed have you forgotten the statuary in the Holy Place? And all of the devotional helps that Solomon had carved within his magnificent Temple? And not to go farther, if our readers wish to hear music, not the product of a puny organ or an ordinary harmonium, let them go to a Romish cathedral or to Rome itself. All these things Popery has. They are part of her strength, her glory, and if we are like her to borrow this one element from Judaism, there is no reason why we may not borrow all."--John M'Donald, "Instrumental Music In Religious Worship," four-page tract issued by the Reformed Presbyterian Synod of Scotland in the 1800's.

"And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your presbyters priests; and to priests, vestments; and to vestments, altars; and to altars, relics; and to relics, organs; and to organs, incense; and to incense, images; For if these things be in your churches and abound, they make you that your sanctuaries shall neither be barren nor unbeautiful to the Vicar of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. But he that lacketh these things is blind to ecclesiastical traditions, and cannot see them between the lines of Scripture, and hath forgotten that he is to re-enact the ceremonies of the old law. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your papal election sure: for if ye do these things ye shall never fall into Protestantism: for so an entrance shall be ministered to you abundantly into the eternal city of Rome" (The Second Epistle of Pope Peter 1:5-11).



# Shades Mountain Messenger

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## The Error Of Transubstantiation

By Mel Futrell

Transubstantiation is a big word, one that may not be in your regular vocabulary. And understandably so, since it is not a Bible doctrine. Our title term has reference to a 13th century (1215) Roman Catholic doctrine which was first proclaimed by Pope Innocent the Third. And is therefore of human not Divine origin. This false doctrine says that in partaking of the bread and fruit of the vine [many erroneously call it the wine] these elements are converted (trans—"moves across") into the substance of the body and blood of Christ. With only the external appearance of the bread and fruit of the vine remaining. Listen to one Catholic writer's explanation of this process:

Q. BUT HOW CAN BREAD AND WINE BECOME CHRIST'S BODY AND BLOOD? "Christ's presence in the form of bread and wine, and how it comes to be that way, is part of the mystery of faith we call the Holy Eucharist. The official Catholic teaching is that Christ is really present in the consecrated elements. The explanation known as 'transubstantiation' says that the substance of bread and wine is changed into Christ's Body and Blood, leaving only the appearance, taste, and so on of bread and wine. Transubstantiation sheds light on the change that takes place, and goes farther toward expressing the faith of the Church than do some other theories about it."<sup>1</sup>

Now if that "explanation" seems unbelievable to you then join the club. When folks start relegat-

ing things to "the mystery of faith" category you can pretty much know that there is a problem with it. Also, in a recent e-mail I received and responded to the Catholic claimant argued that "each time the sacrament is performed it is literally a taking of the body and blood of Jesus Christ."

Brethren, one need not have the wisdom of Solomon to know that if the doctrine of transubstantiation is true then there is a miracle wrought in participating in the Lord's supper (1 Corinthians 10:16, 11:20). But there are absolutely no miracles being wrought today (1 Corinthians 13:8-12), so a commitment to transubstantiation requires one to distort reality. How would one truly demonstrate the "miracle of the sacrament?" I don't believe it would be out of order for me to say, "Show me the miracle!" One well known religious writer and scholar in criticizing the so-called "miracle in the mass" belief has clearly written:

"They are clearly perceived as bread and wine. They look like bread and wine, taste like bread and wine, smell like bread and wine, and feel like bread and wine. If we dropped them, they would sound like bread and wine."<sup>2</sup>

In Matthew's account of the institution of the Lord's supper we read that Jesus, "took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body" (Matthew 26:26-28). Let me ask you a few questions. When Jesus took the bread and broke it, was it His own literal body which He held in His hands,



EDWIN JONES

## WHAT PRESBYTERIANS BELIEVE

By Rev. G. Aiken Taylor, Ph.D.

*The following article originally appeared on the pages of The Presbyterian Journal, not long after Dr. Taylor had taken his post as editor of the magazine. It was later reproduced in pamphlet form for distribution and as such it was an influential publication in the Continuing Presbyterian Church movement of the 1960's. Interest in Dr. Taylor's article continues and it is reproduced here by request.*

*For reference, the proper citation of the article would be as follows:*

Taylor, G. Aiken, "What Presbyterians Believe," *The Presbyterian Journal*, volume 18, number 39 (27 January 1960) pages 5 - 7.

It is frequently pointed out that the word "Presbyterian" refers to the Eldership and that Presbyterianism, as such, is a form of church government. Presbyterianism is not only a form of government in the Church, but is also a well-defined system of beliefs or of doctrine. In the exaltation and interpretation of the Bible the Reformation reached its zenith in the teachings and writings of John Calvin. Thus Presbyterianism, following his interpretation of the Bible, is known as Calvinism. More specifically, the Calvinism of Presbyterians is based on the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms, documents which were written nearly a hundred years after Calvin died.

Presbyterians share with other evangelical churches many basic beliefs. Presbyterians also recognize that earnest Christians may follow other interpretations of the Bible in non-essential matters. But Presbyterians believe that in the Reformed system (another word for Calvinism) the teachings of the Bible are most fully and most accurately set forth. Every Presbyterian officer and minister takes a vow that he believes the Reformed faith to be that system of doctrine which the Bible teaches. Every Presbyterian officer and minister in the Presbyterian Church, moreover, also vows that he will take steps to remove himself from his position should he ever find that his beliefs have taken another direction.

Now the strength of Presbyterianism lies in its central loyalty to the Scriptures. This Church has always insisted that only in the Bible may we find what we must believe about God, His works and His ways. Only the Bible is a rule of faith and life free from error—"our infallible rule of faith and practice." We believe that Presbyterianism agrees with what the Scriptures teach and that it contains nothing contrary to what the Scriptures teach.

### I. SOVEREIGNTY

As a system of doctrine, all Presbyterian beliefs are determined by a basic thought about God: that He is sovereign in all things. The doctrine of the Sovereignty of God teaches that God governs His creation, His creatures and all their actions. If loyalty to the Bible is the great strength of Presbyterianism, its belief in the Sovereignty of God is its very life.

By this doctrine, Presbyterians mean to say that Who God is provides the key to reality, not who man is. What God does provides the key to human experience, not what man does. And what God works provides the key to Salvation, not what man works. When we think of faith, we think first of God. When we think of the effects of faith, we think first of God. Even when



we think of the ordinary events in the lives of every man, we think first of God.

Presbyterians believe that everything which happens takes place according to the will of God and can be fully understood only in the will of God. Nothing can come to any man that He does not allow for his own purposes and glory. He overrules the actions of evil men and brings their evil to naught. He works all things after the counsel of His own will and turns all things--even apparent evil--to ultimate good in the lives of those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose.

Man's reason for living is to glorify God by doing His will and to enjoy Him forever in the practice of life's highest privilege which is to serve the sovereign God who created him and gives him breath.

## II. TOTAL DEPRAVITY

Presbyterians believe that as the result of Adam's sin all men are sinners; that sin is a stain upon us from our birth so that if left to the natural inclinations of our wills our lives would inevitably turn to evil. In the view of Presbyterians human nature is not **neutral**; it is not free to move upward or downward depending on circumstance, environment or education. Neither is human nature **good**; capable of infinite development in goodness, needing only to be left alone or "brought out" to achieve perfection. Human nature is rather sinful and "inclined to evil as the sparks fly upward." We see undesirable behavior and sinful tendencies in the smallest infant, and we observe that without discipline and restraint human beings inevitably live selfishly. This view of human nature Presbyterians describe by the term "Original Sin" because human imperfection seems to be both innate and instinctive. This imperfection (sin) taints every facet of our personalities. Consequently the description of Original Sin to which Presbyterians subscribe is summarized in the doctrine of Total Depravity. Mankind, we say, is inevitably (originally) and altogether (totally) marked by sin on account of the Fall.

The doctrine of Total Depravity also suggests man's helplessness. Human beings are not only sinful, they are also helplessly sinful. We are spiritually dead in our sins, bound under the guilt and penalty of sin and unable to do anything to please God. None of our works are pure and therefore pleasing to God. All our righteousness is as filthy rags. We do not even have it in us to turn to Him that we may be cleansed and healed.

## III. SALVATION

Presbyterians believe that God so loved us--while we were dead in trespasses and sins--that He sent forth His only begotten Son to redeem us. The Lord Jesus Christ, pre-existent with the Father, by Whom He created the worlds, came to earth by being born of the Virgin Mary. He, the Eternal Son, took upon Himself our nature, lived a sinless life as a man and died on the Cross in a sacrifice which somehow paid the price of our redemption from sin--we know not how but we believe it. In a victory over death and the grave our Lord rose from the dead and returned to the Father from Whom He sent the Holy Spirit to apply to those who would believe the effects of His work. In the gift of the Holy Spirit--by grace through faith--the originally sinful nature of man is transfigured to become Godly and possessed of the capacity to be God-like. This "new life" begins now in the hearts of those who believe in and receive Jesus Christ. It continues into and through eternity.



#### IV. ELECTION

In keeping with the doctrine of Sovereignty, under which God is seen to determine all things, Presbyterians believe that the knowledge of Christ and the acceptance of Christ which leads to Salvation also come from God. We are saved by faith alone and this faith itself is a gift of God. Our personal redemption is not due to any goodness of our own for we have none; neither is it earned by our good works for sinners cannot accumulate "credit" leading to redemption. We find Christ because He finds us. We love Him because He first loved us. We become His because He chooses us, calling us and sanctifying us after he justifies us. Presbyterians do not pretend to understand the great truth underlying the Election of God. They simply know that they did not seek God until first they were sought; they did not know Him until He enlightened their hearts; they did not believe until He gave them faith; they did not come until they felt themselves moved. The mysteries of His Will we cannot fathom, but we know that had it not been for Him we would not be where we are.

Because Salvation is clearly not given to every man (although we know not why) Presbyterians therefore believe in Reprobation, or the eternally lost condition of those not elect.

The doctrine of Election is dear to Presbyterians because, on the one hand, it pays homage to the Sovereignty of God in all human affairs and, on the other, because it gives a certainty and an assurance to those whose trust in the Lord Jesus Christ that no dependence on themselves can give. The effect of such a faith is the assurance that all things work together for good to them who "...are the called according to His purpose"; that nothing in this life or in the life to come can separate them from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus. This assurance means, to the believer, that he can go forward boldly into whatever path he feels led because he knows that it is God who goes before. It further means that he is eternally secure in the Love of God because he has been sealed-not of himself-by the Holy Spirit until the final day of fulfillment.

#### V. SANCTIFICATION

Presbyterians believe that as the Election of God calls men to redemption in Jesus Christ so it calls them to newness of life in Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit not only makes a child of sin to become a child of God, He also leads the new believer into a new way of life which is in conformity to the will of God; into holiness of life and Sanctification.

We believe that every Christian will show forth in his life the fruits of a living faith; that he will grow in spiritual maturity and in patterns of living which will increasingly conform to the will of God for him. We believe that love, joy, peace and all the other characteristics of godliness will necessarily become evident in his life as the Holy Spirit increasingly takes charge; that he will more and more "live unto righteousness" as he moves towards the "measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." As love of God increases within him, love for his Christian brothers and for his human neighbors everywhere will correspondingly increase.

To this end, Presbyterians believe in the necessity for utilizing the "means of grace:" prayer, worship and, most especially, the study of God's Word.



## VI. THE CHURCH

Presbyterians believe in the Holy, catholic Church; that is, in the universal unity of Christ's body in time and eternity. As a vine and its branches comprise a single whole, so Christ and all those in whatever place or age derive their life from Him comprise a single Body, the Church universal. This Church is not to be identified with any denomination or body on earth for it exists wherever a true child of God may be found. We believe that there are Presbyterians who belong to this church and there are Presbyterians who do not; there are Baptists, Methodists and Roman Catholics who belong to this Church and there are Baptists, Methodists and Roman Catholics who do not.

Because Presbyterians believe in the Holy, catholic Church, they also believe in the Communion of Saints: the corporate practices of the Christian life. Christian living is not a solitary thing. We believe it to be the Lord's will that Christians congregate in churches for worship, for service, for growth in grace and mutual edification. The Church universal is reflected in those corporate manifestations of Christ's Body in which the ministry of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, the exercise of government and discipline according to the New Testament pattern establish and enlarge the household of faith.

## VII. THE SACRAMENTS

Presbyterians believe in two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. We believe that they are genuine sacraments, that is, instituted by Christ Himself; visible signs which actually confer the blessing or grace of God when appropriated in faith. We do not believe that the blessing is inherently present in the sacraments, but that they are rather the signs and seals of the blessing they represent. As the Holy Spirit does not dwell in the pages of a Book, and yet He warms our hearts by means of the message of that Book, so grace does not reside intrinsically in the sacraments, but comes to the believer who receives them in faith.

BAPTISM is a sacrament which signifies and seals God's covenant promise to be a Father to His own and to their children. It visibly represents the way this promise is carried out in the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the life of those in whom the promise is fulfilled. It is a sacrament which belongs to any in whom there is reason to assume that the promise is being fulfilled, that is, on any professing their faith or setting up a household of faith. We believe that baptism belongs to the children of believers when a household of faith is set up and the conditions of prayer and worship are met. These bring evidence of the Holy Spirit's presence in the hearts of children as well as in the hearts of their believing parents. Because we have visible as well as historical evidence that in a Christian home children may grow in the true nurture and admonition of the Lord, we believe that the sign and seal of the Lord's presence (Baptism) belongs to such children.

THE LORD'S SUPPER not only shows forth the Lord's death until He shall return, but is a sacrament in which He is truly though spiritually present and truly though spiritually received. Again, as the Word conveys grace by providing the occasion for the Holy Spirit to speak to the human heart, so the Lord's Supper conveys the benefits of the death and resurrection of Christ to believers who approach the Table in faith. Presbyterians believe that the Supper is not the possession of any person, congregation or church. It is the Lord's Supper. It is not the Table of any sect or denomination. It is the Lord's table. We do not minister about the Table as hosts, but as guests of Him who issues the invitation to come and who distributes His



benefits severally as He will. Consequently we do not believe that we can dispense or withhold the dispensation of grace; that we can bar any believing Christian whom He would feed. For such reasons we practice "open" Communion.

#### VIII. THE RESURRECTION AND THE LIFE EVERLASTING

Presbyterians believe in the return of Jesus Christ "to judge men and angels at the end of the world." Until He comes, we believe that the souls of those who die in Him depart to be with Him "where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies." At the last day, we believe that the dead shall be resurrected and the living shall be changed: Christ's elect "unto honor...and everlasting life," but the reprobates "unto dishonor...and punishment with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power."

[This article originally appeared in *The Presbyterian Journal*



What do Lutherans believe about the Ten Commandments? Is this correct? Why or why not?

7. What is the Lutheran view of the Lord's supper? How does it differ from the Catholic view?
8. Refute the Lutheran doctrine of salvation by faith alone?
9. Why do Lutherans practice infant baptism?
10. What does the Bible teach about baptism?
11. What did Luther add to the Word of God?
12. Why are Lutherans difficult to convert to New Testament Christianity?

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Chapter Thirteen  
*John Rutherford*  
**The Presbyterian Church**

**Introduction:**

1. Presbyterians are one of the historic branches of the Protestant Reformation.
2. They are related to the Congregational and Reformed denominations.
3. There is not one Presbyterian Church, but several different denominations in the United States wearing that name.

**Discussion:**

**I. History of Presbyterianism:**

- A. Presbyterians can claim two founders:
  1. John Calvin whose theology is responsible for the Reformed, Presbyterian, and Huguenot Churches.
  2. John Knox, a Scottish reformer, who is the father of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland.
- B. Knox was a fiery preacher who opposed the crown of England, the Church of England, and all Roman Catholic tendencies.
  1. He led the fight to separate the Church of Scotland from the Church of England.
  2. Through Oliver Cromwell, Presbyterians for a time dominated the

England in the 1600's.

- C. The Westminster Assembly met from 1643-48.
1. It produced a catechism.
  2. It organized the church under a presbyterian form of government.
  3. It produced the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is the creed of Presbyterians; it was revised in 1967.
- D. Traditionally, Presbyterians have believed the five points of Calvinism:
1. Total hereditary depravity.
  2. Unconditional election.
  3. Limited atonement.
  4. Irresistible grace.
  5. Perseverance of saints.
- E. Presbyterians came to America in the early 1600's.
- F. They founded many colleges and seminaries such as Princeton University and Union Theological Seminary.
- G. A dispute arose on the frontier concerning the ordination of ministers.
1. As a result, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was formed in Dickson County, Tennessee in 1810.
  2. The Cumberland Presbyterians accepted a less educated clergy to meet the needs of the frontier.
  3. They are a small denomination located mainly in the southern USA.
  4. They operate Bethel College in McKenzie, Tennessee and Memphis Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tennessee.
  5. There is an African American branch, the Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which became a separate body in 1869.
- H. In 1861 the Presbyterian Church divided over slavery.
1. In 1983, the two branches reunited to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States.
  2. The Presbyterian Church in the United States is the largest of the Presbyterian denominations in North America.



- I. In 1936 the Northern body divided over liberalism.
  1. J. Gresham Machen led the opposition to those denying the virgin birth and the inspiration of the Bible.
  2. Two conservative bodies were formed, Bible Presbyterians and Orthodox Presbyterians.

## II. Presbyterians Hold Some Truth:

- A. Traditionally, they have held to the virgin birth, vicarious death, and bodily resurrection of Christ, but the main body no longer considers these essential.
- B. They have emphasized a high standard of morality, but in recent years have been torn over acceptance of homosexuality (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
- C. They understand that local churches are to be governed by elders (presbyters).

## III. Presbyterians Teach many Errors:

- A. Calvinism (Ezek. 18:20; I John 3:4; Mark 16:16; John 3:16; Acts 2:36-47; I Cor. 10:12).
- B. Modernists among the majority body deny the fundamentals of the faith.
- C. They have a human creed (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- D. They believe in **thought** rather than **verbal** inspiration [majority body] (I Cor. 2:11-13; 2 Sam. 23:2).
- E. They teach salvation by faith alone (Jas. 2:14-26; Gal. 3:26, 27).
- F. They have a form of government unknown to the New Testament.
  1. A local church has elders [this part is correct] (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).
  2. Local churches are formed into a presbytery.
  3. Presbyteries are formed into a synod.
  4. A General Assembly with a "stated clerk" (chief executive) and a "moderator" (spokesman) settles all matters of discipline and doctrine sent to it by lower bodies.

## Conclusion:

1. There is one branch of the Presbyterians, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, which opposes instrumental music in the worship and sings psalms congregationally.

2. All Presbyterian groups practice infant baptism and sprinkling (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
3. The Presbyterian Church in the United States has been a leader in the Ecumenical Movement.

### **Study Questions**

1. Who are the two men mainly responsible for the Presbyterian Church?
2. What is the historic creed of Presbyterians? When was it revised?
3. What are the five major points of Calvinism (T U L I P)?
4. Who led the fight against liberalism among the Northern Presbyterians?
5. What is the view of inspiration held by most Presbyterians today?
6. What is the Presbyterian teaching on salvation?
7. What does the word "presbyterian" mean?
8. Do Presbyterians have a Scriptural form of government? Why or why not?

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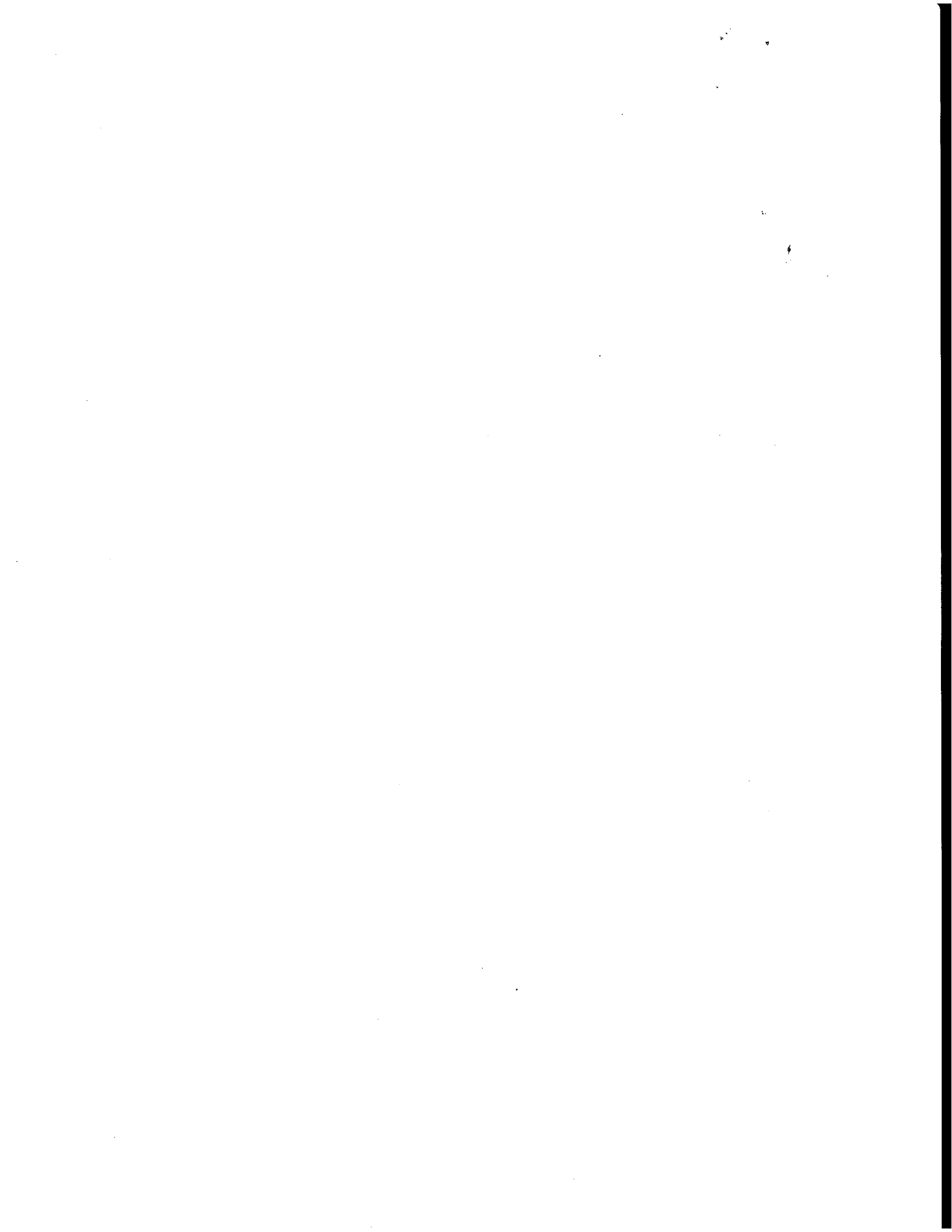
## **Chapter Fourteen**

### **The Methodist Church**

#### **Introduction:**

1. There are several Methodist denominations in the United States.
2. The Methodists have long been a large and influential movement.
3. Though begun in England, Methodism has had its greatest growth and influence in the United States.
4. Because of liberal theology and a "social gospel" emphasis, Methodism is a dying faith today.
  - a. Recent reports indicate that Methodists are losing thousands of adherents every year.
  - b. Methodists have been very active in the Ecumenical Movement.
  - c. Some Methodists have also been in the forefront of those accepting female and homosexual ordination to the clergy.





6. What do Lutherans believe about the Ten Commandments? Is this correct? Why or why not?
7. What is the Lutheran view of the Lord's supper? How does it differ from the Catholic view?
8. Refute the Lutheran doctrine of salvation by faith alone?
9. Why do Lutherans practice infant baptism?
10. What does the Bible teach about baptism?
11. What did Luther add to the Word of God?
12. Why are Lutherans difficult to convert to New Testament Christianity?

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Chapter Thirteen  
*Bob Rutherford*  
**The Presbyterian Church**

**Introduction:**

1. Presbyterians are one of the historic branches of the Protestant Reformation.
2. They are related to the Congregational and Reformed denominations.
3. There is not one Presbyterian Church, but several different denominations in the United States wearing that name.

**Discussion:**

**I. History of Presbyterianism:**

- A. Presbyterians can claim two founders:
  1. John Calvin whose theology is responsible for the Reformed, Presbyterian, and Huguenot Churches.
  2. John Knox, a Scottish reformer, who is the father of the Presbyterian Church in Scotland.
- B. Knox was a fiery preacher who opposed the crown of England, the Church of England, and all Roman Catholic tendencies.
  1. He led the fight to separate the Church of Scotland from the Church of England.
  2. Through Oliver Cromwell, Presbyterians for a time dominated the



England in the 1600's.

- C. The Westminster Assembly met from 1643-48.
1. It produced a catechism.
  2. It organized the church under a presbyterian form of government.
  3. It produced the Westminster Confession of Faith, which is the creed of Presbyterians; it was revised in 1967.
- D. Traditionally, Presbyterians have believed the five points of Calvinism:
1. Total hereditary depravity.
  2. Unconditional election.
  3. Limited atonement.
  4. Irresistible grace.
  5. Perseverance of saints.
- E. Presbyterians came to America in the early 1600's.
- F. They founded many colleges and seminaries such as Princeton University and Union Theological Seminary.
- G. A dispute arose on the frontier concerning the ordination of ministers.
1. As a result, the Cumberland Presbyterian Church was formed in Dickson County, Tennessee in 1810.
  2. The Cumberland Presbyterians accepted a less educated clergy to meet the needs of the frontier.
  3. They are a small denomination located mainly in the southern USA.
  4. They operate Bethel College in McKenzie, Tennessee and Memphis Theological Seminary in Memphis, Tennessee.
  5. There is an African American branch, the Second Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which became a separate body in 1869.
- H. In 1861 the Presbyterian Church divided over slavery.
1. In 1983, the two branches reunited to form the Presbyterian Church in the United States.
  2. The Presbyterian Church in the United States is the largest of the Presbyterian denominations in North America.



- I. In 1936 the Northern body divided over liberalism.
  1. J. Gresham Machen led the opposition to those denying the virgin birth and the inspiration of the Bible.
  2. Two conservative bodies were formed, Bible Presbyterians and Orthodox Presbyterians.

## II. Presbyterians Hold Some Truth:

- A. Traditionally, they have held to the virgin birth, vicarious death, and bodily resurrection of Christ, but the main body no longer considers these essential.
- B. They have emphasized a high standard of morality, but in recent years have been torn over acceptance of homosexuality (1 Cor. 6:9-11).
- C. They understand that local churches are to be governed by elders (presbyters).

## III. Presbyterians Teach many Errors:

- A. Calvinism (Ezek. 18:20; 1 John 3:4; Mark 16:16; John 3:16; Acts 2:36-47; 1 Cor. 10:12).
- B. Modernists among the majority body deny the fundamentals of the faith.
- C. They have a human creed (2 Tim. 3:16,17).
- D. They believe in **thought** rather than **verbal** inspiration [majority body] (1 Cor. 2:11-13; 2 Sam. 23:2).
- E. They teach salvation by faith alone (Jas. 2:14-26; Gal. 3:26, 27).
- F. They have a form of government unknown to the New Testament.
  1. A local church has elders [this part is correct] (Acts 14:23; Tit. 1:5).
  2. Local churches are formed into a presbytery.
  3. Presbyteries are formed into a synod.
  4. A General Assembly with a "stated clerk" (chief executive) and a "moderator" (spokesman) settles all matters of discipline and doctrine sent to it by lower bodies.

## Conclusion:

1. There is one branch of the Presbyterians, the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, which opposes instrumental music in the worship and sings psalms congregationally.

2. All Presbyterian groups practice infant baptism and sprinkling (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12).
3. The Presbyterian Church in the United States has been a leader in the Ecumenical Movement.

### **Study Questions**

1. Who are the two men mainly responsible for the Presbyterian Church?
2. What is the historic creed of Presbyterians? When was it revised?
3. What are the five major points of Calvinism (T U L I P)?
4. Who led the fight against liberalism among the Northern Presbyterians?
5. What is the view of inspiration held by most Presbyterians today?
6. What is the Presbyterian teaching on salvation?
7. What does the word "presbyterian" mean?
8. Do Presbyterians have a Scriptural form of government? Why or why not?

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## Chapter Fourteen

### **The Methodist Church**

#### **Introduction:**

1. There are several Methodist denominations in the United States.
2. The Methodists have long been a large and influential movement.
3. Though begun in England, Methodism has had its greatest growth and influence in the United States.
4. Because of liberal theology and a "social gospel" emphasis, Methodism is a dying faith today.
  - a. Recent reports indicate that Methodists are losing thousands of adherents every year.
  - b. Methodists have been very active in the Ecumenical Movement.
  - c. Some Methodists have also been in the forefront of those accepting female and homosexual ordination to the clergy.



## SOME BELIEFS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

1. They believe in thought rather than verbal inspiration (I Cor. 2:6-13).
2. They believe that the New Testament is merely the record of how the early Christians adopted the broad principles of Christianity to their history and culture.
  - a. To what extent did culture of the first century affect the formation of the N. T.?
  - b. Did immersion in water have its roots in the Jewish washings – thus baptism is not an obligation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
  - c. Was Paul's instructions regarding the role of women culturally oriented? (I Cor. 14:35-35; I Tim. 2:11-13) Barclay said "all the things in this chapter are temporary regulations laid down to meet a given situation."
  - d. This is sometimes called the "new hermeneutic."
3. They believe one is saved by faith alone.

# Command or Culture - Discerning the Difference

by Wayne Jackson

Christian Courier: Feature

Thursday, September 1, 2005

*There is much discussion these days about "culture" versus "command." How does one discern the difference between what is "command" in the New Testament, and that which merely is "cultural," and thus not binding today? This is a fascinating topic worthy of careful study.*

In 1967 the United Presbyterian Church in America adopted a new confession of faith. Concerning the nature of the Bible the following statement was made:

"The Scriptures, given under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are nevertheless the words of men, conditioned by the language, thought forms, and literary fashions of the place and times at which they were written. They reflect the view of life, history, and the cosmos which were then current. The church, therefore, has an obligation to approach the Scriptures with a literary and historical understanding. As God has spoken his word in diverse cultural situations, the church is confident that he will continue to speak through the Scriptures in a changing world and in every form of human culture."

The foregoing paragraph contains some very subtle implications. It reflects what is known as the "historical critical" approach to biblical interpretation, and is based upon an "existential" attitude toward the scriptures. This interpretative theory was popularized by radical theologians like Rudolph Bultmann. It suggests that the Bible is principally the result of the formative influence of the life-situation of the early church. In other words, the New Testament is merely the record of how the primitive Christians, consistent with their subjective inclinations, adapted the broad principles of the religion of Jesus to their unique life styles. This view contends therefore, that what was true for the first-century church may not be true for today's church. Christianity is viewed as a rather "plastic" religion; it may alter its forms of expression to fit the mood and tempo of any given culture and historical circumstance.

In 1976 Presbyterian scholar Robert C. Sproul addressed this controversy, describing the existential approach as "a new hermeneutic" ("Controversy at Culture Gap," *Eternity*, May 1976, pp. 13ff). Does that sound familiar? Indeed! It is the identical philosophy that we are now hearing from numerous clerics who identify themselves with "Christendom." And given enough time, all of the latest denominational fads eventually find their way into the kingdom of Christ. A relatively recent writer opined:

"The historical method of hermeneutics approaches the Scripture with the understanding that the text was written in another period and from within a culture different from Western civilization. Instead of asking, 'What is the meaning of the text for me today?' the historical method asks, 'What is the meaning of the text to those who first read it?' The history and culture behind the text are what determine the real meaning. . . ."

"The implication of this method of interpretation for the Restoration Movement is that many proof-texts which have been used to support favorite doctrines must now be challenged as to



their application for the 20th century church" (Bill Swetmon, "The Historical Method in Hermeneutics," *Image*, July 1989, p. 23).

To what extent did the culture of the first century affect the formation of New Testament doctrine? Which elements of New Testament teaching are culturally oriented so that, from a practical vantage point, they may be altered today to conform to our own unique situation?

Might one assume, for instance, that the New Testament ritual of immersion in water had its roots in the Jewish ceremonial washings of the first century (baptistries have been found in the Essene ruins at Qumran), so that baptism is not an obligation in the twentieth century? And what of the communion components? May we conclude that the bread and fruit of the vine were simply cultural features associated with the Passover feast, hence, other food items may be substituted today?

One of the primary motives with some professed Christians, in their quest to release the modern church from the oppressive shackles of first-century culture, is the liberation of women to assume a more dominate leadership role in the public life of the church. There is truly a feminist revolution in the making. Some are aiming for women worship-leaders, lady preachers, and yes, even female elders.

Were Paul's instructions regarding the limited sphere of woman's public teaching role culturally oriented? This was the position argued by William Barclay relative to Paul's instructions concerning a woman's teaching role. The apostle declared: "But I permit not a woman to teach, nor to have dominion over a man, but to be in quietness" (1 Timothy 2:12). Of this context Barclay wrote: "This is a passage that cannot be read out of its historical context. All the things in this chapter are mere temporary regulations laid down to meet a given situation" (*Letters to Timothy, Titus & Philemon*, Westminster Press, 1960, pp. 76,78). One writer has asserted: "Paul could not have given women much more freedom than he did without going outside the borders of his culture" (Steve Ink, "Another Look At Hermeneutics," Part 3, *Image*, March 15, 1987, p. 11).

How does the conscientious Bible student distinguish the options of **culture** from the abiding obligations of divine **command**? The following thoughts are submitted for careful consideration.

### Focusing the Issue

First, no one has the right to assume that a divinely given instruction or practice is culturally conditioned unless there are contextual considerations which clearly indicate that such is the case.

For example, when Christ sent His disciples forth to proclaim the coming kingdom, He forbade them to preach to the Gentiles or Samaritans (Matthew 10:1ff). Was this to be the case always? Clearly not, for after the church was established, both Samaritans and Gentiles were granted the privilege of responding to the gospel (Acts 8; 10). Thus, though the preaching mission of the apostles in the preparatory phase of the kingdom was culturally limited, as the Jews were being prepared for an acceptance of other peoples, such is not the case now.



During his second missionary campaign, when Paul came to Lystra, he had Timothy, a young colaborer in the gospel, circumcised (Acts 16:3). Was this practice by divine demand, or was it a culturally conditioned decision? How is one to know? It is clear that the apostle's practice on this occasion was a cultural expediency for the following reasons:

- a. Certain false teachers in the early church attempted to bind circumcision as a matter of religious obligation, but the doctrine was summarily rejected by men acting under the guidance of the Spirit of God (Acts 15:1,28ff).
- b. When Judaizers demanded the circumcision of Titus, Paul refused to yield to their dictates—even for an hour (Galatians 2:3-5).
- c. The New Testament expressly states that circumcision received as a matter of attempting to achieve salvation voids the work of Christ, for in Christ the ritual is valueless (Galatians 5:2,6).

Thus, additional biblical information regarding circumcision puts the matter into clear focus.

Upon what basis, though, could one argue that immersion in water was a cultural phenomenon of antiquity and therefore not binding today? There is absolutely none! First, since baptism is "for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), and as the need of forgiveness of sins is both **universal and perpetual**, it is clear that this rite is universal and perpetual, hence, not cultural. Second, since the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ must always be the heart of the "everlasting gospel" (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4; Revelation 14:6), why would not the ceremony that pictures this historical event (cf. Roman 6:3-4,17-18) be an abiding obligation?

Second, **there are biblical passages which indicate that the basic forms of New Testament doctrine were to be age-lasting; hence, they were not cultural.** Consider these examples. In the great commission Christ declared:

"All authority has been given unto me in heaven and on earth. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatever I commanded you and behold, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:18-20).

Within this context the Lord authorized immersion into the name of the sacred Godhead. Note that the obligation to immerse was grounded in His **authority**, not culture. Moreover, the promised blessing—that Jesus would remain with His people unto the end of the world—was coexistent with the responsibility to be immersed. Hence, immersion would be a divine duty until the end of the world. It was not a temporal, culturally-oriented option.

Are the original elements of the Lord's supper—bread and fruit of the vine—mere relics of the Passover celebration (hence, as some contend, more meaningful, modern items might now be substituted), or must the ancient forms be retained? Let Paul answer: ". . . as often as you eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come" (1 Corinthians 11:26). It is clear that the apostle intended that the bread and fruit of the vine be retained as symbols of the Savior's body and blood **until the return of Christ** is accomplished! These were not optional expedients flavored by culture.

Third, the growing contention that the apostolic limitation of woman's role in the public worship of the church was culturally imposed ignores that fact that **the divine injunctions**



**regarding male/female relationships were anchored in creation principles that relate to fundamental differences between the sexes. And creation foundational truths transcend culture.**

Consider this point. In the Lord's declaration regarding the sanctity and permanency of the home, He affirmed: "Whosoever shall divorce his wife, except for fornication, and shall marry another, is committing adultery: and he who marries her when she is put away is committing adultery" (Matthew 19:9). Was this ordinance an accommodation to the cultural habits of that day? May we assume that the teaching of Jesus on divorce and remarriage is not binding today so that one may capriciously divorce and remarry without limitation? Surely not. The fact is, Jewish, Greek, and Roman attitudes concerning divorce and remarriage were all exceedingly loose in that era. The Lord's rather rigid instruction was based upon God's design for the human family as reflected in the acts of creation at the very beginning of earth's history (19:4-8). Get the point, please. When a New Testament teaching is based upon the historical facts of creation, it cannot be dismissed as "cultural."

Similarly, in several New Testament contexts Paul affirms the concept that there is a scale of authority in the divine scheme of things. In 1 Corinthians 11:2-16; 14:33-35; and in 1 Timothy 2:8-15, the apostle sets forth three fundamental truths. First, man is the spiritual head of woman; she is to respect that position (1 Corinthians 11:3,10; 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:11). Second, woman's subordinate status is to be demonstrated by certain obligations enjoined (1 Corinthians 11:5-13), and by other activities forbidden (14:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:12). Third, the theological bases of these instructions arise from the creation background (1 Corinthians 11:7-12; 14:34; 1 Timothy 2:13), and from the historical introduction of sin into this world (1 Timothy 2:14). A consideration of these facts makes it clear that apostolic instructions regarding woman's role in the church are not cultural and transitory. They are coexistent with the Christian age.

C. C. Ryrie has noted that Paul's regulation of woman's role "was not something which was simply forged on the spur of the moment because of the particular situation in one local church of the first century. It is grounded in facts which are not altered by geography or centuries (*The Role of Women in the Church*, Moody Press, 1958, p. 79). William Hendriksen's comment is also very appropriate. He states that Paul's "directives regarding the woman's role in connection with public worship are based not on temporary or contemporary conditions or circumstances but on two facts that have meaning for all time, namely, the fact of **creation** and the fact of the **entrance of sin**" ("The Pastoral Epistles," *New Testament Commentary*, Baker, 1957, p. 109).

A further evidence that the New Testament doctrine concerning woman's role is not cultural is found in the fact that the apostles' teaching was not merely imposed in isolated areas to accommodate fluctuating local circumstances; rather, it was bound upon churches everywhere. The epistle to the Corinthians was not only to the saints in Corinth, but also was directed to "all that call upon the name of our Lord Jesus in every place" (1:2). What he taught in Corinth, he taught in "every church" (4:17). His ordinances were bound in "all the churches" (7:17). With reference to woman's submissive position: "As in **all the churches** of the saints, let the women keep silence in the churches" (1 Corinthians 14:33-34), and if any contended against his apostolic injunctions, they were informed that their conduct was out of step with the general practice of the churches of God (11:16). As one scholar notes:

“. . . in both 1 Corinthians, chapter 11, and 1 Timothy, chapter 2, Paul bases his instruction upon the implications of Old Testament Law, specifically, the creation narrative. Furthermore, the Apostle gives no indication whatsoever that the principles he sets down are not binding upon all the churches” (David R. Nicholas, *What’s A Woman To Do. . . In The Church?*, Good Life Productions, 1979, p. 55).

We must remember that when one removes a divinely stated rationale for a practice from the text of the New Testament, and then injects his own assumed rationale as the basis for the instruction, he is no longer practicing exegesis; rather, he is guilty of eisegesis, i.e., he thrusts his own opinion into the Bible. This is precisely what has been done when it is argued that Paul’s reasoning for woman’s submission is due to culture.

### The “New Hermeneutic” – Some Arguments Offered

Those who contend for the Historical/Critical method of New Testament interpretation, with its corresponding “new hermeneutic,” offer several arguments which they feel buttress their position that Christianity was not designed to be a static religion with “pattern theology.”

**First, it is argued that the early church never possessed the entire New Testament, hence, a New Testament pattern could not have been required as the norm for the entire family of God in that era.** This allegation is seriously flawed for several reasons.

- a. It is an argument based upon ignorance. We simply do not know how much revelatory information the churches of the first century had. A variety of spiritual gifts was available to them, and for all we know, they may have been very well informed. Moreover, those early saints may have possessed many more copies of the scriptures than is assumed by some modern scholars.
- b. We must take into consideration the fact that God may have been more tolerant of “knowledge weaknesses” in that period of progressive revelation than He now would be when we have access to the whole New Testament in its completed format.
- c. It is clear that the early saints did practice “pattern theology” (cf. Acts 2:42; Romans 6:3-4; 17-18; 16:17; 1 Corinthians 1:10). If one may adapt Christianity to his personal and/or cultural preferences, how could he even “depart from the faith”? (cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:1ff; 1 Timothy 4:1ff).

**Second, it is alleged that we must honor the “principles” which inhere in the commands of the New Testament, but that we are allowed to alter activity modes to accommodate our present situation.**

An analogy is commonly drawn between the “greeting kiss” of the first century (cf. Romans 16:16), and that of modern women preachers. It is argued that if we may honor the greeting “principle” today, without holding to Paul’s specific application – the “kiss” – similarly, women may still respect the “principle” of feminine submission while publicly teaching audiences of mixed sexes.

Two things may be said in response to this quibble.

- a. The alleged parallel is specious. There is absolutely no evidence that the saints of the early church were ever commanded to kiss one another *per se* as a method of greeting, and I know of no scholar who has ever argued that position. Kissing, as a



method of greeting, had been practiced for centuries (see Genesis 27:26; 29:13; 1 Samuel 20:41; 1 Kings 19:20; Matthew 26:49). The thing commanded by the New Testament writers was that the practice be “holy” and in “love” (*agape* —i.e., in the genuine spiritual interest of another). There is not a single passage in which the greeting kiss is mentioned but what the admonition is not qualified by a modifying term (see Romans 16:16; 1 Corinthians 16:20; 2 Corinthians 13:12; 1 Thessalonians 5:26; 1 Peter 5:14). In view of this, one is bound to conclude that the instruction concerning the “holy kiss” is as binding today as it ever was. No Christian will ever be allowed to greet his brother or sister in lust, treachery, or hypocrisy.

- b. Just how would one honor the **principle of obedience** while doing that which has been specifically forbidden, by failing to do that which has been commanded, or by altering sacred instruction? That is truly a curious state of affairs. It is, in fact, nonsensical. May one uphold the “principle” of remembering the death of Christ by utilizing steak and coffee in the communion supper? There is no way to maintain the “principle” of obedience while one is disobeying God!

## Conclusion

There is a revolt underway in the Christian community. Many are feverishly working to throw off biblical authority and to write a new "Constitution" for the religion of Jesus Christ. It is the law of “no law.” It involves a disposition that is determined to evolve a new religion fashioned after human desire. The faithful must prepare for, and vigorously oppose this growing apostasy.

## **SOME BELIEFS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

1. They believe in thought rather than verbal inspiration (I Cor. 2:6-13).
2. They believe that the New Testament is merely the record of how the early Christians adopted the broad principles of Christianity to their history and culture.
  - a. To what extent did culture of the first century affect the formation of the N. T.?
  - b. Did immersion in water have its roots in the Jewish washings – thus baptism is not an obligation in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.
  - c. Was Paul's instructions regarding the role of women culturally oriented? (I Cor. 14:35-35; I Tim. 2:11-13) Barclay said "all the things in this chapter are temporary regulations laid down to meet a given situation."
  - d. This is sometimes called the "new hermeneutic."
3. They believe one is saved by faith alone.



# *An Analysis and Refutation of a Major Denomination*

## *The United Presbyterian Church*

Dudley Barrett

### ANALAZATION:

The historic beginning of the Presbyterian Church is found in the work of John Calvin at Geneva. Under the leadership of John Knox, a disciple of Calvin, Presbyterianism became the established religion of Scotland in 1592. The name Presbyterian is taken from the term "presbyter", a transliteration of the Greek noun *presbuteros*—meaning elder,<sup>1</sup> and is used to designate that form of church organization embracing a group of presbyters as the governing body of several congregations. "The Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms were adopted, in 1729, by the General Synod of the Presbyterian Church, as the 'confession of their faith,' excepting certain clauses relating to the civil magistrate."<sup>2</sup> In 1788, the first of several amendments was enacted by the General Synod and in recent months, delegates to the 178th General Assembly adopted—subject to further approval—a "Confession of 1967" which is to be added to the "Westminster Confession of 1647" as the statement of faith by members of the church.<sup>3</sup>

"The Book of Discipline was entirely reconstructed in 1821, and again in 1884, and amendments and additions were made in 1894-1931. In 1934 it was extensively revised and rearranged, and amended between 1941 and 1955."

The Form of Government was amended and added to in various sections between the years 1805 and 1956, and the Directory of Worship between 1805 and 1955."<sup>4</sup>

The Presbyterian Church came to the colonies about 1730 by settlers representing two Presbyterian groups that had separated from the Established Church of Scotland. The first of these had organized the Associate Presbytery in 1733, and the second had set up the Reformed Presbytery ten years later. In 1858 these two groups and their posterity united as The United Presbyterian Church of North America.<sup>5</sup>

### REFUTATION:

#### *The Creed*

A creed that needs no revision is "given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and instruction in righteousness that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (II Tim. 3:16-17) It meets the needs of every creature in the whole world. (Mark 16:15-16) It is a perfect creed (Psalms 19:7) that shall endure forever (I Peter 1:25). "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." (Luke 21:33) And it shall judge us at the last day. (John 12:48)

Some objections to human creeds are: (1) They are not perfect; (2) They must be revised every few years; (3) They make void the word of God; (4) They are contradictory; (5) They keep people divided on the question of religion; (6) They will not judge us in the last day.

Among the doctrines taught by Presbyterians is predestination.

### PREDESTINATION

There are numerous passages that teach the free agency of Man and none that contradict it. God said, "Behold I set before you this day a blessing and a curse; a blessing if ye obey the commandments of the Lord your God which I command you this day, and a curse if ye will not obey the commandments of the Lord your God." (Deut. 11:26-28) See also Joshua 24:15. Lamentable indeed are the words of God's only begotten Son, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets and stonest them that are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not" (Luke 13:34). Peter said, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (II Peter 3:9). The above scriptures teach that by God's grace man may be saved *if* man will accept God's pardon.

Let us briefly consider Romans 8:28-30 and Ephesians 1:3-5. The expression "foreknowledge of God," simply means that God knew beforehand.<sup>7</sup> And the word "predestinate" means to determine before.<sup>8</sup> *God did not choose or predestine which persons should enter Christ, but he "determined before" that those entering Christ should be saved. Men enter Christ by accepting the calling of God and men are called by God through the gospel. "And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."* (John 6:45) "But we are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, for that *God chose you from the beginning* unto salvation in sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth: whereunto he called you *through our gospel*, to the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ." (II Thess. 2:13-14)

<sup>1</sup> Strong's Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible. <sup>2</sup> The Constitution of the United Presbyterian Church in The USA 1965-66 p. 7. <sup>3</sup> "Superchurch: When Will We Have It?" Dominion, January, 1967 p. 36. <sup>4</sup> The Constitution p. 7. <sup>5</sup> Ibid pp 7 & 8. <sup>6</sup> Ibid pp 51, 56 & 57. <sup>7</sup> Strong's. <sup>8</sup> Ibid.

(Continued from Page 14)

Lutherans also teach that "in the sacrament the remission of sins, life, and salvation are imparted (*Smaller Catechism*, Sacrament of the Altar).<sup>10</sup> However, Jesus never stated that grace or remission of sins would be imparted through the taking of the Lord's Supper. His crucifixion would accomplish this. The Supper was given as a memorial or remembrance (Luke 27:9; I Corinthians 11:25).

### OTHER PRACTICES

There are also other non-scriptural practices among the Lutherans which are seen generally in denomina-

(Continued on Page 18)

Begin 6/9/10

## Pentecostalism an Experience More than a Denomination

- "Pentecost is an experience not a denomination." Heading of a United Pentecostal Church International web site. 9

### Overview:

The Pentecostal family of denominations form one branch within conservative Christianity. A major defining feature of Pentecostalism is their belief in Glossolalia, or the ability to speak "in tongues". Another is the unusual freedom and spontaneity exhibited during their religious services. Otherwise, their beliefs, practices and social policies are similar to those of other conservative Christians.

Pentecostalism is a highly fragmented family within Christianity; one source lists 177 separate denominations. 3

### History of Pentecostalism:

Pentecostalism is a relatively modern branch of Christianity. It grew out of the Holiness movement, which in turn had roots in Methodism.

Robert Longman Jr. (1) has listed a number of mid to late 19th century writings from within the Holiness movement which laid the foundations for Pentecostalism:

- 1845 : Article by John Morgan in the Oberlin Quarterly (issue 1, p.115)
- 1856 : Book by William Arthur: "The Tongue Of Fire"
- 1859 : Guide by Phoebe Palmer, "Guide to Holiness"
- 1870 : Book by Asa Mahan "Baptism Of the Holy Ghost"

During the last two decades of the 19th century, there were reports of xenoglossia breaking out at revival meetings, particularly in North and South Carolina. Xenoglossia is the speaking of a foreign language by a person who normally has no familiarity with it. For example, an American with no ability to speak any language other than English suddenly became capable of speaking fluent German. There may also have been some instances of glossolalia (ecstatic speech).

The year 1899 saw a great rise in religious fervor as people speculated about the second coming of Jesus and the end of history as they knew it during the year 1900. Many books were written about the power of the Holy Spirit. Charles F. Parham, a Holiness preacher and head of the Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas conducted a revival meeting in that city. Agnes Ozman, a Methodist, shocked the meeting by speaking fluently in a number of foreign languages that she had never previously learned. This happened on 1900-JAN-1. This event is often regarded as the founding of the Pentecostal movement. Some days later, many individuals spoke in tongues. Then Parham did as well.

One of Parham's students, an African-American named William Seymour started a home church in Los Angeles CA which was attended by members of the two Baptist churches and one Holiness church in that city. On 1906-APR-9, Seymour's landlord, Edward Lee, and closest co-worker, Jennie E. Moore broke out in tongues. Attendance increased



precipitously. This made it necessary to find new quarters in which to hold their meetings. They rented an empty warehouse on Azusa Street in Los Angeles and founded the Apostolic Faith Mission.

The movement spread to other cities in California, and into the Northwestern and Southeastern sections of the US. Many churches were organized - particularly among immigrants. Some Holiness churches switched to Pentecostalism. The movement subsequently spread across North America, and finally has blanketed much of the world.

Until 1914, the movement worked primarily within the Holiness churches. But increasing friction motivated the Pentecostals to form their first denomination, the Church of God in Christ. Although the movement was racially integrated in its early years, white clergy subsequently left to form the Assemblies of God.

Eventually, there evolved three main Pentecostal divisions, and a number of similar splinter groups:

- Some Pentecostals, particularly those with a Holiness background, believe in the "Pentecostal experience" as the third of three experiences:

0. justification (faith and trust by the believer in Jesus as Lord and Savior)
0. sanctification (the "second blessing" - imparting of a new life to the believer by the Holy Spirit)
0. baptism of the Holy Spirit (as evidenced by speaking in tongues)

Main denominations include: Church of God (Cleveland TN), Church of God in Christ.

- Other Pentecostals, particularly those with a Baptist background, believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit can happen to any believer in Jesus, whether or not they have first been sanctified. The main denomination is the General Council of Assemblies of God
- Oneness Pentecostals (a.k.a. "Jesus Only" or "Apostolic Pentecostals") believe that in the early Christian church, baptism was done in the name of Jesus Christ only (as in Acts 2:38), not in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (as in Matthew 28:19). In time, this group abandoned the traditional expression of belief in the Trinity, and accept the oneness of God. A crisis developed within the Assemblies of God in 1916 over these new beliefs. The AOG decided to remain Trinitarian, both in its baptismal formula and its concept of deity. Almost 200 pastors left the Assemblies of God as a result. The United Pentecostal Church and the Pentecostal Assemblies of The World are the main Oneness Pentecostal denominations.

Some denominations are congregational in structure; the individual congregations are self governing. Others have a connexional structure, in which regional and national organizations decide matters of doctrine and organization.

### **The United Pentecostal Church International:**

Within the Pentecostal movement, the United Pentecostal Church International is quite unusual. It holds many non-traditional beliefs, that conflict with other denominations within Pentecostalism, including:

- They believe that the ability to speak in tongues is a necessary indication of a valid



religious conversion. They deny the legitimacy of the conversion of "born again" Christians from other denominations where tongues are rarely, if ever, spoken. "No tongues - no salvation." So, for example, they would regard essentially all Southern Baptists as unsaved, even though most had repented of their sins and trusted Jesus as their Lord and Savior, just as most UPCI members have.

- They share with other "Oneness Pentecostals" the practice of baptizing in the name of Jesus Christ only. (See Acts 2:38) Almost all Christian denominations follow the alternate baptismal formula at Matthew 28:19 and baptize in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
- They believe that anyone who is not baptized in the name of Jesus only will not be accepted into heaven when they die. That would include almost the entire human race.
- They reject the traditional concept of the Trinity. They do not believe that the Godhead is composed of a single deity composed of three persons: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. They believe that God is a unity, a Spirit, who has manifested himself in three roles or "offices, roles, or relationship to humanity." <sup>8</sup> An analogy would be a single man who plays three different roles: that of father, son, and husband -- either sequentially or at the same time. This concept is frequently misunderstood by individuals and groups outside of the UPCI; the denomination are often condemned as a cult because of the confusion over the UPCI's precise understanding of the nature of God.
- In common with many other Pentecostal denominations, their religious service includes footwashing in emulation of Jesus and his followers. *Read John 13:*
- Members are forbidden to join the Masonic Order and other "secret societies."
- Strict dress and hair codes are followed, particularly for women.
- Attendance at movies or watching of television is not permitted.

The church has about 2.3 million members world-wide, including about 600,000 members in their 3,764 North American churches. Their main periodical is The Pentecostal Herald. It is available online. <sup>7</sup> The UPCI's radio program is called Harvestime. It is available throughout the U.S., Canada and the rest of the world.

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<http://www.pentecostsunday.com/>



# SIX WAYS PENTECOSTALISM IS WRONG

Mark K. Lewis

It is no secret, to those who are familiar with current religious thought, that various phenomena are frequently being ascribed to God's Holy Spirit. Tongue speaking, healings, modern revelations, salvation, direct inspiration, and happenings from alpha to omega in denominations A through Z would lead us to believe that the Holy Spirit is indeed alive and well on planet earth today. This "Pentecostal" marvel is of great import to many; it is sad that there is so much confusion regarding it. We shall attempt to explain, in this brief essay, why we do not endorse "Pentecostalism," indeed insist that it is far contrary to the word of God.

Pentecostalism means many things to many people, thus needs some defining and limiting for our purposes in this article. When I speak of "Pentecostalism," I am referring to any direct action of the Holy Spirit upon or within us, separate from the word of God. I am affirming that the Holy Spirit *never* leads or directs us today, or speaks to us or guides us directly—does ABSOLUTELY NOTHING upon or within man apart from the word of God. Thus, all the happenings mentioned above in paragraph one come within the purview of our reasonings. Whatever is going on in the minds, hearts, and lives of so many, regardless of how sincere they are, it is not of God. Let me give six brief reasons for so stating.

1. *Pentecostalism is wrong because it denies that in conversion the spirit operates only through the word of God.* That the spirit *does* operate in conversion, we would never be so ignorant as to deny it. John 3:5, for one example, clearly teaches such. The question is not—and, incidentally, never has been—*does* the Spirit operate in conversion? The question is, *HOW* does he operate? Does he do it directly, God's spirit coming directly into contact with man's spirit, or does he operate through a *means*, a *medium*, that medium being the Bible? It is the latter we affirm.

While John 3:5 tells us we are born of the Spirit, I Peter 1:23, James 1:18, and I Corinthians 4:15 inform us that we are born of the word. A contradiction? No, but only if we understand that the word of God is "the sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17) the tool which the Holy Spirit *always* uses in conversion. The reader is also referred to John 5:24, Romans 1:16, John 17:17, I Peter 1:22, Psalm 19:7, and other scriptures which teach that the word saves us. To look at the matter practically, study the following verses in Acts: 2:41, 4:4, 6:7, 8:12, 11:14, 18:8, and 19:20. They will show that, in the cases of conversion, the word of God was ALWAYS, 100% of the time, preached and believed before salvation! There is no exception. Yea, the spirit operates in conversion, but always and only through his word, the Bible. Pentecostalism errs by denying such.

2. *Pentecostalism is wrong because it denies the all-sufficiency of the scriptures.* This is probably the most important point of all, because if this principle, the all-sufficiency of the Bible, were truly understood, then people would realize that there is no need for the direct action of the Spirit. The Bible is complete and does meet man's every need. Again, for brevity's sake, we will only refer to the passages which prove such conclusively: Psalm 19:7, II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:3 John 6:63, I Thessalonians 2:13, Jude 3. These are representative of a host of verses which substantiate the fact that the Bible is enough, we do not need the direct action of the Spirit upon us. Indeed, an appropriate question would be, what can the Spirit do for us that the word cannot? Every effect or influence that it could be said the Holy Spirit could exert upon or within man is affirmed already of the word of God. Pentecostalism strikes at a crucial Bible doctrine, the all-sufficiency of the word of God. It says, in effect the word is not enough, we must have something else. We must oppose this teaching with all our being.

3. *Who really has the Holy Spirit?* To demonstrate the confusion of the Pentecostal philosophy, all we need to do is ask the above question. The Mormons claim to have it, and teach Mormon doctrine. The Seventh-Day Adventist founder, Ellen G. White, claimed she "got" the Holy Spirit, and founded that religion. Other modern Pentecostals "get the Holy Ghost," and they can heal, and the Christian Scientist gets it and says you are not sick in the first place! Is all this from the Holy Spirit? I want to know *who really has the Holy Spirit?* You see, they all make the same claim, and they all prove it the same way—by personal testimony, feelings, and experiences. Now who is right? Who really has the Holy Spirit? I do not believe that God would leave his ordained religion on such an untrustworthy foundation as the feelings of man. Our fourth point is like unto our third...

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4. What is to prevent other religions from making the same claim? Here is a Mohammedan. He claims that he is a "born again Muslim." He had an "encounter with Allah," and the spirit of Allah has told him that the hottest place in hell is reserved for Christians. How does he prove it? He says, "I had an experience. I feel it in my heart. I know I'm right because Allah has revealed it to me in my heart." He makes the exact same claim as the Pentecostal, and proves it the exact same way! Indeed, every religion in the world could make the same claim as Pentecostalism and have the identical supporting proof. If Christianity must rely on this kind of testimony to sustain its veracity, why is it any better, or more provable, than Buddhism, Shintoism, and Islam? Have we no surer foundation for our religion than this? Indeed we do.

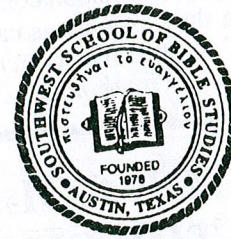
5. Pentecostalism emphasizes the Spirit; Christianity emphasizes Christ. Indeed, I am somewhat perplexed at all this "Holy Ghost" religion; it reminds me somewhat of Old MacDonald's farm: here the Holy Ghost, there the Holy Ghost, everywhere the Holy Ghost. Whatever happened to Christ and the cross? (Read Colossians 1:27; 2:10; II Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 2:20; 4:19; 6:14; Philippians 2:5; Colossians 1:20). The appeal of Christianity is Jesus Christ and what he did on Calvary, and to him we must appeal, and not to "Holy Spirit" religion. There is far too much emphasis on the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism. The cross and forgiveness are the true source of Christian experience, which leads to our final point.

6. Pentecostalism confuses the Biblical doctrines of faith, feelings, experience. Biblical faith is based upon testimony (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1). Because I know I have met the conditions of salvation, therefore I rejoice. Pentecostals have this philosophy exactly backwards. They say, "I feel, therefore I know." The Bible doctrine is "I know, therefore I feel." Salvation is the cause, feelings (*i.e.*, rejoicing, peace, and such like) are the effects. Pentecostalism would have feelings to be a cause: "I feel"—the cause—"therefore, I know I am saved"—the effect. Such is not biblical, nor is it even reasonable. Feelings are always effects, even in the natural world. I feel a pain in my leg—an effect; I reach down and pull out a thorn—the cause. God simply has given us greater assurance than our

feelings, because our feelings can be wrong (Acts 23:1). If we are unknowingly fed erroneous information, then our feelings will react as though it were true. If I am wrongly told my mother has passed away, I will grieve, my feelings will be sad, even though she may be alive and well. And this is precisely the problem with Pentecostalism. As Z.T. Sweeney so well wrote, when the Pentecostal says, "I am conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit within me," what he means is "I am conscious of a feeling within me which I have been taught is caused by the Holy Spirit." But given the deceptions of the evil one (II Corinthians 11:13-14), such is a mighty dangerous theology. We should trust the word of God, yea, even more than our own feelings and experiences (II Peter 1:19).

We have a sure thing—the word of God. We need nothing else. Indeed, it is not as easy to deeply and tiringly study the Bible to learn what it says as it is to simply have some happy experience which convinces us we have been saved by the Spirit directly; but if we are going to be true to God, we have no other option. The Spirit does not work directly today; he is not doing the things so frequently claimed of him. Let us hold fast the word of God, which will lead us to glory (Psalms 73:24).

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# The Pentecostal Movement

within Protestant Christianity places special emphasis on the gifts of the Holy Spirit, as shown in the Biblical account of the Day of Pentecost. Pentecostalism is similar to the Charismatic movement, but developed earlier and separated from the mainstream church. Charismatic Christians, at least in the early days of the movement, tended to remain in their respective denominations.

## Beliefs

Pentecostals believe that one must be saved by believing in Jesus as Lord and Saviour for the forgiveness of sins and to be made acceptable to God. Pentecostals believe in water baptism as an outward sign of conversion, and that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is a distinct spiritual experience that all who have believed in Jesus should receive. Some Pentecostals believe that the baptism in the Holy Spirit is always accompanied initially by the outward evidence of speaking in tongues. This is a major difference between Pentecostal and Charismatic Christians, who believe that a Christian who is baptized in the Holy Spirit may exhibit other physical signs instead of speaking in tongues. However, most major Pentecostal denominations reject the idea that one is not saved unless one speaks in tongues. Pentecostals also typically believe that the Bible has definitive authority in matters of faith.

## Theology

Theologically, most Pentecostal denominations are aligned with Evangelicalism in that they emphasize the reliability of the Bible and the need for the transformation of an individual's life with faith in Jesus. Most Pentecostals also adhere to the doctrine of Biblical inerrancy. Pentecostals differ from Fundamentalists by placing more emphasis on personal spiritual experience.

Pentecostals have a transrational worldview. Although Pentecostals are concerned with orthodoxy (correct belief), they are also concerned with orthopathy (right affections) and orthopraxy (right reflection or action). Reason is esteemed as a valid conduit of truth, but Pentecostals do not limit truth to the realm of reason.

Dr. Jackie David Johns, in his work on Pentecostal formational leadership, states that the Scriptures hold a special place in the Pentecostal worldview because the Holy Spirit is always active in the Bible. For him, to encounter the Scriptures is to encounter God. For the Pentecostal, the Scriptures are a primary reference point for communion with God and a template for reading the world.

One of the most prominent distinguishing characteristics of Pentecostalism from Evangelicalism is its emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit. Pentecostals believe that everyone who is genuinely saved has the Holy Spirit living in them and working through them. But unlike most other Christians they believe that there is a second work of the Holy Spirit called the baptism of the Holy Spirit which opens a believer up to a closer fellowship with the Holy Spirit and empowers them for Christian service. Speaking in tongues, also known as glossolalia, is the normative proof, but not the only proof, nor a sufficient proof, of the baptism with the Holy Spirit. Most major Pentecostal churches also accept the corollary

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us*



that those who don't speak in tongues have not received the blessing that they call "The Baptism of the Holy Spirit". This claim is uniquely Pentecostal and is one of the few consistent differences from Charismatic theology.

Some ministers and members admit that a believer might be *able* to speak in tongues, but for various personal reasons (such as a lack of understanding) might not. This would be the only case where a believer would be filled with the Holy Spirit, but not exhibit the so-called "initial physical evidence" of speaking in tongues. This, however, would be a minority perspective.

Pentecostals believe it is essential to repent for the remission of sins, believe in Jesus as Savior and be baptized in order to obtain salvation. They believe that the Baptism of the Holy Spirit is an additional gift that is bestowed on believers, but that it is not required for salvation.

Pentecostals believe that there are three different types of instances of speaking in tongues. One being tongues spoken as initial evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit two being a prayer language developed in daily prayer with God, and three being tongues and interpretation ("public utterances"). They believe that all Christians can be baptized with the Holy Spirit if they have at least repented, and genuinely ask God and wait on His timing for it to occur. Pentecostals believe that in public ordinances, someone who is given the gift of speaking in tongues may speak in tongues in a church service or other Christian gathering for everyone to hear. They believe that God will give another Christian present the gift of interpretation and that the Christian with the gift of interpretation will be able to speak what the first person did in the language of the audience so that everyone can understand what was said and be edified. They believe that only some people are given the gift of speaking in tongues while everyone has the opportunity to receive the baptism of the Holy Spirit and develop a prayer language with God. This is what Paul was spoke of in 1-Corinthians 12-14.

Critics charge that this doctrine does not mesh well with what they believe to be Paul's criticism of the early Corinthian church for their obsession with speaking in tongues, Paul stated that speaking in tongues is only one of the gifts of the spirit and is not gifted to all, there are other gifts that are given to others, the power of Prophecy for one. (see 1 Corinthians, chapters 12-14 in the New Testament).

Advocates say that the Pentecostal position aligns closely with Luke's emphasis in the book of Acts and reflects a more sophisticated use of hermeneutics. Furthermore, advocates stress that tongues as a gift of the Spirit and tongues as an initial sign of baptism of the Holy Spirit are not to be confused with one another. They believe that the baptism of the Holy Spirit described in Acts must occur before one can be used in any of the gifts of the Spirit described in Corinthians.

Dr. Dale A. Robbins writes in regards to charismatic beliefs that Church history argues against the idea that charismatic gifts went away shortly after the apostolic age. Dr. Robbins quotes the early church father Irenaeus (ca. 130-202) as writing the following, "...we hear many of the brethren in the church who have prophetic gifts, and who speak in tongues through the spirit, and who also bring to light the secret things of men for their benefit [word of knowledge]...". Dr. Robbins also cites Irenaeus writing the following, "When God saw it necessary, and the church prayed and fasted much, they did miraculous things, even of bringing back the spirit to a dead man." According to Dr. Robbins Tertullian (ca. 155-230)



# Oneness Pentecosta

reported similar incidents as did Origen (ca. 182 - 251), Eusebius (ca. 275 – 339), Firmilian (ca. 232-269), and Chrysostom (ca. 347 - 407).[1]

Most Pentecostal churches and denominations accept a Trinitarian Theology in accordance with mainstream Protestantism. The world's largest Pentecostal denomination, the Assemblies of God, holds to this belief as does the Elim Pentecostal Church, the Apostolic Church, Church of God, the Church of God in Christ, and the Foursquare Church (See Statement of Fundamental Truths of the Assemblies of God). Some Pentecostal churches however hold to Oneness theology, which decries the traditional doctrine of the Trinity as unbiblical. The largest Pentecostal Oneness denomination in the United States is the United Pentecostal Church. Oneness Pentecostals, are sometimes known as "Jesus-Name", "Apostolics", or by their detractors as "Jesus only" Pentecostals. This is due to the belief that the original Apostles baptized converts in the name of Jesus. They also believe that God has revealed Himself in different roles rather than three distinct persons. The major trinitarian pentecostal organizations, however, including the Pentecostal World Conference and the Fellowship of Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches of North America, have condemned Oneness theology as a heresy and refuse membership to churches holding this belief. This same holds true for the Oneness Pentecostal towards trinitarian churches. It should be noted that in the UK the term "Apostolics" refers to members of the Apostolic Church (UK) - a denomination which adheres to traditional evangelical teaching on the Trinity.

Most Pentecostal churches hold witnessing to unbelievers as extremely important - sometimes more so than other denominations. "The Great Commission" to spread the "Good News of the Kingdom of God", spoken by Jesus directly before his Ascension is perceived as one of the most, if not the most, important command Jesus gave us. This imperative can be found in Mark 16:15 and Matthew 28: 19-20.

Generous

Being generous, primarily in the area of finance but also in time, etc. is also very important to most Pentecostal churches. Some churches spend millions of dollars every year on missions - that is, going out into the world and leading people to Jesus. This mainly includes practical acts such as the providing of food, water, prison ministry, education, etc. It should be noted however that the focus of winning the lost and of giving generously is by no means an exclusively Pentecostal theology. Many other churches and denominations also highly focus on such things.

## History

The Pentecostal movement was also prominent in the Holiness movement who were the first to begin making numerous references to the term "pentecostal" such as in 1867 when the Movement established The National Camp Meeting Association for the Promotion of Christian Holiness with a notice that said: *[We are summoning,] irrespective of denominational tie...those who feel themselves comparatively isolated in their profession of holiness...that all would realize together a Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Ghost...*

Although the 1896 Shearer Schoolhouse Revival in Cherokee County, North Carolina might be regarded as a precursor to the modern Pentecostal movement, modern Pentecostalism began around 1901. It is generally accepted that its origin dates from when Agnes Ozman received the gift of tongues (*glossolalia*) during a prayer meeting at Charles Fox Parham's Bethel Bible College in Topeka, Kansas in 1901. Parham, a minister of Methodist background, formulated the doctrine that tongues was the "Bible evidence" of the Baptism of



the Holy Spirit. Further, Pentecostals point to the "upper room" experience of the gathered disciples of Jesus as described in Acts 2:1 and Peter's instructions in Acts 2:38 as justification for their practices.

Parham left Topeka and began a revival meeting ministry which led to a link to the Azusa Street Revival through William J. Seymour whom he taught in his school in Houston, although because Seymour was African American, he was only allowed to sit outside the room to listen.

The expansion of the movement started with the Azusa Street Revival, beginning April 9, 1906 at the Los Angeles home of Edward Lee, who experienced what he felt to be an infilling of the Holy Spirit during a prayer meeting. The attending pastor, William J. Seymour, also claimed that he was overcome with the Holy Spirit on April 12, 1906. On April 18, 1906, the Los Angeles Times ran a front page story on the movement. By the third week in April, 1906, the small but growing congregation had rented an abandoned African Methodist Episcopal Church at 312 Azusa Street and organized as the Apostolic Faith Mission.

Pentecostalism has given birth to a large number of "offshoot" churches, often over political, social or theological differences. Not wishing to affiliate with the Assemblies of God, formed in 1914, a group of ministers from predominantly white churches formed the Pentecostal Church of God in Chicago, Illinois in 1919. George Went Hensley, a preacher who had left a Pentecostal church when it stopped embracing snake handling, is credited with creating the first holiness church dedicated to this practice in the 1920s.

The first decade of Pentecostalism was marked by interracial assemblies, "...Whites and blacks mix in a religious frenzy,..." according to a local newspaper account. This lasted until 1924, when the church split along racial lines (see Apostolic Faith Mission). However, interracial services continued for many years, even in parts of the segregated U.S. South. When the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America was formed in 1948, it was made up entirely of Anglo-American Pentecostal denominations. This was one reason why the United Pentecostal Church would not join and its interracial policy has remained throughout its history. In 1994, segregated Pentecostals returned to their roots of racial reconciliation and proposed formal unification of the major white and black branches of the Pentecostal Church, in a meeting subsequently known as the Memphis Miracle. This unification occurred in 1998, again in Memphis, Tennessee. The unification of white and black movements led to the restructuring of the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America to become the Pentecostal/Charismatic Churches of North America.

During the beginning of the twentieth century, Albert Benjamin Simpson became closely involved with the growing Pentecostal movement. It was common for Pentecostal pastors and missionaries to receive their training at the Missionary Training Institute that Simpson founded. Because of this, Simpson and the Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) (an evangelistic movement that Simpson founded) had a great influence on Pentecostalism, in particular the Assemblies of God and the Foursquare Church. This influence included evangelistic emphasis, C&MA doctrine, Simpson's hymns and books, and the use of the term 'Gospel Tabernacle,' which evolved into Pentecostal churches being known as 'Full Gospel Tabernacles.'



In the United Kingdom, the first Pentecostal church to be formed was the Apostolic Church. This was later followed by the Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance, later to be known as the Elim Pentecostal Church, founded in 1914 by George Jeffreys.

From the late 1950s onwards, the Charismatic movement, which was to a large extent inspired and influenced by Pentecostalism, began to flourish in the mainline Protestant denominations, as well as the Anglican and Roman Catholic churches, fostered in Britain by organisations such as the Fountain Trust, founded by Michael Harper in 1964. Unlike "Classical Pentecostals," who formed strictly Pentecostal congregations or denominations, Charismatics adopted as their motto, "Bloom where God planted you."

In Sweden, the first Pentecostal church was Filadelfiaförsamlingen in Stockholm. Pastored by Lewi Pethrus, this congregation, originally Baptist, was expelled from the Baptist Union of Sweden in 1913 for doctrinal differences. Today this congregation has about 7000 members and is the biggest Pentecostal congregation in northern Europe. As of 2005, the Swedish pentecostal movement has approximately 90,000 members in nearly 500 congregations. These congregations are all independent but cooperate on a large scale. Swedish Pentecostals have been very missionary-minded and have established churches in many countries. In Brazil, for example, churches founded by the Swedish Pentecostal mission claim several million members.

The history of pentecostalism in Australia has been documented by Dr Barry Chant in *Heart of Fire* (1984, Adelaide: Tabor).]

### **Pentecostal denominations and adherents**

Estimated numbers of Pentecostals vary widely. Christianity Today reported in an article titled World Growth at 19 Million a Year that according to historian Vinson Synan, dean of the Regent University School of Divinity in Virginia Beach, about 25 percent of the world's Christians are Pentecostal or charismatic.

The largest Pentecostal denominations in the United States are the Assemblies of God, the Church of God in Christ, Church of God (Cleveland), Pentecostal Assemblies of the World and the United Pentecostal Church. According to a Spring 1998 article in *Christian History*, there are about 11,000 different pentecostal or charismatic denominations worldwide.

The size of Pentecostalism in the U.S. is estimated to be more than 20 million including approximately 918,000 (4%) of the Hispanic-American population, counting all unaffiliated congregations, although the numbers are uncertain, in part because some tenets of Pentecostalism are held by members of non-Pentecostal denominations in what has been called the charismatic movement.

Pentecostalism was estimated to number around 115 million followers worldwide in 2000; lower estimates place the figure near to 22 million (eg. Cambridge Encyclopedia), while the highest estimates apparently place the figure closer to 400 million. The great majority of Pentecostals are to be found in Third World countries (see the **Statistics** subsection below), although much of their international leadership is still North American. Pentecostalism is sometimes referred to as the "third force of Christianity." The largest Christian church in the world is the Yoido Full Gospel Church in South Korea, a Pentecostal church. Founded and led by David Yonggi Cho since 1958, it had 780,000 members in 2003. The True Jesus



Church, an indigenous church founded by Chinese believers on the mainland but whose headquarters is now in Taiwan. The Apostolic Church is the fastest growing church in the world.

According to Christianity Today, Pentecostalism is "a vibrant faith among the poor; it reaches into the daily lives of believers, offering not only hope but a new way of living." [2]. In addition, according to a 1999 U.N. report, "Pentecostal churches have been the most successful at recruiting its members from the poorest of the poor." Brazilian Pentecostals talk of Jesus as someone real and close to them and doing things for them including providing food and shelter.

### **Outside the English speaking world**

Pentecostal and charismatic church growth is rapid in many parts of the world. Missions expert David Barrett estimated in a Christianity Today article that the Pentecostal and charismatic church is growing by 19 million per year.

On November 9, 2003, St. Petersburg Times writer Sharon Tubbs stated in an article entitled Fiery Pentecostal Spirit Spreads into Mainstream Christianity that Pentecostalism is the world's fastest-growing Christian movement.

Jeffrey K. Hadden at the Department of Sociology at the University of Virginia collected statistics from the various large pentecostal organizations and from the work by David Stoll (David Stoll, "Is Latin American Turning Protestant?" published Berkeley: University of California Press. 1990) demonstrating that the Pentecostals are experiencing very rapid growth as can be seen on his website. In Myanmar, the Assemblies of God of Myanmar is one of the largest Christian denominations. The pentecostal churches Igreja do Evangelho Completo de Deus, Assembleias de Deus, Igrejas de Cristo and the Assembleias Evangelicas de Deus Pentecostales are among the largest denominations of Mozambique. Among the Indian charismatic denominations are Apostolic Church of Pentecost, Apostolic Pentecostal Church, Assemblies of Christ Church, Assemblies of God, Bible Pattern Church, Church of God (Full Gospel) in India, Church of God of Prophecy, Church of the Apostolic Faith, Elim Church, Nagaland Christian Revival Church, New Life Fellowship, New Testament Church of India, Open Bible Church of God, Pentecostal Free Will Baptist Church, Pentecostal Holiness Church, Pentecostal Mission, United Pentecostal Church in India, and India Pentecostal Church of God.

### **Statistics**

See List of Christian denominations by number of members. The list indicates there may be 105 million Pentecostals with the largest Pentecostal denominations (claiming 2 million or more adherents) being:

- Assemblies of God - 51 million
- New Apostolic Church - 11 million
- Kimbanguist Church - 8 million
- Church of God in Christ - 7 million
- Church of God (Cleveland) - 5 million
- Christian Congregation of Brazil- 2.5 million

- Zion Christian Church - 2.5 million
- Church of the Lord Aladura - 2.5 million
- International Church of the Foursquare Gospel 2 million
- Universal Church of the Kingdom of God - 2 million
- Christian Outreach Centre - less than 1 million

#### Geographical distribution

- Africa: 41.1 million
- Nigeria: 12.1 million
- Kenya: 4.1 million
- South Africa: 3.4 million
- Ethiopia: 2.6 million
- South America: 32.4 million
- Brazil: 13.5 million
- Argentina: 3.5 million
- Chile: 1.8 million
- North America: 21.5 million
- United States: 20.2 million
- Mexico: 2.7 million
- Guatemala: 2.0 million
- Canada: 1.3 million
- Asia: 15.3 million
- China: unknown; believed to be several million
- Indonesia: 5.0 million
- India: 3.9 million
- South Korea: 1.7 million
- Europe: 4.3 million
- Iceland: 0.003 million\* source: Statistics Iceland
- Sweden: 0.1 million
- United Kingdom: 0.9 million
- Oceania: 3.3 million
- Papua New Guinea: 0.4 million
- Australia: 0.4 million

**Source:** *Operation World* by Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk, 2000, unless otherwise indicated.

#### Precursors

- John Alexander Dowie (1848-1907)
- Edward Irving

#### Early history



- Smith Wigglesworth (1859 - 1947)
- Charles Fox Parham (1873 - 1929) Father of Modern Pentecostalism
- William J. Seymour (1870 - 1922) Azusa Street Mission Founder
- William Sowders (1879 - 1952) Restorer of New Testament Order of Worship
- Maria Woodworth-Etter (1844 - 1924)
- George Jeffreys (1889 - 1972) Founder of the Elim Foursquare Gospel Alliance and the Bible-pattern Church Fellowship in Britain
- Aimee Semple McPherson (1890 - 1944) American Female Evangelist and organizer of the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel
- David du Plessis (1905 - 1987) South-African Pentecostal church leader, one of the founders of the Charismatic movement
- Kathryn Kuhlman (1907 - 1976) American female evangelist who brought Pentecostalism into the mainstream denominations
- William M. Branham (1909 - 1965) Healing Evangelists of the mid 20th century
- Jack Coe (1918 - 1956) Healing Tent Evangelist of the 1950s
- A. Allen (1911 - 1970) Healing Tent Evangelist of the 1950s and 1960s
- Oral Roberts (b.1918) Healing Tent Evangelist who made the transition to televangelism
- Rex Humbard (b.1919) The first successful TV evangelist of the mid 1950s, 1960s, and the 1970s and at one time had the largest television audience of any televangelist in the U.S.

[edit]

### **Theologians**

- Derek Prince (1915-2003) - perhaps the world's best-known Pentecostal theologian.
- Rufus Hollis Gause (born 1925)
- Gordon Fee - New Testament Scholar



# SIX WAYS PENTECOSTALISM IS WRONG

Mark K. Lewis

It is no secret, to those who are familiar with current religious thought, that various phenomena are frequently being ascribed to God's Holy Spirit. Tongue speaking, healings, modern revelations, salvation, direct inspiration, and happenings from alpha to omega in denominations A through Z would lead us to believe that the Holy Spirit is indeed alive and well on planet earth today. This "Pentecostal" marvel is of great import to many; it is sad that there is so much confusion regarding it. We shall attempt to explain, in this brief essay, why we do not endorse "Pentecostalism," indeed insist that it is far contrary to the word of God.

Pentecostalism means many things to many people, thus needs some defining and limiting for our purposes in this article. When I speak of "Pentecostalism," I am referring to any direct action of the Holy Spirit upon or within us, separate from the word of God. I am affirming that the Holy Spirit never leads or directs us today, or speaks to us or guides us directly—does ABSOLUTELY NOTHING upon or within man apart from the word of God. Thus, all the happenings mentioned above in paragraph one come within the purview of our reasonings. Whatever is going on in the minds, hearts, and lives of so many, regardless of how sincere they are, it is not of God. Let me give six brief reasons for so stating.

1. Pentecostalism is wrong because it denies that in conversion the spirit operates only through the word of God. That the spirit does operate in conversion, we would never be so ignorant as to deny it. John 3:5, for one example, clearly teaches such. The question is not—and, incidentally, never has been—does the Spirit operate in conversion? The question is, HOW does he operate? Does he do it directly, God's spirit coming directly into contact with man's spirit, or does he operate through a means, a medium, that medium being the Bible? It is the latter we affirm.

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While John 3:5 tells us we are born of the Spirit, I Peter 1:23, James 1:18, and I Corinthians 4:15 inform us that we are born of the word. A contradiction? No, but only if we understand that the word of God is "the sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17) the tool which the Holy Spirit always uses in conversion. The reader is also referred to John 5:24, Romans 1:16, John 17:17, I Peter 1:22, Psalm 19:7, and other scriptures which teach that the word saves us. To look at the matter practically, study the following verses in Acts: 2:41, 4:4, 6:7, 8:12, 11:14, 18:8, and 19:20. They will show that, in the cases of conversion, the word of God was ALWAYS, 100% of the time, preached and believed before salvation! There is no exception. Yea, the spirit operates in conversion, but always and only through his word, the Bible. Pentecostalism errs by denying such.

2. Pentecostalism is wrong because it denies the all-sufficiency of the scriptures. This is probably the most important point of all, because if this principle, the all-sufficiency of the Bible, were truly understood, then people would realize that there is no need for the direct action of the Spirit. The Bible is complete and does meet man's every need. Again, for brevity's sake, we will only refer to the passages which prove such conclusively: Psalm 19:7, II Timothy 3:16-17, II Peter 1:3, John 6:63, I Thessalonians 2:13, Jude 3. These are representative of a host of verses which substantiate the fact that the Bible is enough, we do not need the direct action of the Spirit upon us. Indeed, an appropriate question would be, what can the Spirit do for us that the word cannot? Every effect or influence that it could be said the Holy Spirit could exert upon or within man is affirmed already of the word of God. Pentecostalism strikes at a crucial Bible doctrine, the all-sufficiency of the word of God. It says, in effect the word is not enough, we must have something else. We must oppose this teaching with all our being.

3. Who really has the Holy Spirit? To demonstrate the confusion of the Pentecostal philosophy, all we need to do is ask the above question. The Mormons claim to have it, and teach Mormon doctrine. The Seventh-Day Adventist founder, Ellen G. White, claimed she "got" the Holy Spirit, and founded that religion. Other modern Pentecostals "get the Holy Ghost," and they can heal, and the Christian Scientist gets it and says you are not sick in the first place! Is all this from the Holy Spirit? I want to know who really has the Holy Spirit? You see, they all make the same claim, and they all prove it the same way—by personal testimony, feelings, and experiences. Now who is right? Who really has the Holy Spirit? I do not believe that God would leave his ordained religion on such an untrustworthy foundation as the feelings of man. Our fourth point is like unto our third...



4. *What is to prevent other religions from making the same claim? Here is a Mohammedan. He claims that he is a "born again Muslim."* He had an "encounter with Allah," and the spirit of Allah has told him that the hottest place in hell is reserved for Christians. How does he prove it? He says, "I had an experience. I feel it in my heart. I know I'm right because Allah has revealed it to me in my heart." He makes the exact same claim as the Pentecostal, and *proves it the exact same way!* Indeed, every religion in the world could make the same claim as Pentecostalism and have the identical supporting proof. If Christianity must rely on this kind of testimony to sustain its veracity, why is it any better, or more provable, than Buddhism, Shintoism, and Islam? Have we no surer foundation for our religion than this? Indeed we do.

5. *Pentecostalism emphasizes the Spirit; Christianity emphasizes Christ. Indeed, I am somewhat perplexed at all this "Holy Ghost" religion; it reminds me somewhat of Old MacDonald's farm: here the Holy Ghost, there the Holy Ghost, everywhere the Holy Ghost. Whatever happened to Christ and the cross?* (Read Colossians 1:27; 2:10; II Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 2:20; 4:19; 6:14; Philippians 2:5; Colossians 1:20). The appeal of Christianity is Jesus Christ and what he did on Calvary, and to him we must appeal, and not to "Holy Spirit" religion. There is far too much emphasis on the Holy Spirit in Pentecostalism. The cross and forgiveness are the true source of Christian experience, which leads to our final point.

6. *Pentecostalism confuses the Biblical doctrines of faith, feelings, experience. Biblical faith is based upon testimony (Romans 10:17; Hebrews 11:1). Because I know I have met the conditions of salvation, therefore I rejoice. Pentecostals have this philosophy exactly backwards. They say, "I feel, therefore I know." The Bible doctrine is "I know, therefore I feel." Salvation is the cause, feelings (i.e., rejoicing, peace, and such like) are the effects. Pentecostalism would have feelings to be a cause: "I feel"—the cause—"therefore, I know I am saved"—the effect. Such is not biblical, nor is it even reasonable. Feelings are always effects, even in the natural world. I feel a pain in my leg—an effect; I reach down and pull out a thorn—the cause. God simply has given us greater assurance than our*

feelings, because our feelings can be wrong (Acts 23:1). If we are unknowingly fed erroneous information, then our feelings will react as though it were true. If I am wrongly told my mother has passed away, I will grieve, my feelings will be sad, even though she may be alive and well. And this is precisely the problem with Pentecostalism. As Z.T. Sweeney so well wrote, when the Pentecostal says, "I am conscious of the presence of the Holy Spirit within me," what he means is "I am conscious of a feeling within me which I have been taught is caused by the Holy Spirit." But given the deceptions of the evil one (II Corinthians 11:13-14), such is a mighty dangerous theology. We should trust the word of God, yea, even more than our own feelings and experiences (II Peter 1:19).

We have a sure thing—the word of God. We need nothing else. Indeed, it is not as easy to deeply and tiringly study the Bible to learn what it says as it is to simply have some happy experience which convinces us we have been saved by the Spirit directly; but if we are going to be true to God, we have no other option. The Spirit does not work directly today; he is not doing the things so frequently claimed of him. Let us hold fast the word of God, which will lead us to glory (Psalms 73:24).

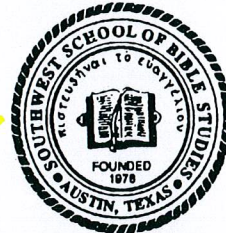
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# Glossolalia

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(Tongues-Speaking)

What Are Its Implications?

WAYNE JACKSON

No Christian can ignore the many questions raised by the phenomenal growth of "glossolalia" or "speaking in tongues." The Pentecostal denominations, which had their start at the turn of this century, now claim membership of over 2,000,000. Their ranks have swelled largely at the expense of the other denominations. Now in the past twelve years the charismatic movement has deeply infiltrated the historic Protestant churches. Even the heavily guarded precincts of Catholicism have not been spared. "Born-again Catholics who speak in tongues are not uncommon today. Then, of course, there are the "Jesus People" and the charismatic fellowships springing up on college campuses across the nation.

All have a common complaint, namely, the stagnation and hollowness of the mainline denominations, which have stifled the working of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of believers. Hence, there has been a mass exodus from these churches and also an inner revolt against the clergymen as these sincere Christians seek to experience the realities of the Christian life. Bible Students sympathize with this disenchantment over churchianity. In 2 Timothy 3:1-5, the Apostle Paul listed the perilous conditions in the world that mark the end of the Age. Verse 5 describes the masses of professed Christians today, "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof," to which Paul adds, "from such turn away."

Actually Bible Students were the first in this exodus from churchianity. Shortly before the turn of the century they heeded the words of Revelation 18:1-4 and left the worldly churches of Babylon. Congregations of Bible Students continue to form throughout the world.

Completely independent of other Bible Students congregations or any man-made headship of Christ and the unstifled working of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. As a result they experience the realities of the Christian life at the end of the Age.

There are hazards in fleeing clerical authority. The Christian's wily foe, Satan, stands ready to divert a good thing. There must be a final authority to which each, standing free in Christ can turn. This authority cannot be an inner experience only, as it would render us vulnerable to Satan. It is disheartening to find some Christians who place their "charismatic experience" above Scripture. We trust these are the exceptions. Thank God, there is an absolute authority, the Bible, which is to govern and regulate every aspect of the Christian life. (2 Tim. 3:16 and 17; 2:15) Because we are concerned we raise the following Scriptural points relative to speaking with tongues.

## New Testament Criteria for Glossolalia

Glossolalia, a Greek word that simply means tongues-speaking or speaking with tongues, was one of the miraculous gifts (Greek: charisma) of the spirit prevalent in the Church during the time of the Apostles. Many feel the Holy Spirit is again miraculously bestowing the charisma of tongues on Christians. Glossolalia today generally takes the form of ecstatic, unintelligible utterances. The question of whether tongues-speaking as used in the Scriptures was ecstatic utterances or foreign languages will be considered in detail subsequently.



Speaking with tongues in the early Church had limited practical value. Therefore, the Apostle Paul saw the need of laying down certain rules governing the use of this gift of the Spirit in the Church. These rules are found in 1 Corinthians 14. If contemporary glossolalia is a blessing of the Lord, we would naturally expect it to function in accordance with these rules.

- 0. First Corinthians 14:5, 27, 28. Tongues-speaking is only edifying in the Church if it is interpreted. "But if there be no interpreter, let him keep silence in the Church." Note from the context that Paul includes both speaking and praying in tongues in this rule.
- 0. Most tongues-speaking today is not interpreted as enjoined by Paul.
- 0. First Corinthians 14:22. "Tongues are for a sign, not to them that believe, but to them that believe not."

The tendency of glossolalia Christians today is to impress fellow Christian believers with the need to being "Spirit-filled." Yet the Apostle said this gift was to be used primarily as a sign to unbelievers. The fact that the current usage of tongues largely ignores these two basic New Testament rules tends to cause this version of glossolalia to be suspect in the minds of many sincere Christians.

### How Important is Glossolalia?

It is interesting to note how the New Testament ranks tongues-speaking as to its importance. In the 12th chapter of 1 Corinthians the Apostle Paul deals with the diversities of operations of the Holy Spirit in the Church. Then he lists the gifts of the Spirit according to their importance. (1 Cor. 12:28). And what do we find at the bottom of the list? Speaking with tongues! Yet our charismatic friends seem to have a different sequence of importance today with glossolalia on or near the top.

First Corinthians 12:29-30 reveals that not all faithful Christians in the apostles' day were to expect to speak in tongues. Yet today many feel glossolalia is the badge of a Spirit-filled Christian.

The unwarranted premium placed on glossolalia today is reflected in an article, which appeared in the February 28, 1975 issue of Christianity Today. The article entitled "A Plea to Some Who Speak in Tongues" was written by a pastor who opened the doors of his church to "both those who speak in tongues and those who do not." The following quotation contains some of his disappointments:

"Professing to be filled with the Spirit of humility and holiness, these persons expressed the opposite. The subtle but real spiritual conceit became more apparent until the words 'Spirit-filled' came to have a regrettable taint. Other pastors with whom I have talked have had similar experiences. There is often a 'know-it-all' attitude among those who speak in tongues that exactly contradicts what they profess in testimony. They definitely give the impression that those who do not speak in tongues have not 'arrived' spiritually, do not have the sensitivity to interpret the Scriptures, and do not have prayer power that can bring results. These persons are insensitive to the concept of Christian discipline. In many of them, habits of worldliness remain while the tongues-speaking flourishes. They are unteachable. Again the spiritual superiority complex rears its ugly head. The tongues-speakers apparently believe that they know it all."

It is hoped that the extremes mentioned in this article are only characteristic of a minority. However, the article does reflect the unscriptural importance attached to glossolalia today. Disconcerting things are heard in charismatic circles, such as; non-charismatic Christians are not to be raptured but left to endure the "seven-year tribulation." Another example is the following quotation from an address given at the Presbyterian Charismatic Conference by George MacLeod, former moderator of the Church of Scotland and member of the House of Lords.

"Only the charismatic communion in all denominations can hear all that God is saying in this age of the Spirit."

Again this may be the view of a minority. Nevertheless, these extremes are symptomatic of the charged atmosphere of partisanship in the Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal movements indicating a consensus that only glossolalic Christians are "Spirit-filled." An unwillingness by charismatics to accept that speaking with tongues was the lowest operation of the Spirit in the Church (1 Cor. 12:28) and that non-glossolalic Christians can be equally "Spirit-filled" (1 Cor. 12:30) cast serious doubt on this practice being an operation of the Holy Spirit.

### **Miraculous Gifts in the Early Church**

In 1 Corinthians 12-14, Paul uses the term "spiritual gifts" in describing the miraculous gifts such as tongues and healing. A revealing statement concerning the purpose of these "spiritual gifts" is also made by the Apostle Paul in Romans 1:11, "That I may impart unto you some spiritual gift; to the end ye may be established." Note the phrase "ye may be established." Remember the New Testament had not yet been given. Evidently the miraculous gifts of the Spirit were necessary at the critical juncture to establish the faith of the Church until the Bible had been completed. Further, the Church of Christ as a completely new operation in the plan of God required more tangible manifestations of its validity. The miraculous gifts provided this confirmatory evidence for the Church at its inception. But the gifts became superfluous (1 Cor. 13:8) after the Church had been established and the canon of the inspired writings had been completed. The Scriptures, the Apostle declares, are sufficient, "that the man of God may be thoroughly furnished unto all good works." 2 Tim. 3:17

A distinction must be made between the spiritual gifts and the gift of the holy Spirit," promised to all believers in Acts 2:38. The Greek word for gift in Acts 2:38 is Dorea not Charisma. Dorea is any gratuity, but Charisma, when related to the Holy Spirit, denotes a miraculous power. Therefore, Acts 2:38 cannot be used to prove that all believers down through the age would receive miraculous gifts.

It is interesting to note how the gifts (Greek - charisma) were initiated in the Church and how they were to cease. The gifts were conferred only by the apostles; however, there were two notable exceptions. These two exceptions occurred at the time of the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The one baptism of the holy Spirit (Acts 1:5) came upon the Church in two steps - both of which were indelibly marked by the miraculous manifestation of speaking in tongues. The first was on the Day of Pentecost, ten days after Jesus' ascension. The waiting disciples were baptized with the Holy Spirit. How did they or anyone else know this nucleus of the Church received the Holy Spirit? This significant event was indelibly marked in history by the



phenomenon of tongues, which accompanied the receiving of the Spirit. As a result, the Jews from many foreign lands gathered at Jerusalem for the holy days, heard the Gospel preached in their own language or tongue. Acts 2:1-11

~~The second step in the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurred 3 and a half years later. It was the historic event of the first gentile, Cornelius, and his household coming into the Church. This notable event was also stamped indelibly for history with the miraculous speaking of tongues.~~ (Acts 10:44-47) Acts 11:15 confirms that the Day of Pentecost outpouring of the holy Spirit, accompanied by tongues, only occurred again at the conversion of Cornelius. Acts 1:5 and Acts 11:16-17 are the only Scriptures that mention the baptism of the Holy Spirit. They limit this baptism to the Day of Pentecost and the conversion of Cornelius. All other scriptural accounts of gifts reveal that they came not as a baptism from the Lord but now could only be conveyed through the Apostles. (Gal. 3:5; Acts 4:19-21, 29-31; Acts 19:1-6) This is further confirmed by Rom. 1:11 at the writing of Paul's letter to the Romans none of the apostles had visited Rome. From Rom. 1:11 we find that the Church at Rome had not yet received spiritual gifts. This was one of the reasons Paul desired to visit them - thus confirming that gifts could not come by prayer alone but only through the ministry of the apostles.

Simon Magus, though given a miraculous gift by the Apostle Peter, was reprimanded for trying to buy this apostolic power of conferring gifts. Acts 8:17-23

When did the exercising of these gifts cease? If the gifts could only be conveyed by the apostles, then when they died the gifts ceased with the death of those Christians who had received these gifts from the apostles.

# Pentecostalism

## General Information

Pentecostalism, a worldwide Protestant movement that originated in the 19th century United States, **takes its name from the Christian feast of Pentecost, which celebrates the coming of the Holy Spirit upon the disciples.**

**Pentecostalism emphasizes a postconversion experience of spiritual purification and empowering for Christian witness, entry into which is signaled by utterance in unknown tongues (Glossolalia / Speaking In Tongues).**

Although Pentecostalism generally aligns itself with Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism, **its distinguishing tenet reflects roots in the American Holiness movement, which believed in the postconversion experience as entire sanctification.**

Pentecostalism grew from occurrences of glossolalia in the southern Appalachians (1896), Topeka, Kans. (1901), and Los Angeles (1906). Working independently, Holiness movement preachers W R Spurling and A J Tomlinson in the South, Charles Fox Parham in Topeka, and William Seymour in Los Angeles, each convinced of general apostasy in American Christianity, preached and prayed for religious revival. Generally rejected by the older denominations, Pentecostals long remained isolated and were reluctant to organize. Now, however, several groups belong to the National Association of Evangelicals in the United States and to the World Council of Churches. The largest multicongregational Pentecostal body in the United States is the Assemblies of God, with an inclusive membership of about 2.1 million (1988). Today the Pentecostal movement is spread over the world; it is particularly strong in South America and has an estimated 500,000 adherents in the U S S R.

Paul Merritt Bassett

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## Advanced Information

Pentecostalism is an evangelical charismatic reformation movement which usually traces its roots to an outbreak of tongue - speaking in Topeka, Kansas, in 1901 under the leadership of Charles Fox Parham, a former Methodist preacher. It was Parham who formulated the **basic Pentecostal doctrine of "initial evidence"** after a student in his Bethel Bible School, Agnes Ozman, experienced glossolalia in January, 1901.

**Basically Pentecostals believe that the experience of the 120 on the day of Pentecost, known as the "baptism in the Holy Spirit," should be normative for all Christians. Most Pentecostals believe, furthermore, that the first sign of "initial evidence" of this second baptism is speaking in a language unknown to the speaker.**



Although speaking in tongues had appeared in the nineteenth century in both England and America, it had never assumed the importance attributed to it by the later Pentecostals. For instance, glossolalia occurred in the 1830s under the ministry of Presbyterian Edward Irving in London, in the services of Mother Ann Lee's Shaker movement, and among Joseph Smith's Mormon followers in New York, Missouri, and Utah. The Pentecostals, however, were the first to give doctrinal primacy to the practice.

**Though Pentecostals recognize such sporadic instances of tongue - speaking and other charismatic phenomena throughout the Christian era, they stress the special importance of the Azusa Street revival, which occurred in an abandoned African Methodist Episcopal church in downtown Los Angeles from 1906 to 1909 and which launched Pentecostalism as a worldwide movement.** The Azusa Street services were led by William J Seymour, a black Holiness preacher from Houston, Texas, and a student of Parham.

The Topeka and Los Angeles events took place in a turn - of - the - century religious environment that encouraged the appearance of such a Pentecostal movement. The major milieu out of which Pentecostalism sprang was the worldwide Holiness movement, which had developed out of nineteenth century American Methodism. Leaders in this movement were Phoebe Palmer and John Inskip, who emphasized a "second blessing" crisis of sanctification through the "baptism in the Holy Spirit." English evangelicals also stressed a separate Holy Spirit experience in the Keswick Conventions beginning in 1874.

From America and England "higher life" Holiness movements spread to many nations of the world, usually under the auspices of Methodist missionaries and traveling evangelists. Although these revivalist did not stress charismatic phenomena, they emphasized a conscious experience of baptism in the Holy Spirit and an expectancy of a restoration of the NT church as a sign of the end of the church age. Other teachings that became prominent in this period were the **possibility of miraculous divine healing in answer to prayer** and the expectation of the imminent premillennial second coming of Christ. A great interest in the person and work of the Holy Spirit elicited the publication of many books and periodicals devoted to teaching seekers how to receive an "endowment of power" through an experience in the Holy Spirit subsequent to conversion.

In the quest to be filled with the Holy Spirit, many testimonies were given concerning emotional experiences which accompanied the **"second blessing,"** as it was called. In the tradition of the American frontier some received the experience with eruptions of joy or shouting, while others wept or spoke of surpassing peace and quietness.

By 1895 a further movement was begun in Iowa which stressed a **third blessing called "the fire,"** which followed the conversion and sanctification experiences already taught by the Holiness movement. The leader of this movement was Benjamin Hardin Irwin from Lincoln, Nebraska, who named his new group the Fire - Baptized Holiness Church. Other "fire - baptized" groups formed during this period included the Pillar of Fire Church of Denver, Colorado, and the Burning Bush of Minneapolis, Minn.

Not only did such Holiness teachers emphasize conscious religious experiences; they tended to encourage persons to seek for them as "crisis" experiences that could be received in an instant of time through prayer and faith. By 1900 the Holiness movement had begun to think of religious experiences more in terms of crises than in gradual categories. Thus the **Fire -**

**Baptized Holiness Church taught instant conversion through the new birth, instant sanctification as a second blessing, instant baptism in the Holy Ghost and fire, instant divine healing through prayer, and the instant premillennial second coming of Christ.**

Those teachers of the **Keswick** persuasion tended to speak of the four cardinal doctrines of the movement. This way of thinking was formalized in A B Simpson's four basic doctrines of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, **which stressed instant salvation, baptism in the Holy Spirit, divine healing, and the second coming of Christ.**

Thus, when tongue - speaking occurred in Topeka in 1901, the only significant addition to the foregoing was to insist that tongue - speaking was the biblical evidence of receiving the Holy Spirit baptism. **All the other teachings and practices of Pentecostalism were adopted whole cloth from the Holiness milieu in which it was born, including its style of worship, its hymnody, and its basic theology.**

After 1906 Pentecostalism spread rapidly in the United States and around the world. Despite its origins in the Holiness movement, the majority of Holiness leaders rejected Pentecostalism, and there were occasional charges of demon possession and mental instability. **Leaders of the older Holiness denominations rejected Pentecostal teachings outright.** These included the Church of the Nazarene, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, the Church of God (Anderson, Indiana), and the Salvation Army.

**Other Holiness groups, however, were Pentecostalized rapidly** as leaders went to Azusa Street to investigate the phenomena in evidence there. Among the Azusa Street "pilgrims" were G B Cashwell (North Carolina), C H Mason (Tennessee), Glen Cook (California), A G Argue (Canada), and W H Durham (Chicago). Within a year from the opening of the Azusa Street meeting (April, 1906), these and many others spread the Pentecostal message around the nation. Sharp controversies and divisions ensued in several Holiness denominations. The first Pentecostal denominations emerged from these struggles from 1906 to 1908.

This first wave of Holiness - Pentecostal groups included the Pentecostal Holiness Church, the Church of God in Christ, the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the Apostolic Faith (Portland, Oregon), the United Holy Church. Most of Pentecostal Free - Will Baptist Church. Most of these churches were located in the southern states and experienced rapid growth after their Pentecostal renewal began. Two of these, the Church of God in Christ and the United Holy Church, were predominantly black.

Pentecostalism also spread rapidly around the world after 1906. The leading European pioneer was Thomas Ball Barratt, a Norwegian Methodist pastor who founded flourishing Pentecostal movements in Norway, Sweden, and England. The German pioneer was the Holiness leader Jonathan Paul. Lewi Pethrus, a convert of Barratt's, began a significant Pentecostal movement in Sweden which originated among Baptists. A strong Pentecostal movement reached Italy through relatives of American immigrants of Italian extraction.

Pentecostalism was introduced to Russia and other Slavic nations through the efforts of Ivan Voronaev, a Russian - born American immigrant from New York City who established the first Russian - language Pentecostal church in Manhattan in 1919. In 1920 he began a ministry in Odessa, Russia, which was the origin of the movement in the Slavic nations. Voronaev founded over 350 congregations in Russia, Poland, and Bulgaria before being arrested by the Soviet police in 1929. He died in prison.



Pentecostalism reached Chile in 1909 under the leadership of an American Methodist missionary, Willis C Hoover. When the Methodist Church rejected Pentecostal manifestations, a schism occurred which resulted in the organization of the Methodist Pentecostal Church. Extremely rapid growth after 1909 made Pentecostalism the predominant form of Protestantism in Chile.

The Pentecostal movement in Brazil began in 1910 under the leadership of two American Swedish immigrant, Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren, who began Pentecostal services in a Baptist church in Belem, Para. A schism soon followed, resulting in the first Pentecostal congregation in the nation which took the name Assemblies of God. Phenomenal growth also caused Pentecostalism to be the major Protestant force in Brazil.

Successful Pentecostal missions were also begun by 1910 in China, Africa, and many other nations of the world. The missionary enterprise accelerated rapidly after the formation of major missions - oriented Pentecostal denominations in the United States after 1910.

**It was inevitable that such a vigorous movement would suffer controversy and division in its formative stages. Though the movement has been noted for its many submovements, only two divisions have been considered major. These involved teachings concerning sanctification and the Trinity.**

**The sanctification controversy grew out of the Holiness theology held by most of the first Pentecostals, including Parham and Seymour. Having taught that sanctification was a "second work of grace" prior to their Pentecostal experiences, they simply added the baptism of the Holy Spirit with glossolalia as a "third blessing." In 1910 William H Durham of Chicago began teaching his "finished work" theory, which emphasized sanctification as a progressive work following conversion with baptism in the Holy Spirit following as the second blessing.**

**The Assemblies of God, which was formed in 1914, based its theology on Durham's teachings and soon became the largest Pentecostal denomination in the world.** Most of the Pentecostal groups that began after 1914 were based on the model of the Assemblies of God. They include the Pentecostal Church of God, the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel (founded in 1927 by Aimee Semple McPherson), and the Open Bible Standard Church.

**A more serious schism grew out of the "oneness" or "Jesus only" controversy, which began in 1911 in Los Angeles. Led by Glen Cook and Frank Ewart, this movement rejected the teaching of the Trinity and taught that Jesus Christ was at the same time Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and that the only biblical mode of water baptism was administered in Jesus' name and then was valid only if accompanied with glossolalia. This movement spread rapidly in the infant Assemblies of God after 1914 and resulted in a schism in 1916, which later produced the Pentecostal Assemblies of the World and the United Pentecostal Church.**

Through the years other schisms occurred over lesser doctrinal disputes and personality clashes, producing such movements as the Church of God of Prophecy and the Congregational Holiness Church. The large number of Pentecostal sects in America and the world, however, did not result from controversy or schism. In most cases Pentecostal denominations developed out of separate indigenous churches originating in different areas of the world with little or no contact with other organized bodies.

The greatest growth for Pentecostal churches came after World War II. With more mobility and greater prosperity, Pentecostals began to move into the middle class and to lose their image of being disinherited members of the lower classes. The emergence of healing evangelists such as Oral Roberts and Jack Coe in the 1950s brought greater interest and acceptance to the movement. The TV ministry of Roberts also brought Pentecostalism into the homes of the average American. The founding of the Full Gospel Business Men in 1948 brought the Pentecostal message to a whole new class of middleclass professional and business men, helping further to change the image of the movement.

In the post - World War II period the Pentecostals also began to emerge from their isolation, not only from each other but from other Christian groups as well. In 1943 the Assemblies of God, the Church of God (Cleveland, Tennessee), the International Church of the Foursquare Gospel, and the Pentecostal Holiness Church became charter members of the National Association of Evangelicals, thus clearly disassociating themselves from the organized fundamentalist groups which had disfellowshipped the Pentecostals in 1928. They thus became part of the moderate evangelical camp that grew to prominence by the 1970s.

Intrapentecostal ecumenism began to flourish also during the late 1940s both in the United States and elsewhere. In 1947 the first World Pentecostal Conference met in Zurich, Switzerland, and has since met triennially. The next year the Pentecostal Fellowship of North America was formed in Des Moines, Iowa, and has met annually since then.

Pentecostalism entered a new phase in 1960 with the appearance of "neo - Pentecostalism" in the traditional churches in the United States. The first well - known person to openly experience glossolalia and remain within his church was Dennis Bennett, an Episcopal priest in Van Nuys, California. Although forced to leave his parish in Van Nuys because of controversy over his experience, Bennett was invited to pastor an innercity Episcopal parish in Seattle, Wash. The church in Seattle experienced rapid growth after the introduction of Pentecostal worship, becoming a center of neo - Pentecostalism in the northwestern United States.

This new wave of Pentecostalism soon spread to other denominations in the United States and also to many other nations. Other well - known neo - Pentecostal leaders were Brick Bradford and James Brown (Presbyterian); John Osteen and Howard Irvin (Baptist); Gerald Derstine and Bishop Nelson Litwiler (Mennonite); Larry Christenson (Lutheran); and Ross Whetstone (United Methodist).

In 1966 Pentecostalism entered the Roman Catholic Church as the result of a weekend retreat at Duquesne University led by theology professors Ralph Keiffer and Bill Story. As glossolalia and other charismatic gifts were experienced, other Catholic prayer groups were formed at Notre Dame University and the University of Michigan. By 1973 the movement had spread so rapidly that thirty thousand Catholic Pentecostals gathered at Notre Dame for a national conference. The movement had spread to Catholic churches in over a hundred nations by 1980. Other prominent Catholic Pentecostal leaders were Kevin Ranaghan, Steve Clark, and Ralph Martin. The most prominent leader among Catholics, however, was Joseph Leon Cardinal Suenens, who was named by popes Paul VI and John Paul II as episcopal adviser to the renewal.

**In order to distinguish these newer Pentecostals from the older Pentecostal denominations, the word "charismatic" began to be used widely around 1973 to**



**designate the movement in the mainline churches. The older Pentecostals were called "classical Pentecostals."** By 1980 the term "neo - Pentecostal" had been universally abandoned in favor of "charismatic renewal."

Unlike the rejection of the earlier Pentecostals, the charismatic renewal was generally allowed to remain within the mainline churches. Favorable study reports by the Episcopalians (1963), Roman Catholics (1969, 1974), and the Presbyterians (1970), while pointing out possible excesses, generally were tolerant and open to the existence of a Pentecostal spirituality as a renewal movement within the traditional churches.

By 1980 the classical Pentecostals had grown to be the largest family of Protestants in the world, according to The World Christian Encyclopedia. The 51 million figure attributed to the traditional Pentecostals did not include the 11 million charismatic Pentecostals in the traditional mainline churches. Thus, seventy - five years after the opening of the Azusa Street meeting there were 62 million Pentecostals in over a hundred nations of the world.

V  
(Elwell Evangelical Dictionary)

Synan

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Test on Presbyterians – Pentecostalism

Test #3

Instructor: James Meadows

A2601

General Questions – Presbyterians

1. (Open) Name the two founders of the Presbyterian Church.
  - a. John Calvin
  - b. John Knox
2. (Open) Name two things accomplished by the Westminster Assembly (1643-48)
  - a. It produced a catechism  
It organized the church under a presbyterian
  - b. system  
The Westminster Confession
3. (Open) In what county in Tennessee was the Cumberland Presbyterian Church formed? Dixon County - 1810
4. What divided the Presbyterian Church in 1861? Slavery
5. Name at least three issues the Presbyterian Church has traditionally held.
  - a. Virgin birth
  - b. Resurrection
  - c. vicarious death
6. What issue has torn the Presbyterian Church in recent years? Homosexuality



7. They believe in thought rather than verbal inspiration. Explain: God gave the thought, but not the words
- 
8. (Open) What man led the opposition to those denying the virgin birth and inspiration? J. Gresham Machen

True or False

- F 1. They operate Bethel College in Jackson, Tennessee.
- T 2. They believe the five points of Calvinism.
- T 3. John Knox opposed the Church of England and all Roman Catholic tendencies.
- T 4. They have a form of government unknown to the N.T.
- T 5. The Reformed Presbyterian Church of North American opposes instrumental music in the worship.
- T 6. They believe in the sacraments.
- T 7. They believe there are Baptists, Methodists and Roman Catholics who belong to the universal church.
- T 8. They believe in the eternally lost condition of those not elect.
- T 9. "We believe that Presbyterians agree with what the Scriptures teach and that it contains nothing contrary to what the Scriptures teaches.

General Questions – Pentecostalism

1. (Open) What movement had the greatest impact on Pentecostalism? The Methodist Holiness Movement
2. When and where did the Church of God (Cleveland, TN) begin? It began in Cleveland, TN in 1886 as a pre-pentecostal holiness movement

3. What man influenced the "second blessing" in the Holiness movement? \_\_\_\_\_

John Wesley

4. What does Xenoglossia mean? the speaking of a foreign

language by a person who normally has no familiarity with it.

5. What is a major defining feature of Pentecostalism?

Tongue speaking

6. What was the major sign that one had received Holy Spirit baptism? \_\_\_\_\_

Tongue speaking

7. What is meant by "oneness Pentecostals?" Baptism in the

name of Jesus only.

How strong is their belief about this? All who do not practice

this will be lost.

8. Why would they regard all Southern Baptists as unsaved? They do

not practice tongue speaking, nor teach it.

9. Name at least four ways Pentecostalism is wrong (we studied six ways).

- a. It denies that the Spirit operates only through the Word
- b. All sufficiency of the Scripture
- c. Who really has the Holy Spirit
- d. Other religions make some claims as Pentec.
- e. It emphasizes the spiritualist of Christ
- f. Confuse biblical doctrines of faith, feeling, experience



10. Prove that only the apostles received Holy Spirit baptism on the day of Pentecost  
(Use scriptures to prove this). \_\_\_\_\_

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11. Name four church fathers who believed that miracles continued even into the third century.

- a. Justin Martyr      b. Clement  
b. Tertullian      d. Origen

12. What event is often regarded as the founding of the Pentecostal movement?

- (1) The outpouring in Topeka, Kansas 1901  
(2) The Azusa Street Revival

True or False

- T 1. Pentecostals see themselves as true Orthodox Christians.  
T 2. Oswald Chambers referred to the tongues' movement as a "satanic counterfeit."  
T 3. Francis of Assisi started the Franciscan Order.  
T 4. The Waldenses covers a group within the Catholic Church.  
T 5. The Holiness movement of the nineteenth century began as a renewal movement within the Methodist Church.  
T 6. Jerome translated the Bible into the Latin language.  
T 7. "Pentecost is an experience not a denomination."

- T 8. They believe "No tongues – no salvation."
- T 9. They believe that anyone not baptized in the name of Jesus only will be lost.
- F 10. Many of their members are members of the Masonic Order.
- F 11. They believe that the Holy Spirit operates only through the word of God.
- T 12. They say "I feel, therefore I know" but the Bible teaches "I know, therefore I feel."
- T 13. They practice foot-washing.

**Bonus Question:** Three extra points if correct.

What is the form of government in the Presbyterian church? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



# What Was the Gift of Tongues?

by Wayne Jackson

**Christian Courier: Questions**

Thursday, February 17, 2000

Does 1 Corinthians 14:2 indicate that the “tongue” was a mysterious, spiritual utterance, known only to God, rather than a human language?

**“Please explain 1 Corinthians 14:2. Would not this indicate that the ‘tongue’ was a mysterious, spiritual utterance, known only to God, rather than a human language?”**

No, it wouldn't. Note the following factors.

0. The term “unknown” is not in the original text. It was added by the King James translators. It is unwarranted and unnecessary.
0. The nature of the “tongues,” alluded to in this chapter, must be the same as those defined earlier in the New Testament, i.e., human languages (Acts 2:4-11), unless there is a compelling reason for assigning a different meaning to the expression. No such reason is indicated in 1 Corinthians 14.
0. Unless one understands the contextual background of this statement (14:2), he will not interpret this passage correctly. A knowledge of this “background” is determined by an examination of the chapter as a whole.

Some in the Corinthian church were abusing the spiritual gifts they possessed. There was simultaneous chattering, thus creating confusion (cf. vs. 26-33). In addition, some were exercising their gift of “tongues” before audiences of a different language, without the use of the corresponding gift of “interpretation” (1 Corinthians 12:10). It is, therefore, in this light that the apostle's admonition is given. In an expanded paraphrase, we may summarize Paul's instruction in 14:2 as follows:

“For he who speaks in a foreign language [when no interpreter is present], is not speaking [meaningfully] to men, but [only] unto God; for no man [in the audience who is of an alien language] understands [what is being said]; he [the speaker] is speaking mysteries [that which the listener cannot comprehend by virtue of the language barrier], even though he speaks in the spirit.”

This harmonizes beautifully with the context, and it does not force a bizarre meaning upon the term “tongues.”

A consideration of all the factors in this chapter, therefore, forces the careful student to the conclusion that the languages contemplated in this section of scripture, are human languages, spoken by those who had not learned them naturally, but who were empowered by the Spirit of God to speak in a supernatural fashion. Those early saints were required to exercise their gifts within the bounds of divine propriety and this is the thrust of the apostle's admonition.

# Can Christians “Speak in Tongues” Today?

by Wayne Jackson

**Christian Courier: Questions**

Tuesday, March 18, 2003

Can Christians “speak in tongues” today, as some did during the first century? The “charismatics” claim they can; but do the Scriptures teach that this gift was to continue throughout the history of the church? Look at what the New Testament actually teaches on this theme.

“Would you explain the ‘speaking in tongues,’ as this practice took place in the early church? What was the nature of those ‘tongues’?”

Literally speaking, the “tongue” is an organ of taste and speech within the mouth (cf. Lk. 16:24). By metaphorical (figurative) extension, however, the term is used commonly in literature for a human language (see Rev. 5:9; 7:9, etc.). Herodotus, for example, used the expressions “language of Pelasgi” and “the tongue spoken by Pelasgi” interchangeably (**History** 1.57). The Bible student, therefore, must interpret the term “tongue” (when used of human speech) in this light, unless there is contextual evidence to demand that the word is being employed in some unusual sense.

Shortly before his ascension back into heaven, Christ promised his disciples that one of the gifts that would accompany believers, confirming the validity of their messages, would be the ability to speak with “new tongues” (Mk. 16:17). The term “new” (Grk. *kainos*) signifies a fresh mode of speaking, not a new language previously unknown to the human family (see: “New,” W.E. Vine, **Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words**). As D. Edmond Heibert observed, “this can mean only languages not before known to the speakers” (**The Gospel of Mark**, Greenville, SC: Bob Jones University, 1994, p. 485).

In the New Testament, the gift of “tongues” was one of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Cor. 12:8-11).

There are two major views within the community of “Christendom” relative to the nature of these “tongues.”

0. ~~The “Pentecostals,” or “charismatics,” contend that the gift of tongues constituted a type of “heavenly language,” a series of unintelligible sounds that are unrelated to normal human speech.~~
0. ~~By way of contrast, others argue, with much greater force, that the gift of a “tongue” was simply the divinely imposed ability to communicate the gospel of Christ in a human language that the speaker had not been taught by the ordinary education process.~~

The “human language” view is supported overwhelmingly by the biblical evidence. This may be demonstrated by a consideration of the following points:



## Acts 2

On the day of Pentecost, the phenomenon of “speaking in tongues” was identified decisively as the supernatural employment of human languages. Note how “tongues” and “language” are used interchangeably in the opening section of Acts 2.

“And when the day of Pentecost was now come, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other **tongues**, as the Spirit gave them utterance. Now there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven. And when this sound was heard, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speaking in his own **language**. And they were all amazed and marveled, saying, Behold, are not all these that speak Galileans? And how hear we, every man in our own **language** wherein we were born? Parthians and Medes and Elamites, and the dwellers in Mesopotamia, in Judaea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, in Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and sojourners from Rome, both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians, we hear them speaking in our **tongues** the mighty works of God” (bold emphasis added).

If we let the Bible explain itself, unquestionably the “tongues” of this text are ordinary human languages. The apostles were supernaturally endowed with the ability to speak these languages, though they had never known them before.

### The Corinthian Context

It is sometimes claimed, though, that whereas the “tongues” of Acts 2 were ordinary human languages, elsewhere in the New Testament (e.g., 1 Corinthians 14) “tongues” were ecstatic utterances, that is, mysterious sounds, unknown to anyone except to the speaker and God. The evidence, however, from the Corinthian context demonstrates otherwise. Consider the following points with reference to the data in 1 Corinthians 14.

1. The “tongue” of this context was a gift that provided edification (v. 4) and instruction (v. 19). Mere inarticulate sounds do not.
2. In a church assembly composed of various nationalities, a Christian was forbidden to use his tongue-gift before an alien audience – unless someone was present who could “interpret.” (vv. 5, 13, 27-28). The Greek word for interpret is *diemeneuo*, which normally means to translate from one language to another (see Cesla Spicq, **Theological Lexicon of the New Testament**, Peabody, MA, 1994, Vol I, p. 312). Compare Acts 9:36, where the name “Tabitha” is translated as “Dorcus” – the former being an Aramaic name, the latter the Greek version.
3. Paul says that if one speaks in a “tongue,” and others do not understand the language, the speaker would sound like a “barbarian” (v. 11). This term signifies a one who speaks a “foreign tongue” (F.W. Danker, et al., **Greek-English of the New Testament**, Chicago: University of Chicago, 2000, p. 166; see also Acts 28:2). This is another indication that human languages are in view.
4. The expression “strange tongues” (v. 21), is taken from Isaiah 28:11, where the reference is to the language of the Assyrians (a nation that would invade Israel).

This use by Paul further demonstrates the nature of “tongues” in the Corinthian context.

0. Paul gave instructions regulating one who possessed the gift of a “tongue.” If those within the church assembly did not understand the particular “tongue” he was able to speak, he either must use an interpreter, i.e., translator (see above), if one was available, or else he was to remain silent (vv. 27-28). Those who claim to “speak in tongues” today jabber on – irrespective of the composition of the audience. Their practice does not conform to the New Testament standard.

## Conclusion

As we conclude, we must emphasize this fact. The Scriptures teach that the gift of “tongues” was to cease with completion of the New Testament canon (1 Cor. 13:8ff). As W.E. Vine wrote: “With the completion of Apostolic testimony and the completion of the Scriptures of truth (‘the faith once for all delivered to the saints,’ Jude 3, RV), ‘that which is perfect’ had come, and the temporary gifts were done away” (**Commentary on First Corinthians**, Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1951, p. 184). (Elsewhere on this web site we have provided a detailed study of this context in 1st Corinthians; see: “**Miracles**”).

Finally, there is this very telling point. Those who profess to speak in tongues today reveal a woeful inconsistency. In their mission training schools, they must teach their missionaries to speak in the “tongues” of those nations they seek to evangelize. This practice demolishes their contention of being in possession of the miraculous gift of tongues, such as that exhibited on the day of Pentecost.



# Didn't Paul Command, "Forbid not to speak in tongues"?

by Wayne Jackson

**Christian Courier: Questions**

Tuesday, April 15, 2003

What is the meaning of Paul's command, "Forbid not to Speak in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39)? Does this imply that the gift of tongues was to continue to the end of time?

In a recent article in the **Question & Answer** section of this site, we responded to an inquiry dealing with the nature of the gift of "speaking in tongues," as such is set forth in Acts 2; 1 Corinthians 12-14; etc. In rejoinders to our article, several courteous readers wrote to us, essentially asking this question:

**"Why do you forbid to speak in tongues, when the Bible says, 'Forbid not to speak in tongues' (1 Cor. 14:39)?"**

Let us address this sincere inquiry.

It is impossible to understand the significance of the command, "forbid not to speak in tongues" (1 Cor. 14:39), without fitting that prohibition into the larger context of the entire segment dealing with spiritual gifts discussed in 1st Corinthians, chapters 12 through 14.

Paul begins this portion of the epistle by the phrase, "Now concerning spiritual gifts..." (12:1). Following, then, is a discussion of several aspects of the "spiritual gift" problem as such related to the Corinthian church. Paul's need to address this controversy likely was generated by a report of divisiveness within that church (cf. 1:10ff), and as a result of correspondence with some of the saints there (7:1).

Chapters 12-14 may be summarized as follows:

0. Chapter 12 catalogs the various spiritual gifts available, e.g., wisdom, knowledge, healings, prophecy, tongues (the ability to speak a foreign language supernaturally), interpretation of tongues (the divine gift of translation from one language to another), etc. (vv. 8-10). Further, this section argues that the gifts issue from a unified source, the sacred Godhead – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (vv. 4-5,11).

The implication clearly is this: those who possess these gifts must not act in an individualistic, adversarial fashion; rather, unity within the body of Christ must prevail (vv. 12ff).

0. Based upon the foundation laid in Chapter 12, Chapter 13 argues that spiritual gifts must be exercised in love. A gift recklessly invoked, with no consideration for others, is nothing more than an irritating noise (vv. 1-3).

"Love" is defined with such an exhilarating range of qualities that, were these traits to be mastered, nothing but unity would result (vv. 4-7).

Finally, after such a magnificent discussion of "love" is concluded, this lofty attribute – so enduring in its nature – is set in contrast to the fact that the "spiritual gifts"

(creating such a controversy among the Corinthian Christians) were but a temporary phenomena anyhow. They were merely piece-by-piece modes of conveying divine revelation, so that when the “perfect” (teleios – complete; see “perfect,” W.E. Vine, **Expository Dictionary**) arrived, i.e., the finished canon of Scriptures, these gifts were to cease.

0. Finally, Chapter 14 reveals the sort of contentious disposition that marred the Corinthian church. The apostolic instruction sought to correct those evils by regulating the use of the spiritual gifts, particularly the gifts of prophecy, tongues, and the interpretation (translation) of tongues.

This provides an abbreviated background of the difficulties with which Paul was forced to deal in Chapter 14. How, then, does this relate to the prohibition, “forbid not to speak in tongues”? There appears to have been two principal problems related to the gift of “tongues” and the gift of “prophecy.” Let us consider each of these matters.

0. Some of those who possessed the gift of speaking in tongues were abusing their blessing. For example, a brother might have the “gift” of speaking in a particular dialect – let us say, as an example, Persian. What was he to do if, in a certain church assembly, only Greek-speaking folks were present? If there was no one who possessed the gift of translation, he was to remain silent (vv. 2,6ff).

While one person was delivering a message in a “tongue,” another was not to interrupt. Rather, those endowed with such gifts were to communicate “in turn” (v. 27). The use of their individual gift was under their personal control (v. 32), and they must exercise self-control in order that confusion not disrupt the meeting (v. 33).

0. Another prevailing factor was the reality that “prophecy” was deemed to be a “greater” gift than that of tongues. And why was this the case? Because prophecy was the more versatile gift; it involved the divine ability to teach the congregation in the native language (in this case Greek) so that each Christian could be edified (v. 3). On the other hand, the gift of tongues frequently was curtailed by the need for a translator, in the absence of which, the brother with the language gift was required to remain mute.

On account of this difference, prophecy was considered to be the “greater” (v. 5) gift. Because of its utilitarian nature, the gift of “prophecy” is viewed as superior, from a practical vantage point, to that of “tongues” (vv. 1-5; 12; 22-25).

When one blends into this equation the fact that some of the Corinthians were inclined to a divisive spirit anyhow (3:1ff), it is not difficult to see that the disposition could develop which suggested that those who possessed the gift of prophecy were superior to those with the gift of tongues. Carried a bit further, the former might even attempt to suppress those who possessed the gift of tongues. In view of this, Paul’s warning, “forbid not to speak in tongues,” makes perfect sense.

This is how verse 39 is to be interpreted within the framework of the overall context of the discussion. The gift of prophecy still was to be desired, but such was not to be used as a device to silence those who had the more limited gift.

It is an egregious misuse of this prohibition to employ it as a proof-text for the notion that the gift of tongues was intended to last throughout the Christian age – a theory in direct conflict with 13:8ff.