

Errors Of Catholic Doctrine

“And now I am no more in the world, but these (men) are still in the world, and I Am coming to You, Holy Father, Keep in Your Name those whom You have given Me, that they may be one, as We are One” (John 17:11). With these words, Jesus called God, the Holy Father.

‘Indeed, all who delight in piety and are determined to live a devoted and Godly life in Jesus will meet with persecution. But wicked men and seducers will go from bad to worse, deceiving and leading many astray, and being deceived and led astray themselves. But as for you, continue to hold to the things that you have learned, knowing from Whom you learned them. And how from your childhood you had a knowledge of the Sacred Writings (Holy Scriptures) which are able to instruct you and give you the understanding for salvation which comes through faith in Jesus. All scripture is God-breathed and profitable for doctrine, instruction, for reproof and conviction of sin, for correction of error, discipline in obedience and for training in righteousness, holiness, conformity to God’s will; so that the man of God may be complete, proficient, mature, well fitted and thoroughly equipped for every good work’ (2 Timothy 3:12 to 17).

‘Paul, an apostle of Jesus, not from men and neither through man, but through Jesus our Messiah and God the Father, Who raised Him from among the dead ... Grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus, Who gave Himself up for our sins, in order to deliver us from this present wicked age and world order, in accordance with the will and purpose of God our Father. To Him be ascribed all the glory, through all the ages of the ages, and the eternities of the eternities! Amen. I am astonished that you are so quickly turning and deserting Him Who called you by the grace of Jesus the Messiah, and that you are transferring your allegiance to a different Gospel. Not that there could be any other genuine Gospel, but there are some who are bewildering you with a different teaching which they offer as a Gospel, and want to pervert the true Gospel of Jesus the Messiah into something which it absolutely is not. But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a Gospel different from which we preached to you, let him be accursed (doomed to eternal punishment)! As we said before, so now I say it again: If anyone is preaching to you a Gospel different from that which you received from us, let him be accursed! Am I trying to win the favour of men or of God? Do I seek to please men? If I were still seeking to please men, I should not be a servant of Jesus. For I want you to know, that the Gospel which was proclaimed is not man’s Gospel. For indeed, I did not receive it from man, nor was I taught it, but it came to me through a direct revelation given by Jesus the Messiah’ (Galatians 1:1 to 12).

If you happen to be a Roman Catholic, some aspects of this Bible study may shock you because there are some shades of Catholic doctrine that do not line up with scripture. This Bible study is not an attack on Catholics, but is about the Catholic doctrines which are out of step with some of the Gospel. Most of what the Catholic Church teaches is correct: The virgin birth of Jesus; His crucifixion; His resurrection; the people’s participation in Communion; Joseph’s role in Jesus’ life; they teach us we should spend our lives wholly focussed on walking with and serving God; living a Christian life and raising our children in the knowledge of God; they focus on prayer and getting to know God as our Father; they teach creation; they teach us the prophets foretold of Jesus’ birth; the church correctly stands up against abortion. They have charities and hospitals, caring for the poor and the sick. All these things are correct and scriptural.

We have to start this Bible study by searching the scriptures, because that is the beginning. The Bible is the living Word of God and all scripture is God-breathed; not some scripture, but all scripture. Everything that is written in the Bible is there because God wants it there and we cannot add to it, nor subtract from it (Revelation 22:18 & 19). The Roman Catholic Church has most unfortunately, both added to and subtracted from, the Word of God. The scriptures written above are very strong but it is the Word of God, and it is important we take notice of it. We have to adhere strictly to the teachings within the Bible, and not accept false teaching from any man. There are many dedicated Catholic people who love the church, but who don’t realise they need to be born-again to get into heaven. Just simply being a Catholic cannot save our soul – Jesus said we must all be born-again, regardless of what church we choose to meet in. That fact has been an eye-opener to many. When Jesus said that he was talking to Nicodemus, a church leader who was very surprised at Jesus’ words, but accepted it and was born-again as Jesus said he had to be (John 3:1 to 10). So just being a Catholic, a priest or a nun cannot save our soul, no matter how religious we are. When Jesus said we must be born-again, He meant just what He said. The only way to heaven is to be justified by faith, not through any church. The true Gospel is this: We are born-again into the Kingdom of God by faith in the Lord Jesus. ‘Therefore, since we are justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus. Through Him (Jesus) we have access by faith into His grace, in which we stand. And let us rejoice in our hope of the glory of God’ (Romans 5:1 & 2). Only through accepting Jesus can we enter heaven and no one can get to heaven except through Jesus. Jesus said, “I Am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me” (John 14:6). ‘In Jesus, we have redemption through His blood; the forgiveness of sin according to the riches of

the Father's grace ... making known to us the secret of the Father's will in accordance with His good intention which the Father had purposed and set forth in Jesus' (Ephesians 1:7 & 9). There is only one way we can be saved; that is by faith and the belief in Jesus. We cannot enter heaven by 'buying' our salvation. No amount of money can do that. 'But Peter said to him, "Destruction overtake your money and you, because you imagined you could obtain the free gift of God with money!"' (Acts 8:20). The Bible leads to salvation for everyone who believes. 'For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus, for it is the power of God working for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and the Gentile' (Romans 1:16).

My personal background is that of a Roman Catholic and I thank God for the Godly priest who led me to Jesus when I was just four years old. Never underestimate the power of God and His ability to reach a young child. The priest told me about Jesus in a way that a young child could understand, and after I accepted the Lord into my life, the priest breathed on me and said, "Receive the Holy Ghost" in the same way Jesus breathed on His apostles (John 20:22). I immediately spoke with the tongues of angels. Back around 1950, speaking in tongues was a rare event so I feel incredibly blessed and privileged, for the Lord to have given me that gift at such a young age. Thank God the priest was a Spirit-filled man, able to impart the gift to me. None of my family were Christians. When I was older, I attended church and catechism classes as often as possible and bought my first Bible at age 11. The Lord became more real to me as I grew up in Him. I was alone with God and did not meet another Holy Spirit-filled Christian for nineteen long years. It was the Word of God that kept and sustained me throughout my childhood, just as the above verse teaches. I was in my 20's when God led me on to serve Him in churches where the congregations are filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with other tongues. I thank God for the grounding in the Gospel and the knowledge of the outworking of Calvary during catechism classes. I have never forgotten the solid Christian foundation I received in the Catholic Church, for which I am eternally grateful. My aim is to try to reach as many people as possible with the full Gospel and tell them we must all be born-again by faith in a heart-felt conversion, not just be church-goers. God demands more than that. He said we are to be doers of the Word, not just hearers (James 1:22). 'Doing' the Word is not following man-made traditions, but obeying the Word of God.

We are all called to walk a narrow path, produce Spiritual fruit and build our Spiritual foundation on the Rock (Jesus). Many people will cry, "Lord, Lord" but will end up in hell because they never accepted the true Gospel of faith, but trusted in their religion. 'Jesus said, "Enter (heaven) through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads away to destruction (hell), and many are those who are entering through it. But the gate is narrow and the way is straitened that leads away to (eternal) life, and few are those who find it. Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed as sheep, but inside they are ravenous wolves. You will recognise them by their fruits ... Every tree that does not bear good fruit, is cut down and cast into the fire (the eternal lake of fire) ... Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord', will enter the Kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day (Judgement Day) 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name and driven out demons in Your name and done mighty works in Your name?' And then I will say to them publicly, 'I never knew you: depart from Me, you who act wickedly'. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and obeys them will be like a sensible man who built his house upon the Rock. When the rains fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat against the house; it did not fall because it had been founded upon the Rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not do them will be like a foolish man who built his house upon the sand; and the rain fell and the floods came and the winds blew and beat against the house, and it fell and great was the fall of it" (Matthew 7:13 to 29). We can see here that Jesus was speaking about people who were religious, they called Him Lord and they served Him, but because many were never born-again and intimately acquainted with Him, He rejected them. He said that will be the way for many religious people who never seek out the narrow path; only a few will find it. For the whole of our Christian lives, we must be obedient to Jesus' teaching. In this parable, the 'house' Jesus is speaking of is us; the believer. If we are sensible and obey Him, we will enter heaven through the narrow 'gate'. If we are foolish and disobey His teachings, then He will reject us on Judgement Day. Jesus is our King and our Judge, so He would know exactly what He is talking about. The Kingdom of heaven is not about any religion; it is about the Kingdom that God is establishing with His genuine, dedicated, obedient, born-again believers.

Some people will depart from the faith because of seducing spirits. A seducing spirit is one that may look good and make you feel good and starts off with the truth, then goes into error and people are seduced. It looks good, feels good but it is not good. The 'latter times' are the time from the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in the upper room in Acts 2:1 to 4 through to the present age. The age of grace began when Jesus started His ministry and began healing and forgiving people without them having to sacrifice animals for atonement. We are living at the end of this latter age. These next verses are powerful because the Holy Spirit is speaking here; 'But the Holy Spirit distinctly and expressly declares; that in latter times some will turn away from the faith, giving attention to deluding and seducing spirits and doctrines that demons teach. Through the hypocrisy and pretensions of liars whose consciences are seared, who forbid people to marry and to abstain from eating meats which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe the truth ... But avoid irreverent (non-

scriptural) legends and silly myths and express your disapproval of them. Train yourself toward Godliness' (1 Timothy 4:1 to 3 & 7). Jesus consistently taught against man-made traditions, and spoke of many woes for those who are bound up in religious traditions and rituals, who will not allow for the cleansing of the blood of the Lamb and who will not allow the inward work of the Holy Spirit of the living God (Matthew 23:1 to 39; Luke 11:37 to 52). Jesus strongly taught against empty religion. We are not to subject ourselves to the doctrines of men. These things have an appearance of wisdom in self imposed religion but they are of no spiritual value (Colossians 2:20 to 23). We are told people will have a form of Godliness but deny the power of God (2 Timothy 3:5). Many Catholics have a form of religion but they deny the power of God.

The Gospel reveals the power of God. It is the Gospel of Jesus that we need to be preaching. The true church is not a building nor is it a denomination; it is God's people, all over the world, in many different denominations; and it is the true church that Jesus is coming back for; people washed in the blood of Jesus; people whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life, regardless of which church denomination they attend. They are the true body of believers. The Lord is looking for a holy church of every nation, tribe, people and language (Revelation 7:9). Jesus said, "I will build My church and the gates of hell will not stand against it" (Matthew 16:18). What is Jesus' church like? In the whole of Ephesians chapter 5, we have a 'picture' of people living in harmony with one another, with Jesus as their Head. 'As Jesus loved the church and gave Himself up for her, so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the Word, that He might present the church to Himself in glorious splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing' (Ephesians 5:25 to 27). The Word of God in the heart of the true believer, always exposes deception and those things that are not of God. 'When He, the Spirit of Truth comes, He will guide you into all Truth' (John 16:13). Jesus said you shall know the Truth (of the full Gospel) and the truth shall set you free (from the effects of sin and the bondage of empty religious rituals) (John 8:32). Cardinal Newman wrote a book, 'The Development of the Christian Religion; the Catholic Religion'. On page 359 you can read that the temples, incense, oil lamps, vote of offerings, holy water, holidays and season of devotions, processions, blessings of fields, blessing of the surf, lent, sacerdotal vestments, the tonsures of priests, monks, nuns, icons and images are all of pagan origin. Christmas and Easter are both pagan celebrations.

Transubstantiation: In the Catholic mass, the church has what it calls 'transubstantiation'. The statements in the Catholic doctrine, says they believe their communion wafer and wine actually become the physical body and blood of Jesus. The whole concept is scientifically impossible. Grape juice would always remain grape juice and the wafer would always remain a piece of baked ground cereal. They believe that Jesus is being continually crucified for their sins and will keep on doing so until the world ends but that is wrong, because the Bible says that Jesus died once only, for all mankind when He offered up Himself on the cross (Hebrews 7:27; 10:10). They believe they are literally eating and drinking the body and blood of Jesus; that the substance of the Eucharistic elements is converted into the substance of the body and blood of Jesus; only the appearance and taste of the elements still remain. The belief in transubstantiation is cannibalistic and it is not the truth, but people have been seduced into believing that is the truth. They believe they are honouring God when they are not doing so at all. That is why the Catholic Church still has Jesus on the cross, but that is not right, because He was taken off the cross and has risen from the dead. When Jesus spoke about our taking of His body and blood, He did not mean we were to literally eat Him (John 6:48 to 58). He was referring to our accepting the sacrifice of Himself for our eternal salvation. We were asked to take the bread and grape juice regularly to remember Jesus' sacrifice for us, right up until He comes again (Luke 22:19). If you believe in the doctrine of transubstantiation, then you are believing something that is not the truth.

Infant baptism: There is not one word regarding infant baptism in the Bible. Sprinkling a baby with water will not be an effective baptism because baptism comes after repentance and babies do not know what sin is therefore they cannot repent. Sprinkling water on an adult is not effective either. Baptism is by full immersion, after repentance. 'Repent and be baptised every one of you for the forgiveness of sin' (Acts 2:38). Jesus was baptised in the Jordan River (Mark 1:9). He went down into the water and came up out the watery 'grave' (Matthew 3:16) signifying His own death, burial and resurrection. Our baptism identifies us with Jesus' burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3 to 11), and signifies our 'death' to the old life, and our resurrection to a new life in God. If infant baptism was God's way, then Jesus would have been baptised as a baby, but he was an adult when He was baptised and He is our example. We need to know what sin is and be able to repent before we can be baptised. John the Baptist insisted people repent before they were baptised, and became angry with the people who came to be baptised without first showing the fruit of repentance (Matthew 3:7 & 8; Luke 3:7 & 8). They were acting out of a religious attitude instead of a repentant attitude. We need to have our hearts right with God before we are baptised in water, and a baby cannot repent or seek God for themselves. Infant baptism is not scriptural, nor is it effective. If you have been sprinkled as a baby, you would need repent and be baptised by full immersion, if you desire to be obedient to what we have been told in the scriptures.

Purgatory: It is supposed to be a place where people go after death to be purged of evil then go on to heaven. You are supposed to be able recite prayers and make payments to the church to get other people out of purgatory. That is not scriptural. The Bible never mentions purgatory. Pope Gregory the Great first established the doctrine of purgatory in 593 AD. Why did the church not have anything like purgatory, before 593 AD? The scriptures tell us that a man dies once and after that comes the judgement (Hebrews 9:27). There is only heaven and hell and later the lake of fire for the non-believers (Revelation 20:15). Purgatory does not exist. It is a false doctrine. The Bible tells us believers go straight to heaven as did Enoch (Genesis 5:24), Elijah (2 Kings 2:11) and Stephen (Acts 7:55 to 60). People have been told about purgatory for so long, they believe it is true; but if they care to look at history, they will see it is a place invented in the mind of one man, Pope Gregory.

Confessional and Penance: The priest will sit in a private little closet-sized room and listen to a person confess all their sins, then he will tell the sinner to pray certain prayers for 'penance' and they will be forgiven. That is contrary to scripture. We are to confess our sins to God and He will forgive us. No one except Jesus has the power to forgive sins on behalf of God. God is the One Who forgives, after we pray and ask His forgiveness. 'If we freely admit that we have sinned and confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9). The confession of our sins to God for forgiveness, is to bring repentance, a change of our hearts and a spiritual cleansing. Only God is able to do that. If you are uncomfortable about going to confession, then you can relax and never go again because it is pointless. Talk directly to God and confess your sins to Him. You cannot shock God – He knows everything already, but He wants us to take responsibility for our own sin by telling Him and then repenting and apologising to Him for our actions. When we take full responsibility for our own actions, then it is less likely we will repeat the same mistake.

Rosary beads: They were introduced by Peter the Hermit in 1090 AD and the concept was copied from the Hindu's. Jesus condemns this type of praying. 'And when you pray, do not speak useless repetitions, repeating the same ones over and over as the Gentiles do, for they think they will be heard for their much speaking. Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask Him' (Matthew 6:7 & 8). Repetitive 'prayers' like saying several 'Hail Mary's' is something the Lord does not appreciate. He wants our prayers to be heart-felt and genuine, and spoken with thanksgiving and praise. Our prayers have to come from the heart and be specific. Saying the rosary is a pointless exercise because God does not listen to empty, repetitive prayers.

Mariology is the worship of Mary, Jesus' mother; but to worship Mary or pray to her as Catholic's do, is not of God. People who feel uncomfortable using the name of Jesus, sometimes feel more comfortable believing they are speaking to Mary. Back in the early church, people were much the same and did not like hearing about Jesus. The apostles were forbidden to teach in the name of Jesus. Not to be deterred, Peter and the apostles said they had to obey God rather than man, and continued preaching the Gospel about Jesus (Acts 4:18; 5:28, 29 & 40), but never preached about Mary as being divine. The worship of Mary was set up in 381 AD and was decreed by the council of Ephesus in 431 AD; that is recorded in history; it is a fact. There is no mention of worshipping Mary until then and there is no worship of Mary in the Bible. Pope Pius 9th proclaimed the immaculate conception of Mary in 1854. In 1931 Pope Pius 11th reaffirmed that doctrine. Mary was not 'immaculately' conceived. She was a normal woman who needed to repent of her sin and accept her Son Jesus as her Saviour like every other person. The Catholics believe Mary was the only human born by immaculate conception, so they say Jesus was born without original sin. That implies Mary did not need a Saviour and that she was divine, but after studying the scriptures we can see that is wrong and is contrary to scripture, because the Bible says we are all sinners (Romans 3:23). Mary herself realised she had need of a Saviour (Luke 1:46 & 47). If Mary did not need a Saviour, she would not have glorified God as her Saviour. Most certainly Mary was chosen by God to bring forth our Messiah, but she died like all mortal humans. Why did people start worshipping a deceased woman? This actually dates back to the days of the Babylonian cult, instigated in the Tower of Babel, and is still practiced today. After Damascus became the area of the head of the Babylonian cult, which worshipped the 'queen of heaven' and her son (the Madonna and child) (Jeremiah 7:18), the Catholic Church thought it would be politically expedient to give them a parallel figure to bring into their new officially imposed worship. That was when Mary was elevated to divine status. The so-called 'queen of heaven' or goddess of fertility, was Ishtar where we get the word Easter. The image of mother and child had been an object of primary worship from the time of Babylon, centuries before the birth of our Lord Jesus. 'Behold, there sat women weeping for Tammuz' (Ezekiel 8:14). That god Tammuz was a Babylonian god that was supposed to die every year and be raised again during Easter time along with his mother Ishtar. Ishtar and Tammuz are pagan gods now depicted as Madonna and child or Mary and Jesus. This abomination has been adopted from the Babylonian cult. The halo we often see drawn around their heads was taken from the ancient practice of sun worshipping. The symbol of the sun god Sol, Baal or Tammuz, is depicted as a 'T' then on top of the 'T' a loop symbolising the goddess of the moon or fertility, Ishtar, became the Egyptian ankh. An ancient statue of Venus holding her son Sol was adopted by the church as Mary and Jesus. What is even worse than that,

is the so-called 'sacred heart' that is surrounded by a shining 'sun'. During the time of human sacrifices, the first part of the flesh removed from the victim was the beating heart which was then offered to the sun god Sol. That ancient abomination is what has been adopted into the church as the so-called 'sacred heart' and was referred to in the Old Testament (Leviticus 18:21; 20:2). Instead of destroying the pagan gods as the Lord commanded in His Word, they were simply adopted into Christianity and masked as Christian themes. These false doctrines have nothing whatsoever to do with the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. We need to realise that. The angel Gabriel told Mary and Joseph that Jesus would be conceived by the Holy Spirit (Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:26 to 38) and He was born without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Mary had never had sex with a man (Luke 1:27 & 34) and did not have sex with Joseph until after Jesus was about a month old (Matthew 1:24 & 25). The Holy Child born to Mary was born of the living God (Matthew 1:20 & 21; Luke 1:35). In the early church, prayers were never directed to Mary. We are not to pray to Mary but we are to do what the Bible says: we are to pray to the Father in Jesus' name (John 16:23). If Mary, who was a righteous woman, knew she was being linked to the evil 'queen of heaven' she would no doubt be devastated. This whole doctrine of Mary worship is evil in the sight of God.

Images, icons and idols: The crucifix and other icons were introduced to the church in 787 AD. A whole 787 years went by before anybody thought of instituting such things. They are not scriptural. Images like Jesus hanging on the cross; images like the Madonna and Child; images like Mary or Jesus with a huge shining 'sacred' heart, are all idols. Making images is strictly forbidden by God and is the second of the Ten Commandments (Exodus 20:4). Having icons and idolatry is strictly forbidden and they are as serious in God's eyes as the sin of witchcraft (1 Samuel 15:23). People who make these images are cursed because the idols are an abomination to God (Deuteronomy 27:15). They may suffer from mental illness (confusion) and will be brought to shame (Isaiah 45:16). We are not to have them in our homes, we are to detest them and burn them (Deuteronomy 7:25 & 26). So we can see by these scriptures that God is not pleased when people resort to worshipping these images. Genuflection is another unnecessary man-made ritual brought into the Catholic church. The person genuflecting is actually kneeling and bowing in an act of worship, to an idol situated in the front of the church. Since it is sin to bow the knee to anyone other than the Lord (Exodus 20:5), genuflection is sin.

Lent: This is 'mass population, public fasting'. It is also contrary to scripture to fast in this way. We should fast in secret. 'When you fast, do not be like the hypocrites who put on a sad face so that their fasting may be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have their full reward already. When you fast, anoint your head and wash your face so that your fasting may not be noticed by others but by your Father Who sees in secret; and your Father, Who sees in secret will reward you openly' (Matthew 6:16 to 18). Fasting in public is pointless and is the only reward those people will get. God is not impressed by it. Genuine fasting is a deeply Spiritual experience that should be between God and the person who is fasting.

Circumcision: (Please note: this paragraph is not a medical opinion for or against circumcision. It is solely to point out the scriptural view.) Circumcision was introduced to Abraham by the Lord, to the males in the Hebrew tribe who later became known as the Jews, to ratify the Old Covenant between God and His chosen people (Genesis 17:10 to 14). To help the Hebrews understand the seriousness of the Covenant, it was ratified in blood – circumcision. God chose the Jews and entrusted them with the commandments and the oracles of God (Romans 3:2), and the prophets foretold the coming of the Messiah Jesus, and God said He would make a New Covenant with the Jews (Jeremiah 31:31). The New Covenant was ushered in by Jesus and was ratified by His own blood, which has over-ridden the blood covenant the Lord made with Abraham. Jesus said, 'This is My blood of the New Covenant, poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins' (Matthew 26:28). The New Covenant negated the need for physical circumcision. Circumcision is no longer necessary for the Jews, so how much less important is it, for Gentiles? There were Christian Jews in the New Testament who wanted that practice to continue, but Paul denounced it and told them to stop doing it, because it is no longer necessary. 'True circumcision is of the heart, a spiritual and not a literal (or physical) matter. His praise is not from men, but from God' (Romans 2:29). 'For circumcision counts for nothing, neither does uncircumcision, but what counts is keeping the commandments of God' (1 Corinthians 7:19). 'But even Titus who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Greek' (Galatians 2:3). 'For neither is circumcision now of any importance, nor uncircumcision, but only a new creation, the result of a new birth and a new nature in Jesus the Messiah' (Galatians 6:15). Baptism is now more important than circumcision. 'In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, but a spiritual circumcision performed by Jesus by removing the body of flesh (meaning the sinful nature). Thus you were (spiritually) circumcised when you were buried with Him in your baptism, in which you were also raised with Him to a new life through your faith in the working of God, when He (God) raised Him (Jesus) from the dead' (Colossians 2:11). If you are considering having your son circumcised because of the incorrect teaching in the Catholic church, you now know – scripturally – it is a pointless exercise and counts for nothing in the Kingdom of God.

Contraception: This incorrect teaching came from misinterpreting just one verse, and if we look at the irony of it, the Church's ban on contraception seems rather silly. In the Bible, we can read the story of Judah, his wife Shua and their three sons Er, Onan and Shelah. Er married a woman named Tamar and because Er was so wicked, God slew him. Judah then told his second son Onan, to marry Tamar and raise sons for his late brother, as was the custom of the day. Onan married Tamar but refused to have sons for his late brother. He prevented conception by using what we now call the 'rhythm method' or 'withdrawal method'. In those days, they still were populating the earth. God was displeased with Onan and so He slew him too (Genesis 38:1 to 10). That one passage of scripture does not tell everybody on earth, they cannot use contraception. The irony is; the Catholic Church still will not allow their women to use any form of contraception except the rhythm method; the very same method Onan used! If you are afraid to use contraceptives because of this incorrect church doctrine, then you can relax. The Lord has never put such a ban on anyone.

Limbo: The place where unbaptised babies are supposed to go if they die but are not old enough to be condemned for punishment; kind of suspended in no-mans-land forever. In reality, limbo does not exist. Babies and children go straight to be with the Lord at the point of death. One can only imagine the dreadful feeling bereaved parents must endure, after having suffered the tragic loss of a child, then being made to believe their precious child is in limbo. It would be devastating. Parents should be at peace after reading this, knowing their children are already with the Lord in heaven. David said of his dead baby, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me" (2 Samuel 12:23). David knew he would go to heaven after he died and he knew the baby would already be there. David knew he would be able to go to be with his baby, and he knew he would see the baby again. The same applies to all babies and children. Jesus said the Kingdom of heaven is made up of children (Matthew 19:14). There is not one scripture in the Bible that speaks about limbo. It does not exist.

Celibacy: As we read earlier, the scripture says to forbid people to marry, is a doctrine demons teach (1 Timothy 4:1 & 3). It is not from God. Priests and nuns should free themselves from the bondage of this demonic doctrine and marry. The Apostle Peter was married – he had a mother-in-law and Jesus healed her, then she got up and began waiting on Him (Matthew 8:14 & 15; Luke 4:38 & 39). Mark was his son (1 Peter 5:13). Celibacy was introduced to priests by decree in 1079 by Pope Boniface 8th. It is scripturally obvious this pope was under the influence of demons when he made this ordinance. Jesus imposed no such rules nor did any of the apostles. The Catholic church waited more than 1,000 years before accepting this ordinance. Paul was single and preferred to stay that way because he felt he could dedicate his life to serving the Lord; but importantly, he said, "I say this for your own welfare, not to put a restraint upon you" (1 Corinthians 7:8 & 35). Paul taught that bishops, deacons and church leaders were to have a wife and children (1 Timothy 3:2, 4 & 12). So what exactly is a bishop? He is an elder, pastor or leader of any Christian church and he is encouraged to marry and raise a family. It is scripturally correct for people to remain celibate until they are married, but it is scripturally wrong to deny anybody the right to be married if they chose marriage.

Abstaining from meats: The scripture says, to force people to abstain from eating meats, is a doctrine demons teach (1 Timothy 4:1 to 5). The decree not to eat meat on Fridays came about because Jesus died on a Friday – so all Fridays had to be meat free. It is not scriptural. We can eat whatever we want, when we want and if we take it with thanksgiving, then it is blessed, hallowed and consecrated by the Word of God and by prayer.

Papacy: The Papacy itself is of pagan origin. The title of Pope – which means universal father – was first given to the bishop of Rome about 400 AD. Before the 4th century, the head of the church was known as the Bishop of Rome. Stemming from the Babylonian cult as explained earlier, Jesus did not appoint Peter to be the headship of Rome and expressly forbade the practice (Luke 22:24 to 26). Paul continued with the same instructions where he stated clearly that Jesus is the Head of His church (Ephesians 1:22 & 23; Colossians 1:18). The Catholics believe Peter was in Rome as the first pope. There is no record in any history book anywhere, not even in the Bible, that Peter was ever in Rome. Peter was never a pope. He was in Babylon when he wrote the two books that carry his name (1 Peter 5:13). Just because the Catholic church state that he died in Rome and is buried in the Basilica does not mean that is true. The fact is, Claudius had already forced all Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:2). It was Paul who went to Rome (Acts 19:21; 23:11), and Paul died there (2 Timothy 4:6). The very first pope came 400 years later, long after Peter was dead. If one cares to do their sums, the dates don't add up. The pope (whoever is voted in) claims to be the Vicar. Vicar means 'in the place of God'. The church calls the pope the 'holy father' and priests are called 'father' but Jesus very definitely instructed us to "Call no man Father, which is upon the earth, for One is your Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9). Jesus meant Father as someone trying to take the place of God on earth. The pope is certainly not God on earth and he is not the holy father because there is only one Holy Father and He is in heaven. Jesus called God 'Holy Father' (John 17:11). We must never call the pope 'his holiness' for there is only One Who is holy and He is God. The pope is subject to sin like all humanity so he is not holier than anyone else. The pope is not infallible and the seriously incorrect doctrines in the Catholic church proves that. We

must not worship the pope because that is idolatry and we know that idolatry is sin. Here are five shocking examples of idolatry and self-worship spoken by Catholics; all of these statements are nothing less than blasphemy and God will hold the speakers accountable unless they repented. Orere, the noted historian said this; "To make war against the pope is to make war against God seeing that the pope is God, and God is the pope." ... Pope Leo 13th said, "I hold the place of Almighty God on the earth." ... Pope Pius 10th said, "The pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ on earth, but he is Jesus Christ himself, hidden under the veil of flesh. Does the pope speak? It is Jesus Christ who speaks." ... Pope Pius 11th said on the 30th April 1922, to a group of cardinals who fell on their knees before him. "You know that I am the holy father, the representative of God on earth, the vicar of Christ which means that I am God." ... Pope Innocent the 10th at his coronation; a cardinal fell down before his feet saying, "Most holy and blessed father, head of the church, ruler of the world, to whom the keys of the kingdom of heaven are committed, whom the angels in heaven revere, and the gates of hell fear, and all the world adores, we especially venerate, worship and adore you." How completely misguided these men were! The pope is not God nor is he in the place of God. The pope himself needs to repent, be born-again, be washed in the saving blood of Jesus and be baptised by full immersion if he wants to ever see heaven. He is a sinner like everyone else and he needs to be saved like everyone else. He needs to accept Jesus as his Saviour, like everyone else. The pope is a normal human man who happens to be the head of a doctrinally flawed church. The pope is not – repeat – not the so-called antichrist. He may be misguided enough to believe he is in the place of God, but he is not an evil man. He is a genuine man who happens to lead a religion that sadly believes a seriously flawed doctrine. For those who wrongly believe the pope is the antichrist, we only need to turn to the scriptures to end that speculation. 'As you have heard the antichrist is coming and even now many antichrists have arisen. They went out from our number but they did not really belong to us or they would have remained with us ... Who is a liar as he who denies that Jesus is the Messiah? That man is the antichrist who denies the Father and the Son ... Every spirit which does not confess that Jesus has come in the flesh is not of God. This is the spirit of antichrist which you heard was coming, and now is already in the world ... Many false leaders have gone out into the world; men who will not confess the coming of Jesus the Messiah in the body. Such a one is the antichrist' (1 John 2:18 & 22; 1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7). If we look closely at the description of the antichrist, clearly that criteria does not fit any pope. They have acknowledged God the Father and Jesus the Son right through the ages. They do not deny Jesus came in the flesh and they do not deny He is the Messiah. The above verse says that the antichrist was already in the world when John wrote those epistles. There were no popes around then. No pope has, up to this time in history, been the antichrist. We need to understand that an antichrist spirit is not one person, it is an antichristian attitude. The above verses are clearly speaking in the plural, not the singular. If anybody whosoever, denies Jesus came in the flesh and that He is the Messiah, they are the ones who have the spirit of antichrist as described in the verses above, and there are millions of people around the world who deny Jesus is the Messiah.

Prayers for the dead and the sign of the cross: Both of these began about 300 AD and there is no mention of either in the Bible. It is for a man once to die, then comes judgement, as we have already read earlier in this study. Praying for the dead is pointless. Crossing oneself is about as sensible as crossing one's fingers to hope for something. It is pointless and it is pagan. Candles: Wax candles were introduced into churches about 320 AD. These candles are supposed to help bring about answers to prayer requests when lit in conjunction with prayer and payment to the church. That thought is wrong. It is by faith we find answers to prayer, not by candles! Holy water is not scriptural and is of pagan origin. Water cannot be made holy – only God is holy and God expects us to set ourselves apart and be holy for Him. 'For as the One Who called you is holy, you should also be holy in all of your behaviour. For it is written, "You shall be holy for I am holy"' (1 Peter 1:15 & 16). Holiness comes from the teaching, or the 'water' of the Word of God which washes us spiritually clean (Ephesians 5:26). The element of water can never be made holy.

The veneration of angels and dead 'saints' began around 375 AD. We are forbidden to worship angels, for they are servants of God like we are (Revelation 22:8 & 9). The Church of Rome forced people to believe their teachings, and the heathen practices of Europe were adopted by the church. They felt it was the simplest solution; to absorb their pagan rituals. This took a tremendous compromise and thus the stage was set for an emergence of the Christian faith with paganism. The heathen population used to worship gods of various origins and categories, such as fertility, success in battle, foretelling and hundreds of others. After Rome forced people to accept their religion, the worship of gods became the worship of 'saints'. The 'holy man' or 'saint' was instituted. They were 'lesser' deities which the people believed had the power to act as intercessors with God, to heal, protect, bring good harvests etc. The truth is quite different. Once a person is dead, they cannot heal or do anything else on earth. If they were genuine believers, then they are with God in heaven forever. If they were non-believers then they will be in hell, awaiting Judgement Day. God has put a chasm between them and they cannot pass from one place to another (Luke 16:26) and they cannot do anything for anybody on earth. They are deceased people; gone from this earth forever. They cannot intercede for us either, nor do they need to. We have need of only one Intercessor, and that is Jesus (Hebrews 7:25). There is One Mediator between God and man, the Man Jesus our

Lord (1 Timothy 2:5). Icons of these supposed saints, were believed to have miracle working power and the same belief is still held today. They are only pieces of wood, plastic or metal and have no power at all, so venerating them is foolish and pointless. According to the scriptures, any person whatsoever who is a genuine, dedicated, committed, humble believer, who shuns evil, does good, walks in holiness and who has obeyed all the commands given in the Bible, is a saint. When Paul wrote the letters that later became most of the New Testament, he often referred to genuine Christian people as the 'saints'. The word 'saint' is a translation of the Hebrew word for 'holy one'. A real saint is simply a person who has the right to be called a child of God because they wholly obey Him. There would be millions of people alive on earth at this time who have the right to be called saints. They are not to be worshipped, but loved as our brothers and sisters in the faith.

The robes worn by popes, priests and other church workers are a supposed copy of the robes worn by the Levitical priests as outlined in the Old Testament (Exodus 28:4 to 40), but they have swapped the linen turban for the mitre. Jesus said to beware of men who like to wear these robes and who like to be greeted in public. These men pretend to make long prayers, and these men will receive a greater condemnation because of their hypocrisy (Mark 12:38 & Luke 20:46).

Many people say the Roman Catholic Church is reforming. All the reforming it is doing is superficial and is not going to the root of the matter, because the root of the problem lies with the cannibalistic doctrine of transubstantiation. Added to this is the incorporation of paganism and the other errors exposed in this Bible study. Because of these things, the church service called the 'mass' is misguided and not of God, yet a recent pope said, "We can never change the mass." One day, God will have His say on the matter. We do have to point out, that although there are serious errors of doctrine in the Catholic church, there are no 'conspiracies' linked to a global take-over or any such nonsense. It is a religion with errors but there are also real truths woven throughout. Many millions of people have come to know the saving grace of the Lord Jesus through the truths taught by the Catholic church. The church is not 100% wrong, but it is not 100% correct either. During the middle ages, the Roman Catholic Church was responsible for the murder of millions of born-again Christians as well as Jews and anyone else who didn't accept their teaching. That is a sad and shameful fact of history. During the inquisition, there was much torture of people the church deemed to be heretics. Anyone who didn't believe what was coming out of Rome was reported to the Council of Marona in 1184. Jesus never taught that the Gospel should be preached with violence. Accepting Jesus has to be our choice and it is not to be forced upon anybody. Read Fox's book of Martyrs which is an authentic book of history, and you will read of some of the terrible things done by the Roman Catholic Church.

It would be impossible to list all the errors found within the Catholic church, but here are more misguided views that are contrary to scripture. Stigmata (that is so-called blood and/or oil that suddenly appears on an idol) is an evil thing and is not from God. It is an evil hoax straight from the devil, used successfully to keep people away from the full Gospel of the saving grace of Jesus. The people are deceived by a seducing spirit and they focus on the stigmata instead of looking to Jesus. We know the Bible is the Word of God, and there is only truth in all the scriptures. The Counsel of Trent in 1545, decreed that church tradition has equal authority with the Bible!! How wrong is that? This view is still held today by the Roman Catholic Church. It gets worse! On Saturday November 1st 1986, Roman Catholic schools were told by Mr Price, the CEO of the Catholic Education Office in Britain, that they should not teach creationism, the Biblical view of how the world was made in six days. A whopping 343 Catholic schools (involving thousands of children) received that directive. Mr Price, the CEO of the Roman Catholic education at that time said, "A literal interpretation of the Bible is not acceptable. The concept of the evolution of man and other primates is the answer to this serious dispute. There has been some confusion about what to teach. The letter was written so the true position of the church can get through to the children." The true position of the Roman Catholic Church is that the literal interpretation of the Bible is no longer acceptable!? Mr Price further explained, "We don't object to telling the Bible story to a kindergarten child, but the issue should be left open for further discussion as the child grows up." He said, "There has been a rift between science and the church since the days of Galileo but the pope is trying to bring about reconciliation." That article will give you some idea of the lack of dependency upon the Word of God within the church, and the lie of evolution is now being taught to children who should be taught the truth of creation. Obviously, Mr Price has an antichristian attitude.

Pope Gregory the Great in 600 AD imposed Latin on the international church. In about 1400 AD, 600 years ago, the church forbade the people from reading or interpreting the Bible. Only Roman Catholic priests were allowed to read the Bible. They would supposedly read it in the mass service, and when the priest read something important, a man standing beside the altar would ring a small bell to let the congregation know when this 'important verse' was noticed by the priest. This whole portion of the service was farcical, absurd, useless and a foolish pretence of religion. No sense could be made of such silly rituals. It was useless because the congregation were never told what the priest had read! How could such a ritual benefit anybody? In the 1960's Pope John 23rd came along, and allowed the Catholic people to read the Bible again. It was God's strategy to reach the millions who were attending Catholic churches. The Bible says God can turn around the heart of kings,

according to His will (Proverbs 21:1). God turned the pope's heart around and Pope John gave the people the right to read the Bible. When the people began to read the Bible and discover the truth for themselves, millions left the church to follow the whole truth.

Another error that has surfaced is the Turin Shroud. That fabric was definitely not used to wrap Jesus' body. It may possibly have been the shroud of some poor victim of violence, but certainly not Jesus. It is either a fake or a hoax. Jesus was not wrapped in a large one-piece shroud as the Turin shroud is; he was wrapped in several long strips of cloth and the head-piece came off and was found a short distance away from the rest of the cloths. That fact alone should be enough to show people the Turin shroud was not used on Jesus' body. Again we need to turn to the scriptures for the proof. Joseph of Arimathea and Nicodemus took Jesus' body and bound it in linen cloths (plural) (John 19:38 to 40). John saw the linen cloths (plural) lying there, then Peter saw the linen cloths (plural) lying there but the burial headpiece was not lying with the other linen cloths, but was still rolled up (wrapped round and round) in a place by itself (John 20:5 to 7). We must always rely on the Word of God, and the scriptural description of Jesus' burial cloths do not match that of the Turin shroud.

None of the above incorrect doctrines have anything to do with salvation. If anyone disbelieves what is written in this Bible study, then they should search the scriptures out for themselves, plus look at history books regarding the Babylonian cult. The goal of Jesus was to lead people to salvation by faith in God; to reconcile mankind back to God our Creator – not heap strange beliefs, traditions and rituals onto people. Remember, we are not to believe any Gospel but the Gospel preached by Jesus and the apostles. There are millions of dedicated Christians still in the Catholic church. Millions who have already received Jesus while in the church. But now after a move by the Holy Spirit that began all around the world about the 1960's, many Christians have left the traditional churches to follow the Holy Spirit-filled churches. There was no way the hierarchy of these churches could keep the Holy Spirit out because it was ordained by God that in the latter days, there would be the latter rains (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit). The early church was the time of the former rains, and now is the time for the latter rains to fall, which God said will be upon all flesh. 'All flesh' is all people, who have a disposition towards Almighty God. Inside the main-stream churches, there are millions of people who have a disposition towards God, who have accepted that salvation is by accepting Jesus as their Lord and Saviour, and are being washed in the blood of the Lamb. That is why millions have left the main-stream churches for Spirit-filled churches. The pope appealed to people to go back to the Catholic church. One recent pope said they were trying to stem the tide of the people in the church being born-again and being filled with the Holy Spirit because they were then leaving the church. That would be like trying to stop rain falling. It can't be done for it is written, 'This is of God. You will not be able to stop it and if you try you might even be found fighting against God Himself!' (Acts 5:39). Thousands of priests and nuns all over the world have heard the full Gospel and are leaving the church in droves. Many of the priests are Pentecostal pastors today, married and with families. With the outpouring of the Holy Spirit in this day, many priests and nuns are being born-again, filled with the Holy Spirit and speak with tongues. They are not walking away from God, they are leaving the unsound doctrines taught in the church. If the Catholic church would embrace the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit instead of trying to stop it, then many people would stay in the church. People are not going to stay where they are not appreciated or worse, where they are persecuted. So, here is a challenge; put aside every one of your unsound doctrines, traditions and rituals and return to the teachings outlined in the scriptures. Embrace the power of God and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Remember Jesus said, not everyone who says "Lord, Lord" will enter the Kingdom of God (Matthew 7:21). Are you building your faith on the Foundation Rock of Jesus, or are you placing your hope in a religion with errors? It is not religion that saves us from hell; it is only faith in Jesus and His shed blood that can save us, and we all need Him. For those who have been raised as Catholics, these truths may be hard to accept, but if you truly seek God He will open your eyes, and He says, blessed are the eyes that see and the ears that hear (Matthew 13:16).

Amen and God bless you.

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