

Who Really Is The Holy Father?

John 17:11; “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.” With these words, Jesus called God, the Holy Father.

If you happen to be a Roman Catholic, some of the topics in this sermon may shock you because there are some shades of Catholic doctrine that do not line up with scripture. This sermon 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; we should spend our lives wholly focussed on walking with and serving God; prayer; getting to know God as our Father; creation; proclaiming that the prophets foretold of Jesus’ birth; living a Christian life. All these things are correct and scriptural.

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 gentle way; 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 in 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, for the Lord to have given me that gift at such a young age. The priest must have also been a Spirit filled man to have imparted the gift to me. I thank God for the continuing grounding in the Gospel and the knowledge of the outworking of Calvary during catechism classes. I was in my 20’s when God led me on to serve Him in Full Gospel churches, but I have never forgotten the solid Christian foundation I received in the Catholic Church, which I am very grateful for. 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.

We have to start this sermon by searching the Bible, because that is the beginning. The Bible is the living Word of God and all scripture is God-breathed; not some 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 22:17 to 19. The Roman Catholic Church has most unfortunately, both added to and subtracted from, the Word of God.

In 2 Timothy 3:12 to 17 we read; ‘Indeed, all who delight in piety and are determined to live a devoted and Godly life in Christ 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 Christ 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’.

The two key words for correct living in God are righteousness and holiness. There is no substitute for righteousness and holiness. Galatians 1:1 to 12 says; “Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, not from men and neither through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father, Who raised Him from among the dead. To all the people who are with me, to the churches of Galatia; Grace and peace from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, 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 Christ 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 Christ 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 (anathema, devoted to destruction, 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 (anathema)! 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 Christ. 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 Christ the Messiah."

Those scriptures are very strong but it is the Word of God, and it is important we take notice of it. From Paul's words, we can see that 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 your 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 in John 3:1 to 10, 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. So just being a Catholic, a priest or a nun cannot save your soul, no matter how religious you are. When Jesus said we must be born-again, He meant just what He said. We can add here, that Nicodemus was so afraid of the leadership, he came to Jesus, secretly at night.

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 Christ; Romans 5:1 & 2; 'Therefore, since we are justified by faith, let us have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 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'.

Only through accepting Jesus can we enter heaven and no one can get to heaven except through Jesus; John 14:6; Jesus said, "I Am the Way and the Truth and the Life; no one comes to the Father except through Me."

Jesus came to earth for that purpose; Ephesians 1:7 & 9; 'In Him (Jesus) we have redemption through His (Jesus) blood; the remission and forgiveness of sin in accordance with the riches of His (the Father's) gracious favour; making known to us the secret of His (the Father's) will in accordance with His (the Father's) good intention which He (the Father) had purposed and set forth in Him (Jesus)'.

We cannot enter heaven by 'buying' our salvation; Acts 8:20; 'But Peter said to him, "Destruction overtake your money and you, because you imagined you could obtain the free gift of God with money!"'

We are to walk a narrow path, produce 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; Matthew 7:13 to 29; 'Jesus said, "Enter through the narrow gate; for wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads away to destruction, and many are those who are entering through it. But the gate is narrow and the way is straitened that leads away to life, and few are those who find it. Beware of false prophets, who come to you dressed as sheep, but inside they are devouring wolves. You will fully recognise them by their fruits." Verse 19; "Every tree that does not bear good fruit, is cut down and cast into the fire." Verse 21; "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'."

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 church; it is about the Kingdom that God is establishing with His people.

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, back into truth, then into error, and into truth again 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 through to the present age. Grace started with the birth of the new church at the day of Pentecost in the upper room. We are living at the end of this latter age. These next verses are powerful because the Holy Spirit is speaking here in 1 Timothy 4:1 to 3 & 7; '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 have knowledge of the truth'. Verse 7; 'But refuse and avoid irreverent legends (impure and godless fictions) and silly myths and express your disapproval of them. Train yourself toward Godliness'.

The Bible leads to salvation for everyone that believes; Romans 1:16; 'For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is God's power, working unto salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek (Gentile)'.

The Gospel is the power of God. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ 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 Lambs book of life regardless of which church they attend. They are the true body of believers. The Lord is looking for a holy church. 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 chapter 5 in Ephesians, we have a mental 'picture' of people living in harmony with one another, with Jesus as their Head, but especially Ephesians 5:25 to 27; 'As Christ 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'.

The word of God exposes deception. The Bible, in the heart of the true believer, always exposes deception and those things that are not of God. The Holy Spirit will guide you into all truth; John 16:13; "But when He, the Spirit of Truth comes He will guide you into all the Truth..." Jesus said you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free and be in you a liberating force; John 8:32.

Jesus consistently taught against mindless man made traditions. In Matthew 23:1 to 39 and Luke 11:37 to 52, Jesus speaks 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. Jesus strongly taught against religion. Colossians 2:20 to 23 tells us 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 value. In 2 Timothy 3:5, we are told the people in these last days, will have a form of Godliness but deny the power of God, and we are to avoid them and turn away from them.

Cardinal Newman wrote in his 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, sacerdotal vestments, the tonsures of priests, monks, nuns, icons and images are all of pagan origin. Now let's look at some of the non scriptural doctrines in the Roman Catholic Church.

Some errors of doctrine taught in the Catholic Church are transubstantiation, infant baptism, purgatory, confessional, penance, the rosary, the worship of Mary and praying to Mary, Madonna and child, images, icons and idols, lent, circumcision of boys, contraception, limbo, celibacy, abstaining of eating meat, Papacy, rituals, genuflection, prayers for the dead, the sign of the cross, wax candles, holy water and praying to 'saints'.

Transubstantiation: In the Catholic mass, the church has what it calls 'transubstantiation'. The statements in the Catholic doctrine, says that they believe their communion wafer and wine actually becomes the body and blood of Jesus. They believe that Jesus is being continually crucified for their sins and will keep on doing so until the world ends. They believe they are literally eating and drinking the body and blood of Jesus; that the substance of the Eucharistic elements is converted by consecration wholly into the substance of the body and blood of Jesus; only the appearance and taste of the elements still remain. That belief is almost 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. When John 6:48 to 58 records Jesus' words, obviously Jesus did not mean we were to literally eat Him. He was referring to suffering with Him and taking up our own cross, as He did. When they believe that Jesus is going to be continually suffering for sin, that is wrong too because in Hebrews 7:27; 9:12 and 10:10, the Bible says the Jesus Christ once for all offered up Himself on the cross and is now sitting in His Holy Place, at the right hand of the Father.

Infant baptism: There is not one word regarding infant baptism in the Bible. (Read the text called [Baptism](#) on this website). 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 won't save them either. Baptism is by full immersion, after repentance. 'Repent and be baptised every one of you for the remission of sin' we are told in 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 (Romans 6:4). When Jesus came out of the water, John the Baptist saw the heavens opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. John heard God's voice say, "This is My beloved Son. In whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:16 & 17 and John 1:32). Romans 6:1 says baptism identifies us with Jesus burial and resurrection. If infant baptism was God's way, then Jesus would have been baptised as a baby, but he was an adult of about thirty when He was baptised and He is our example. We need to know enough to be able to repent before we can be baptised.

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 to go through prayers and payments then get 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 (also called Sheol and Hades) 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 the believers go straight to heaven as did Elijah and Moses, who came back to earth briefly to speak with Jesus (Matthew 17:3; Mark 9:4 and Luke 9:30). 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 man 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 (1 John 1:9) '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'.

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 in Matthew 6:7; 'And when you pray, do not heap up phrases or multiply words, repeating the same ones over and over as the Gentiles do, for they think they will be heard for their much speaking'.

Mary worship; Praying to Mary; Madonna and Child: Mariology is the worship of Mary, Jesus' mother; but to worship Mary as Catholic's do, is not of God. People who feel uncomfortable using the name of Jesus, sometimes feel more comfortable speaking to Mary. Back in the days of Acts, people were much the same and did not like hearing about Jesus, so Peter and the apostles were told they couldn't 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 5:28 & 29). The worship of Mary was set up in 381 AD. There is no mention of worshipping Mary until then and there is no worship of Mary in the Bible. That is recorded in history; it is a fact; so where did they get the authority to start worshipping a deceased woman? This actually dates back to the days of an evil ruler named Nimrod, who lived in Babylon and instigated the Tower of Babylon. It was Nimrod who started heathen worship which became known as Babylonianism and that is still practiced today. When Damascus became the head of the Babylonian cult; which worshipped the 'queen of heaven' and her son, (the Madonna and child) 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 image of mother and child had been an object of primary worship from Babylon for centuries before the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Pope Pius 9th proclaimed the immaculate conception of Mary in 1854. This doctrine has nothing whatever to do with the conception of Jesus by the Holy Spirit. We need to realise that. The angel Gabriel told Mary and Joseph (Matthew 1:20) that Jesus would be conceived by the Holy Spirit and they were to name him Jesus because he would save his people from their sins (Luke 1:26 to 38). Jesus is the Greek form of the name Joshua which is Hebrew. Both are pronounced Yeshua and mean Saviour (Matthew 1:21). Jesus was born without sin (2 Corinthians 5:21). Mary had never had sex with a man (Luke 1:27) 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). The Catholics believe Mary was the only human being 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 said she had need of a Saviour (Luke 1:46 & 47). If Mary didn't need a Saviour; she wouldn't have glorified God as her Saviour. Mary has been a sinner like all other humans who have ever been on this earth. Romans 3:23 says we have all sinned and fallen short of the glory of God and Romans 3:10, says 'There is none righteous, no not one' and it is the word of the living God that counts; not ancient pagan beliefs. In 1931 Pope Pius 11th reaffirmed that doctrine – of Mary as the mother of God – which was first decreed by the council of Ephesus 431 AD. 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 in John 16:23: we are to pray to the Father in Jesus' name.

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.

Lent: This is 'mass population, public fasting'. It is also contrary to scripture to fast in this way. We should fast in secret. Matthew 6:18 tells us: 'When you fast, wash your face so that your fasting may not be noticed by men but by your Father Who sees in secret; and your Father, Who sees in secret will reward you in the open'.

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 by the Lord to Jews and only Jews, to show the old covenant between God and His chosen people; Genesis 17:10. 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 not necessary. Baptism is now more important than circumcision, which counts for nothing in the new covenant, ushered in by Jesus. Read Romans 2:29; 'True circumcision is of the heart, a spiritual and not a literal matter. His praise is not from men, but from God'. 1 Corinthians 7:19; 'For circumcision counts for nothing, neither does uncircumcision, but what counts is keeping the commandments of God'. Galatians 2:3; 'But even Titus who was with me, was not compelled to be circumcised, although he was a Greek'. Galatians 6:15; '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 Christ Jesus the Messiah'. Colossians 2:11; 'In Him also you were circumcised with a circumcision not made with hands, but a spiritual circumcision performed by Christ by stripping off the body of flesh. Thus you were 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'. If you are considering having your son circumcised because of the incorrect teaching in the 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 scripture, and if you look at the irony of it, the Church's ban on contraception seems rather silly. In Genesis 38 we read the story of Judah, his wife 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 and God was displeased with Onan and so God slew him too. That one scripture does not tell everybody on earth, not to 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 same method Onan used!

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 suffer, 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. In 2 Samuel 12:23, David said of his dead baby, "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." David knew he would go to heaven after he died; he knew the baby would be there; David knew he would be able to go to be with his baby; and David knew he would see the baby again. The same applies to all babies and children. In Matthew 19:14, Jesus said the Kingdom of heaven is made up of children. 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. 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). Celibacy was introduced to priests by decree in 1079 by Pope Boniface 8th. It is a man made ordinance. Jesus imposed no such rules nor did any of the apostles. The Catholic church waited more than 1,000 years before making 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 one wife and could have children (1 Tim 3:2, 4 & 12). So what exactly is a bishop? He is an elder, pastor or leader of any Christian church, and he is allowed to marry and raise a family.

Abstaining from meats: In 1 Timothy 4:1 to 5 the scripture says to force people to abstain from eating meats, is a doctrine demons teach. The decree not to eat meat on Fridays, came about from a man made rule; 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 bishop – was first given to the bishop of Rome about 600 AD. Stemming from the Babylonian cult as explained, Jesus did not appoint Peter to be the headship of Rome and expressly forbade the practice in Luke 22:24 to 26. Paul continued with the same instructions in Ephesians 1:22 & 23 and Colossians 1:18, where he stated clearly that Jesus is the Head of His church. In Romans chapter 16, Paul greeted all those people who were in Rome at that time; but the Catholics say Peter was there as the first pope. If he was, Paul would have greeted him too. Peter would have been the first person mentioned, however, 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 and he simply never went to Rome. The very first pope came 600 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 of Christ on earth. Vicar is a Greek word that means 'in the place of Christ' or antichristos. The church calls the pope the holy father but in Matthew 23:9, Jesus very definitely instructed us to "Call no man Father, which is upon the earth, for One is your Father which is in heaven." Jesus meant Father as someone trying to take the place of God on earth. The pope is certainly not Christ on earth and he is not the holy father because there is only One Holy Father and He is in heaven. 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 believes he is infallible in his translation of the word of God. That is quite wrong and the incorrect teaching in the 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 repent.

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."

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 1894 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."

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 Christ, genuflection is sin. The Bible says not to worship idols.

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, except to say it is for a man once to die, then comes judgement, as we have already read earlier in this text. 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 supposedly help bring about prayer requests when lit in conjunction with prayer and payment to the church. Holy water is not scriptural and as we read earlier in this text, 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. "And you shall be holy to Me; for I the Lord am holy, and have separated you from the people, that you should be Mine." (Leviticus 20:26).

The veneration of angels and dead 'saints' began around 375 AD. 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. Thus the stage was set for an emergence of the Christian faith with paganism. The population used to worship gods of various origins and categories, such as fertility, success in battle and foretelling. 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 they believed had the power to act as intercessors with God, to heal, protect, bring good harvest etc. The truth is quite different. Once a person is dead, they cannot heal nor do anything else. 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. Hebrews 7:25 says we have need of only one Intercessor, and that is Jesus. 1 Timothy 2:5 says there is One Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus our Lord. There is no need for the worship of saints; there is no need for the worship of Mary. 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 or plastic and have no power at all. God frowns upon the worship of these idols and doesn't much like the makers of the idols either. In Isaiah 45:16, the Lord said even the makers of idols will go off into confusion and they will be put to shame. We are also not to worship angels, for they are servants of God like we are (Revelation 22:8 & 9).

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 transubstantiation. Although the mass is misguided and some of it is not of God, a recent pope said, "We can never change the mass." One day, God will have His say on the matter.

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 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. 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.

Here are more misguided views that are contrary to scripture. We know the Bible is the Word of God, and there is only truth in all the Sacred Writings: 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. "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." Mr Price, the CEO of the Roman Catholic education at that time said, "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.

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. 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 the Catholic church. Proverbs 21:1 says God can turn around the heart of kings, according to His will. God turned the pope's heart around and Pope John gave the people the right to read the Bible. They began to read the Bible and discover the truth for themselves and millions left the church to follow the whole truth.

There are millions of dedicated Christians in the Catholic church. Millions who have already received Christ 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 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 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 is appealing to people to go back to the 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. Now thousands of priests and nuns have heard the full Gospel and are leaving the church in droves. Many of the priests are Pentecostal pastors today, married and with families.

Remember Matthew 7:21? 'Not everyone who says "Lord, Lord" will enter the Kingdom of God'. 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 Christ 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, as I initially found them 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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