

# **What Catholics and Protestants Should Know**

by

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**PACIFIC PRESS PUBLISHING ASSOCIATION  
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CALIFORNIA, USA.**

**1953**

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## Introduction

The Roman Catholic Church has in recent years circulated many booklets and tracts to inform the public concerning its doctrines and practices. These publications, as well as numerous radio speeches and programs, have cheered many persons and probably vexed others.

After many years of contact with both Protestants and Catholics, as well as months of Study, the author is convinced that there are some disagreements between the two religious groups which, if clarified, would help adherents of all Christian faiths to better understand each other. To bring this about, men will have to be open-minded, and free from all feelings of controversy and prejudice. They must be willing to search for truth and accept it, whether it comes from the Roman Catholic Church or from any other source.

An honest person should be persuaded by truth. A prejudiced person is easily blinded and irritated; he is a poor candidate for honest conclusions. The individual who cherishes such traits becomes angry when his way of thinking is disturbed or is proved false.

The apostle James writes: If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. Will you pray as you read this book that God will guide you to a fuller understanding of the basic doctrines of the Holy Scriptures that clarify many of the problems over which Catholicism and Protestantism disagree?

Some persons have a tendency to read until they find a statement with which they do not agree, or do not fully understand; then they discard the whole book. Paul writes: "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." 1 Thessalonians 5:21. The wise man Solomon states: He that answers a matter before he hears it, it is folly and shame unto him." Proverbs 18: 13.

In this book the subject treated in a chapter is interwoven with what precedes and what follows. So if the reader selects a topic at random, he will not get the full force of the Scriptural argument.

When a text is quoted from the Holy Bible, the corresponding reference is given. In some cases where the chapters and the verses of the Douay Catholic Bible and the King James Version do not coincide, both references are given. This will give the reader opportunity to look them up in either or both the Catholic Bible or the Protestant Bible.

The names of the books in the King James Version and the corresponding books of the Douay Version are given in the Biblical Index. Some of the books have different names. For example, The Revelation in the King James Version is The Apocalypse in the Douay Version. Apocalypse is the Greek word for Revelation. Sometimes the same name is spelled differently, like Jonah in the Protestant Bible and Jonas in the Catholic. This is due largely to the softening of some of the harsher Hebrew sounds, which Greeks and Latins found hard to pronounce. For example, we have Jeremiah in the King James, Jeremias in the Catholic, and Yirmeyah in the Hebrew; Ezekiel, instead of Yeliezkel; Hezekiah, instead of Hizkiyah. (See Why Catholics Should Read the Bible, John Murphy Company, Baltimore, Maryland.)

The authors of the books of the Bible did not write the headings or titles to them. Thus, different translators have assigned variant names to the books. The two books of Paralipomenon are so called because they treat on "things passed over." They contain some matter not found in the preceding books called the Kings. In the King James Version they are called Chronicles.

The two Bibles differ also in numbering the Psalms. The King James Version has Psalms 9 and 10 as in Hebrew, but the Catholic combines the two into one Psalm. This makes the Douay Version one unit behind. That is, Psalm 9 in the King James is Psalm 8 in the Douay, etc. The Catholic Bible divides Psalm 147 into 146 and 147, so Psalm 148 again agrees in both Bibles.

The books of the Bible in the original languages were not divided into chapters and verses at the time they were written. The division was made later, so the chapters and the verses do not always coincide in the two Bibles. This is a man made arrangement for convenience and has nothing to do with the content of the books.

It is the sincere desire of the writer that both Protestants and Catholics will study their respective Bibles and from them receive a better comprehension of the Biblical doctrines that perplex so many.

J. H. MEIER.

# 1. The Holy Bible Is All True

CATHOLICS and Protestants agree that the Holy Bible is God's word, and that it "is all true." This is stated in the booklet *What You Should Know About the Catholic Church*, page 19, sponsored by the Catholic Information Service, La Crosse, Wisconsin.

American Catholic archbishops and bishops gathered at Baltimore made the following declaration: "The Bishops of this country assembled at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore, urged the Catholic people to read the Holy Bible. 'We hope, Bishop said, 'that no family can be found amongst us without a correct version of the Holy Scriptures.' They recommend, furthermore, 'If it be not always feasible in the morning, at least every evening, at a fixed hour, let the entire family be assembled for night prayers, followed by a short reading of the Holy Scriptures, the Following of Christ, or some other pious book...."

"Our late Holy Father, Leo XIII, on the 13th day of December, 1808, granted to all the faithful who will read the Holy Gospels for a quarter of an hour each day, an Indulgence of three hundred years. And to those who follow this practice for a month, a Plenary Indulgence on any day within the month on which they approach with sacraments and pray for the intention of His Holiness. "Pastoral Letter of the Archbishops and Bishops of the United States, quoted in *Why Catholics Should Read the Bible*, John Murphy Company (Roman Catholic), Baltimore, Maryland.

These Catholic bishops and archbishops made their position clear when they said: "We hope that no family can be found amongst us without a correct version of the Holy Scriptures," and they encouraged the use of the Holy Scriptures in family devotions.

The Holy Bible is God's inspired word. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2, Timothy 3: 16. "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." 2 Peter 1:21. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Psalm 119:105 (Catholic Douay Version, Psalm 118:105). "Thy word is truth." John 17: 17.

It is evident that since the Holy Bible is God's word, it is the truth, and we should study it. Truth is never contradictory; wherever taught, it always agrees with itself. Why should we be content to live without the confidence and strength that comes from knowing the truth when there is a ready source in the Bible?

The reading of the Scriptures is not restricted to a particular few. The Bible is needed in family worship and in private devotions alike. It is important that we pray, but it is also important that we read the Holy Bible. When we pray we speak to God; but when we read the Bible, God speaks to us. The Holy Bible is an expression of God's will. It is a letter from Him given through the holy prophets and apostles to the children of men. When we receive a letter from a friend we find time to read it. In the same way we should also find time to read God's word.

In Paul's day many rejected the apostle's preaching because they did not know what the Scriptures taught. Acts 17: 10,11. So today, individuals who are not willing to search the Holy Bible to know God's will concerning them do not know what to believe. Many take it for granted that what they already know is sufficient to assure them of heaven. Some seem to be certain of their religious ideas, even though they hardly ever look inside the Bible.

However, the only way to know God's will for us is to read the Holy Book of God every day.

When Paul came to Berea he spoke highly of its people, because they were different from those in Thessalonica. He says: "These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so." Acts 17:11. They read the Bible. When they discovered that Paul preached Bible truth, they accepted his teachings.

There are some persons who seem to be afraid to study the Sacred Writings because they fear that they might find something to upset their religious thinking and practice. Whenever anyone finds something in the Holy Bible that is clearly contrary to what he believes, he can be sure that his belief is wrong. Every person who wants to be in harmony with God's teachings must go to the Bible often.

Many Protestants have the erroneous idea that Catholics never read the Bible. This is not true, for you may buy Catholic Bibles in practically every Catholic bookstore in America.

There are, however, some Catholics who still hesitate to open the Bible and read it. I have been with many who would not read for themselves, but they would listen to me as I read to them out of their own Catholic Bible. The true church agrees with God's word, and combats error with it. The Bible is the "sword." If a church holds doctrines contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ, the apostles, and the

prophets, then those doctrines are wrong. Both cannot be right.

We should study the Holy Bible with prayer and without fear of offending anyone. If “the Holy Bible is all true,” then we should not be afraid to read it. The Bible is not written in such a difficult style and language that a doctor of divinity or a priest is needed to unravel it. It is written in simple language, and the translators, whether Catholics or Protestants, give it in good English, so that those who read may understand.

Of course there are deep truths in the Holy Bible, and the apostle Peter says that there “are certain things hard to be understood.” 2 Peter 3:16, Douay. The apostle Paul exclaimed: “The depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgments, and how unsearchable His ways! For who hath known the mind of the Lord?” Romans 11:33,34, Douay.

There are some things that you cannot understand or explain in botany, would you take the position that no one should study botany at all? In the springtime you sow radish seeds, and in a few weeks you have radishes for your table. You relish them, yet you cannot explain all the mysteries about them. Would you refuse to eat radishes because you cannot explain everything about them? Then, would you refuse to read the Holy Bible because there are some things that are difficult to understand?

On the other hand, there are some persons who will not use their minds and think when they read the Bible. The fact that there are deep things in the word of God is no reason for our failure to understand what has been revealed. What was God's object in giving divine revelations to the prophets and apostles who wrote the Bible? He gave us the Bible not only for doctors of divinity, but for all mankind. God's word is given unto us and to our children forever.” There are many things that He has revealed, and we should know what they are. David said: “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against Thee.” Psalm 119:11 (Douay, Psalm 118:11). “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105 (Douay, Psalm 118: 105). If we follow the light of the Bible we surely cannot err.

Those who study the Bible honestly, prayerfully, and thoughtfully will receive spiritual blessings and a peace in the heart that passes all understanding. Those who do not study it and live the truths contained in it are in uncertainty. They are not settled. They dread to think about death, or about the Second Coming of the Lord. They feel insecure, because they are not ready to meet their Lord. Their religion is not clear to them. They get no spiritual benefits from it. They go through a round of ceremonies, but their hearts are empty. They long for something which they do not possess.

Would you be indifferent to a written message to you from the pope? Would you disregard a letter from some prominent person or some close friend? If you show interest and respect for messages from individuals, you surely should read and respect God's letter to you. If you read and meditate upon a letter from a close friend, then why not do the same with the letter from God, the Holy Bible? If you are interested in having a companionship with God and a happier Christian experience, read the Holy Word of God.

## 2. The Catholic and the Protestant Bible

AHE Catholic and the Protestant Bibles in general, excluding the Apocrypha, are the same. The Protestant gets his faith on the Bible alone, while the Catholic draws his belief not only from the Bible, but also from tradition, from the decisions of the councils, and from the Apocrypha. Both Catholics and Protestants believe the thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New as inspired of God. The Catholic Church, however, adds the Apocrypha as a part of the Bible.

According to the chronology of the Catholic Douay Bible, Malachi wrote the last book of the Old Testament about 400 years before Christ. This closed the Old Testament canon centuries before the Christian Era, long before the Catholic Church or the Protestant churches came into existence. We can therefore readily see that the Old Testament did not come from any of these. The Bible is not the product of the Protestant churches or of the Roman Catholic Church, but was given by inspiration apart from either Christian body.

The New Testament was not yet written in the time of Christ, it was penned later by apostles as Paul, John, James, Peter, and others.

Since the Old and the New Testament are accepted (excluding the Apocrypha) by both Catholics and Protestants as the word of God, it follows that tradition, the decisions of the councils, and the Apocrypha must necessarily agree with the Bible.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the Bible and tradition must agree. "The Catholic Church rejects all traditions which are against Scripture. She accepts divine traditions which are complementary to Scripture, and which are in perfect harmony with the principles taught in Scripture."- Bible Quizzes to a Street Preacher, booklet No. 1, p. 28. Rumble and Carty, Radio Replies, Saint Paul, Minnesota. This booklet carries the approval of Archbishop John G. Murray, Saint Paul, Minnesota.

If it is true that tradition and the Bible must agree, then there should be no contradictions. Tradition might throw additional light on certain passages of the Bible, but it must not be contrary to Bible teaching. If the Bible is of divine origin, and if tradition is of divine origin, and if the decisions of the councils are divine, then the three must agree. If there were to be any contradictions, it would be evident that not all three were divine, for God cannot contradict Himself. The Holy Spirit, God the Father, and the Son are all one in purpose. They agree in their decisions and teachings; so tradition, the Bible, and the decisions of the councils should also agree. If they do not, there is something wrong, something human in it. This will be studied more fully under the chapter titled "Tradition."

If you take a Douay Bible, which is the most commonly used by Catholics, and compare it with the Protestant King James Bible, you will discover that there is not much difference between them. No two translators would probably use exactly the same wording, even though their translations would be accurate in expression of thought.

Let us compare the first two verses (Genesis 1:1,2) of the Catholic Douay Bible with the first two verses of the King James Version and note the difference: "In the beginning God created heaven, and earth. And the earth was void and empty, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved over the waters." (Douay Version.)

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." (King James Version.)

I have two German Catholic Bibles before me. One is the translation by a Catholic, Leander van Esz, and the other is the version of Joseph Franz von Allioli, which is authorized by Roman Catholic leaders for publication and circulation. If you compare the two versions they differ nearly as much in the wording as do the Douay Bible and the King James, although both were translated by Catholics. Each translator expresses the thought in his own way, perhaps using different words, yet each one generally conveying the same idea.

The original Old Testament was written mostly in Hebrew, and the New Testament in Greek. The Old Testament was translated from the Hebrew into Greek, and this version is called the Septuagint.

Sidney Collett says: In the second century of the Christian Era Latin superseded Greek, and remained for many years the predominant language of Europe. At this time a Latin translation was made in North Africa from the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament and the original Greek of the New, so that all Latin speaking people might be able to read the word of God. It is known as the Vulgate, which itself is

a Latin word, meaning “make common or public.” In the fourth century this Vulgate Version was revised by the saintly scholar Jerome, who had access to ancient Hebrew manuscripts; and so important was this revision of Jerome's that, like the Septuagint, it has influenced all future translations. It is from this version that the English translation of the Psalms as in our Prayer Book and in the Roman Catholic Douay Bible was made.”-Sidney Collett, *All About the Bible*, pages 28, 29.

So the Old Testament of the Douay Bible came into existence through three languages. First, it was written in Hebrew, then translated into Greek, which is the Septuagint. From the Septuagint 'It was translated into Latin, and from the Latin into English. Jerome had access to the original Hebrew in his revision and translation.

The New Testament of the Douay Bible was translated from the original Greek into Latin, then into English. So the Old Testament came through three languages and the New Testament through two.

The King James Bible was translated directly from Hebrew and Greek manuscripts into English, and other translations were considered only for comparison. If, therefore, you are to choose between a version that came through two and three languages, as in the case of the Catholic Bible, and one that was translated more directly into the English from original languages, as in the case of the King James Bible, why not accept the one that is more certain to give you the original meaning-the King James Version?

Roman Catholic scholars tell us that the Vulgate, which is the Latin Bible the Roman Catholic Church uses, is not a very exact translation. The Roman Catholic scholar Dr. Johann Jahn says: “The universal admission of this version throughout the vast extent of the Latin Church multiplied the copies of it, in the transcription of which it became corrupted with many errors.... Cardinal Nicholas, about the middle of the twelfth century, found *tot exemplaria quot codices* (as many copies as manuscripts).” introduction to the Old Testament, sec. 62-64. Quoted by John Dowling in the *History of Romanism*, 1870 ed., page 486.

The Catholic Encyclopedia says this about the Vulgate Bible: “From an early day the text of the Vulgate began to suffer corruptions, mostly through the copyists who introduced familiar of the Old Latin or inserted the marginal glosses of the MMS which they were transcribing.”-Article, “Versions, The Vulgate.”

The Catholic Encyclopedia states further: “This revision is now the officially recognized version of the Latin Rite and contains the only authorized text of the Vulgate. That it has numerous defects has never been denied.” - Ibid.

Let us point out one of those errors in the Catholic Bible. From Hebrews 11:21 we quote: “By faith Jacob dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph, and adored the top of his rod. The early translators wanted to make it appear that it was perfectly correct for a patriarch to adore his rod or cane, a form of worship which the Holy Bible prohibits. See Exodus 20:4-6.

Jacob did not adore the top of his staff. Let us quote the King James Version: “By faith Jacob, when he was a dying, blessed both the sons of Joseph; and worshiped, leaning upon the top of his staff.” This changes the thought altogether. The Catholic revision of the Challoner-Rheims Version gives this text differently from the Douay Version. “By faith Jacob, when dying, blessed each of the sons of Joseph and bowed in worship towards the top of his staff.” Hebrews 11:21.

The German Roman Catholic translation by Dr. Leander van Esz, authorized by the censors for publication and circulation, gives this text the same meaning as does the Protestant King James Version. “Durch Glauben segnete der sterbende Jakob jeden der SiShne Josephs, indem er betend sich auf seinen Stab lehnte.” This says that Jacob “prayed, leaning upon his staff.” This is far from adoring the top of the staff.

In the sixteenth century the Latin Bible was stamped as the only recognized and authorized version allowed to Roman Catholics. But Catholic scholars found numerous mistakes in the sanctioned translation and it was revised in 1590. Pope Sixtus V took a personal interest in this work of revision, and to make sure of its being correct, he read the proofs himself. This edition was printed at Rome in 1590, accompanied by a bull forbidding the least alteration in this infallible text. But “the book was full of mistakes. The scholarship of Sixtus was by no means great, and His infallibility somehow failed to make up for this defect.” J. Paterson Smyth, *The Old Documents and the New Bible*, 1875.

The Catholic Encyclopedia comments further on this: “But Sixtus V, though unskilled in this branch of criticism, had introduced alterations of his own, all for the worse.... His immediate successors at once proceeded to remove the blunders and call in it a defective impression.”-Article, “Bellarmine.”

Can the Roman Catholic Church take the stand as it has since 1546, that the Latin Vulgate, from which the Douay Version is translated, is the “only recognized and authoritative version,” and condemn the

Protestant King James Version, which was translated by the most able Hebrew and Greek scholars in Christendom? How can she condemn the King James Bible as “heretical,” when the Catholic Douay Version is more defective? Certainly she has little ground for upholding one version to the exclusion of all others.

### 3. The Apocrypha

ALTHOUGH the Roman Catholic Church accepts all the books of the Bible as given in the King James Version, it also accepts of equal value the books called the “Apocrypha.” Which are Tobias, Judith, Esther 10: 4 to chapter 16 inclusive, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Daniel 3:25-90, treating on the prayer of Azarias, Daniel 13, which gives the Story of Susanna, and Daniel 14, which treats on Daniel and Bel. The last two books are 1 and 2 Maccabees.

The word “apocrypha” comes from the Greek meaning “secret” or “spurious.” These books or portions of books are so called because their contents are questionable. These books had this name before they were officially approved for the Catholic Bible on April 8, 1546, at the Council of Trent.

The Roman Catholic Church admits that these books were not in the Hebrew Bible that was used in the time of Christ and by Christ Himself. In the footnote of Daniel 3:24-9 1 of the Catholic Douay Version you can find the following: “Here St. Jerome takes notice, that from this verse [Daniel 3: 24], to 9 1, was not in the Hebrew in his time.”

We quote again from the footnote of the same Catholic Bible on Daniel 13: “This history of Susanna, in all the ancient Greek and Latin Bibles, was placed in the beginning of the book of Daniel. Till St. Jerome, in his translation, detached it from thence; because he did not find it in the Hebrew: which is also the case of the history of Bel and the Dragon.”

The Catholic Church accepts books that Jesus, the apostles, and St. Jerome did not recognize. In spite of this, about fifty-three bishops on the Council of Trent voted to place the questionable portions into the Catholic Bible. Since then the whole Roman Catholic world accepts these books as a part of the Bible.

Protestants accept only the books of the Old Testament as they were found in the Hebrew Bible used at the time of Christ. The Catholic Church, however, admits that the “Apocrypha” were added to the books of the Jewish canon.”-Why Catholics Should Read the Bible, John Murphy Company (Catholic), Baltimore, Maryland.

Again we quote: “The decree of the Council 'on the Canonical Scriptures,' which was made at the 4th session (April 8th, 1546), at which about 53 representatives were present, pronounced the enlarged Canon, including the Apocryphal books, to be deserving in all its parts of 'equal veneration' (pari pietatis affectu), and added a list of books 'to prevent the possibility of doubt.'” - McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, article, “Canon.”

About fifty-three men took it upon themselves to add books to the Bible. If God intended to have these books in the Old Testament, why then were they not there at the time of Christ?

There are many other apocryphal books outside of those inserted by the fifty-three men. For example, the “Book of Enoch,” “Third Book of Esdras,” the “Fourth Book of Esdras,” the “Ascension of Isaiah,” the “Third Book of Maccabees,” the “Forth Book of Maccabees,” the “Teaching of Noah,” and others. Why did not the Roman Church accept some of those?

Men the Reformation leaders thundered against indulgences, purgatory, limbo, and other doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church, she had to defend herself. Since she could not prove her point from the Bible alone, she resorted to other books, which she claimed of equal value to the other books of the Bible. It is thus since 1546 that the Apocrypha have become a part of the Catholic Bible.

The Old Testament, which was the Bible at the time of Christ, was confided into the hands of the Jews. They were asked to take care of it, and they did. Paul writes: “What advantage then hath the Jew? . . . Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God.” Romans 3:1,2. Moffatt gives it: “Then what is the Jew's superiority? ... Much in every way. This to begin with-Jews were entrusted with the Scriptures of God.”

The Jews were entrusted with “the oracles of God,” meaning “the Scriptures of God,” and they did not have the Apocrypha. Jesus did not use the Apocryphal books. We have no record in the New Testament that He ever quoted a verse from them, or that He even referred to them.

Similarly, none of the New Testament writers ever refer to the books of the Apocrypha, or quote from it. Sidney Collett observes, “Although there are in the New Testament about 263 direct quotations from, and about 370 allusions to, passages in the Old Testament, yet amongst all these there is not a single reference, either by Christ or His apostles, to the Apocryphal writings.” -All About the Bible, page 50. They cite many texts from the Old Testament. Doesn't this prove that the apostles and Jesus Christ did not recognize them as a part of the Old Testament Scriptures? It would be strange that these doubtful writings



would receive no reference at any time by any apostle or by Jesus, if they were inspired books and were on the same level as the other Old Testament books.

The Apocryphal books contain gross mistakes. For example, chapter 1, verse 5, of the book of Judith says: "Now in the twelfth year of his reign, Nabuchodonosor [Nebuchadnezzar] king of the Assyrians, who reigned in Nineveh the great city," etc. Was Nebuchadnezzar (or Nabuchodonosor as he is also called) king of Assyria? Did he reign there? Anyone who has studied history, or has read the book of Daniel, knows that he was king of Babylon and lived at the city of Babylon, the capital. Daniel 4:4-7,30.

In Tobias, another book accepted by the fifty-three bishops on the Council of Trent, an angel is represented as telling a lie. We quote: "And Tobias said to him: I pray thee, tell me, of what family, or what tribe art thou? And Raphael the angel answered: ... I am Azarias the son of the great Ananias. And Tobias answered: Thou art of a great family." Tobias 5: 16- 19. Notice that the angel said: I am Azarias the son of the great Ananias." Was this true? Of course not. An angel could not be the son of Ananias, a human being. Angels are created beings and are not born. Furthermore, good angels do not lie. This Apocryphal book obviously is not inspired.

Baruch is another such book. It purports to have been written by a person of that name who was secretary to Jeremiah. Baruch 1:1. This book quotes from Daniel and Nehemiah (2 Esdras in the Douay Catholic Bible); but since the book of Daniel was written after the time of the person named Baruch, how could he quote from Daniel?

These are but a few examples to show that the Apocrypha were not inspired of God and do not properly take their place alongside the books of the Bible.

Jesus said: "Salvation is of the Jews." John 4:22. Again we quote from Paul: "Unto them [the Jews] were committed the oracles of God." Romans 3:2. The Douay Version gives it in these words: "The words of God were committed to them." Since the Jews were the Lord's people and His holy words were committed to them, we may be certain that if the Jews were not given the Apocrypha, God did not intend these legendary writings to be a part of the Bible.

The Apocryphal books do not pretend to be inspired. In none of them is there any indication that they claim inspiration. There may be some historical value in them, but they are not more inspired than is a history of the United States. While we may accept the genuine books of the Bible for spiritual guidance, the Apocrypha do not merit our trust.

In the New Testament times there were also produced and circulated many apocryphal works, such as the "General Epistle of Barnabas," the "First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians." The "Second Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians," "Apostolical Constitutions," "First Book of Hermas," "Second Book of Hermas", "Third Book of Hermas." Various epistles of Ignatius, the "Gospel of the Infancy," of the Savior, a mutilated and corrupted "Gospel of John," and the "Gospel of the Nativity of Mary." "The Infancy of the Savior." These spurious writings were not included in the Catholic Bible. Can it be that the church fathers selected only those Apocryphal books which would help substantiate certain of their doctrines? The canon of the Old Testament was arranged some four hundred years before Christ, when ancient Hebrew patriarchs determined which books should be in God's word and which should not. Since the Roman Catholic Church did not come into being until long afterward, it had nothing to do with the process. How then can this church claim the credit for formulating the canon?

Though the Roman Catholic Church had no hand in forming the canon of the Bible, the scribes and monks of the church did play a part in helping to preserve hand-written copies of the Scriptures through the Middle Ages. Similarly, the scribes among the Jews took care of the Hebrew Scriptures throughout the centuries before Christ. While the Jewish scribes carefully guarded the Old Testament, they failed so far to understand its teachings that they did not recognize the Son of God when He came to them, but crucified Him. It is interesting to note that though much of the Sacred Writings condemned the attitudes and behavior of the Jews, they protected the Bible and multiplied its copies. God used them for the sake of people in later centuries who would obey the word of truth.

In like manner, though the Roman Catholic Church served in some degree as a custodian of the Bible through the troubled years after the fall of Rome, the teachings and practices of the church were often in contradiction to the Scriptures it so zealously guarded. Unfortunately, mere custodianship of the word of God does not confer infallibility upon any church.

The reason the Jews departed from the teaching of the Bible was that they accepted tradition and the decisions of their councils as their guide of faith. The Roman Catholic Church has made the same mistake. It, too, compromised the plain truths of the Bible in order to follow tradition.

There were men already in the time of Paul who wrote epistles, using the name of Paul or of other

apostles so as to give their views and deceptions weight. Paul sounded this warning: "Now we beseech you, brethren.... that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us.... Let no man deceive you by any means." 2 Thessalonians 2: 1-3.

In his epistles, Paul usually gave his identification at the beginning and at the close, so as to prevent deception. In the introduction he often introduces himself in these words: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ," and at the close, "The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write." 2 Thessalonians 3:17.

Sometimes Paul dictated the epistle while someone else wrote it for him, as in the case of the letter to the Romans. His secretary Tertius states at the close of this epistle: I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord." Romans 16:22. At the beginning of the letter Paul identifies himself in saying: Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God ... . To all that be in Rome: ... Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 1:1,7. The epistle is Paul's, but his secretary Tertius wrote it.

But in spite of all the warnings and admonitions Paul wrote, writings and false decretals came into the Catholic Church, and these were not discovered until centuries later, after they had done their baleful work. The erroneous doctrines that were established by them were not withdrawn from the church, though the decretals were recognized as false.

The Catholic Encyclopedia, discussing "False Decretals," makes this declaration about these false documents: "The Decretals of the Pseudo-Isidore, is a name given to certain apocryphal Papal letters contained in a collection of canon laws composed about the middle of the ninth century by an author who uses the Pseudonym of Isidore Mercator, in the opening preface to the collection. . . . Nowadays everyone agrees that these so-called Papal letters are forgeries.... The Middle Ages were deceived by this huge forgery, but during the Renaissance men of learning and the canonists generally began to recognize the fraud."

Dr. Dillinger, a student of Roman Catholic history, has this to say about these decretals: In the middle of that century-about 845-arose the huge fabrication of the Isidorian Decretals, which had results far beyond what its author contemplated, and gradually, but surely, changed the whole constitution and government of the church. It would be difficult to find in all history a second instance of so successful, and yet so clumsy a forgery. For three centuries past it has been exposed yet the principles it introduced and brought into practice have taken such deep root in the soil of the church [Catholic] , and have so grown into her life, that the exposure of the fraud has produced no result in shaking the dominant system.

"About a hundred pretended decrees of the earliest popes, together with certain spurious writings of other church dignitaries and acts of synods, were then fabricated in the west of Gaul, and eagerly seized upon by Pope Nicolas 1 at Rome, to be used as genuine documents in support of the new claims put forward by himself and his successors. The immediate object of the compiler of this forgery was to protect bishops against their metropolitans and other authorities, so as to secure absolute impunity, and the exclusion of all influence of the secular power. This end was to be gained through such an immense extension of the papal power, that, as these principles gradually penetrated the church, and were followed out into their consequences, she necessarily assumed the form of an absolute monarchy subjected to the arbitrary power of a single individual, and the foundation of the edifice of papal infallibility was already laid-first, by the principle that the decrees of every council require papal confirmation; secondly, by the assertion that the fullness of power, even in matters of faith, resides in the Pope alone, who is bishop of the universal church, while the other bishops are his servants." - Janus (Dr. J. J. Ignatius von Dillinger), *The Pope and the Council*, pages 94-96.

As forged documents crept into the Roman Catholic Church as authentic, so came the Apocryphal books into the Bible. Any careful student nowadays can detect the errors in the Apocrypha as well as in the false decretals.

Perhaps as time goes on, these Apocryphal books will have to be discarded as were the other spurious writings that deceived the church for centuries, but which were detected during the Reformation.

If this church was not able to keep false writings from deceiving her, how about the oral word called tradition that has been handed down from generation to generation. We shall study more about this in the next chapter.

## 4. What Is Tradition?

TRADITION is defined by the Roman Catholic Church as follows: "Tradition ... means properly the act of handing down, and thus the doctrine was handed down. In its widest sense it includes all truths or supposed truths handed down from one generation to another; and in all societies which have no literature tradition is, with all its manifold imperfections, the great bond between the present and the past."-William E. Addis and Thomas Arnold, *A Catholic Dictionary*, page 882. Benziger Brothers, New York, 1893.

Tradition was placed on equality with, or even above, the Holy Bible at the Council of Trent. Dr. J. H. Holtziman says: "Finally, at the last opening on the eighteenth of January, 1562- (Council of Trent), their last scruple was set aside; the Archbishop of Reggio made a speech in which he openly declared that tradition stood above Scripture."- Cited in *Canon and Tradition*, page 263.

We have already observed that the Roman Catholic Church was deceived by forged documents, as is attested by Roman Catholic works as well as Protestant. How then can the church be sure that at the stories that have been handed down orally for nearly two thousand years are all authentic?

Let us suppose that I should write a biography of a person whom I know well. If this biography would be preserved in the same language for centuries, the truth would not change. The facts would remain exactly as they were written. It would be an authentic and a reliable biography.

Roman Catholic leaders and popes admit that errors crept into the translation of the Latin Bible, which is recognized as their standard version. If they found it impossible to keep the written word free from errors, then how can they pretend to keep oral that I did not include in the written biography, and those oral words were passed on to son, grandson, great-grandson, great-great-grandson, and still on to later posterity for nearly two thousand years, would you have confidence in that portion of the story. It would then have become a family tradition. It might have some truths, and it might not. How would you know? Where ecclesiastical tradition is involved, the Roman Catholic will say: "The church must decide what is truth and what is error."

Now, let us consider this a moment. How could the church do this unless the leaders were given divine revelation? It sometimes happens that a certain pope decrees one thing, and his successors overthrow it and decree something else. It is the human element in church leaders that causes them to make mistakes.

The written portion of the hypothetical biography, preserved in the identical language in which I wrote it, would inspire far greater confidence than would the oral word passed from mouth to mouth for centuries, would it not? Then why do some persons lay so much stress on tradition? The written word is more reliable traditions pure for generations?

One Catholic author makes this statement: "Scripture may be silent, and tradition contradictory, but the church is independent of both. Any doctrine which Catholic divines commonly assert, without proof, to be revealed, must be taken as revealed."-John Emerich Edward Dalberg-Acton, *The History of Freedom*, pages 513, 514.

Arbitrary statements of doctrine are contrary to God's plan. Though learned divines may attempt to introduce man-made doctrines or decrees contrary to Scripture, no matter how long or loudly they are proclaimed, such cannot be the truth, because God's word is truth." John 17: 17.

The Bible is not the product of the Roman Catholic Church. The church is the keeper of the Bible, it is not its maker. The Bible is above man-made creeds and doctrines. Creeds are the production of men, while the Bible is the production of the Spirit of God. The creeds are only echoes of the heavenly message, while the Bible is the message.

Fallible men cannot make infallible creeds. If men claim to make infallible creeds that are binding on the conscience, they go beyond their jurisdiction. It is the message of the Bible that is binding on the conscience, because that is from God.

The Holy Scriptures contain the truth, and there is where we should go to find the principles for our faith. Why, then, should men and women depend on the priests for their version of truth?

Like the Jews of old, many religionists are tempted to stress tradition above the word of God. What did Jesus say about tradition? "Thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.... But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:6-9. Although Jesus condemned tradition, the Roman Catholic Church says: "Without tradition there would be no doctrine of the church, and no church." - John Adam Moeliler, *Symbolism*, page 284.

Paul writes: "Keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you." 1 Corinthians 11:2. By ordinances

he did not mean traditions.

Before Paul was converted, he said, he was exceedingly zealous of “the traditions of my fathers” (Galatians 1: 14), as are many of the Roman Catholic leaders. But after the Lord struck him down on the road to Damascus and he became converted, he later wrote to the church at Colosse, “Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy.... after the tradition of men.” Colossians 2:8.

Through the use of tradition one can prove almost any point of doctrine he desires. Many absurd and incredible things may be taught. Barnabas, who is considered one of the church fathers, writes that the hyena, a wolf like animal, is part of the year male and the other part of the year female. See *The Ante Nicene Fathers*, vol. 1, P. 143. He writes other foolish things that are not fit for public print. This Barnabas is often quoted to prove traditional doctrines. It is no wonder that the apostle Peter calls the tradition of the fathers “vain conversation.” 1 Peter 1:18.

Would you risk your eternal life on such a shaky foundation as tradition? “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” 1 Corinthians 3: 11. “And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone.” Ephesians 2:20. “The foundation of God stands sure.” 2 Timothy 2: 19.

If we need written codes for our government, how much more do we need stability when our eternal interests are at stake! The Lord has given us something that is more stable and tangible than tradition. It is the infallible word of God. God does no guesswork; He does not bring things to us in an imperfect state. Jesus says: “The Scripture cannot be broken.” John 10: 35. There we have the sure foundation. If your doctrines do not agree with the Bible you can be sure that your doctrines are wrong and your faith is based on falsehood.

When Jesus was tempted, he did not refer to the decisions of the councils, or to tradition or man-made ideas. He referred the devil directly to the Scriptures. With them He defended Himself against the evil one. He said: “It is written.” Matthew 4:4,7,10. Jesus quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3; 6: 16; 6:13 and 10:20. He referred the devil directly to the Bible, and not to the decisions of the elders, the Apocrypha, or tradition.

The Pharisees placed so many traditions upon the people that they began to groan under the load. On the Sabbath day they did not allow the members of the church to walk more than a certain stipulated distance, called “a Sabbath-day's journey.” Acts 1:12. Where does the Bible state the distance one might walk on the Sabbath? Nowhere! Then where did the Jews get the idea? From the tradition of the elders. To such absurd ends persons will go when they accept tradition!

The Jews asked Jesus: “Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread. But He answered and said unto them, Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?” Matthew 15:2,3. They placed tradition equal to and even above the Bible. Men who do that will inevitably depart from the Bible. It is the devil's snare to lure people away from the truth, the Holy Bible.

The Jews also accused Jesus of breaking the Sabbath. While Jesus did not break the Sabbath according to the commandment, yet He did according to the Jewish traditions. In the Talmud the Jews had hundreds of exactions and man-made rules, not given by God at all. They were traditions and interpretations handed down for generations, and were accepted as authentic; yet Jesus rejected them. The Bible was His rule, and He always referred others to the same authority.

On one occasion Jesus was asked: "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not?" Mark 2:18. Where did John's disciples act the idea to have fast days? From the traditions of the leaders. But did Jesus accept them? No, His disciples did not fast as the Pharisees did. Where does the Roman Catholic Church get her authority for fasts? From tradition and the decisions of the councils. But are these requirements Biblical? No.

Leaders who wish to dominate always show a dictatorial spirit, especially if they believe that their own ideas are infallible. Who would dare to raise his voice against a man or group of men who claim that their ideas are infallible? Jesus rebuked the Pharisees who had this spirit. They had organized themselves as some men do today in religious circles, men who wish to dominate and make their words law. “Woe unto you also, you lawyers [theological doctors]! For you lade men with burdens grievous to be borne, and you yourselves touch not the burdens with one of your fingers.” Luke 11:46.

We cannot make a mistake in following the Bible. If we follow tradition, we often are obliged to get away from the Bible. In many respects tradition and the Bible do not agree. For this reason Jesus gave this warning for all time: “Thus have you made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.... In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” Matthew 15:6-

9. Peter said: "We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:2,9. If you do not obey the Bible you do not obey God, for the Bible is God's word. Hebrews 4:12.

The Bible is not based on traditions, but on direct revelation from God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God." 2 Timothy 3: 16. "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto you do well that you take heed, as unto a light that shines in a dark place." 2 Peter 1:18. The Bible is God's word, and one cannot make a mistake in accepting its teachings.

## 5. Is the True Church Built on Petros or “Petra”?

THE Roman Catholic Church claims that Peter was the first pope, the successor of Christ. They say he is therefore Christ's vicar and the visible and infallible head of the church, having power and authority over all the other apostles and the entire church. Catholic leaders also claim that Christ built His church upon Peter and gave him the keys to unlock and close the kingdom of heaven and hell to anyone as he chose. They assert that the popes in past history up to the present are Peter's successors, and have the same power of the keys.

These far-reaching claims are based on the verses found in Matthew 16:18,19. Let us make a careful and critical examination of these verses and see what Jesus said and what He actually meant.

Here is the text: “Thou art Peter, and upon this Rock I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.”

The New Testament was originally written in the Greek, from which the Latin, English, and other versions were translated. If you study the Greek text you will find that the word Peter and the word Rock on which Christ was to build His church are two separate and distinct words, each having a different meaning.

Is the True Church Built on “Petros” or “Petra”? The word Peter in Greek, is petros, which means “a piece of rock; a stone; a single stone; movable, insecure, shifting, or rolling.” The word rock is Petra, which means “a rock, a cliff; a mass; a projecting rock; mother rock; huge mass; solid formation. Fixed; immovable; enduring.” (Compare the definition in any standard work.)

The word petros for Peter in the Greek is in the masculine gender, and the word Petra for the rock is in the feminine gender. Petros and Petra are two distinct words in the Greek. Petros is a shifting, rolling, or insecure rock, while Petra is a solid, immovable rock.

In the English language the gender is not specified by the article. We say, the fork, the spoon, and the knife. The three words have the same article. In the Greek, as in many of the modern languages, each noun and corresponding article is in the masculine, feminine, or neuter gender. In many cases it is an arbitrary arrangement, regardless of sex.

Take, for example, these three words in German with their respective articles: the fork, (die Gabel) feminine; the spoon, (der Löffel) masculine; the knife, (das Messer) neuter. Even inanimate objects are thus assigned some gender. This is the way the nouns are classified in the German language, and the same is true in the Greek language.

The Spanish language has two articles for the English article the. They are el (masculine) or la (feminine). Every noun is either in the masculine or in the feminine.

It sometimes happens in Spanish that two different words are spelled the same, but take different articles according to gender. For example, el papa (masculine), means the pope; and la papa (feminine), means the potato.

You can readily see from those examples that the article is important. If one noun is in the masculine it must have a masculine article, and if it is in the feminine it must have a feminine

You would not be using good German if you were to say, in the nominative case, der Gabel or die Messer. It is die Gabel (das Messer).

The text under consideration in the Greek shows that petros, in the masculine, and Petra in the feminine, proving that they are two distinct words; and each one has a different meaning. Now the question is, on which of the two, petros or Petra, did Christ establish His church? Was it on petros, a movable rock, or Petra, an immovable rock?

Let us quote the text again: “I say also unto thee [to Peter], That thou art Peter [petros, masculine gender], and upon this Rock [Petra, feminine gender] I will build My church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” Verse 18. The text indicates clearly that the church of Christ is built on Petra and not on Petros.

Now, who is this Petra or rock on which Christ built His true church? Let the Holy Bible again give the answer. If the Bible gives the answer, we make no mistake in accepting it because the definition is authentic. “They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock [Petra, in the Greek] was Christ.” 1 Corinthians 10:4. Here we have evidence that Petra refers to Christ, and not to Peter, petros.

Again we quote: "Jesus Christ Himself being the chief Cornerstone." Ephesians 2:20. "He is the Rock, His work is perfect." Deuteronomy 32:4; 2 Samuel 22:2, 3 (Douay, 2 Kings 22:2, 3).

If Jesus would have built His church on Peter, petros, He would have said: "Thou art Petros, and upon this Petros [or upon it] I will build My church," but such is not the case. He plainly says: "Thou art Petros, and upon this Petra I will build My church." Paul tells us that the Petra is Christ. Peter is never designated by Petra.

If Peter is the rock on which Christ was to build His church, Peter could not be overcome and the gates of hell could not prevail against him. But the fact is that he was overcome, and the gates of hell did prevail against him. Didn't he deny his Lord? This was after Christ told him that the Rock was not to be overcome.

Jesus told Peter on one occasion: "Get thee behind Me, Satan: thou art an offense unto Me: for thou savors not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Matthew 16:23.

The gospel story reveals that later on Peter was overcome; so he could not be the rock to which Christ referred. Peter gives the answer as to who the Rock is. Speaking of Christ, he says: "This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders;" so Christ must be the rock on which God built His church.

Peter and Paul agree that Christ is the Rock; but the pope claims the title for himself. Which testimony should we accept? "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Romans 3:4.

When Christ was crucified, an inscription was written in three languages and placed above His head on the cross. "And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin and Hebrew." Luke 23:38. This proves that the three languages were used at that time. John records: "This title then read many of the Jews: for the place where Jesus was crucified was nigh to the city." John 19:20.

In the Latin Bible that the priests use today, the two words Petrum (Peter) and petram (rock) are used as in the Greek. In this the modern scholars contradict themselves. First, they say that the Latin Bible is the official Bible of the Roman Catholic Church; then, they endeavor to make one word out of two in their own text.

If Matthew 16:18,19 is important, then why are not other scriptures equally important? Why take one text and build a theological system on it, and reject others? If "the Bible is all true," then all texts are true and important. To reject one text and accept another would not be consistent, logical, or honest. "And the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Against what? Against Petros or against Petra? It refers to Petra. The gates of hell will not prevail against Christ, on whom the true church is built.

Peter was not the head of the church in his day. Instead of teaching the disciples, apostles, and other believers to call Peter pope, or Holy Father Peter, Jesus said: "Be not you called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all you are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.... But he that is greatest among you be your servant." Matthew 23:8-11. "Call no man your father could not refer to an earthly parent, but to the spiritual title. Of course, Jesus recommended our paying full respect to earthly parents when He quoted the commandment: "Honor thy father and thy mother." Mark 7:10.

Sometimes 1 Corinthians 4:15 is used to prove that we may call spiritual leaders our fathers. Paul writes: "I have begotten you through the gospel." They were begotten through the gospel and not through Paul. Again Paul writes: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." Romans 1:16.

We repeat: it is through the gospel that we are begotten, and not through Paul or some other person. It is the gospel that is the power of God unto salvation, and not man.

If Jesus delegated Peter as the head of the church, why did the other disciples quarrel among themselves as to who would be the greatest? If this decision had already been made by Christ, why should the others fret about it? The other disciples would have submitted to the wish of their Master. Thus it seems evident that no such appointment had been made by Jesus.

Neither Peter nor any of his successors were heads of the true church. Paul explains this when he says: "The head of every man is Christ." 1 Corinthians 11:3. God "gave Him to be the head over all things to the church." Ephesians 1:22. This explains that Jesus is the head of every person and also of the church. We are responsible to the head, which is Christ, and not to men who try to circumvent the work of Christ and take His place. Christ is the head of every person, and we are responsible to Him as individuals.

There is not a trace of evidence in the Bible that Peter was a pope. What would you think of historians who would write accounts of Abraham Lincoln, yet in not a single instance mention his title as President of the United States of America? Could you imagine such an oversight? If Peter had borne some such title as "pope," don't you think that at least one inspired writer would have mentioned it?

Peter wrote two epistles, but he does not use the title of pope in either. Can you imagine a pope today writing two letters to the church and forgetting his title? Peter could have mentioned it on the Day of Pentecost when he delivered that stirring sermon, but he did not do so. The church in the days of the apostles did not recognize Peter as the head of the church. Long before Jesus was born He was considered the Rock.

Isaiah declares: "Therefore thus said the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious cornerstone, a sure foundation." Isaiah 28: 16. Peter applies this prophecy to Christ. He wrote: "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief Cornerstone, elect, precious: and he that believes on Him shall not be confounded." 1 Peter 2:6.

David said: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." Psalm 61:2 (Douay, Psalm 60:3). Paul writes that the "Rock was Christ." 1 Corinthians 10:4

"Other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." 1 Corinthians 3:11. "Upon this Rock," said Jesus, I will build My church." Matthew 16: 18.



## 6. The Keys, to Loose and to Bind

THE keys are the Scriptures, both Old and New Testament, and what they bind is bound in heaven, and what they loose is loosed in heaven. It was the work of Paul, as well as of Peter or any of the other disciples and believers, to use those keys. It was the preaching of the word of God that meant life to those who accepted it and meant death to those who rejected it. When Paul and his helpers came to Troas and preached the word, he said: "To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life." 2 Corinthians 2: 16.

The element of authority was in the word of God, and not in Paul, or in any other disciple. "So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Romans 10:17. The source of preaching is the word of God, the Bible. So then, it is the Bible that binds and loosens, and not the preacher or the priest.

Jesus did not commit the work of the gospel to Peter individually, but to the entire church. The same power that was given to Peter to bind and to loose was given to Paul, to James, to John, and to the whole church.

"Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou has gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church [both men and women]: but if he neglect to hear the church [men and women that compose the church], let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever you [the church members, both men and women shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven." Matthew 18: 15- 18.

This indicates that women have the same authority as men to help loose and bind. "Whose so ever sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose so ever sins you retain, they are retained." John 20:23. This refers to disciplinary matters.

Let us illustrate how church members, both men and women, loose and bind those that sin. One of the commandments says: "Thou shall not steal." Suppose there is a person in the church who steals, and another member discovers it. What is the duty now of the one who knows his brother steals? He is to go to the guilty one first and try to help him, as the Bible indicates. If the thief reforms he has been helped. His sin is forgiven, not by the person but by God. But if the thief disregards the admonition and continues to steal, the brother who knows about it should take one or two more and try to help him. If he refuses again and does not accept the admonition the case is to be presented to the church, and this means all the members.

The church then has a right to eliminate the accused from church fellowship and consider him as a Gentile and publican. Such a one still needs the help and prayers of the church, as sinners and Gentiles do. The Bible condemns the thief and so does the church. The church works in harmony with the Bible instruction, so what is bound by the church is bound in heaven. This gives the church disciplinary powers, but not power to forgive sins. That belongs to God alone. Luke 5:21; Mark 2:7.

If the sinner repents and wants to come back after he has been dropped as a member, the church again accepts him, according to the Bible. So what the Bible loosened, the church also loosed, and what the Bible bound the church also did accordingly. The church and the Bible must work in harmony. If at times policy disagree, then we must obey God rather than men. Acts 5:29. Sometimes a church makes mistakes. Men can see only the exterior and judge accordingly.

When the disciples brought Judas to Jesus they thought they had found a man with talents which would be a great help to the church; but they could not look into the heart of Judas. They had so much confidence in him that they made him treasurer. Jesus did not reveal what was in Judas's heart until Judas himself exposed it. If Judas had died a short time before the shameful betrayal he would have been considered a great loss to the cause of Christ. Why? Because men can see only the exterior and cannot judge the heart. Priests cannot look into the heart, so they press the individuals to confess and open before them their inmost thoughts and feelings.

It happened that the early church in the time of Peter made a mistake. The disciples baptized a certain man and accepted him into church fellowship, though he was not converted. "Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.... And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money.... But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee.... Thy

heart is not right in the sight of God.... For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.” Acts 8:13-23.

This man Simon was baptized and had joined the believers, but he was not converted. Do you suppose that because he was a church member he was accepted by God? The record of church membership does not always agree with the list in the book of life. We might carry a baptismal certificate around until it is worn through, but that will not ensure us a place in heaven.

If the church acts according to the word of God, those acts are recognized in heaven. If it does not act according to the Bible, the Lord does not accept error or wrong, even though the church might place its stamp of approval on it. God does not sanction any error, whether it comes from the church or from an individual.

What is it that locks heaven against a person? What it is that will keep multitudes out of the kingdom of heaven? It is sin. If the sin is taken away, then we have a right to enter the kingdom. What provision is made to take the sins away so we will not be shut out of the kingdom of heaven? That provision is the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. That gospel is the Bible, both Old and New Testaments. There you have the keys.

The privilege to preach the gospel and to further God's cause in the earth was given to all the apostles and the whole church. The object of the church is to do that work. Jesus said: “Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, LO, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.” Matthew 28:19, 20.

This gospel commission extends from the time of the apostles down to the end of time. Those that reject the gospel will be lost. There you have the key that keeps people out of heaven. Paul says: “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come.” Thessalonians 1:7-10.

If those that obey not the gospel will be lost, then the key is not limited to Peter or to his successors, but to the gospel as found in the Holy Bible. Those who accept the gospel will have entrance into the kingdom of heaven, and those who reject it will be shut out of the kingdom.

Again we quote: “I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.” Romans 1:15,16. If the gospel is the power of God unto salvation, the gospel is the key that gives entrance to the kingdom of heaven, and is that which keeps persons out of heaven. There, then are the keys. The keys are the Scriptures, both the Old and the New Testament.

If you accept the word of God, the kingdom of heaven is open for you; and if you reject it, it is closed for you. You are the one that has to make the choice and decide what kind of keys you want to use. You cannot make a mistake if you accept the Biblical keys.

## 7. The Infallibility of the Pope

THE decree of the Vatican Council on infallibility, issued in 1870, makes the following declaration: "Thee Roman Pontiff, when he speaks ex cathedra, that is, when in discharge of the office of pastor and doctor of all Christians, by virtue of his supreme apostolic authority he defines a doctrine regarding faith or morals to be held by the universal church, . . . is possessed of that infallibility with which the divine Redeemer willed that his church should be endowed for defining doctrine regarding faith or morals. And that therefore such definitions of the Roman Pontiff are irreformable of themselves, and not from the consent of the church."-First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ, chapter 4, published in the fourth session of the Vatican Council, July 18, 1870; *Petri Privilegium (The Vatican Council and Its Definitions)*, Archbishop Manning (R.C.), p. 218. Longmans, Green & Co., London, 1871. Quoted in *Source Book*, 1940 ed., P. 258, Washington, D.C.

According to this decree, when the pope speaks in his official capacity defining faith and morals, he is infallible. This does not include the personal or private acts as infallible, but those promulgated from the chair on faith and morals for the whole church. This is the Roman Catholic position regarding infallibility.

We shall study this question from the viewpoint of the Bible first, and then from secular history. The Bible gives a true and exact history. It relates the good and bad. Today much history relates only the good and the greatness of men without saying a word about the bad side.

In the Acts of the Apostles the account of how Judas hanged himself is recorded. This report was probably detrimental to the early church and to the cause of Christ, yet inspiration mentions it because it was the truth.

The Bible records that Peter made a mistake in doctrine. This might seem strange to many Roman Catholics, since he is considered by them to be the first pope, and not likely to make a mistake. But the Bible records it, so it must be true.

At one of the meetings held at Antioch, AD 51, according to the chronology of the Catholic Douay Bible, there arose a discussion among the church members and the leaders whether the apostles should eat with the Gentiles.

Peter ate with them when no Jews were around, but when Jews were near enough to see him, he would refuse. Paul states the case as follows: "But when Peter was come to Antioch, I [Paul] withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. . . . And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him. Insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I [Paul] saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I [Paul] said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compels thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?" Galatians 2:11.

Paul corrected Peter before the whole assembly, and Peter did not refute him. He did not claim infallibility. If Peter had been pope and had assumed the power that popes do today, he would have silenced Paul immediately. Instead, Peter submitted to Paul's decision. Paul exposed Peter's error to the whole church. He thereby demonstrated that Peter was not pope and did not have the last word in doctrine, either.

On another occasion Peter's religious scruples forbade him to go to the Gentiles, and the Lord had to give him a vision to get that idea out of his mind. After the vision he said: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: but in every nation that fears Him, and works righteousness, is accepted with Him." Acts 10:34,35. Peter had believed that it was wrong to mix with the Gentiles. Wasn't this a doctrinal mistake? If Peter was fallible, then how about popes today?

The apostle Paul took not Peter, but the gospel, as the standard of faith. Paul says: "But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all," etc. Galatians 2:14. Again Paul declares: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.", Romans 1:16,17. It is the gospel of Christ that brings salvation to those who believe. The gospel is the standard of faith for all Christians.

Peter, in speaking of Jesus, said: "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4: 12. It is through Jesus that we

are saved, and it is the gospel that brings us the story, the good news. If we could be saved through the pope, then there would be more than one name through which we could be saved. This would contradict the Scriptures.

The popes cannot save us any more than could Paul. It is Jesus “which takes away the sin of the world.” John 1:29. It is Jesus “that loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood.” Revelation 1:5. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7.

If the Lord intended that the pope should dictate the rules of faith and of morals, why then did Paul say that the Lord would come “in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power”? 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9.

Paul declares through inspiration: “I testify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.” If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that you have received, let him be accursed.” “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.” Galatians 1:11,12, 9, 8.

John points out how exact God is with the revealed word. If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book. And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the Holy City, and from the things which are written in this book.” Revelation 22:18,19.

If the doctrine of infallibility were defined by Christ or by any apostle, why did the Roman Catholic Church wait until 1870 to make this doctrine a dogma of the church? Why didn't she accept it centuries before?

The truth is that papal infallibility was not generally taught in the Roman Catholic Church previous to 1870. We shall quote from two catechisms printed before 1870, to verify this.

“Question. Must not Catholics believe the Pope in himself to be infallible?

“Answer. This is a Protestant invention; it is no article of the Catholic faith; no decision of his can oblige, under pain of heresy, unless it be received and enforced by the teaching body, that is, by the bishops of the church.” - Stephen Keenan, A Doctrinal Catechism.

Again we quote: “Do we believe that, as a consequence of this primacy, the Pope is infallible and may decide as Christ himself, as the non-Catholics allege?

“No. The Pope possesses in controversies of faith only a judicial decision, which can only become an article of faith when the church gives its concurrence.” - Krautheimer, Catechism of the Catholic Religion, page 87.

Before 1870 the infallibility of the pope was declared as “a Protestant invention.” If the popes are infallible since 1870, what were they before that time? If they were fallible before 1870, in what about their doctrines?

If the popes possessed “in controversies of faith only a judicial decision, which can only become an article of faith when the church gives its concurrence,” then it was the church that made the articles of faith binding, and not the pope. But since 1870 the popes have had the last word on doctrines and morals. Surely there is a contradiction here.

A year after the pope was declared infallible The Catholic World stated: “We have no right to ask reasons of the church, any more than of Almighty God, as a preliminary to our submission. We are to take with unquestioning docility whatever instruction the church gives.” - August, 1871, page 598.

Paul said: “These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so.” Acts 17:11. The Bereans took the Bible as their guide, and Paul commended them highly for doing so. “Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.” Psalm 119:105 (Douay, 118:105). The Bible, and not the pope of Rome, is the safe guide.

The doctrine of infallibility came gradually into the church. It took centuries of compromise and decadence, with many false decretals and deceptions, to make the circumstances favorable for such a proclamation. “The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God.... The Pope is of so great authority and power that he can modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws.... Whatever the Lord God Himself, and the Redeemer, is said to do, that his vicar does, provided that he does nothing contrary to the faith.” -P. F. Lucius Ferraris, Ecclesiastical Dictionary (R.C.), article, ((Pope.))

The Bible says this: “Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day [the coming of the Lord]

shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” 2 Thessalonians 2: 3, 4.

Paul said that apostasy would come and that a man would arise that would exalt himself as God and place himself in the temple of God, saying that he is God. Do we not see this fulfillment in the pope who has declared that he is another God on earth?

When it was found that the pope had reached the summit of power by using false decretals and forged documents, the true nature of which was later discovered, he did not step down. If the pope had admitted that he had been deceived, we would not hold that against him. The apostle Peter, Philip, and others could not avoid making mistakes. But after the deceptions were discovered, the pope should have rectified the error and told his church that he and others had been exalted through error.

We shall now let history tell of the errors of the popes in matters of doctrine. One thing is certain about accurate history: it is neither Catholic nor Protestant, Lutheran nor Calvinistic, Greek nor English. History is a collection of facts. You may write against it, you may suppress or pervert it, but you cannot destroy it. It is imperishable. You may read it with a biased or prejudiced mind, but your approach does not change the facts.

Before the year 1900 histories used in the public schools of the United States stated certain facts. Since then the histories have been revised, leaving out the truth that hurts. The following is an example of a “correction” that was made in *An Introduction to the History of Western Europe*, by Professor J. H. Robinson, about indulgences. We quote: “It is a common mistake of protestants to suppose that the indulgences was forgiveness granted beforehand for sins to be committed in the future. There is absolutely no foundation for this idea.” - Page 391.

But what are the historical facts about indulgences? We read the following about Tetzl, who sold indulgences for money in Germany during the time of Luther. I “absolve thee ... from all thy sins, transgressions and excesses . . . and I restore thee ... to that innocence and purity which thou possessed at baptism. So that, when thou dies, the gates of punishment shall be shut, and the gates of the paradise of delight shall be open.” - Coxe, *House of Austria*, vol. 1, Page 385.

Doesn't this kind of indulgence profess to take care of sins from the moment of purchase until the death of the purchaser? According to the certificate the owner would go to heaven at death. That means that the certificate holder either would sin no more after he had bought it, or else that his sins committed after such a time would be canceled.

We quote from a letter written by Archbishop Sinnott of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, March 1, 1944: I have received from the Pastors of the different Parishes a list of those who have boys overseas. Some time ago, as you are aware, I called on Catholic Mothers to enroll their boys as Perpetual Members of the Society of the Propagation of the Faith. I said: “What better guarantee for any boy exposed to all the hazards of war! A guarantee should he be killed, that he will go at once to his Maker, to be with Him for all eternity! ... It is not necessary to pay the \$40.00 at once. You can pay any sum you wish by installments.” - From an exact photographic reproduction of Archbishop Sinnott's letter, of Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. *The Gospel Witness and Protestant Advocate*, Toronto, Canada, publishers.

This letter makes it plain that, according to this teaching, after the \$40 are paid any sins which the “protected” soldier might commit before he dies in battle would not interfere with his going directly to “his Maker” at death, instead of to purgatory. No exception is made whatever. The said \$40 would guarantee to bring him to heaven at death. How then can the Roman leaders say that no provision is made for future sin?

This idea of forgiving sins in advance did not originate with Archbishop Sinnott. During the Crusades the popes themselves granted indulgences for future sins. “They granted plenary indulgence to all who would go. This involved forgiveness of past sins and the forgiveness in advance of any sins they might commit while engaged in crusading, with the assurance of freedom from purgatorial pains.” - Albert Henry Newman, *A Manual of Church History*, volume 1, Page 461.

When Roman Catholic leaders revise books, of course many of those “objectionable” things are left out; but that does not change the facts of history.

The Catholic Church not only controls the editing of many books, but it also has great influence over the public press. News that is unfavorable to the Catholic Church is frequently not printed. *Time* magazine told how a San Francisco newspaper reported an incident which was unfavorable to the Catholic Church, and a church boycott was used to try to bring the paper that published it to terms.

*Time* magazine in its issue of October 23 1944, told a story about the Catholic boycott of the press that has shocked all freedom-loving Americans. On September 11, the San Francisco News published an

item that a Roman Catholic priest with a woman companion had pleaded guilty to drunken driving. Other San Francisco papers were afraid to publish the story. Ten days later the News again reported that the priest had paid a \$250 fine.

Time magazine not only repeated the News's item, but told how Archbishop Mitty of San Francisco first tried by threats to suppress the publication of it. Having failed to intimidate the News, the archbishop organized the entire clergy and laity of San Francisco to boycott the News in every parish "until it recognized the well-known weight of the Church." All Catholic advertising was immediately withdrawn from the columns of the News.

History shows that indulgences were sold for money and also to eradicate future sins, and the Roman Catholic Church now wants American histories, reference books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, and newspapers to say the contrary.

The Council of Trent declared that the Holy Bible is the rule of faith and morals. If the Council of Trent was infallible, then the Vatican Council of 1870 was wrong in making the pope supreme; and vice versa. Certainly the two councils cannot have been in accord.

Dr. Dillinger says the following: "Even the boldest champions of papal absolutism, men like Agostino Trionfo [Augustinus de Anconal and Alvaro Pelayo, assumed that the popes could err, and that their decisions were no certain criterion. . . . So, too, Cardinal Jacob Fournier, afterward pope, thought that papal decisions were by no means final, but might be overruled by another pope.... A pope might err in matters of faith." - Janus (Dr. J. J. Ignaz von Dillinger), *The Pope and the Council*, pages 272,273.

When two popes take opposing views on such doctrines as the legality of civil marriages, the person who would believe in papal infallibility is brought to a hard choice. He must conclude that one is in error, and that not all popes have been infallible.

Pius IX was pope at the time of the Vatican Council. He made the provision that in case he were to die during the council, its decisions would take precedence over the decisions made by previous councils or popes, and thus correct any inconsistencies there might be. If the pope were truly the Vicar of Christ, would he dare to make provisions for contradictions?

Let us again look at history. Boniface III (607) made the parricide Emperor Phocas confer the title of Universal Bishop on Gregory 1 (785-90) calls anyone Antichrist who himself, while Gregory takes the name of Universal Bishop. Eugene III (1145-53) authorized fighting duels, but Julius 11 (1509) and Pius IV (1560) forbade it. Eugene IV (1431-1447) approved both the Council of Basle and the restitution of the Communion cup to the church of Bohemia, and Pius II (1458-64) revoked the concession. See *Ibid*, p. 9. If these popes were infallible, would they make such contradictory decrees and blunders? If they were divinely ordained they could not have such inconsistent teachings.

Another unproved claim of the Roman Catholic leaders is that the papal chain of succession from Peter to the present time has not been broken. The truth is that it was broken in a number of places. We quote: "From Victor, bishop of Rome in 193 AD, to Clement VII in 1523-34, there were nine popes who were guilty of heresy, nine whose elections were disputed, nine whose elections were doubtful, fourteen who were guilty of simony [that is, of buying the papal chair], and nineteen who were guilty of intrusion [that is, forcing one's self without right or welcome]. Yet all of these, excepting three, are counted as links in the papal chain, in spite of the fact that it is contrary to Roman canon law for one to be accounted as pope who secured the papal chair through simony or intrusion. And as to doubtful elections, Bellarmine, a famous Roman Catholic author, says, 'A doubtful pope is no pope.'" -*De Concil*, book 2, chapter 19. Quoted by Stevens in *Was Peter the First Pope?* page 21.

Cardinal Gibbons says: "But if the Pope erred in faith and morals he would no longer be Christ's Vicar and true representative." -*The Faith of Our Fathers*, 76th ed., p. 125.

We have given a few examples from both Catholic and Protestant sources to show that popes have erred, and those that erred could not be true representatives or vicars of Christ. This throws the succession of popes and their infallibility to the four winds.

Millions of heart-hungry persons put their trust in the claims of men and look up to them for their salvation, when they should look to God and to the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The difficulty with the majority of people today, including both Catholics and Protestants, is that they do not investigate what they believe and why they believe it. They leave such things to the minister or to the priest. Many take for granted that what they believe must be Bible fact. They are more interested in stocks and bonds, in business, farms, and fine breeds of cattle, than they are in their own salvation. Paul writes: "Examine yourselves, whether you be in the faith; prove your own selves." 2 Corinthians 13:5.

When Paul preached to the Bereans they searched the Scriptures daily to see whether his message

was true. If the people of that time could study the word of God daily, could not we do the same when we have the best facilities for study at hand? If the Bereans were not satisfied to take Paul's word for the doctrine they heard, should we be less satisfied and believe everything that is being preached from the pulpit or taught in the church schools? Paul commended the Bereans for studying the Bible daily. They investigated. The doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus was new to them; they wanted to be sure that it agreed with the Bible. Are you sure that what you believe agrees with the Bible? "Prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." Romans 12:2. By what can we prove the will of God? By His Holy Word! There we have the source. We are accountable to God and not to any man for our salvation. "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Romans 14:12. We must give account to God and not to the priests or the pope, or to the preachers. "Cursed be the man that trusts in man, and makes flesh his arm." Jeremiah 17:5. "There is a way which seems right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Proverbs 14: 12.

Are you sure that you are following God's way-or is it possible that you are following man-made ways? It is for you to "prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." The only way you can prove it is to go to your Bible. There you have God's acceptable will expressed. Read it and believe it, pray while you study it, and God will lead you into the truth. Your faith then will be strengthened in the infallible God, and not in a fallible human substitute.

## 8. The Exaltation of the Pope

“THE Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God and the vicar of God.... The Pope is crowned with a triple crown as king of the heaven and of earth and of the lower region.... The Pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly but also of the heavenly kingdom. The Pope is of so great authority and power that he can modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws.” - P. F. Lucius Ferraris, Ecclesiastical Dictionary (Roman Catholic), article, “Pope.”

God has never given such power to any man. Since the pope has such an exalted reputation, persons who want to see him at the Vatican must kneel before him. Even the apostle Peter did not require such adulation. When Cornelius fell down before Peter in an act of worship, the apostle said: “Stand up; I myself also am a man.” Acts 10:26.

Some have told me, If you kneel in front of the pope, you merely give him the honor that you would give any high official.” Yet no one kneels before the President of the United States of America. Genuflection, or kneeling, is not merely a sign of respect, as is tipping one's hat to a woman, or bowing to a queen, or removing one's hat at the dedication of a monument or statue, or on entering a church, or on saying “Good morning.” Kneeling to any human being has in it the element of adoration, which the second commandment of the Bible prohibits. Exodus 20:4-6.

Not even angels allow men to worship them. Revelation 19:10. The pope has a number of crowns, and one of them, called the tiara, is made of gold. It consists of three crowns in one, With 252 pearls, 229 diamonds, 3 2 rubies, 19 emeralds, and 111 sapphires. This is a contrast to the crown of thorns that Jesus wore. Jesus was the Son of the omnipotent God, yet He visited the people in their homes, the poor as well as the rich. He preached the gospel, ate at the table of sinners, and spoke words of comfort and cheer to them. The Savior said: “You know that the princes of the Gentiles exercise dominion over them, and they that are great exercise authority upon them. But it shall not be so among you: but whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Matthew 20:25-28.

In this text Jesus expresses His will regarding the attitude that His disciples should have toward each other and to church members in general. Jesus ate at the table of the poor, the rich, the sinners, and the publicans. He had no separate table placed a little higher than the other tables, nor did He eat alone, as do the popes. A well-known Catholic writer, Camille M. Cianfarra, says that according to “ancient custom” the pope always eats alone. If he has guests he does not sit with them at the table, but at a table placed “higher than the others, and is, of course, served first.” *The Vatican and the War*, page 90.

The Savior's love and impartation of truth to men, women, and even children, was not hindered by artificial barriers. He brushed aside all artificiality and repetitious ritual as of no value, and placed Himself as a servant. Our Lord and Savior had no armed guards around Him. Jesus Christ said: “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's.” Luke 20:25.

Jesus laid down the following principles for the apostles and all His followers: “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant. Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.” Matthew 20:26-28.



## 9. Confession

THE Roman Catholic view of confession is expressed in The Catholic Encyclopedia: "Confession is the avowal of one's own sins made to a duly authorized priest for the purpose of obtaining their forgiveness.... The Lateran edict presupposed the necessity of confession as an article of Catholic belief and laid down a law as to the minimum frequency of confession-at least once a year."-Article, "Penance," subdivision, "Confession."

We continue to quote from the same Catholic work: "The absolution given by the priest to a penitent who confesses his sins with the proper dispositions remits both the guilt and the eternal punishment (of mortal sin).... In order to have it canceled here, the penitent receives from his confessor what is usually called his penance, usually in the form of certain prayers which he is to say, or of certain actions which he is to perform, such as visits to a church, the Stations of the Cross, etc. Almsdeeds, fasting, and prayer are the chief means of satisfaction, but other penitential works may also be enjoined."-Ibid., p. 628. This is the Roman Catholic position regarding confession.

The Holy Bible speaks about confession and also about forgiveness. The question is, however, to whom should we confess, and who can forgive sins? According to Roman Catholic teaching the priest is the judge, for as Canon 888 says: "The priest has to remember that in hearing confessions he is a judge."

Canon 870 states: "In the confessional the minister has the power to forgive all crimes committed after baptism." And again: "The crimes are not only forgiven but destroyed and the criminal made a new person-a saint." - Session 40, chapter 7, D.B. 799 on the Council of Trent.

"The decrees of the Council of Trent are binding on Catholics under pain of anathema and excommunication."

The Bible teaches: "If we confess our sins, He [Jesus] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9. Jesus is the one who forgives, and He is the one to whom we confess.

"All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of Him [Jesus] with whom we have to do. Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.... Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." Hebrews 4: 13-16. We are to come boldly to our heavenly high priest, Jesus Christ, and not to an earthly confessional before a human being, to obtain mercy and grace and to receive forgiveness and cleansing for our sins.

The Brooklyn Tablet of November 3, 1944, states: "A priest is called by God and rightly so to act as mediator between God and man, and to offer up a sacrifice of propitiation for the sins of men."

The teachings of the Scriptures declare Christ is our priest: "We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man." Hebrews 8:1,2. Before Christ became priest for us, God had ordained earthly priests in the Old Testament; but as soon as Jesus died and was raised from the dead He became the priest. There was no longer need for earthly priests.

The earthly priest served only as a "shadow" of the heavenly priest, Jesus Christ, and when Christ came this "shadow" ceased. "There are priests that offer gifts according to the law. Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, said He, that thou make all things according to the pattern showed to thee in the mount." Verses 4,5.

The whole Levitical priesthood and ritual in connection with the offerings of lambs, bullocks, etc., was a "shadow of heavenly things." When Jesus, the true Lamb of God, came and died, there was no more need of the symbols that pointed to Him. When Jesus died, the veil in the temple tore from top to bottom. Matthew 27:5 1. What did this have to do with terminating the Levitical priesthood?

The temple was divided into two sections, the holy place and the most holy. Though the priests officiated every day in the holy place, the high priest was allowed to enter the most holy place only once a year. If anyone entered the most holy place at any other time he was instantly killed. When Jesus died as the true Lamb to which all the sacrifices pointed, "the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom." Everybody could look into the most holy place, and not be affected. The Levitical priesthood now ended, and another priesthood started. What priesthood? It was the priesthood of Christ.

'We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the

heavens.” Hebrews 8:1. “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens. Who needs not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's. For this He did once, when He offered up Himself.” Hebrews 7:25-27.

“Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession.” Hebrews 4:14.

Though the Levitical priesthood came to an end, the Roman Catholic Church revived a similar system. This church transfers the priesthood of Christ to her priests. Jesus is our Priest, and we confess our sins to Him; and He is the one that forgives.

Christ became not only Priest for us in the New Testament, but also our Mediator. “He [Jesus] is the Mediator.” Hebrews 8:6. “For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus.” 1 Timothy 2:5. The Bible says that there is one Mediator. The Catholic Church says that there are many, not only priests, but also saints, who intercede for us. There is “one God,” and “one Mediator,” and “one Holy Spirit,” the Bible declares. See Ephesians 2:18. If the church says there are many mediators and the Bible says there is one, which teaching shall we accept?

Christ is our Advocate, for “if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” 1 John 2:1. An advocate is “one who pleads the cause of another.” - Webster. There is one advocate who pleads, and not two or more. We find no record in the Bible that an apostle or follower of Christ titled himself as priest, or an advocate between God and man after Christ had ascended. Christ is our only priest and our only advocate.

Jesus is the propitiation for our sins. The apostle John writes: “Jesus Christ the righteous: . . . He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.” 1 John 2:1,2. Propitiation means “atonement or atoning sacrifice; specifically, the self-sacrifice and death of Christ, viewed as appeasing divine justice and effecting reconciliation between God and man.” -Webster.

Neither Jesus nor the apostles knew anything of the many traditions and exactions that have been invented for men to fulfill in order to receive remissions of their sins. Jesus invites us to come directly to Him, and not through a third person. “Whosoever will” may come. Revelation 22:17. “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.” Matthew 11:28-30. “Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.” Revelation 22:17. Jesus invites us to come to Him directly, and not through another mediator.

If we confess our sins, He [Jesus] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” 1 John 1:9. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” Verse 7. Why not claim this promise and comply with the instructions? If we do, then there will come a change into our lives. We will not sin over and over again, but we will have a new experience, a change of heart.

The sick woman crawled up close to the Savior and touched the hem of His garment, and she was healed. She did not have to go through another “mediator” or some other “intercessor,” but went directly to Jesus. That touch of faith healed her infirmity and her sin-sick soul. Yes, it is that touch of faith that will heal your own sick soul.

The Bible is full of examples of men and women who prayed directly to God, but it has none of a person praying to saints or other mediators. Cornelius prayed to God, and the Lord heard him. Acts 10:1-3. Moses prayed for his sister Miriam, who was stricken with leprosy, and she was healed. Numbers 12:10-14. The church prayed to God for Peter, and the Lord heard them; and Peter was miraculously delivered from the prison. Acts 12:12. Peter prayed for Dorcas, and she was raised from the dead. Acts 9:40. Elijah prayed to God “earnestly that it might not rain: and it rained not on the earth by the space of three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth brought forth her fruit.” James 5:17,18. So all through the Bible we see that men and women prayed directly to God, and not through another saint or intercessor. The Lord's Prayer begins with the words: “Our Father which art in heaven.” Jesus gave an example of praying directly to God.

“Come now, and let us reason together, said the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.” Isaiah 1:18. When the Lord says this He does not mean that we should come to Him through another person. We may go directly to God.

Peter says: “Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” Acts 3:19. “Whosoever believes in Him [Jesus] shall receive remission of sins.” Acts 10:43. Paul states: In whom [Jesus] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Ephesians 1:7. John records: “He

that hears My word, and believes on Him [God] that sent Me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.” John 5:24.

James teaches us what to do if we make mistakes toward one another: “Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another.” James 5: 16. Our sins should be confessed to God, and our faults to one another. “Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do you.” Colossians 3:13.

The teachings of the Bible are that we should confess to God through Jesus Christ, our high priest in heaven. He is our intercessor, advocate, and mediator.

We should turn to the Author of our salvation, who only has power to forgive and save from sin. The lowly Jesus says: “Come unto Me, all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.” Matthew 11:28. Where should you go to find rest for your soul? To the priest? No, to Jesus. There you can pour out your woes, confess your sins, and unburden your heartaches. Our Lord understands, and He will not turn you down. Come to Him through prayer. He hears your prayers and your confessions.

In order to confess your sins, you cannot follow a prayer that someone else has written. Nobody else can write a prayer to fit your case exactly. Pray to God and tell Him exactly what you want, and confess what you have to confess. Mention the sin by name, whatever it is, then plead for forgiveness; and believe that you have it. If you do this sincerely, something will come into your life that you perhaps never experienced before. It is the working of the Holy Spirit on your heart that first brings conviction of your sins; and when you confess them to Jesus, and believe that He has forgiven you, you will enjoy a peace in your heart that no priest can bring. It is simple, but effective. Try it in sincerity. It works.

It is natural for men to want to do something to pay God back. The Jewish leaders made use of this sentiment in the time of Christ. They made rules which they thought were good, but God rejected them. Jesus said: “They bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers . . . . They make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues [churches], and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. But be not you called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all you are brethren. And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.” Matthew 23:4-9.

If a man professes to forgive sin, the Bible refers to his action as blasphemy. Jesus forgave sins, and the Pharisees immediately accused Him of blasphemy. They saw in Him only a human being. But Jesus was more than a human. He was the Son of God. The Pharisees railed at Him: “Who is this which speaks blasphemies? Who can forgive sins, but God alone?” Luke 5:2 1. Jesus and the Father can bestow complete forgiveness of sins; but no human being can do so.

The Christian teaching of the Bible is: “Repent you therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.” Acts 3:19. This does not mean that we should commit the same sins over and over again without a change of life. It does not mean that old sins are merely wiped off and forgiven and that the individual may go forth again and again to soil his soul with the same sins. It is not a laundering process. “We know that whosoever is born of God sins not.” 1 John 5:18.

Jeremiah writes: “For though thou wash thee with niter, and take thee much soap, yet your iniquity is marked before Me, said the Lord God.” Jeremiah 2:2,2. “He that said he abides in Him ought himself also so to walk, even as He walked.” 1 John 2:6. “For it is God which works in you both to will and to do of “His good pleasure.” Philippians 2:13.

Peter states that a person may have been a good Christian and later may depart from God. “For if after they have escaped the pollution of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.... But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.” 2, Peter 2:20-22. Sinning, after we have accepted Christ as our personal Savior, is the exception and not the rule.

By confessing our sins to God and repenting, we experience a change of heart. The Holy Spirit will then be able to work more fully for us. If a man has committed a theft, he must confess to God and make full restitution, seeking the pardon of the one whom he has wronged. This is what brings a change into the life. Though a thief may receive forgiveness at the hands of a priest, if he does not return the money he stole he cannot logically be considered guiltless. The one who suffered the loss must be repaid. Since a priest is not all-wise, he can be deceived. He absolves at times when he should not. God does not make such a mistake.

We shall quote from an authentic source to prove that the percentage of prisoners of Roman

Catholic profession is much higher than that of Protestants or those of no profession. This can be seen from the most recent annual reports of the commissioner of correction in the State of New York to the state legislature. In the latest available report for the year ending June 30, 1942, we find the following figures of prisoners committed to the two largest New York prisons—Clinton (Dannemora) and Sing Sing: (cf. Annual Report of the Commissioner of Correction for the Year 1942, published in 1943, page 18).”

	Total Rom. Caths.	Greek Caths.	Protestants	Jews	Mise.
Clinton	159	80	-	74	3 2
Sing Sing	1,303	627	10	512	130 22

For the year ending June 30, 1941, we find the following (page 19):

	Total Rom. Caths.	Protestants	Pagans	Jews	Mise.
Clinton	149	80	65	-	4 -
Sing Sing	1,477	725	581	5	152 14

The same average of 50 per cent Roman Catholic criminals committed to these two jails is listed consistently year after year in these reports. The significance of this high percentage can be judged by the fact that Roman Catholics make up only about 25 per cent of the total population of New York State.

Mr. Joseph Zacchello, an ex-priest, makes this statement: “We former priests know what true forgiveness of sins means in Christian teaching: that God alone forgives sins and with forgiveness comes a complete change of life. The Catholic practice of confession is merely a recital to a man, of sins committed, with no guarantee of pardon from God, and nothing to prevent the repetition of the same sin over and over again. In true Christian teaching, forgiveness of sin is not just the wiping off of old sins from the soul and then going forth to soil it again with more of the same sins. It means the gift of a whole new soul, the rebirth to a new life for the sinner to whom sin becomes abhorrent and who remains sanctified and a true child of God thereafter. Then the sinner is really saved. He becomes not only a saint, but also a good citizen. Only this kind of religious teaching is a real deterrent to crime.”

All Roman Catholics are agreed that God hears and answers prayers; yet the church teaches that forgiveness is obtained through a duly authorized priest. Suppose a certain soldier is sent across the ocean to the battlefield. He is a rascal, and apparently bound for perdition. On the trip a torpedo strikes the ship, and this wicked man is mortally wounded. He knows that he must die, and he becomes repentant. He wants to confess all his sins, but there is no priest on board the ship; and he will die before the ship reaches the harbor. Now suppose this sinner pours out his sin-sick soul with true repentance and sorrow, and confesses all of his guilt to Jesus. According to Catholic teaching this man is eternally lost unless he made a “perfect contrition.” However, no person knows when that takes place.

The church wants to take the power of pardon away from God or from Christ, and place it upon frail men. But we see in the Gospels that Jesus forgave sins directly for individuals who came to Him, and He did not expect them to come through a third person. See Matthew 9:2; Mark 2:5,9; Luke 5:20,23; 7:48. If Christ forgave sins directly then, why wouldn't He do it today?

Throughout the whole Bible we see that men confessed directly to God and received their pardon from Him. “Seek you the Lord while He may be found, call you upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts. And let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” Isaiah 55:6,7.

If men and women would understand the Biblical teaching regarding the priesthood of Christ, everything would be cleared up. In the Old Testament, God ordained priests under the Levitical system. But when Jesus came and died as the true Lamb and was raised from the dead, He began His work as priest in the heavenly sanctuary. The earthly sanctuary was but a copy of the heavenly.

“We have such an High Priest, who is set on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens; a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, and not man.” “Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.” Hebrews 8:1,2; 7:25. This proves that Christ is our priest in heaven; and there is no need of earthly priests.

We have no examples in the Bible where men and women had to relate all their sins in detail when they came to Jesus. Our Lord put no one through the ordeal that priests put men and women through when they confess. The publican prayed: “God be merciful to me a sinner.” That was all. He was sincere about it, and the Lord accepted him. When the prodigal son, who represents the sinner, returned to the father, who represents our heavenly Father, the prodigal did not have to relate how wicked a life he had led, and how he had squandered his money. The prodigal made up his mind to return to his father, and he also decided what

he wanted to confess to him. But as he neared the father and started with his confession, he never even finished what he intended to say. The father knew that his son was repentant over his sins, and that was enough. He accepted him. See Luke 15:17-24.

Mary Magdalene did not reveal in detail all her secret sins to Jesus. Where does the Bible state that the wicked woman who was brought to Jesus because of adultery told Jesus in detail all about her sins? Jesus told her, "Go, and sin no more." The sins of the people were open to Jesus then, and they are today. As soon as we recognize our sins and confess them to Jesus in sincerity, He accepts us and blots them out. How do we know this? We know it, because He has promised. His promise is more than any priest's promise. There is no record in the Bible where Jesus turned any sinner down. All that came to Him with repentance were forgiven. They were always given the admonition, "Go, and sin no more." John 8:11.

Four men brought a man sick with palsy to be healed by Jesus. But there was such a multitude of people around the house where Jesus was that the men opened the roof and let the sick man down in front of Jesus. What did Jesus do? Did He ask him all kinds of questions? Did He have all the people go out of the house and have that man confess in detail about all his sins? No, Jesus did not do this. "When Jesus saw their faith, He said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee," and the sinner was cleansed and accepted. Mark 2:5.

As soon as we confess our sins to Jesus in sincerity, He forgives us. This is wonderful and so gracious, but many people think that it is too easy. They think that they will have to pay money, work, or do something else to earn forgiveness. Some think that they have to punish themselves to earn heaven. This is typical of pagan religions, and there is where the idea comes from. This is contrary to the teachings of the apostles and prophets, and of Jesus Himself.

We do not earn eternal life; we receive it as a gift. This is wonderful. All we need to do is to accept it. When we do this, the Lord will help us, and will give us power to overcome sin. He will not only forgive us our sins, but will cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:9. No priest can do this. Jesus does the forgiving and also the cleansing.

After we have confessed our sins to Jesus and have asked for forgiveness, He fulfills our request. Then a change will take place in our lives. We cannot explain all this. The working of the Holy Spirit cannot be explained. We cannot explain what electricity is, yet we know that it exists. We can only use it and see its effects.

Good works will follow when we accept God's free gift of salvation. We do not work to earn heaven, but we do good works as a consequence of possessing the free gift. Good works are not in any way the cause or the medium of salvation, but are the result, the fruit or evidence, of salvation.

Paul said that eternal life is a gift. Romans 6:23. We accept the gift first; then the results will come. You plant a good tree, and it will bear good fruit. You plant a bad tree, the fruit will be bad. "By their fruits you shall know them." Matthew 7:20.

As soon as men and women grasp the idea that the grace of God is a gift, then Jesus becomes the object of devotion and obedience. Instead of the priest's being one whom we obey, Jesus becomes the mediator. Then we sit at His feet and talk to Him. He talks back to us through His Holy Word, and through His Holy Spirit. Try our Savior.

If you confess to the priest, you give him the obedience and devotion that you should give Jesus. It is natural that after you have revealed all the intents of your heart to a priest, there is formed a tie between him and you that is hard to break. Reason, logic, Bible proof, historical proof, common sense, intelligence, or anything else, will not break the bond, unless you get your eyes away from a frail man, and place them on Jesus.

By confessing to the Lord, men will receive not only forgiveness, but also a cleansing from sin. This, however, is what man often does not want. He wants forgiveness while he continues to indulge in sin. The pardon of Jesus includes more than a mere forgiving. It includes a purifying of the soul. This is what a priest cannot do. It is for this reason that the confessional is so doubtful and so insecure. Men confess, but their hearts are not changed. Confessing to the Lord places us on vantage ground. He forgives and helps us to overcome sin.

There are two texts that all Roman Catholics know. One is about Peter and the keys, and the other is about forgiveness of sins by a priest. The latter is based on John 20:23. We quote: "Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosesoever sins you retain, they are retained." The fallacy of the Roman Catholic interpretation of this text is exposed by reading other texts in the Bible that are of equal value.

The Father sent Christ on a mission, and Christ sent His disciples on a mission. These two

missions are not the same. The Father sent His Son to die for the remission of sins. We quote: "But He, whom God raised again, saw no corruption. Be it known unto you therefore, men and brethren, that through this Man [Jesus] is preached unto you the forgiveness of sins: and by Him [Jesus] all that believe are justified from all things." Acts 13:37-39.

The mission of Jesus was to bring "forgiveness of sins." The mission of the apostles was to "preach the gospel." Mark 16:15; also see Matthew 28:19,20. The mission of Christ was to bring remission of sins, and the apostles were to preach that remission which Jesus accomplished. The apostles were mere men, and they did not die to remit the sins as Jesus had done.

So the mission of Jesus and the mission of the apostles were separate and distinct. Jesus accomplished the remission of sins, and the apostles were to preach that remission through the gospel. When the apostles preached the gospel and the people accepted it, their sins were remitted, not by the apostles, but by the gospel.

Paul writes: "For we are unto God a sweet savor of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish. To the one we are the savor of death unto death; and to the other the savor of life unto life." 2 Corinthians 2:15,16. It was the preaching of the gospel that brought life or death.

All Christians that teach the gospel bring remission or retention of the sins of the people. Teaching the gospel is not confined to the ministers alone. Many men who were not ordained preached in New Testament times. The power to remit or retain sins is not limited to the ordained preachers alone. It is the gospel that remits and retains when sinners accept or reject its terms.

The disciples remitted and retained the sins by the preaching. This power was in the gospel they preached, and not in the apostles personally. Paul states: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes." Romans 1:16. So when we preach the gospel, we remit or retain the sins, not by our own power, but by the power of the gospel. The power is in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

If you turn on a switch closing an electrical circuit, the electricity begins to flow and supplies power for work. So it is spiritually. We are only the instruments that place poor souls in contact with the heavenly Redeemer, and He does the work in the heart. No men have the power to free other men from their sins. God only can do that, and this comes through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

How many men there are who do not know this! They look to some human being to save them and forgive them of their sins. They want assurance that they will not go to purgatory, or if they do that they will not stay there long. Frail men are taken in the place of Jesus, who is our priest, our advocate, and our intercessor. He is the one to whom we confess, and He is the one who can help us. It is not the priest who can remit or retain sins, but only the gospel of Jesus Christ. Those that accept the gospel will have their sins remitted and those that reject it will have their sins retained.

## 10. Baptism: Sprinkling, Pouring, or Immersion?

THREE forms of baptism are generally practiced in the churches today: sprinkling, pouring, and immersion. The Bible tells us that there, is only one baptism; so not all three could be correct. Paul says: “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” Ephesians 4:5.

The word of God has given us clear and precise instructions, and we have numerous examples of baptism to show us how it should be administered and what the candidates should know before they are baptized. Although it is so clear that anybody can understand the language, many persons hold to the teachings of tradition rather than to the teachings of the Bible.

Jesus commanded the disciples: “Go you therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Matthew 28:19,20. This text makes it clear that we should teach before we baptize. If a person does not have an understanding of what baptism means, what would be the use of administering the rite to him?

Again we quote: “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be damned.” Mark 16:16. “The eunuch said, See, here is water; what does hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believes with all your heart thou may.” Acts 8:36,37. Those that were baptized should not only receive instruction, but they should believe with all their hearts. This verse does not say: “He that is baptized shall be saved,” but “he that believes and is baptized shall be saved.”

Repentance also precedes baptism. “Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.” Acts 2:38.

The texts just quoted prove that a person should receive instruction, have faith, and repent before he is baptized. Some churches encourage the baptism of babies; but this rite was never intended for infants. Can babies receive instruction, have faith, and repent, especially since they have not sinned? No! Children should wait until they come to the age of accountability. Persons should be baptized because of their profession of faith, and not because of the profession of faith of a sponsor, or of others.

The Bible does not teach that guardians, sponsors, godfathers, or godmothers may do the repenting, the believing, and the answering of questions for the candidate. The individual must fulfill the requirements himself. The eunuch said, “I believe,” and then Philip baptized him. Acts 8:37, 38.

Churches which baptize infants do not permit them to receive the Communion bread. Why not? “They are not old enough to understand,” church authorities say. “Anyone who partakes of the Communion must be instructed first so that he will know what it is about.” If this reasoning is correct, why is not the same principle applied to infant baptism? Babies do not understand when they are sprinkled, either. Baptism and the Communion are intended for persons who are old enough to understand and who want to participate as an exercise of their own will.

Others argue that a child must be baptized to remove original sin, that is, the sin in which he is born. We have all been born into a world of sin, and have inherited the depraved nature of mankind. “Behold, I was shaped in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.” Psalm 51:5 (Douay, Psalm 50:7). The Scriptures plainly teach, however, that it is not baptism, but the blood of Jesus Christ, that removes sin. “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7.

If, as some Protestant churches teach, a minister has the power to remove sins by baptism, then why should not the priest have power to forgive the sins by confession? One is as un-Biblical as the other.

This is the reason why some pastors and the priests are considered almost demigods. To have power to remove sins by sprinkling and by confession, they would have to be gods. The Roman Catholic Church teaches: Indeed, it is not too much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices, the priests are so many gods.” - St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest*; or, Selva, page 16.

When the apostle John saw in vision a large number of the saved, and wondered who they were, he heard a voice from heaven saying: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.” Revelation 7:14. In Revelation 1:5 we read, “Christ ... washed us from our sins in His own blood.” “The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.” 1 John 1:7.

If baptism removes the original sins of infants, as some say, what removed the sins of children before baptism was introduced in the time of John the Baptist and Jesus? Were all the children lost before Christ, when there was no baptism at all?

Some say that baptism took the place of circumcision. Circumcision was not introduced until the time of Abraham, 2,000 years after creation, and even then was not understood to take away sin.

Newborn babes cannot understand baptism or confession. They are innocent. They are not responsible for their advent into the world; their parents carry that responsibility. God is just in all His ways, so He will be just with children who may die before coming to the age of accountability.

However, the Bible makes a difference between children born of parents who are wicked, and those born of parents who fear God. Paul writes about this: If any brother hath a wife that believes not, and she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which bath an husband that believes not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him. For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now are they holy." 1 Corinthians 7:12-14.

If either of the parents is a Christian, Paul says, the children will be accounted holy. But if both husband and wife are sinners and unbelievers, their children are accounted unholy.

How God will judge these children we leave to Him. We have no further revelation in the word of God about it. But it is clear that God makes a difference between children according to the faith of their parents.

Parents carry a special responsibility for their children until the young persons come to the age of accountability. Parents who shirk their duty, living wicked lives and neglecting to train their children in the right way, are held responsible. Their children are unholy. If they die before accepting Christ, they die unholy. God has not told us what He will do with such children. This subject will be treated more fully in the chapter, "After Death, What?"

We shall now take up the study of the form of baptism. Three kinds are practiced today—sprinkling, pouring, and immersion. Which was used for Jesus? Matthew says, "And Jesus, when He was baptized, went up straightway out of the water." Matthew 3:16. If He went "out" of the water He surely must have been in the water. Jesus was baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist. If John had sprinkled Him, why should He have been taken into a river? Jesus was immersed.

In some Catholic and Protestant books are pictures of Jesus standing in the Jordan while John stood on the bank and poured water on His head. In a similar situation, however, the evangelist Philip and the eunuch, who was to be baptized, "went down both into the water." Acts 8:38. Why should both go into the water if sprinkling or pouring were sufficient?

People came from far and near to be baptized by John. "Then went out to him [to John the Baptist] Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan." Matthew 3:5,6. People went to be baptized where there was enough water to perform the rite.

When John did not baptize in the river Jordan, he baptized where there was much water. "And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salin, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized." John 3:23. You need but little water for sprinkling or pouring, but you need much more water for immersion. This is the way people were baptized in the true apostolic church.

Baptism represents the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. As Christ died, so we must die to sin; He was buried in the tomb, so we are buried in the watery grave; He was raised from the dead, so we are to be raised in newness of life. "Know you not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Romans 6:3,4.

Someone may ask if adults were immersed, but babies sprinkled. Infants were never baptized in any form in Biblical times, either by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Most Bible students agree that immersion was the only approved mode of baptism. There is no text or example that proves that sprinkling or pouring was used at any time. Immersion only was practiced.

Jesus said: "Suffer little children, and forbid them not, to come unto Me: for of such is the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 19:14. Some persons use this text to support their views on sprinkling. But they must remember that "Jesus Himself baptized not." John 4:2 Jesus received the children "and He took them up in His arms, put His hands upon them, and blessed them." Mark 10:16. Jesus blessed the children, but did not baptize them. To pronounce a blessing on children is not to baptize them.

The word "baptism" comes from the Greek word "baptizo," which means "dip" or to "immerse;" but never to "sprinkle."

The only examples we have in the Bible of persons who were baptized were adults. Let us take a few examples of men and women who were baptized. Acts 8:12; 2:41,42. Paul was baptized after he was



converted. Acts 9:18.

Of the three thousand that were baptized the record states: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." Acts 2:41,42. Could babies gladly receive the word, or could they continue steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine, and in prayers?

A lady requested to join the church. She said that she had been baptized in the Lutheran Church, and when she married a Roman Catholic she was baptized in the Catholic Church. She thought that one "pouring" and one "sprinkling" should be enough. But after she got out her Bible and began to study the question of baptism for herself, she soon learned that sprinkling or pouring is no Biblical baptism. She then was immersed, as Jesus our Lord had been, and she became a member of my church.

Sprinkling is an invention of Catholicism, and many Protestant churches held to this tradition when they separated from the Catholic fold. The ministers and the people believe it, not because the Bible teaches it, but because their churches teach it.

Those who have been sprinkled or poured, or "baptized" in some way not approved in the Scriptures, should be baptized by immersion. There were certain disciples at Ephesus who had been baptized, but who had not received sufficient instruction. They said, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Then Paul reminded them of what John had said, "that they should believe on ... Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Acts 19:2-5. Thus they were baptized again after they received sufficient instruction.

Candidates for baptism must believe on Christ and receive proper instruction before they are baptized. If any person was not baptized according to the Bible rule, his baptism is not valid. It is not Scriptural.

Today many are sprinkled, and then are later instructed and confirmed. This is the opposite of the Bible order. When children come up to the age of accountability they should then be baptized, and not before.

Confirmation is another human invention. When a church gets away from the true doctrine of the apostles and prophets, she has to invent things so as to make her errors look plausible. A counterfeit is always an imitation. Sometimes it comes so close that many are deceived.

Those who depend on their baptismal certificate alone may be utterly disappointed in the final judgment. Jesus says: "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. A person should be thoroughly converted before being baptized.

Baptism and conversion are two separate and distinct experiences. Unfortunately, a person sometimes is baptized even though he has not been converted, as in the case of Simon the magician. Acts 8:13-24. The fact that babies are sprinkled does not guarantee them eternal life.

Protestants who accept infant baptism on the basis of tradition have no defense against other un-Scriptural traditions, such as mass and confession. Roman Catholics profess to teach that tradition and the Bible must agree. "The Catholic Church rejects all traditions which are against Scripture." - Bible Quizzes to a Street Preacher, booklet Number 1, Rumble and Carty, "Radio Replies" (Roman Catholic), Saint Paul, Minnesota, page 28. This statement is untrue when applied to baptism by sprinkling, which is authorized, not by the Scriptures but by tradition. Many Protestants who profess to believe only the Bible look in vain for a text to prove this doctrine. Immersion is the only Biblical form of baptism.

## 11. After Death, What?

THE only knowledge we have about the condition of the that God reveals in His word, the Holy Bible. No one has come back from the grave to tell us his impressions of the after-death state. Lazarus was raised from the dead by our Lord, but nothing is recorded regarding a visit to heaven or any other place during the four days he was dead. The Lord alone can tell us what the state of the departed is, and we should accept His teachings. All other speculation is a waste of time.

We have a few examples of persons who were dead and were raised to life again. Moses died and was buried, but the Lord raised him and took him to heaven. Deuteronomy 34:5,6, Jude 9; Matthew 7:1-3. Elijah was translated without seeing death (2Kings 2:10) and so was Enoch (Genesis 5:24). There was also a multitude that rose from the dead when Jesus came back to life. "And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after His resurrection, and went into the Holy City, and appeared unto many." Matthew 27:52,53. They went to heaven when Jesus ascended. Ephesians 4:8. Mary had not yet died, so she was not in this group.

It was such an unusual occurrence for those persons to go to heaven that Holy Writ recorded it. However, this does not prove that all go to heaven when they die or are raised from the dead before the general resurrection. We quote: "David is not ascended into the heavens." Acts 2:34. If he did not go to heaven, where did he go? Did he go to hell-fire? No! The Bible states that he went to the grave, and his sepulcher was still intact at the time of the apostles. "Let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day." Verse 29. David was dead, not alive; and he went to the grave.

Jesus makes it plain that people do not go to heaven immediately when they die, but go there after the resurrection. Jesus said: "I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto Myself. That where I am, there you may be also." John 14:2,3.

Jesus has not come yet, so the righteous are not yet in heaven. They will go there when Jesus comes to take them. We know that the Lord has not yet come, for "every eye shall see Him" when He comes. Revelation 1:7. This has not yet taken place. All the dead will rest in their graves until that day. If those who have died are now rejoicing in heaven, how could Jesus say that He will receive them when He comes?

When Jesus comes back to this earth He will come visibly. If "every eye shall see him," He surely will be seen. "And when He [Jesus] had spoken these things, while they beheld, He was taken up; and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, You men of Galilee, why stand you gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as you have seen Him go into heaven." Acts 1:9-11. When Jesus comes He comes visibly, and He will receive the righteous.

Daniel rests in the grave "till the end be;" and that time has obviously not come. Daniel 12:13. So he is not in heaven.

If the righteous do not go to heaven at death, but after they are raised from the dead, where do the wicked go when they die? "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2 Peter 2: 9. The wicked are "reserved unto judgment." Verse 4. That is, they will be judged first, then they will be punished. You would not punish first, and then judge; and neither would God. You do not send a man to jail for ten years and then take him out to see what sentence he deserves. Some men would like to send the wicked to hell-fire first and then judge them, or send them to heaven and then judge them to see whether they really should be in heaven or hell.

The Bible states clearly that the wicked are reserved "unto the day of judgment to be punished." If the unjust are reserved to be judged, first, it is evident that they are not in hell before the judgment takes place.

The judgment takes place after we die. Hebrews 9:27. The Lord has appointed a day when He will judge the world. Acts 17:30, 2 Corinthians 5: 10; Ecclesiastes 12:14. The judgment was still future in the time of Christ. Matthew 12:4 1; 11:22. It was still future in the time of Paul. Acts 24:25; Romans 2:16. If the judgment was yet future at that time, then all the people that had died before were not yet judged. How then could they be in hell or heaven? Even the evil angels are reserved to be judged before their final punishment. 2 Peter 2:4.

The world itself is reserved to be burned up. 2 Peter 3:7. If the world is reserved to be burned, it has not yet burned. If the wicked are reserved to be judged, they are not in hell-fire until they are judged. The evil angels are reserved to be judged, too, so they are not in hell-fire now. No one is in hell-fire now, until after the judgment, and then the wicked will get their punishment. This punishment comes after the resurrection. Revelation 20:4-9. The righteous go to heaven after the resurrection. 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17.

The judgment is not completed until the verdict of God is pronounced: "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still. And he that is righteous, let him be righteous still: and he that is holy, let him be holy still." Revelation 22:11.

Jesus speaks about the separation of the wicked from the righteous "as a shepherd divides his sheep from the goats: and He shall set the sheep on His right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on His right hand, Come, you blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom.... Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from Me, you cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." Matthew 25:32-41.

When God has given the verdict, "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: and he which is filthy, let him be filthy still," there is no case where this decision is revoked. His judgment is final. God cannot say that a person is guilty and not guilty at the same time. No one is half-saved or half-condemned. If this could be so, then God would not be certain of His decisions. He would have to alter cases. This would make God an unreliable judge. "Let God be true, but every man a liar." Romans 3:4

God knows whether a man is guilty or not guilty. He knows whether a person has been a great sinner or whether he barely missed heaven, and He judges accordingly. He gives everyone according to his works. He does not punish all sinners to the same degree, as we shall see later.

After a person is dead there is no second chance in purgatory to get to go to heaven. If he did not live a godly life on this earth before death, he is lost. The sinner who rejects God's grace, despises His love, lives in sin, and enjoys the pleasures of this world (1 John 2:15-17), likes to think of another opportunity after death; but this is a vain hope.

God's word says: "Today if you will bear His voice, harden not your hearts." Hebrews 3:7. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." 2 Corinthians 6:2. The accepted time is now, while we are alive.

Peter declares: "Brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if you do these things, you shall never fall." 2 Peter 1:10. We should make our calling and election sure while we live, and not put it off until after we are dead. Then it will be too late.

The righteous and the wicked go to the grave, and remain there until the resurrection. They do not go to a place called hell or to heaven immediately at death. "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear His voice, and shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." John 5:2,8,29.

The dead, both righteous and unrighteous, come forth from the graves and not from heaven or hell. They come from the place where they were while dead, which is the grave.

While the dead are in their graves, do they have any consciousness or feeling; can they remember, see, hear, and talk? Based on observation alone, your answer to this question ordinarily would be as good as anyone's-we can't know. Some of course, will guess. But we do not want any speculation on this subject. What we need is the Bible answer, and not guesswork.

The Bible tells us plainly that the dead do not remember. In death there is no remembrance of Thee." Psalm 6:5. If there is no remembrance, then that quality of the mind does not exist. While we are alive we can remember, but after death we do not remember.

"His breath goes forth, he returns to his earth; in that very day his thoughts perish." Psalm 146:4 (Douay, Psalm 145:4). If the thoughts perish when a person dies, he surely cannot think. There is no consciousness.

When we die, God takes the breath of life, also called the spirit, away from us, and then all consciousness ceases. It takes the spirit and the body to produce consciousness, and when the two are severed, all consciousness and feeling cease.

Many times we hear it said at funeral services that the deceased person is in heaven praising God, singing before the throne, and interceding for us before the Father; but what does the Bible teach? "The dead praise not the Lord, neither any that go down into silence [the grave]." Psalm 115:17 (Douay, Psalm I 13: 17). How could the dead praise the Lord after God has taken away the breath of life and the body is decomposed? How could they praise the Lord after death, when the Bible says, "The dead praise not the

Lord?" This would be impossible, because their memory is taken away, they cannot think, and their thoughts have perished.

Death is compared with sleep. "But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that you sorrow not, even as others which have no hope." 1 Thessalonians 4:13 (Douay, verse 12). Jesus spoke of Lazarus's death as a sleep. "Our friend Lazarus sleeps; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep.... Howbeit Jesus spoke of his death." John 11:11-13. When a person is asleep, he is unconscious and knows not what happens around him. The dead are similarly unconscious.

Many are perplexed about the nature of the soul. The Bible speaks about the soul, body, and spirit. What are they? What function does each one have? When we are alive is it the body, the soul, or the spirit that has feeling, consciousness, and intelligence? or is it the combination of the three that produces life and brings the qualities of consciousness? The Bible teaches that it takes the combination of the three to cause the senses to function.

In creating Adam, the record states, "The Lord God formed man of the dust -of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7. Notice that it took the body plus the breath of life (which is also called spirit, for they are the same), to make the soul. So when we are alive we are living souls, and when we die God takes the breath of life away and we are dead souls. "The soul that sins, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4 All souls have sinned, and they are all doomed to die. Romans 3:23.

The Roman Catholic view is this: "One of the main things about our soul is this-it will live forever. Everything else around us is under going change; things begin and later die out. But not the soul. Since God makes a soul, it lasts forever. We say the soul is immortal."-Philip Leinfelder, *Your Soul-What Is It? And What Is Its Destiny?* Spicer and Buschman, Inc., Printers, La Crosse, Wisconsin, page 3. This pamphlet has the approval of the church.

Notice that the writer says, "We say the soul is immortal." However, it does not matter what a priest or a minister says about the soul. It is what God says that is important.

If the Bible says, "The soul that sins, it shall die," and the Roman Catholic Church says that the soul is immortal, which is right? Only the Bible view is trustworthy. If the soul can die, then it is not immortal. "Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28.

Perverted theology applies the word "immortal" to the words "soul" and "spirit," but God's word does not. The word "immortal" is used only once in the whole Scriptures and it is applied to God. The word is found in 1 Timothy 1:17, which reads: "Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory for ever and ever."

It is the eternal King, "the only wise God" that is said to be "immortal," and not man. This is the only instance where the word "immortal" is used in the Bible. How then can theologians use such terms as "immortal souls," "immortal spirits," "never dying souls," etc., when the Bible never warrants such terms?

The word "immortality" is used five times in the Scriptures, but it is not applied to either the soul or the spirit. The first text is found in 1 Timothy 6:13-16. I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickens all things, and before Christ Jesus; . . . that thou keep this commandment without spot, unrebukable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. Which in His times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see.

This verse states clearly that God "only hath immortality." There is no indefiniteness nor uncertainty left for the imagination to twist the meaning. It is clear that God is the source of immortality. The immortality that will be given to the saints is not something they possess, but it is a gift from God. "For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord." Romans 6:23. If eternal life is a gift, it is not something that we possess. It is no birthright.

The second text is found in Romans 2:5-7. "But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasures up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God. Who will render to every man according to his deeds: to them who by patient continuance in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, eternal life." God will give immortality to those who seek Him. If we must seek for it, we do not possess it. Men do not seek for that which they already have.

Those who seek for immortality by patient continuance in well doing will secure this attribute. But from what source or from what place will they secure it? To whom shall they go to obtain it? The answer is found in the third text.

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." 2 Timothy 1:10.

Immortality is revealed through the gospel. The gospel teaches us how we may receive it. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. This is the way we get immortality, and the only way. We do not possess it by nature. Immortality is conditional.

Eternal death is abolished in all who accept Jesus as their personal Savior. They will not perish, but have everlasting life, immortality. But those who "are contentious, and do not obey the truth," cannot expect to receive this immortality. Romans 2:7,8. Those who do not obey the gospel, the word of God, will be destroyed. 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

When will the children of God receive immortality? Will they receive it when they die, or at the resurrection? We find the answer in the fourth and fifth texts where the word "immortality" is found. "Behold, I show you a mystery. We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory." 1 Corinthians 15:51-54.

The putting on of immortality will be at the resurrection, and not when we die. Immortality is put on at the last trump," and then the "mortal" will put on "immortality." We are "mortal" until we put on "immortality," which is at the resurrection. Then we will be "changed" from the "mortal" to "immortality" and from the "Corruptible" to "incorruption." If we put on "immortality" at the resurrection, we do not put it on while we live or while we are dead, but after we are raised from the dead. Then we put on immortality and not until then.

Job calls man mortal. "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" Job 4:17. If man is mortal he is not immortal. It is an impossibility to be, and not to be, at the same time.

We have now studied the five texts where the word immortality is used, and in no case is it applied to "soul" or "spirit." It refers to God or to the heavenly state after the resurrection, but never to this life.

The words "soul" and "spirit" occur in the Bible approximately 15 times, and in not a single instance is the term "immortality" or "immortal" applied to them.

Those who have been taught the immortality of the soul from childhood find it rather difficult to change their views. But if a teaching is wrong, why should we continue in it, even if we were taught the error as truth by our parents or ministers of the gospel? What we should be concerned about is to get in harmony with the Bible, regardless of childhood teaching. Because our forefathers believed the earth to be flat, should we?

A man cannot be alive and dead at the same time. He cannot possess immortality and mortality at the same time. We are either mortal or we are not. The Bible calls man mortal. "Shall mortal man be more just than God?" Verse 17.

Suppose a man has an auto accident and is badly hurt and loses consciousness. While he is in this state he sees nothing, hears nothing, and feels nothing. He is absolutely unaware of what is going on. You may take him to the doctor and have his body X-rayed and have his broken bones set in place, and put him to bed. He feels nothing and knows nothing until consciousness comes back to him. Then he knows and feels again. So it is in death. The Bible says so. The dead are unconscious until the resurrection, when God again brings them back to life.

Suppose another man had an accident and was killed. Would he know more and feel more than the one who was unconscious? Some men teach such absurdities. How much do the dead know, anyway? Here is the answer:

"For the living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything, neither have they any more a reward; for the memory of them is forgotten. Also their love, and their hatred, and their envy, is now perished; neither have they any more a portion forever in anything that is done under the sun." Ecclesiastes 9:5,6.

The living know, but the dead do not know, and their love, hatred, and envy perish. This is the condition of the dead. If the dead know not anything, then why should anyone pray to them. We should not pray to the dead, because they do not hear, and they are unconscious until the time of the resurrection. Jesus taught us to pray directly to the Father: "Our Father which art in heaven." He instructed us to pray to the living God, and not to anyone who is dead. Why call to the dead when they cannot hear? Why pray to them to intercede for us, when they cannot think, feel, hear, or know anything?

This doctrine of the immortality of the soul is the basis of all heathen cults, and is the foundation of spiritism. It has permeated the Christian churches, but it is a false doctrine. The soul can die, as the word of God declares.

Let us quote just a few texts to prove that the soul dies, that it can go to the grave, that it is raised from the grave, and that it can be saved.

“Whatsoever soul it be that does any work in that same day, the same soul will I destroy from among his people.” Leviticus 2.3:30.

“And they smote all the souls that were therein with the edge of the sword, utterly destroying them: there was not any left to breathe.” Joshua 11:11.

“His soul draws near unto the grave, and his life to the destroyers.” Job 33:22 “He will deliver his soul from going into the pit.” Verse 2,8.

“O Lord, Thou has brought up my soul from the grave: Thou has kept me alive.” Psalm 30:3. “Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear Him, upon them that hope in His mercy; to deliver their soul from death.” Psalm 33:18,19. “Let them be ashamed and confounded together that seek after my soul to destroy it.” Psalm 40:14. “God will redeem my soul from the Power of the grave: for He shall receive me.” Psalm 49:15. “Thou has delivered my soul from death.” Psalm 56:13. “Those that seek my soul, to destroy it, shall go into the lower parts of the earth.” Psalm 63:9.

“Incline your ear, and come unto Me: hear, and your soul shall live.” Isaiah 55:3. “The soul that sins, it shall die.” Ezekiel 18:4,20.

“Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.” Matthew 10:28. “For what is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?” Matthew 16:26.

“But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.” Hebrews 10:39.

“Lay apart all filthiness and superfluity of naughtiness, and receive with meekness the engrafted word, which is able to save your souls.” James 1:21

If the soul dies, if it goes to the grave, if it is brought up out of the grave, and if it can be destroyed, then it is not immortal. “The soul that sins, it shall die.” Ezekiel 18:4,20. There is no opportunity left to twist the meaning of this text. The soul that sins will die. And how many souls have sinned? All have sinned, and all are subject to death. Romans 3:23. But there is hope for lost souls. John 3:16.

The sea creatures are also called souls. They all die during the second plague that falls on the sea. Revelation 16:3. This plague is only one of the seven plagues that will fall on the earth before Jesus returns again. All sea creatures, land animals and birds will not have a resurrection. Jesus died to save man, but not the animals. They will not be raised again from the dead. Man will have a resurrection. This will take place when Jesus comes the second time. John 5:28,29. The righteous will then be taken to glory, and the wicked will go to the lake of fire to receive their punishment.

To make it simple, so that anybody can understand the question of the soul, the body, and the spirit, let us use an illustration. An electric bulb does not have light in itself. It is a dead bulb. But when the current comes into it, it produces light. The bulb and the current together produce light. So, it is with the body. The body and the spirit combine to produce life. When the current is severed from the bulb, the light goes out. So when the spirit or the breath of life is severed from the body, life ceases.

It is the spirit or the breath of life, for they are the same that God takes away at death, and not the soul. The word “spirit” and the word “soul” are different words with different meanings.

The body plus the spirit or the breath of life make the living soul. Genesis 2:7. When God takes the spirit away, the living soul becomes a dead soul, a destroyed soul. Suppose you have boards which represent the body, and you have nails which represent the breath of life or the spirit, and with the boards and the nails you make a box, which is to represent the living soul. Suppose you change your mind and pull the nails out and place them to one side, and the boards you place on the other side. Where now is the box? You say, it ceases to exist, it is destroyed. So it is with the living soul. It is composed of the body and the spirit, as the box is composed of boards and nails. When the spirit and the body are severed, the living soul is destroyed, it is dead, even as the box is destroyed after the boards and the nails are separated.

In the Old Testament the word “soul” is used 473 times, and not in a single instance is it designated as “never-dying,” “immortal,” or as something that cannot be destroyed, or something that has knowledge, understanding, feeling, or any function whatever, after death.

The New Testament uses the word “soul” fifty eight times, not once saying that it is “immortal” or “never-dying,” but that it is subject to be killed or to be destroyed.

The term “soul” may be given three comprehensive definitions: (1) a person; (2) the natural mind,

thought, intellect, and affections; (3) mere life, or vitality. But in no instance is it spoken of as something that does not cease to function at death.

The animals, the birds, and all other living creatures have the breath of life. The word of God, whose authority everyone should be willing to accept, makes this clear. "All flesh died that moved upon the earth, both of fowl, and of cattle, and of beast, and of every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth, and every man: all in whose nostrils was the breath of life." Genesis 7:21,22.

Did this breath of life that God put into man and beast and every creeping thing have feeling or intelligence before it came into the living creatures and man? Did the breath of life of man have eyes, mouth, ears, and a mind before God breathed it into the nostrils of Adam? No! Neither did the breath of life of the animals have legs, horns, hoofs, or consciousness, before it was placed into them, neither does it have after it leaves the animals at death.

The breath of man and beast goes to the same place. Let us again quote from the Bible. "For that which befalls the sons of men befalls beasts; even one thing befalls them: as the one dies, so dies the other; yea, they have all one breath [or "spirit;" ruach in Hebrew]; so that a man hath no pre-eminence above a beast: for all is vanity. All go unto one place; all are of the dust, and all turn to dust again." Ecclesiastes 3:19,20.

If man and beast have the same breath (or spirit) and they go to the same place when they die, they do not go to heaven or hell. The spirit or the breath of life goes back to God who gave it, of both man and beast. The Bible teaches this.

Let us quote another text to prove that the animals also have a spirit. "Who knows the spirit of man that goes upward, and the spirit of the beast that goes downward to the earth?" Solomon asks this question, and then he answers it. "Then [at death] shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 3:21; 12:7. God takes the breath of life to Himself from the wicked, the righteous, and all living creatures. Their breath goes to the same place, and their bodies go to the same place. If God takes the spirit, or the breath of life, to Himself, it does not go to hell-fire. The wicked go to hell fire after the resurrection, and not immediately when they die,

Some hold the idea that the breath of life is a part of God, and therefore must be immortal, never-dying. If the breath of life or the spirit is a part of God, and God will send that spirit to hellfire, then God would punish Himself. Or if that spirit would go to glory to enjoy heaven, then God would get that enjoyment, and not the dead.

When persons depart from the truth, it is somewhat as if they were telling a lie. If you tell one lie, you will be forced to tell many more to cover up the first one. So it is with false doctrines. If we establish our faith on a false premise, it makes no difference how we reason, and how plausible it may seem, the conclusion is wrong. If men would take the Bible as their guide, they would get out of this confusion. But the way it is, many would rather follow a church than the teachings of the Bible, and no unity is possible. This is the reason we have so many churches. Each one wants to stay with his church rather than to renounce error and defend the truth.

It takes courage, honesty to do that. If we are not honest with ourselves, we will not accept additional truths as we find them in the word of God. For those that have been brought up believing error, it is a struggle to change. But if we change for the better, change to truth and God's word, why not do it? Why not take a step forward?

Death is the opposite of life. Sinners receive eternal death, while the righteous will receive eternal life, which is a gift of God. The wicked do not possess this gift by nature. They will not live eternally in hell-fire. If they would, then they, too, would have eternal life. But eternal life comes only to those who believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and obey Him. John 3:16. If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land." Isaiah 1:19. This will be made clear in the next chapter.

If men are not dead when they die, then Jesus was not dead. If Jesus was not dead, then there is no hope for any man for a resurrection or of a future life. Jesus died that we might have life. If the soul of Jesus lived on after His death, or His spirit lived apart from the body, then He still had life. But He teaches that He laid down His life. "Therefore does My Father love Me, because I lay down My life, that I might take it again." John 10:17.

If Jesus laid down His life, and took it again, there was a time when He did not have life, until He took it again. During that time He was dead. This was from the time He died on the cross, until He rose again on the third day. If He was not dead, then we are all without hope.

We receive eternal life through His death. It is a gift. Eternal life is a gift of God. Romans 6:23. If everlasting life, or immortality, is a gift of God and is given to the righteous, then the wicked do not have

immortality.

In the "Apostles' Creed" it is stated that Jesus descended into hell, and on the third day rose again. Some think that Jesus went to hell-fire during the time of His death. It is no wonder that many think so, because men of high office teach it. Even the Roman Catholic paper called *The Register*, of November 17, 1948, La Crosse, Wisconsin, vol. 24, No. 4 5, states the following: "The Apostles' Creed, used by nearly all Christians of all denominations, asserts that Christ descended into hell. By this we mean that He went, after His death and before His resurrection, to limbo, to address the souls of those saints who had died before the crucifixion and to announce their early deliverance into heaven." The author of this article states that Christ went to limbo, supposed to be "on the borders of hell." What he says about this is his own interpretation. There is no hell-fire in "Hades." Christ did not go to "Gehenna," a place of destruction by fire, but to the grave, "Hades." His soul went to the grave. We quote: "Thou wilt not leave My soul in hell [Hades, the grave, neither wilt Thou suffer Your Holy One [Jesus] to see corruption." Acts 2:27. This proves that the soul of Jesus went to the grave, and not to God. His spirit was taken away by God, but His dead soul went to the grave.

To prove his theory, the writer of the *Register* article quoted 1 Peter 3:18,19, and said that Jesus went to hell-fire and preached to the souls in prison, which he thinks is limbo. The Bible does not teach that Jesus went to hell-fire and there in the flames preached to others who were there. Let us quote 1 Peter 3:18,19 and see what it actually teaches.

"For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just [Christ] for the unjust [the sinner], that He [Christ] might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened [brought back to life] by the Spirit [the Spirit of God]. By which [by the Spirit which raised Christ from the dead] also He [Christ] went and preached unto the spirits in prison [the sinners]. Which [the sinners] sometime were disobedient [at the time of Noah before the Flood], when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water." 1 Peter 3:18-20.

Jesus was raised by the Spirit of God, and by this same Spirit He preached through Noah to the sinners who were disobedient before the Flood.

The same Spirit that raised Christ from the dead is in us, and was in Noah. If the Spirit of Him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, He that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwells in you." Romans 8:11. The Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead also dwelt in Noah, as it does in us; and by this Spirit Jesus preached through Noah to the sinners.

When did the sinners, or the spirits in prison, hear the preaching at the time of Christ, or at the time Noah was building the ark? It is evident that it was when Noah lived, and not at the time of Christ, because it was at the time "while the ark was a preparing." The ark was prepared at the time of Noah, and thus the preaching referred to was done at the time of Noah.

But who are the spirits in prison? Persons who are in error and darkness; in other words, sinners. A prophecy regarding Jesus states that His mission was "to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house." Isaiah 42:7.

Another prophecy concerning Christ's ministry is found in Isaiah 61: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon Me. Because the Lord hath anointed Me to preach good tidings unto the meek; He hath sent Me to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Verse 1.

Christ Himself declared that this verse found fulfillment in his mission on this earth while He was alive. Luke 4:18-21. So He did not do this while He was in the grave.

The Bible gives abundant proof that men preach through the Spirit of God. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His." "You are ... in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Romans 8:9.

Peter writes: "The prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when It testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." 1 Peter 1:10-12.

Isaiah prophesied about the soul of Jesus. He revealed that Christ's soul would be an offering for sin. "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shall make His soul an offering for sin." Isaiah 53:10. If the soul of Jesus was made an offering for sin, it was not alive after it was



offered. Jesus said: "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death."

Matthew 26:38. I am He that lived, and was dead." Revelation 1:18. Yet men want to rob the world of all the virtues of this precious offering and nullify the whole plan of salvation, by teaching that Christ was never dead!

The Register in the same article states: "The Catholic doctrine of reward or punishment after death and before the Final judgment is inferred from the parable of Lazarus and the rich man, who were both portrayed in irreformable eternity, Lazarus in a state of reward and Dives in hell (Luke 24: 19-31)." -The Register, NOV. 7, 1948, La Crosse, Wisconsin, article, "Listening In."

Lazarus went where Abraham was, that is to "Hades," the grave. The rich man (Dives) also went to "Hades," the grave. Abraham, Lazarus, and the rich man all went to "Hades," the grave, and not to hell-fire (Gehenna); and there they spoke in a parable form.

These men spoke somewhat as the blood of Abel cried to God (Genesis 4:10), or as the stunted hire of the laborers cries to God. James 5:4. If this parable were an actual happening, would those in heaven speak to those in hell-fire? See the next chapter for a fuller explanation and Bible proof.

The writer of the article in The Register continues to draw apparent support for his ideas "from St. Paul's statements that we are exiled from the Lord as long as we are in the body, but after this we can be with the Lord. Also from Paul's wish to die that he might be with the Lord and receive a crown of justice." -Ibid.

The writer then gives 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Philippians 1:23; 2 Timothy 6:8, to prove his assertions. Now let us consider these texts and see whether they teach any such doctrine. What we want are facts, and not fancies.

"For we know that if our earthly house [our earthly state] of this tabernacle [our earthly body] were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands [the heavenly state], eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan [earthly state], earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven [future state]: if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle [earthly state] do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed [die], but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life [eternal life]. Now He that bath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit. Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body [in the earthly state], we are absent from the Lord [we are not in the heavenly state]. (For we walk by faith, not by sight) we are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body [be in the heavenly state], and to be present with the Lord [in the heavenly state]." 2 Corinthians 5:1-8.

The apostle Paul draws a comparison between the earthly state with the heavenly. which would be much better. In other words, a comparison of the earthly body with the heavenly body of the future life. But he does not teach that when we die we go immediately into the heavenly state. We go into that state after the resurrection, and not when we die. See 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; John 5:2-8,29.

The next text is Philippians 1:23, where Paul says: "For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart [to die], and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh [to live] is more needful for you." Paul does not teach that he would go immediately to heaven at death. He explains this in 2 Timothy 4:7,8, where he says that he would not go to heaven immediately, but at the appearing of Christ. We quote his words: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day [the coming of the Lord]: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love His appearing [the coming of the Lord]." So Paul expected his crown at the coming of the Lord, and not immediately after his death.

The third text which the writer gives, 2 Timothy 6:8, is not found in the Bible. Second Timothy does not have six chapters. He must refer to the one quoted above, 2 Timothy 4:8. One doesn't have to be a doctor of divinity to understand that these verses do not convey the idea which The Register tries to teach.

God does not gather His children to Himself when they die, but after the resurrection. "He shall send His angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together His elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other." Matthew 24:31. If the righteous dead were already enjoying heaven, what would be the object of raising their old, decayed bodies? This text proves that our "going to glory" will be done in the physical body; that is why the body must be raised again.

Roman Catholics pray to the dead, and especially to Mary, for help. The Bible does not teach that Mary was raised from the dead. She died as all other women die, and she will be raised again at the time of the resurrection. She sleeps, as other saints sleep, until the trumpet shall sound and the dead in Christ will

be raised. Then why should anyone pray to her or to any other dead saint?

If this doctrine of praying to Mary is important, then why doesn't the Bible make some statement regarding it? The apostles, who wrote as late as ninety-six years after Christ, surely would have mentioned it if she were raised from the dead. Most of the New Testament was written after the death of Mary, and nothing is mentioned about her going to heaven.

"According to legend. St. Thomas was not present with the other apostles at the burial of Mary, and doubted her ascension till the Virgin threw down to him her cincture as tangible proof." Time, Nov. 29, 1948, P. 8 1.

According to this "legend" Thomas and the other apostles were still alive when she was supposed to have gone to heaven bodily. Isn't it strange that not one of the apostles ever mentioned it? If this doctrine of Mary were important, how could they keep silent? How could the Lord make such an oversight and not inspire at least one man to write about it? Every apostle is silent and God is silent. What does this prove? This doctrine of praying to Mary is not Scriptural. It is a doctrine that was introduced later, as with other un-Scriptural doctrines and practices of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the Virgin Mary, the mother of Jesus, is not like God. Conway writes: "Does your Church [the Catholic] believe the Virgin Mary to be like God, everywhere present? Not at all; omnipresence is an attribute of God alone."-Rev. Bertrand L. Conway, The Question-Box Answers 1911, page 516.

A Roman Catholic writer says: "Catholics do not believe that the Blessed Virgin is in any way equal or even comparable to God, for she, being a creature, although the most highly favored, is infinitely less than God." - Joseph Faa di Bruno, Catholic Belief, page227.

Rev. Bernard O'Reilly states: "She is only a human being; she, the Mother of Christ, is only a creature-the most highly honored indeed of all created beings."-Rev. Bernard O'Reilly, D.D., LL.D., Life of the Blessed Virgin, Haydock's Bible (Catholic), end of Old Testament division, chapter 5, column 17 Page 12.

The Roman Catholic Church further states-and in this we heartily agree-"We can direct our complete attention to one thing only at a time; we can follow but one train of thought at any given moment. Should we attempt to attend to many different things at once, indistinctness and confusion must inevitably result. Such is one of the differences between God's knowledge and ours." Right Rev. Mgr. John S. Vaughan, Thoughts for All Times, pages 23,24.

You will notice that the Catholic Church believes that the Virgin Mary cannot be "omnipresent," because that attribute belongs to God alone. She "is only a creature," and is not "in any way equal or even comparable to God." She is a "created being," and a created being can direct "complete attention to one thing only at a time," or else "indistinctness and confusion must inevitably result."

An official Catholic paper states: "One of the sweetest graces our Lord gave us was at the very close of His life, when, in the person of St. John, He made Mary our Mother. What has she not done for us? She has loved us, taken joy in us, interest in our work, and from our birth she has had her arm around us." - The Catholic News, Sept. 12, 1900.

How could Mary get to all Roman Catholics, unless she were omnipresent, which the Roman Catholic Church teaches that she is not?

The psalmist says, "What is man, that Thou art mindful of him? Or the son of man, that Thou visits him? Thou made him a little lower than the angels; Thou crowned him with glory and honor, and did set him over the works of Thy hands." Hebrews 2:6,7. Mary was made lower than the angels, as all other men and women are. The angels do not have the faculty of omnipresence. God sends them here and there. They are "ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation." Hebrews 1:14. God sends the angels to minister to us, and He has enough of them to go around; but how can He do this with Mary?

Only the Godhead has the faculty of omnipresence and omnipotence, and not man or the angels; not even the saved. Only the Holy Trinity can be at two or more different Places at the same time.

Some theologians see the fallacy of all this and say that God communicates everything to Mary, that she may know and then intercede for us before God. The same procedure would apply to the "saints," who likewise are said to intercede for us.

If God hears us directly, why should He advise the saints and Mary about our petitions, and then have them come back with the same requests? Why should heaven's affairs be so complicated?

Catholics are encouraged to petition Mary frequently. But if she is so close and has her arm around every Roman Catholic from birth, why should those so sheltered keep repeating their requests?

Jesus warned us against repetition in our prayers. "But when you pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking." Matthew 6:7.

It is not the repetition that counts, but the faith in which the petition is made. The publican prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and that prayer was heard. The Pharisee made a long and pretentious prayer, but was not heard. See Luke 18:9-14. The answer to our prayers does not depend so much on our repeating the same thing over and over as on the sincerity and the faith we have when we pray.

A dispatch printed at Vatican City, January 10, 1947, gives the names of five popes who were declared saints and honored as such for hundreds of years, but shortly before had been removed from the list. The report said:

"Felix II, who was listed as a saint and as pope from 363 to 365, is removed from the list as an anti-Pope. Designation of sainthood, which was given to all Popes up to the year 530, is therefore removed from Felix's name." - Joseph Zacchello, D.D., *Secrets of Romanism*, page 166.

"The designation of sainthood was removed from four of the legitimate Popes; Liberio from 352-366, Anastasio from 496 to 498, Stephen III from 752 to 757, and Stephen V from 816 to 817."

So, according to Vatican admission, Felix II was removed from the sainthood and placed as an antipope, and Liberio, Anastasio, Stephen III, and Stephen IV (or V) remained on record as popes; but their sainthood was removed. What do you suppose happened to all the petitions of those honest persons who prayed to those pseudo saints?

Those who think they will go to purgatory because they are too good to go to hell and not good enough to go to heaven will be sorely disappointed. They will go to hell-fire instead of to purgatory, but their punishment will be less than that of greater sinners. This takes place after the resurrection, and not when a person dies. God makes a difference in punishment as we shall see in the next chapter.

The teaching that a person lives, though dead, is the devil's invention. This theory has deceived pagans and many Christians, but it is not according to the teachings of God's word. False systems of religion get rich by trying to make people do something for their dead. God's word plainly declares, however, that those who do not make their peace with God before they die cannot depend on their relatives or on their money to change their relationship with God after death.

If the dead were to live on in one form or another, then the devil would triumph and say: "I told you all the time that you will not surely die, but will live on. Genesis 3:4. Yet God had told Adam what his punishment would be for sin: "Thou shall surely die." Genesis 2:17. As in the experience of Adam and the children of Israel all men are called to choose between God's plain words and Satan's lies. "Choose you this day whom you will serve." Joshua 24:15.

No one goes to his reward until after the resurrection, when Jesus comes again. "For the Son of man shall come in the glory of His Father with His angels; and then He shall reward every man according to his works." Matthew 16:27.

It is a consolation to know that the dead are unconscious from the time they die until they are raised again at the resurrection. Deceased parents do not know what experiences come to their children in life. They cannot see their boys being shot down in battle. A dead mother does not know anything about her children who are perhaps in famine-stricken countries where they die of starvation. Mat would heaven be for such a mother if she were conscious and could see all that? God knew that it would not be wise for the dead to see and know what happens on the earth until the terrible reign of sin comes to a close. Then fire from heaven will come down and destroy the wicked, and bum the whole earth into ashes. Revelation 20:7-9; 2 Peter 3: 10; Malachi 4:1-3.

It is a pleasant theory to have nearly everybody go to heaven at death; but how about those who do not go to heaven? If your son or your daughter were to die without having accepted Christ, would you want to see them in hell-fire eternally, without end? Will God give every sinner, great or small, the same punishment? Does God make a difference in punishments? Will the wicked have eternal life in hell-fire? Can people in heaven speak to persons in hell-fire? These questions will be taken up in the next chapter.

## 12. Hell

WE HAVE seen in the previous chapter that the Bible teaches that the dead are truly dead, and have no consciousness whatever. Their memory, thoughts, love, hatred, envy, and feeling have perished. Death is compared to a sleep. When we are asleep, we are unconscious. We are not aware of anything until we wake up. So it is in death.

You cannot punish a person who is unconscious. Even a person who faints does not feel pain. You could pull his teeth, and he would not know the difference. He would not feel any pain until consciousness returned. So it is in death.

If the wicked go to hell-fire at death, and the righteous to heaven, why should Christ plan for a resurrection? If the righteous are in heaven after death, why should they be taken out and placed back in the old, decayed body, and then returned to heaven? The same is true with the wicked. Why should they be sent to hell-fire, then taken out and judged? One does not punish a man before he is judged. The judgment of the wicked has not yet taken place. If the wicked are in hell-fire now, why should they be taken out and placed back into the old body, and then returned to hell-fire? If they were punished without the body in hell-fire, why not leave them there? The whole theory of a present hell with fire and brimstone does not make sense. We shall now study this question of "hell" from the word of God.

The Lord knows all about it, and He has given us ample instruction in His word that we may know. The sad thing about false doctrines is that men and women do not go to their Bibles to find out for themselves. They always take somebody else's theory or interpretation in the place of the Bible. If men would take the Bible as their only guide, they would soon get away from their fancied theories. The trouble is that some of those doctrines bring money into the treasury and the recipients are reluctant to discard them. What we are interested in are facts, and not fancies.

Christians in general misunderstand the word "hell" probably more than any other word in the Bible. Many think that whenever the word "hell" occurs in the Bible it always refers to a place of fire and brimstone. But if we study the original words from which hell is translated, we learn that such is not the case. Let us examine the original words in the Greek New Testament from which the word "hell" is translated, according to the King James Version. "Hell" is translated from three Greek words, Hades, Tartarus, and Gehenna. Each of the three words has a different meaning.

Hades means the region of the dead, the grave, or the pit. It is found ten times in the New Testament, where it is translated "hell," which means the grave. Matthew 11:23; 16:18. Luke 10:15; 16:2,3 (Douay, verse 22). Acts 2:27,31. Revelation 1:18; 6:8; 20:13,14. In 1 Corinthians 15:55 the word Hades is translated grave.

Tartarus occurs but once, and is found in 2 Peter 2:4. "God did not spare the angels that sinned but cast them down to hell [Tartarus], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment."

Parkhurst's Greek Lexicon says that Tartarus, in its proper physical sense, is the darkness which surrounds the material universe. This agrees with Paul's statement that Satan is "the prince of the power of the air." Ephesians 2:2.

Tartarus does not signify a place of punishment and torment, because the fallen angels were not yet cast down into hell-fire, but to Tartarus, "to be reserved unto judgment" (2 Peter 2:4), but the judgment has not yet taken place. So the evil angels are not in hell-fire. The wicked are also reserved "unto the day of judgment to be punished." Verse 9. This proves that the evil angels are not at all in hell and the wicked have not yet been judged, and therefore have not yet received their punishment in hell fire.

Gehenna always denotes the place of the final punishment and the destruction of the wicked, and the fires by which it will be accomplished. It is always translated "hell" and occurs in the following passages of the New Testament:

Matthew 5:22, 29, 30; 10:28; 18:9; 23:15,33.

Mark 9:43, 45, 47 (Douay, 42, 44, 46).

Luke 12: 5.

James 3:6.

Total, twelve times.

Webster defines "hell" as follows: "1. The place of the dead, or of souls after death, the grave; corresponding to the Hebrew Sheol, and the Greek Hades. 2. The place or state of punishment for the

wicked after death; the abode of evil spirits, corresponding to Gehenna, Tartarus.”

So we have three definitions of the word hell as used in the Bible. First, it refers to the grave where the souls go after death. This again proves even by Webster that the place of the souls is the grave, or Hades. Second, Gehenna is the place of punishment of the wicked. Third, Tartarus, the place or abode of the evil spirits. This agrees with the Bible.

The wicked will not receive their punishment until after they are judged and after the resurrection. The same is true with the reward of the righteous. Both will receive their reward and punishment after Jesus comes the second time. Revelation 22:12; Matthew 16:27; Luke 20:46,47; 12:47,48. The resurrection of the just occurs when Jesus returns. John 5:28, 29.

“For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first.” 1 Thessalonians 4:16. The dead in Christ are the Christians which will be raised first, before the wicked. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.” Revelation 20:6. So the Christians will be raised at the coming of the Lord, at the first resurrection.

The righteous living at the coming of the Lord will be translated in “the twinkling of an eye.” 1 Corinthians 15:52. “Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thessalonians 4:17. Christians living when Jesus comes will be caught up with Christians that had been dead but were raised up from their graves, and all together will meet the Lord in the air, and so be with the Lord. These redeemed will reign with Christ in heaven a thousand years. “They shall be priests of God and of Christ, and shall reign with Him a thousand years.” Revelation 20:6. “They lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years.” Verse 4.

The wicked that are alive when Jesus comes will be destroyed by the brightness of His coming. “The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ. Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power; when He shall come.” 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10.

The wicked that are alive when Jesus comes will be destroyed. It is for this reason that they will cry “to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of Him that sits on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of His wrath is come.” Revelation 6: 16, 17. The righteous shout: “Lo, this is our God; we have waited for Him, and He will save us.” Isaiah 25:9.

Now, if the wicked living are destroyed, and the righteous go to heaven, at the coming of the Lord, how many people are there left on the earth? None whatever. The wicked will not be raised until a thousand years later. “The rest of the dead lived not again until the thousand years were finished.” Revelation 20:5.

The righteous are raised at the beginning of the thousand years. This is called the first resurrection, and the wicked are raised at the end of the thousand years, at the second resurrection. “Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power.” Revelation 20:6.

During the millennium Satan is bound. “Millennium” in Latin means a thousand years. He is not bound with a chain of iron, but a chain of circumstances. See Jude 6 and 2 Peter 2:4. A mighty angel laid hold on the dragon, that old serpent, which is the devil, and Satan, and bound him a thousand years.” Revelation 20:2. He is confined to this earth. He has no one to deceive for a thousand years. It is a severe punishment for him and his imps to see all the destruction and misery they brought into the world, and meditate over it for a thousand years.

During the thousand years the earth is desolate, and no one is living on earth except the devil and his angels. Jeremiah had a vision of how things looked upon this earth after Jesus came with His fierce anger, and brought retribution. I beheld the earth, and, lo it was without form, and void; and the heavens, and they had no light. I beheld the mountains, and, lo, they trembled, and all the hills moved lightly. I beheld, and, lo, there was no man, and all the birds of the heavens were fled. I beheld, and, lo, the fruitful place was a wilderness, and all the cities thereof were broken down at the presence of the Lord, and by His fierce anger. For thus hath the Lord said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken it.” Jeremiah 4:23-28.

After the thousand years the wicked will be raised, and Satan then will “be loosed out of his prison, and shall go out to deceive the nations which are in the four quarters of the earth, Gog and Magog, to gather them together to battle: the number of whom is as the sand of the sea.” Revelation 20:7,8.

For what purpose will Satan gather the wicked? Because the New Jerusalem comes down from

God out of heaven. "And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them [with the righteous], and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God." Revelation 21:3.

After the city has come down from heaven to this earth, the wicked will gather around it with Satan as their leader, and will attempt to take it. "And they went up on the breadth of the earth, and compassed the camp of the saints about, and the beloved city: and fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." Revelation 20: 9. Here is where the wicked will get their hell-fire and brimstone, but not before. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." Verse 15.

"Fire came down from God out of heaven, and devoured them." That means the wicked were destroyed. They will not burn throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. The Bible makes this plain.

The wicked will be burned up. "For, behold, the day comes, that shall burn as an oven; and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble: and the day that comes shall burn them up, said the Lord of hosts." Malachi 4:1.

"It shall leave them neither root nor branch." Verse 1. Satan is the root, and the wicked are the branches.

The wicked shall be turned into ashes. "And you shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, said the Lord of hosts." Verse 3. It is not what you or I say that is authority, but what God says. It is the Lord of hosts that says that they will be burned into ashes.

"He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matthew 3:12. The chaff represents the unrighteous, and the wheat represents the righteous. This unquenchable fire cannot be put out until it has done its work. If firemen, in describing a blaze they had tried to control, say that the fire was "unquenchable," that does not mean that it burned eternally, but that no one could put it out until it had consumed everything. Then, of course, it would have gone out by itself.

"The transgressors shall be destroyed." Psalm 37:38 (Douay, Psalm 36:38).

"All the wicked will He destroy." Psalm 145:20 (Douay, Psalm 144:20).

"Destroy" according to Webster's Dictionary is: "To unbuild; to break up the structure and organic existence of; to demolish; to spoil utterly; to bring to naught; to put an end to: to annihilate."

"They shall consume; into smoke shall they consume away." Psalm 37:20 (Douay, Psalm 36:20).

"They that forsake the Lord shall be consumed." Isaiah 1:28.

"And shall consume ... both soul and body." Isaiah 10:18.

"Consume" means: "To destroy; as by decomposition, dissipation, waste, or fire." Webster.

"Except you repent, you shall all likewise perish." Luke 13:3.

Perish: "To be destroyed; to pass away; to become nothing; to be lost; to waste away; to die." - Webster.

"For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23. "The soul that sins, it shall die." Ezekiel 18:4,20. "All have sinned." Romans 3:23. They all die. "For the wages of sin is death." Romans 6:23.

The wicked die in this life, but they will be raised again and die the second death, that is, the second time. "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Revelation 20:6. "He that overcomes shall not be hurt of the second death." Revelation 2:11. "But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death." Revelation 21 :8.

The wicked "Shall be as though they had not been." Obadiah 1:16.

"Fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Matthew 10:28.

How can one believe in the eternal torment of the wicked, when more than two hundred passages of Scripture plainly affirm that they shall die," "be consumed," "devoured," be destroyed, "both soul and body in hell." "Burned up," "be as though they had not been," "into smoke shall they consume away," "shall be ashes under the soles of your feet," et cetera?

Is it reasonable to believe in a hell of fiery torment and ceaseless misery to exist forever, when God says: "Behold, I make all things new"? Revelation 21:5. John wrote: I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea." Verse 1. "The former things are passed away." Verse 4.

But does not the Bible say that the wicked will be destroyed with "everlasting destruction," and "unquenchable fire"? It does. This means that the fire cannot be put out by anyone until it has done its

work. It will not go out until every sinner has received “according to his works.” The destruction will be complete. It will be a punishment not to be repeated. It is an everlasting destruction, an everlasting punishment. But not an everlasting punishing. The punishment is done once and forever, not to be repeated or done again. It is everlasting punishment, a complete and final end of the wicked.

How long the wicked will burn in hell-fire is not stated. However, we know that they will finally be burned up into ashes, so that nothing of them remains. Each one will receive his punishment according to his works. Undoubtedly some who were not so wicked as others will burn less time or receive less punishment. If you put stubble, wood, and coal into your stove, they will not burn up at the same time. So it is with the wicked. The Lord is just and gives “every man according to his works!”

There is a text, however, that puzzles many, and on it is based the whole philosophy of the eternal punishment of the wicked. There is one thing sure, and that is, God's word does not contradict itself. If over two hundred texts concur in a certain view, that view should be given thought when any one text is being considered. How can this text be harmonized with the many other texts which apparently say the opposite, as is generally believed?

The trouble is not with the Bible, but with the interpretation ordinarily placed upon it. People do not let the Bible explain itself. Let us first quote the text and then let other writers of the Bible explain it. “And the devil that deceived them was cast into the lake of fire and brimstone, where the beast and the false prophet are, and shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever.” Revelation 20:10.

The word “forever” in Biblical language is sometimes used as we use it today. When you buy a house or a farm you receive a title. On this title is stated that it is yours forever. It, of course, means until you die or until you sell it. The Bible uses the word forever, in many instances, in the same way. Let us take a few examples.

The Chaldeans said: “O king, live forever!” Daniel 2:4; 3:9. “The land shall not be sold forever.” Leviticus 25:23. I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever! Psalm 23:6 (Douay, 22:6). Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights, but the prophet says: “The waters compassed me about. ... The earth with her bars was about me forever!” Jonah 2:5, 6. This forever was only three days.

Hannah took her son Samuel and dedicated him to the Lord that he should be before the Lord in the temple “and there abide forever.” 1 Samuel 1: 22. Samuel could not abide in the temple longer than he lived. Later Hannah said: I have lent him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be lent to the Lord.” Verse 28. By the term “forever” she meant as long as Samuel lived. So the term “forever,” in Revelation 20:10 means as long as the sinners have life, as long as they live. If it did not mean this, it would be in contradiction to more than two hundred other texts that are clear on the subject.

We do not know how long these resurrected sinners will burn, but we know from God's word that they will be burned up into ashes. They will be consumed in the flames and turned into smoke. They will burn up on this earth, where they had committed their crimes. Then after they and the earth have been turned into ashes, God makes a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21:1-3. “Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth.” Matthew 5:5.

How could the righteous live on the earth if the wicked were burning on it throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity? How could God make a new earth, if the earth itself would be a hot oven through all time? The Lord says: “Behold, I make all things new.” Revelation 21:5. “The former things are passed away.” Verse 4.

We use terms like “forever” and “perpetual” which have different durations according to the law of the state or the country. Perpetual means from thirty to ninety-nine years, according to the usage of the different countries. In Chile, South America, perpetual means thirty years. The Bible sometimes uses terms in like manner.

“Sodom and Gomorrah, and the cities about... are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire.” Jude 1:7. Are Sodom and Gomorrah and the cities about them still burning? The fact is, they were burned up with the vengeance of eternal fire until they were turned into ashes. Peter clarifies this: “And turning the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah into ashes condemned them with an overthrow, making them an ensample [example] unto those that after should live ungodly.” 2 Peter 2:6.

As Sodom and Gomorrah were turned into ashes by the vengeance of eternal fire, so shall the ungodly be burned into ashes by eternal fire in the final day. It is a fire that comes from the eternal God, and it cannot be put out until it has done its work, as was true with Sodom and Gomorrah.

When all other evidence fails those who advocate an eternal hell and a conscious state of the dead, with hell or heaven the immediate prospect at death, instead of after the resurrection, such persons usually resort to the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Let us study this parable, as recorded in Luke 16: 19-31. Preceding this parable there are a number of other parables given, and also some after it. Let us enumerate them.

Luke 15:1-7 gives the parable of the lost sheep.

Luke 15: 8-10, the parable of the lost coin.

Luke 15:11-32, the parable of the prodigal son.

Luke 16: 1-12, the parable of the unjust steward.

Luke 16:19-31, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus.

Luke 18:1-8, the parable of the widow and the unjust judge.

Here we have a list of parables. Now, why should anyone say that all these are parables except one—that of the rich man and Lazarus? The reason is that some wish to keep the dead alive, the wicked in eternal hell-fire and the righteous in heaven. They would send the dead to hell or heaven, and later judge them! Besides this, the Bible says: “The living know that they shall die: but the dead know not anything.” Does the Bible contradict itself? No, never. The trouble is with man.

When Jesus spoke in parables He always had a reason or a motive in mind to teach a lesson. The parables were not always actual happenings, but were illustrations to drive home some truths to the minds of the hearers. The Pharisees scoffed when Jesus gave many of these parables. “And the Pharisees also, who were covetous heard all these things: and they derided Him.” Luke 16: 14.

The question under discussion was covetousness, and not whether a man is alive in some state after having been laid away in the grave. Jesus used this illustration of a rich man and a poor one. Both went to Hades, the grave, and not to Gehenna, the final place of torment; and they spoke to each other in a parable.

The Bible uses figures of speech much as we do. Let us take a few examples from the Bible. Abel's “Blood cries unto Me from the ground.” Genesis 4:10. Did Abel's blood actually cry out? Again: “For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it.” Habakkuk 2:11. Do you suppose that the stone actually cried out, and that the beam answered it? Anyone knows that these are figures of speech.

The same is true here, where the dead are pictured as speaking to each other in the grave. They do not actually hold a conversation across the reaches between hell and heaven. God's word teaches that “the living know: ... but the dead know not anything,” and in the day they die, it declares, their “thoughts perish.” The Bible does not contradict itself. This story is a parable, and the rich man and the poor man speak to each other in the grave in a parable form.

The Pharisees thought that the fact of their being rich was an evidence that they were in special favor with God. Christ intended to teach them that the possession of riches is not proof that one is in favor with God. A man may be desperately poor and yet be among the saved; while the rich may stay out of the kingdom of God and go to hell-fire in the final reckoning day.

The Lord does not reward the righteous at death, nor does He punish the wicked then. “Behold, I come quickly; and My reward is with Me, to give every man according as his work shall be.” Revelation 22:11. When the Lord comes again, He will bring His reward with Him, and will give each man according to his works. Jesus has not yet come, and therefore has not yet brought the reward either for the righteous or for the wicked. How, then can we apply this parable to the dead as occurring before Christ comes and brings the rewards? If the rich man and Lazarus received their rewards immediately at death, how could Jesus say that He will bring the reward when He comes?

When the rich man died, where did he go? He went to Hades, the grave, translated “hell,” which means the grave. See Webster's Dictionary. Hades always means the grave. In Weymouth's translation this note appears on “Hades” in Luke 16:23. “The Greek equivalent of the Hebrew Sheol—the dim underworld to which all the dead go—with no idea of torment.”

The rich man went to Hades, and not to Gehenna. Gehenna always refers to the place of final torment and destruction of the wicked, but Hades always means the grave. There is no hell-fire in the grave, or Hades.

The rich man lifted up his eyes in Hades, the grave, and not in Gehenna, and he spoke with Lazarus, who was in Abraham's bosom. Where was Abraham? He was in Hades, too, that is, the grave. Abraham was not in heaven at the time Jesus gave this parable. He went to the grave, as did all other men, and he was there at the time of Christ. See Matthew 24:30,31; 1 Thessalonians 4:16,17; Acts 1:8-10; Revelation 1:7.

If Abraham had actually been in heaven, and the rich man actually in Gehenna, hell-fire, then we would assume that those who are in heaven can speak to those that are in hell. Suppose you had your son



and your daughter in Gehenna, and were yourself in heaven, and that from your vantage point on high you could speak to them and see them suffer throughout the ceaseless ages of eternity. Would that be heaven for you? Could you enjoy it? Don't you think that in time the thought would come into your mind, and that you would express it to God, that perhaps they had received enough punishment? "They were not bad children," you might say. They just missed heaven. Then, according to the popular view, God would answer, "No, they will never get out of those flames. They are there eternally." Then you would ask God again: "But God, my children were not as bad as the kidnapers and other hardened criminals, why do You punish my children, who were much better, with the same punishment? Don't You make a difference between a person whether he was somewhat bad or very bad?" How could a just God answer? Can't you see the fallacy? How could you shout, "God is love," under those conditions?

If the soul of the rich man was in hell, do "souls" have eyes, hands, mouths, tongues, and the sense of feeling, and speech?

The rich man was in Hades, the grave, and not in Gehenna, the final place of destruction. He wanted to tell his friends to be careful, that they would not be subject to the torments that await all the wicked when their turn comes. But what did Abraham answer? He told him: If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." Luke 16:31.

Now, what do Moses and the prophets teach regarding the dead? They teach that the dead know not anything. Ecclesiastes 9:5,6. If men will not believe Moses and the prophets, they will not believe though one rose from the dead. We must believe Moses and the prophets. These holy men taught that the dead are asleep, that they are unconscious, that they praise not the Lord, that their thoughts perish and they know not anything of what happens under the sun. Then why not believe Moses and the prophets?

Justice demands that the wicked will be judged before they are punished. God has a time appointed for the judgment. "He hath appointed a day, in the which He will judge the world in righteousness by that Man whom He hath ordained; whereof He hath given assurance unto all men, in that He hath raised Him from the dead." Acts 17:31.

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." 2 Corinthians 5:10. "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12:14.

So God has a time when He will judge. The judgment comes after death. "And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." Hebrews 9:27. Now, does this judgment take place immediately after death or later?

The judgment, in the time of Christ, was still future. "The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas." Matthew 12:41. Notice that the men "shall rise in judgment." This puts the judgment in the future. They had not yet risen in judgment. "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." Matthew 11:22. If it shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon in the day of judgment, then Tyre and Sidon were not yet judged. If the judgment was still future at that time they surely were not yet in hell-fire.

The judgment was still future in Paul's time. "As he [Paul] reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." Acts 24:2,5. When Felix thought of the future judgment, he trembled. The Spirit of God moved on his heart, but he waited for a more convenient season. That time never came. He was a lost man.

Many are making the same fatal mistake. They postpone acceptance of the full truth until they think it will be more convenient; but this is a delusion. It is a trick of the devil. The Lord never tells us to postpone. He says, "Today if you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts." Hebrews 3:7, 8.

Paul writes: "God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel." Romans 2:16. It is evident that the judgment was still future in the time of Jesus and in the time of Paul. The millions of people that had died from the time of Adam on up to that time had not yet been judged; consequently they were not in hell or in heaven. The judgment comes before the punishment or the reward.

The wicked are reserved unto the day of judgment to be punished. "The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." 2, Peter 2:9. If the wicked are reserved for the judgment, they surely have not yet received their punishment, because the judgment precedes the punishment.

The evil angels are also reserved for the judgment to be punished. "God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell [Tartarus, not hell-fire, but the abode of the evil angels in outer

darkness], and delivered them into chains of darkness, to be reserved unto judgment.” Verse 4. So the wicked angels are reserved for the judgment as are the ungodly. They, too, have not yet received their punishment. They are not in hell-fire now. They will go there when the wicked will, but that will be after they are judged.

The earth itself is reserved for the last consuming fire. “But the heavens and the earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” 2 Peter 3:7. The world, the heavens of this world, the evil angels, and the wicked are all reserved for that fire. The evil angels and the world are not yet in this fire; neither are the wicked.

The earth will be burned at the same time as the wicked. “The heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” Verse 10. “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:15. “The heavens and the earth” are “reserved unto fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men.” 2 Peter 3:7. So when the earth burns, the ungodly will burn also; but not before.

The wicked have committed their crimes on this earth, and here is where they will receive their punishment. The fire that descends from heaven turns the earth into a great lake of fire which cleanses the whole earth from all sin and sinners. While the earth is melting with fervent heat and the host of evildoers are receiving their just punishments, the righteous are safe within the City of God, the New Jerusalem. See Revelation 21:1-3; 20:7-9.

In these terrible flames the evil angels will be consumed, and the devil will be turned into ashes also. Satan was once a mighty angel, but he fell and then used his might and power to deceive men and women to bring them to perdition. Ezekiel gives a description of the devil and how he will be burned into ashes eventually.

“Thou has been in Eden the garden of God.... Thou was perfect in thy ways from the day that thou was created, till iniquity was found in thee.... Your heart was lifted up because of thy beauty, thou has corrupted thy wisdom by reason of thy brightness: I will cast thee to the ground, I will lay thee before kings, that they may behold thee. Thou has defiled thy sanctuaries by the multitude of your iniquities, by the iniquity of thy traffic. Therefore will I bring forth a fire from the midst of thee, it shall devour thee, and I will bring thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee.” Ezekiel 2-8: 13- 18.

The righteous are secure within the City of God, the New Jerusalem. “But the fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whore mongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone: which is the second death.” Revelation 21:8.

This theory that the wicked go to hell-fire immediately after death, before they are judged, is an absurdity. Suppose two men die on the same day. One was a good moral man, but who had not yet accepted Christ, and the other one was a great criminal, who deserves a punishment a thousand times worse. But according to the popular theory they both receive the same judgment. Is this justice?

Suppose a man died five thousand years ago who, though not deep in sin, was still not at peace with God; and he was sent to hell-fire. After five thousand years a very wicked man dies who should have a sentence much greater than the other man. Yet the fairly good man has been receiving his punishment for five thousand years when the wicked rascal first begins his. Is this justice?

This pernicious doctrine has turned more men away from God, I believe, than many persons realize. Where can you see the justice of God in this popular theory? If both persons, the fairly good man and the worst rascal, receive the same punishment, I believe the fairly good man would stand on the brim of hell and cry out, “Unjust!”

The Roman Catholic Church sees the injustice of giving every man the same sentence, so it has invented purgatory. Purgatory is based on the assumption that all wicked go to eternal hell-fire immediately at death and will never be consumed. This, however, is not true. Each man will receive “according to his works.” So there is no need to find an explanation for a purgatory or limbo where man may have another chance.

The Lord will have different degrees of punishment. A human judge has that much justice. Your city judge would not condemn every man with life imprisonment regardless of the crime. Why? Because he is more just. The man that killed a number of people in cold blood will receive more punishment than the one that stole a watermelon. The Bible teaches clearly that there are degrees of sin and degrees of punishment. So there is no need of purgatory.

Paul writes: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that everyone may receive

the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10.

“And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required: and to whom men have committed much, of him they will ask the more.” Luke 12:47,48.

It is evident, that the sinners in the lake of fire would perish in a few seconds, unless God would intervene and not let them be destroyed. This is exactly what the Bible teaches. “For their worm shall not die, neither shall their fire be quenched.” Isaiah 66:24. God will let them live, and will not put the fire out until each one receives his just punishment. But eventually the last criminal and Satan himself will be consumed and turned into ashes. Malachi 4:1-3; Ezekiel 28:13-19.

A judge that would condemn every criminal with the same sentence regardless of the gravity of his transgressions would not long keep his office. People would rise up in arms against such an unfair judge, and remove him quickly. No one would cast his vote for such a man. Yet men want to ascribe such poor judgment and such injustice to a just and all wise God! They make a human judge more just than the God of justice! No wonder that some men turn against the Bible, and some become infidels, and others accept the pernicious, money making, false doctrine of a purgatory.

After the wicked, the evil angels, and Satan himself have been burned up and turned into ashes “they shall be as though they had not been.” Obadiah 16. The earth will be purified of all sin. Sin and sinners will be no more. This earth will burn up. The tragedy of sin in this world will be an object lesson for future ages, so that no person ever again will transgress God's commandments. “He will make an utter end: affliction shall not rise up the second time.” Nahum 1:9.

After the earth is purified and the sinners and the devil are destroyed, then God will make a new heaven and a new earth, out of this in which we now live. “And I saw a new heaven and a new earth: for the first heaven and the first earth were passed away; and there was no more sea. And I John saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them, and be their God. And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away. And He that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new.... He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son.” Revelation 21:1-7.

Of the wicked it is written: “And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.” Revelation 20:15. The wicked were cast into the lake of fire after they were raised from the dead. This proves that they were not there before. After they have their just and due punishment, they will be turned into ashes, and that will be the end of all the wicked and the devil with all his imps. Then all heavenly beings will see the result of sin. Everybody will know what it means to be disobedient to God's commandments and will know the far-reaching, evil results of such a course, and sin will not enter again.

May God help us all. We have a hell to shun, and a heaven to gain. On which road are you? Are you on the narrow way, or are you on the broad way? Those who go to hell-fire will go there because they did not decide to go to heaven. “Enter you in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:13,14.

## 13. Purgatory

THE leading Catholic weekly newspaper, with a circulation of more than a million, says this about purgatory: "Purgatory is real—a suburb of hell. Every Catholic may not know what is taught by good authority, namely, that the sense pains of Purgatory equal those of hell. Which means, the temperature is about the same in both regions."—Our Sunday Visitor, Nov. 26, 1944.

But from what authority does the Roman Catholic Church get this idea? If the church claims to get it from the Bible, then we must go to the Bible to find out whether it is true. If the Bible does not teach it, and the church gets it from tradition, then we must conclude that tradition has once more been used to establish an un-Scriptural doctrine.

Another Catholic writer makes this statement about purgatory: "The ordinary place of purgatory, which is appropriately and generally understood by the name purgatory, is under the earth, near to hell." - *Theologia, Dens (Roman Catholic)*, tom. VII, *tractatus de Quatuor Novissimis*, N. 2-7, "De Loco Purgatory." Quoted in *Source Book*, edition, 1940, Page 437, Washington, D.C.

The Catholic Encyclopedia also states that hell is supposed to be in the earth. See article under "hell" and also under "purgatory."

Purgatory is not mentioned in either the Catholic or the Protestant Bible. Not even a reference is made to it. It is strange that such a doctrine could be developed and woven into the Roman Catholic teachings with such a detailed explanation and description, when the Bible is absolutely silent on the question. Artists paint purgatory as the most horrible of sights. Writers describe it with vividness as though they had been there and gone through the terrible ordeal, taken the temperature, and came back to report and bring us some snapshots of what they saw. The Virgin Mary is painted with the babe Jesus on her lap, coming down to this flaming purgatory to redeem the souls who have worn her "scapular" during life.

On what grounds, then, does the Catholic Church believe in a purgatory? We shall quote directly from their own authorized writings.

"On what grounds does the Church believe in Purgatory? Because there is one. If you were judge of mankind what would you do with those who die 'too bad for heaven, too good for hell'? An intermediate place of temporary punishment is the only reasonable solution." - Philip Leinfelder, *What You Should Know About the Catholic Church*, sponsored by the Catholic Information Service, La Crosse, Wisconsin, page 9.

This "reasonable solution" may be someone's conclusion, but it is based on uncertain grounds. The Bible says: "For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." *Ecclesiastes 12:14*. And God will give every man according to his works. See the previous chapter. The great sinner receives more punishment than the one who sinned less.

This idea of purgatory is based on the assumption that all men will suffer equally in hell-fire regardless of their degrees of sin. But this is not true. Great sinners receive more punishment than do the ones whose sins were not so great. This is justice. *Luke 12:47,48*; *Romans 2:6*.

The Roman Catholic conception of the justice of God is more logical than is that of most Protestants. The Catholic makes a difference in the punishment, while most Protestants send all sinners into the same place to receive the same degree of punishment. But the whole idea of an eternal hell is not Scriptural.

Those who live in sin, just enough sin to keep them out of heaven, will be sorely disappointed. Their destiny is sealed when they die, and no second chance is possible. It is a pleasing theory that you can live in sin and die in your sins, and yet get to heaven. It is appealing. This is the reason why so many believe it. They can enjoy the sins of this life and get to heaven anyway through purgatory. But this will be a disappointment to those who come under this category. Paul writes that God "Will render to every man according to his deeds." *Romans 2:6*.

Some men will receive a greater damnation. The priests during the time of Christ received a scathing reproof from the Master. "Beware of the scribes, which desire to walk in long robes, and love greetings in the markets, and the highest seats in the synagogues, and the chief rooms at feasts; which devour widows' houses, and for a show make long prayers: the same shall receive greater damnation." *Luke 20:46, 47*. If these false leaders will receive a greater damnation, they will receive a greater punishment.

As we learned in the chapter entitled "The Apocrypha," the Catholic Church found itself unable to prove purgatory from the Bible alone, so it accepted other books and placed them into the Bible at the

fourth session of the Council of Trent, April 8, 1546. From these spurious books theologians have endeavored to prove purgatory and some other false doctrines the Bible itself does not teach.

The text that is quoted from one of those spurious books is found in Maccabees. "And making a gathering, he sent twelve thousand drachmas of silver to Jerusalem for sacrifice to be offered for the sins of the dead, thinking well and religiously concerning the resurrection, (for if he had not hoped that they that were slain should rise again, it would have seemed superfluous and vain to pray for the dead,) and because he considered that they who had fallen asleep with godliness, had great grace laid up for them. It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead, that they may be loosed from sins." 2, Maccabees 12:43-46, Douay.

There are four books of the Maccabees, but the Catholic Church accepted only two of them recently. Why should that be? If two of the books of the Maccabees are good, why should not all four be accepted? If we accept two books of Moses, why should we not accept all five of them? The Catholic Church approved the two Apocryphal books, and thus attempts to prove the doctrine of praying for the dead.

Some of the Jews did not believe in a resurrection. "Then came to Him certain of the Sadducees, which deny that there is any resurrection; and they asked Him." Luke 20:2-7. Would you conclude then, that there is no resurrection, merely because the Jews did not believe in one?

The Jews had many traditions that Jesus utterly condemned. In vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." "You made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition." Matthew 15:9,6. Jesus condemns the Jewish traditions, yet the Roman Catholic Church still wants to retain some of them.

We cannot take the belief of some of the Jews; as authority if they do not agree with the Bible. Why accept purgatory merely on the basis that some of the Jews believed it?

If theologians of the Roman Catholic Church want to accept what the Jews taught, then why don't they accept what Josephus, the great Jewish historian, teaches? Josephus speaks about Hades, that is the grave, as a place "wherein the souls of the righteous and unrighteous are detained.... This region is allotted as a place of custody for souls."-Flavius Josephus, Hades, translated by William Whiston, paragraph 1.

The pagans had the idea of a purgatory. In Greece this belief of purgatory was inculcated by the philosophers who knew not God, much less knew something about the Bible. Even Plato held out a hope for those who were punished after death. The Egyptians and the pagan Romans believed in a punishment of the dead. See Alexander Hislop, *The Two Babylons*, popular ed. pages 167, 168.

The Roman Catholic Church, however, seems to have accepted this doctrine from philosophers of Alexandria who believed that there was a fire in which the supposed "souls" of the dead were purified. This doctrine was added to the dogmas of the Catholic Church binding under pain of eternal damnation, at the Fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215.

The Roman Catholic Church teaches that a person can redeem his brother through the paying of money for saying masses for him. The Bible says: "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." Psalm 49:7. The Douay Version gives this text in this manner: 'No brother can redeem, nor shall man redeem: he shall not give to God his ransom, nor the price of the redemption of his soul.' Psalm 48:8,9.

There is no price that we can pay to redeem the soul. Money will not help the dead. Prayers for them are in vain. The doom of the dead is sealed when they die. If you want to do something for them, you must do it while they are alive.

If a sinner depends on his relatives or his friends to get him out of purgatory, a place which does not exist, he will be greatly disappointed. He must be sure that he is right with God while he is alive. Here on earth there are only two ways, and each person has to decide in which one he wants to go. One leads to perdition, and the other leads to heaven. There is no third road or middle road that leads through purgatory.

"Enter you in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leads to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it." Matthew 7:13,14.

Unconverted and unregenerate men and women desire extended opportunity. They do not wish to give up their sins now. Those who teach a "second chance" are perpetuating a delusion and a terrible deception. If the devil can make anyone believe that he will have another opportunity to get better after death and go to heaven anyway, he has such a one in his snare. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap." Galatians 6:7.

The spiritual sowing time is while we are alive. Now is the time to get right with God. "Today if

you will hear His voice, harden not your hearts.” Hebrews 3:7,8. “Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation.” 2 Corinthians 6:2. The day of salvation is now, while we are alive; and not after we are dead.

Sometimes 1 Corinthians 3:12-14 is used to prove a purgatory. But if you read the text carefully you will discover that it does not speak of a purgatory at all. A person who had never heard about a purgatory could not read purgatory out of this text. Paul speaks of Christians who should look up to Christ as their example. He has laid a sure foundation on which we should build. We should be builders together with Him. In order to build on that foundation that Jesus has laid, what kind of materials should we use? Paul tells us. “Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. If any man's work abide which he hath built thereupon, he shall receive a reward.” 1 Corinthians 3:12-14.

If your life's work is not in harmony with God and you have devoted your time, talent, money, and energy to sin, and have built on the things of this world that are perishable, your work is represented by wood, hay, and stubble. It will be consumed when “the earth also and the works that are therein shall be burned up.” 2 Peter 3:10. But if your lifework has been for Christ and for eternity, it is represented by things as imperishable as gold, silver, and precious stones.

Even work for the cause of God is sometimes done in a slipshod, careless manner, or in ignorance. Like buildings made from shoddy materials, such work done for show or prompted by misguided zeal will be put to the test. The man may be saved, but he will see his work come to naught. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire.” 1 Corinthians 3:15. As Paul observes, misguided workers for God often are prompted in part by willful and obstinate ignorance; and the few who are saved when their “house”, burns up around them will have a narrow escape.

The expression, “as by fire,” is a figure of speech and does not refer to purgatory. Even the events of this life sometimes test our characters and our work.

Peter makes this clear. “Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy.... Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf.” 1 Peter 4:12-16.

This does not refer to purgatory, but to the fiery trials we have in life. The prophet Amos writes: “You were as a firebrand plucked out of the burning.” Amos 4:11. Peter again declares: “The trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perishes, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.” 1 Peter 1:7.

The psalmist writes: “For Thou, O God, has proved us: Thou has tried us, as silver is tried.” Psalm 66:10, (Douay, Psalm 65:10). Isaiah states: “Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction.” Isaiah 48:10. “As silver is tried by fire, and gold in the furnace: so the Lord tries the hearts.” Proverbs 17:3, Douay.

It is evident that the fiery trials we have do not refer to purgatory, but to our present lives. They refer to the experiences we have in this life as Christians.

The Holy Spirit, which inspired holy men of God to write the Bible, apparently did not inspire them to say a word about purgatory. If God intended that the true church should have such a doctrine, then He surely would have given some revelation regarding it. But the complete silence is proof that God did not intend to have us believe in a purgatory. Two Jesuits have written a work describing purgatory. In it they say:

“How the great Saints and Doctors astonish me, when they treat of this fire, as of the pain sense, as they call it.... Out of which assertion it clearly follows, that the furious fits of the stone, fever, or raging gout, the tormenting colic, with all the horrible convulsions of the worst disease, nay, though you join racks, gridirons, boiling oils, wild beasts, and a hundred horses drawing several ways and tearing one limb from another, with all the other hellish devices of the most barbarous and cruel tyrants, all this does not reach to the least part of the mildest pains in purgatory.” -Two Ancient Treatises on Purgatory, by two Jesuit priests, Fathers Mumford and Thimelby.

From what source did these Jesuits get their information? They did not get it from the Bible.

Even after a priest has given the “extreme unction” to a dying Roman Catholic, he is not sure where that person goes. He is undecided whether the deceased goes to purgatory or to heaven. The whole system of ritual of the Roman Catholic Church still leaves the lay members in doubt about their dead.

The Bible does not teach a presently burning hell, or a purgatory. Men will get their reward after

the resurrection; not when they die.

The words of Matthew 5:26 are often used by priests to frighten their lay members about purgatory. This text has nothing to do with a purgatory. In the time of Jesus it was the custom to throw men in jail who could not pay their debts. The story is given of a man that owed ten thousand talents, but could not pay them, so he went to the king and asked for patience. He fell before the king and the king forgave him all his debt. Then this pardoned man went to another man that owed him one hundred pence. His fellow servant fell at his feet as he had done before the king whom he owed ten thousand talents, but he would not listen to the man's petition who owed him only one hundred pence, and threw him into prison.

When the king discovered what had happened, how this man whom he pardoned from a great debt had thrown into jail another man who owed him but little, the king became angry and took this unthankful and merciless man and threw him into jail until he would pay the last penny. See Matthew 18:23-35.

In Matthew 5:25 Jesus warned His followers that they should agree quickly with their adversaries, that is, with those who were their enemies, or else they might be taken to court and thrown into jail; and they would not get out until the last penny was paid. Jesus refers to a custom that was prevalent in those days, and had no reference to a purgatory. This is an invention of the priests.

Another text that is perverted is Job 19:21. "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O you my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me." Job was the speaker. He was suffering with boils and his friends came to condemn him. Even his wife turned against him. In this state of mind he cried out: "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O you my friends." Instead of receiving pity and compassion from his friends, he was accused by them of being a sinner, and was therefore plagued. He told them: "I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are you all." Job 16:1,2. His wife told him: "Does thou still retain your integrity? Curse God, and die." Job 2:9. No wonder that Job asked for pity. This has no reference to purgatory at all. Job asked for pity while he was alive, and not after he was to die.

Because Protestants have challenged the Roman Catholic Church's theory of purgatory, the priests have had to search for texts to support their stand, and in so doing they have misapplied many texts.

Dear Catholic friends, go to your Bibles and let God speak to you. Do not depend on man for your salvation. It is only Jesus Christ that can save you and me. No priest can do that, no matter how beautiful he pictures the fancied but deceptive doctrines. If his doctrines do not agree with the Bible, then you may be sure that they are wrong and are man-made.

"God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil." Ecclesiastes 12: 14. Notice that every work will be brought into judgment, and each one will receive "according to his deeds." Romans 2:6. Each one will be judged according to his works and not according to the amount of money he spends for the dead. The expression "works" refers to the acts of life. Each one will be judged accordingly.

A man once said to me, If purgatory is not mentioned in the Bible, then it is limbo that it speaks about." No, limbo is not mentioned in the Bible either. It has the same origin as purgatory -it comes from paganism.

If the Bible is so silent on purgatory and limbo, why should anyone believe such doctrines? If "the Bible is all true," then purgatory and limbo certainly are not true.

God is just and punishes each man according to his works. There is no need for an intermediate place. What would be the object? The idea of purgatory is based on the assumption that God is so unjust that He will punish every sinner, regardless of his crimes, with eternal hell-fire. But this assumption is wrong. This false doctrine gives rise to purgatory in an attempt to make God more just. But God is just, even with hell-fire. He gives every man what he deserves, and then burns him up into ashes. After the wicked are turned into ashes (Malachi 4:1-3), God makes a new heaven and a new earth where the saved will dwell (Revelation 21:1-8). This new earth will be our own globe, and "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.... He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." Revelation 21:4-7. May you live for God now, and then have the privilege of entering into that glorious land!

## 14. The Mass, the Bread, and the Wine

AS WE have observed before, if the Roman Catholic Church had not departed from the teachings of the apostles and prophets, the Reformation would not have come. It would have been unnecessary. Inconsistencies between papal tradition and Bible truth became so apparent, however, that even some of the church leaders were dissatisfied. As they began to study the Bible more fully, these men decided to accept only what the Inspired Word taught. This new attitude was soon shared by the people among whom they worked. The high officials of the church were not pleased with this, as we might expect. They did all they could to prevent it. When persuasion failed, the church used persecution and even death.

One of the doctrines which the Reformers especially criticized was the mass. Is the doctrine of the mass Biblical? We quote from Roman Catholic authority the following: Is then the mass the same sacrifice as that of the cross? It is essentially the same; it differs only in the manner in which it is offered." - Manual of Christian Doctrine, by a Roman Catholic seminary professor, page 49. In other words, Catholic theologians teach that every time the priest says a mass, Jesus is sacrificed again.

The Roman Catholic prayer book, The Path to Paradise (page 20), declares:

"When the priest goes to the altar,	Jesus enters the garden.
When the priest kisses the altar,	Jesus is betrayed with a kiss.
At the unveiling of the chalice,	Jesus is spoiled of his garments.
At the covering of the chalice,	Jesus is crowned with thorns.
When the priest washes his fingers,	Pilate washes his hands.
When the priest signs the oblation,	Jesus is nailed to the cross.
At the elevation of the Host,	The cross is raised up.
At the elevation of the chalice,	Jesus' blood flows from his wounds.
At the breaking of the Host,	Jesus dies upon the cross."

Christ's saving work was not half-completed; He died once and no more. "Wherefore He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him [Jesus], seeing He ever lives to make intercession for them.... Who needs not daily ... to offer up sacrifice: ... for this He did once, when He offered up Himself." "We are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.... This Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down on the right hand of God." Hebrews 7:25-27; 10:10-12.

Notice that Jesus "needs not daily ... to offer up sacrifice," because He did it "once," "once for all ... .. He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever." This means that the pretended second sacrifice of the mass is superfluous. There is no need for it. Jesus was the mass once and forever at Calvary. "He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever." This includes all sins, whether venial or mortal, small or great. "The blood of Jesus Christ ... cleanses us from all sin." 1 John 1:7.

The shedding of the blood of Jesus was necessary, but after that was done the price was paid. "Without shedding of blood is no remission." Hebrews 9:22 "Where remission of these [sins] is, there is no more offering for sin." Hebrews 10:18. The sacrifice of Jesus was complete. He paid it all at once. There is no need for Jesus to keep on paying. If you were to buy a house and pay for it in full, there would be no need for you to pay that same price again and again. After the full amount is paid, the account is settled. There is nothing that any man can do to improve on the sacrifice of Jesus.

Though you will not find the word "mass" in the Bible, Catholic theologians teach that one who fails to attend mass on Sunday thereby commits a "mortal" sin. Most of the speaking connected with this ceremony is done in Latin, and is understood by few. When Jesus instituted His Supper, commonly called the "Communion," He did not speak in a foreign tongue that the disciples could not understand. See Matthew 26:17-30.

Jesus did not take the wine and drink it Himself, as some would do today; but He passed it to all who were present. Mark records: "He [Jesus] took the cup, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them: and they all drank of it." Mark 14:23. If they all drank of the wine, then Jesus did not drink it alone. The common practice for a priest is to use only a small amount of wine in conducting the mass, then to drink it himself. This practice, too, does not harmonize with the Scriptural principles.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian church regarding the Lord's Supper and gave them instructions as to



who should partake of the bread and the wine. He does not teach that in each congregation the presiding minister alone should drink the wine:

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed took bread. And when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is My body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of Me. After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is the New Testament in My blood: this do you, as oft as you drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as you cat this bread, and drink this cup, you do show the Lord's death till He come. Wherefore whosoever shall cat this bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of that bread, and drink of that cup.” 1 Corinthians 11: 23-28.

Catholic theologians teach that the bread and wine are actually changed into the body and the blood of Christ when the priest says, “This is My body,” and, “This is My blood.” They stress the word “is.” Because our Lord said, “This is My body,” they suppose that it is actually His flesh.

The Bible also says that Jesus is the Lamb of God. John 1:29; Revelation 5:12. We know that the lamb is used as a symbol to represent Christ. Jesus also says, I am the Door,” and, I am the Vine.” John 10:9; 15:5. How was Jesus a door and a vine? These were symbols used to represent certain phases of His relationship to mankind. He is also called “the Lion of the tribe of Judah.” Revelation 5:5. The Bible often uses figures and symbols, and such are the bread and wine.

In an effort to prove that the priests eat the actual flesh and drink the blood of Christ at the Communion, Catholic theologians often quote John 6:53-55: “Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you have no life in you. Who so eats My flesh, and drinks My blood, bath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. For My flesh is meat indeed, and My blood is drink indeed.” The Jews thought that Jesus meant His literal flesh and His literal blood, but such is not the case. Jesus explains it in verse 63: “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.”

Nicodemus, who was supposedly himself an authority on religious matters, became confused when Jesus told him: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” Nicodemus asked, “How can a man be born when he is old?” John 3:3, 4. He did not understand the meaning of the words of Jesus, so the Lord asked him, “Art thou a master of Israel, and knows not these things?” Verse 10.

As Nicodemus did not understand the meaning of the new birth-and many even today do not grasp its significance-there are millions who do not understand what it means to eat and drink the blood of Christ. They take it literally, as did the Jews of Christ's day.

The wife of Zebedee brought her two sons, James and John, to Jesus, and said, “Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand, and the other on the left, in Thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, You know not what you ask. Are you able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto Him, We are able.” Matthew 20:21,22.

What did Jesus mean by drinking His cup? He gives the explanation in chapter 26 of Matthew. “He took with Him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy. Then said He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry you here, and watch with Me. And He went a little farther, and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, O My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from Me: nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou wilt.” Verses 37-39.

The cup here signifies His terrible experience in the Garden of Gethsemane. It is evident that we cannot take some things to be literal when the context itself speaks in figures, or illustrations. So when Jesus speaks about eating His flesh and drinking His blood to receive eternal life, He means to accept His word, which brings life to the believer. “The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.” John 6:63. Jeremiah had an experience like this, for he said, “Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and Thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart.” Jeremiah 15:16. We eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ in a spiritual sense, and not literally so.

One thing that priests do not wish to discuss is, What happens to the bread and the wine that was changed into the “actual” flesh and the “actual” blood of Christ, after they consume it? Does the God they create and eat become a part of their bodies, a portion of it even becoming waste, or does it again change back to God?

The ceremony of the mass as it is now performed was unknown in the days of the apostles. Even Peter, whom the Catholics regard as the first pope, would be confused were he to be able to look upon one such service.

In accepting tradition as of greater authority than the word of God, Catholic leaders make the same mistake as did the Jews in the time of Christ. Jewish theologians once said to Christ, "Why do Thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? For they wash not their hands when they eat bread." Matthew 15:2. On another occasion they said, "Why do the disciples of John and of the Pharisees fast, but Thy disciples fast not?" Mark 2:18. They criticized Christ because He did not follow their traditions.

Jesus quoted Isaiah's words, "But in vain they do worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." Matthew 15:9. This is what happens today.

There is not a single example in the Bible of anyone's conducting a mass. Such a ceremony was unknown to Bible writers, including those who wrote of the primitive church of apostolic times. This practice was introduced in later centuries and has become a tradition of the church. Its origin, therefore, is human and not divine.

Why should any ceremony be conducted for the benefit of dead persons, when, as has been pointed out in previous chapters, "the dead know not anything"? The Bible declares plainly that no one who has died will regain consciousness until the day of resurrection. One cannot help wondering, Why do so many people accept these practices? Paul supplies the answer: "The time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:3,4. "They received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth." 2 Thessalonians 2:10-12.

"Thy word is truth," Jesus said in a prayer to His Father. John 17:17. "Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men." Acts 5:29. Though other men may assume things that are contrary to the teachings of the Bible, we should reject them. "Obey God rather than men."

## 15. Celibacy

THE Garden of Eden God saw that “it is not good that man should be alone,” but Catholic disagreement with this principle is expressed in the teaching of celibacy. Priests and other men and women who dedicate their time to the promulgation of Catholicism, and who are consecrated for that purpose, are forbidden to marry.

Peter, who is regarded by Catholics as the first pope, was married. Matthew says, “When Jesus was come into Peter's house, He saw his wife's mother ... sick of a fever.” Matthew 8:14. Here the Bible speaks of Peter's wife, and declares that Peter and his wife lived at home.

Paul offers further evidence that not only Peter (Cephas, John 1: 42), but the other apostles were married. “Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and Cephas?” 1 Corinthians 9:5.

The word “wife” in this text is also translated “woman,” but with the idea of a married woman. It is unthinkable that Peter and the other apostles would take as traveling companions women to whom they were not married.

The English Catholic translation in the Douay Bible uses the word “woman.” The L. Van Esz and Allioli German Roman Catholic versions translate it “Frau,” and “Weib.” If the translators of these verses had thought that the Greek or Latin meant an unmarried woman, they would have translated it “Fraulein,” which means an unmarried girl or woman.

Weymouth, in his modern speech translation, renders this passage: “Have we not a right to take with us on our journeys a Christian sister as our wife, as the rest of the apostles do-and the Lord's brothers and Peter?” Moffatt gives it: “Have we no right to travel with a Christian wife, like the rest of the apostles, like the brothers of the Lord, like Cephas himself?”

Faced with this contradiction of their teachings, Catholic theologians say, “If he [Peter] had a wife at the time he was called to the ministry, he left her.”-Rev. Joseph B. Ward, *The Truth About Catholics*, August 1, 1949, ed. No. 2, Catholic Literature Society, Los Angeles, California, p. 14.

They neglect to note, however, that Paul wrote his words in 1 Corinthians 9 many years after Peter had been called to the ministry. Still later Paul wrote to Timothy recommending that young men who aspire to become bishops should be married:

If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desires a good work. A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife; ... one that rules well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity.” 1 Timothy 3:1-4. He also wrote of deacons: “Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.” Verse 12.

Philip the evangelist was also married. The author of the book of Acts, who traveled with Paul, wrote, “We entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him. And the same man had four daughters.” Acts 21:8,9.

In answer to the question, “Why don't Catholic priests marry?” Catholic theologians say, It would interfere with their work. Besides, virginity is higher than the married state.”-Rev. Philip Leinfelder, *What You Should Know About the Catholic Church*, Catholic Information Service, La Crosse, Wisconsin, page 13.

Though the apostle Paul was a widower or a bachelor, he was by no means typical in this respect. The priests and prophets of the Old Testament, as well as of the New, were married. Let us take a few examples: Aaron, the high priest, Exodus 28:1; Samuel, a priest and judge, 1 Samuel 8:1-3; Eli, a priest, 1 Samuel 2:12; Moses, Exodus 18:1-6; other priests, Ezra 7:5. Judges 18:30; the apostles, Matthew 8:15; 1 Corinthians 9:5; an evangelist, Acts 21:8,9. Bishops, 1 Timothy 3:2; deacons, 1 Timothy 3:12;

Deborah, a married woman who was judge, Judges 4:4, 5; the prophetess Huldah, a married woman who lived at the college and to whom the people of Israel came for advice and instruction, 2, Kings 22:14; the prophetess Anna of the New Testament, Luke 2:36-38; and many others. There is nothing in the Bible to demand that men or women who work for God should get a certificate of separation or leave their wives or their husbands, as the Roman Catholic Church now teaches. (See *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, article “Celibacy,” vol. 3, P. 487.)

Paul declares the excellence of the Christian marriage. He writes, “Let every one of you ... so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.” “So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loves his wife loves himself.” Ephesians 5:33, 28.

How could Peter write, “Likewise, you husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge, giving

honor unto the wife; . . . that your prayers be not hindered” (1 Peter 3:71 if he had separated himself from his wife? Peter was surely no hypocrite.

There were religious women who helped to advance God's work and who gave hospitality to Paul and other missionaries and apostles. For example, Lydia gave hospitality to Paul (Acts 16:14,15), but she was married. Elias (Elijah) was cared for by a widow. Luke 4:26. Priscilla cared for Paul, but she was married and her husband living with her. Acts 18:1-3.

Paul writes, “I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children. Guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully.” 1 Timothy 5:14.

For centuries celibacy was a subject of constant dissension in the Roman Catholic Church itself. Before the year 1000, many priests lived openly in wedlock.

“Popes Leo IX (1048-1054) and Nicolas II (1058-1061) interdicted all priests that had wives or concubines from the exercise of any spiritual function, on pain of excommunication. Alexander II (1059-1063) decreed excommunication against all who should attend a mass celebrated by a priest having a wife or concubine. This decision was renewed by Gregory VII (Hildebrand) in a council held at Rome in 1074, and a decretal was issued that every layman who should receive the communion from the hands of a married priest should be excommunicated, and that every priest who married or lived in concubinage should be deposed.... Individual instances of married priests were still to be found in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries.... Nevertheless, after the Reformation, the question came up; and at the Council of Trent (1545-1563) several bishops, and the emperor Charles V, favored a relaxation of the rule. But the majority of voices decided that God would not withhold the gift of chastity from those that rightly prayed for it, and the rule of celibacy was thus finally and forever imposed on the ministers of the Roman Catholic Church.”-McClintock and Strong, *Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, article, “Celibacy.”

The fact that popes issued decrees against priests who had wives or concubines proves that there were many such clergymen within the church at that time. How then can the Catholic Church honestly tell her members that celibacy was founded by Paul, and has been practiced ever since that time? During the first three centuries after Christ there was no enforced celibacy, as McClintock and Strong point out in their article on this subject.

Of course, the Bible makes it plain that unmarried life, voluntarily assumed, is commendable under certain circumstances. See Matthew 19:12; 1 Corinthians 7:1-35. But this does not mean that it applies to every member of the clergy. Paul, who is much quoted for recommending celibacy under certain conditions, also wrote, “Let every man have his own wife.” 1 Corinthians 7:2. He calls marriage “honorable in all.” Hebrews 13:4 He does not forbid bishops to marry. “A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife.” 1 Timothy 3:2. Paul writes to other leaders of the church: “Let these also first be proved; then let them use the office of a deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well.” Verses 10-12.

When Paul was at Corinth, about AD 54, he stayed with Aquila and Priscilla. Later this Jewish Christian family went back to Rome, about AD 60, where they helped to carry the gospel forward. Paul wrote in his letter to the Romans, “Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus.” Romans 16:3. This man and woman were Paul's helpers, but he did not say anything about separating them.

One of the characteristics of the apostasy against which Paul warned the church is that of “forbidding to marry.” 1 Timothy 4:3. It is clear that in apostolic times celibacy was the exception, and not the rule, among Christian workers. Its observance today is a Roman Catholic Church institution, introduced in later centuries as an expedient for the aims of the church administration. Its origin is human, not divine.

## 16. Why There Are So Many Churches

THE principal differences among Christian churches today date back to the separation of “dissenters” from the Roman Catholic Church in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, known as Reformation times. Protestants, as those were called who broke away from the Catholic Church, were often persecuted severely. The Catholic Church makes no apologies for the suffering and bloodshed resulting from this persecution. One authoritative Catholic writer, whose work carries the approval of an official church censor, says:

“When confronted by heresy, she does not content herself with persuasion; arguments of an intellectual and moral order appear to her insufficient, and she has recourse to force, to corporal punishment, to torture. She creates tribunals like those of the Inquisition, she calls the laws of the state to her aid, if necessary she encourages a crusade, or a religious war.... Especially did she act thus in the sixteenth century with regard to Protestants. Not content to reform morally, to preach by example, to convert people by eloquent and holy missionaries, she lit in Italy, in the Low Countries, and above all in Spain, the funeral piles of the Inquisition. In France under Francis I and Henry II, in England under Mary Tudor, she tortured the heretics, while both in France and Germany, during the second half of the sixteenth and the first half of the seventeenth century, if she did not actually begin, at any rate she encouraged and actively aided, the religious wars.” - Alfred Baudrillart, *The Catholic Church, the Renaissance, and Protestantism*, pages 182, 183.

W. E. H. Lecky, the great historian, writes, “That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history.” - *History of the Rise and Influence of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe*, vol. 2, Page 32.

Though the church leaders thought that persecution of this kind would intimidate the “heretics” and frighten would-be dissenters, they discovered in time that their efforts were resulting in a far different effect. Many who witnessed the burning of the martyrs were led to question the motives of the church leaders, and to seek the answer in the forbidden pages of Scripture. Many of the victims of the Inquisition had been charged with possession or use of the Bible, which was denied to the laity. Those who sought to find reasons for the conflict of attitudes between Bible loving Protestants and Catholic leaders soon discovered that the cause of justice favored the Bible, and many conversions to Protestantism resulted. Someone has said that “the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the gospel.”

When Catholic leaders observed this trend, they decided to change their tactics. Clearly they could not oppose the Bible. If they could make it appear to support their doctrines or could draw away the attention of their people from it, they could stop this cause of unrest. Consequently they produced a “Catholic Bible,” well annotated with footnotes to emphasize the official Catholic view of all controversial passages. Though they held this version before their people as the only correct one for their study, if they had to study the Scriptures, they did not encourage even such investigation. Anyone reading the Scriptures was cautioned against forming a “private opinion.” When Protestants appeal to the Bible for their side of disputed doctrines. Catholic leaders condemn their Bible versions as erroneous. Many Roman Catholics have accepted this explanation.

Though the Catholic Church has a broad educational plan for all its youth from elementary grades up through college and university years, little emphasis is placed upon the study of the Bible. They do learn much, of course, about the traditions of the church and its doctrines; but they are not encouraged to seek truth from the Scriptures.

Most of the un-Biblical doctrines discussed in the previous chapters are taught in Catholic schools, including those of the mass, the intercession of the Virgin Mary, the value of holy water, the baptizing of bells, the canonization and veneration of “saints,” the observance of holy days. The celibacy of the clergy, the rosary, confession, the sale of indulgences, the scapular, the Inquisition, the temporal power of the pope, the infallibility of the pope, the baptizing of infants, purgatory, ever-present hell, and many others.

Though one who studies the Bible carefully may readily recognize these teachings as un-Scriptural, many of them are still widely believed by Protestants as well as by Catholics. The question is often asked, “If the Reformers, such as Martin Luther, were led by God in their great work, why did they not accept all the Bible teachings on these subjects?”

The answer is, “These great men, like the disciples of old, were not able to grasp all the light. Jesus

said, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but you cannot bear them now." John 16:12. If God had revealed to Luther, for example, all the light we have today, he would have been so far in advance of his time that the common people could not have followed him from the utter darkness in which they lived. They would have been bewildered. He received enough light to illumine the path of truth and start a reform that was to continue until the church came to all the truth. But when Luther died, his followers stopped where he left them.

Man's understanding of truth must be progressive. We do not attempt to teach a grade-school child calculus or Greek; we start him out on simple arithmetic and spelling. We give him more difficult intellectual tasks as he shows his capacity to learn. Jesus followed this principle in revealing spiritual truths to the people of His day. "And with many such parables spoke He the word unto them, as they were able to hear it." Mark 4:33. So, too, did He seek to bring the truth of the gospel to the people of medieval Europe. As they showed a capacity to learn, He would lead them on to fuller revelations of His truth.

Unfortunately, many church leaders were unwilling to learn more, or to permit their followers to grow spiritually. Some prepared an Index of books which they forbade church members to read, and in many other ways sought to limit investigation and inquiry of spiritual truth. In many churches today the standard of belief is not the Bible, but the creed or writings "approved" by certain councils. As the years pass, proponents of these various churches point back to their antiquity as proof of their virtue. Catholic leaders say that since their church was founded long before Protestantism began, they alone are true. They forget that many Oriental religions, which are non-Christian, date back centuries before Christ, and the Jewish religion even earlier.

The Jews boast of their religion, and trace their ancestry back to Abraham. Yet in Jesus' day they had so far departed from the truth that they crucified the Son of God. Though they had been waiting long for the coming of the Messiah they had minimized the importance of Holy Writ and exalted the traditions of men, and so did not recognize their great Deliverer when He came.

Similarly, religious leaders of modern times may become so wrapped up in their creeds and resolutions that they do not recognize the voice of God speaking to them and calling them to accept new revelations of His will.

In 1632 Galileo Galilei published a book expressing his belief that the sun was the central body around which the earth and other planets moved. Though he had arrived at this belief as a result of careful scientific observations and deep study, and though he was restating some of the convictions of Copernicus, another astronomer, he was immediately attacked by ecclesiastical authorities for disturbing the "accepted" ideas of the church. He was tried before the Inquisition and was forced "to fall upon his knees and abjure by oaths the truths he had discovered and so ably maintained." The discoveries of later years bore out the truth of Galileo's convictions, and the church authorities removed his published works from the Index in 1833.

In the early years of the forming of the Catholic Church, many doctrines and practices were adopted from the heathen peoples whom missionaries sought to "convert." Some of these pagan institutions are plainly evident today in the worship accorded relics and images, in the use of holy water, lighted candles and incense, the veneration of saints, the celibacy of the monks and nuns, and the ceremonial processions. A Catholic writer, Theodore Maynard, has said, "It has often been charged-usually by the narrower sort of Protestant controversialist-that Catholicism is overlaid with many pagan incrustations. Catholicism, it must be added, is ready to accept the accusation-and even to make it her boast. Only it would change the term to some extent; it regards the process as willingness to absorb the true, the good and the beautiful, wherever they may be found, and to indulge all harmless human propensities. The great god Pan is not really dead; he is baptized."-The Story of American Catholicism, pages 37, 38, censored by Arthur J. Scanlan and Francis J. Spellman, then archbishop of New York.

Who is this god Pan? Webster says, "A god of flocks and pastures, forests and their wild life, patron of shepherds, hunters, fishermen, etc.... Pan was represented as having the legs and, sometimes, the ears and horns of a goat." What does the god Pan have to offer a man seeking the kingdom of God? He offers nothing. The Bible is God's guidebook.

Yet ecclesiastics will cling tenaciously to these expressions of "harmless human propensities," and will anathematize anyone who questions the virtue of them. They give the title of "tradition" to practices which originated in pagan compromises, then teach these new ceremonies as zealously and as sincerely as Bible doctrines, if not more so. Someone may ask, "Are not these church leaders intelligent men, and sincere, too?" Most of them may be so, but even honest people can be deceived. The Baal priests in the time of Elijah undoubtedly were sincere, at least they were desperately in earnest as they prayed to their

gods and cut their flesh until the blood gushed forth,-but they were wrong. The zeal demonstrated by a person who propagates false doctrines does not guarantee that those doctrines will be right. Even the devil is an intelligent being, and many of the fallen angels from heaven are his helpers; yet he and they evidently must be deceived. See Revelation 12:4,7-9; Luke 10:18. These who once lived in heaven itself are doomed to perdition.

We cannot judge the merit of a man's message solely on his apparent intelligence and sincerity. The real test is this: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20. His message must ring true to the word of God, or it is untrustworthy. To many people today, however, do not take time to study the Bible, and they are easily led astray. Some prefer the kind of religion which does not make the demands upon their conscience which the plain Bible teaching exacts. The Lord says of them, "My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou has rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee." Hosea 4:6. The apostle Paul warned that in the last days truth would be unpopular. He said, "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables." 2 Timothy 4:3,4. Moffatt's translation gives it in these words: "The time will come when people decline to be taught sound doctrine, they will accumulate teachers to suit themselves and tickle their own fancies, they will give up listening to the truth and turn to myths."

He explains this attitude in another passage: "This know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, . . . lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof. . . Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." 2 Timothy 3:1-7.

There are many people today, like Pilate of old, who may ask, "What is truth?" but never stay to learn Christ's answer. In His prayer to His Father He said, "Sanctify them through Thy truth: Thy word is truth." John 17:17. To a young man inquiring the way to eternal life He said, "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:17. Then Jesus went on to quote from the Decalogue: "Thou shall do no murder, Thou shall not commit adultery, Thou shall not steal, Thou shall not bear false witness, Honor thy father and thy mother." Verses 18,19.

Yet we find people today who call themselves Christians while refusing to accept this same Decalogue which the great Master so plainly taught. "There is no law now," they say. "We are not under a law."

Let such persons consider, however, the words of the apostle Paul: "Where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 4:15. Are there transgressors today? The apostle John declared, "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Are there sinners today? Paul also said, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet." Romans 7:7. Here Paul clearly refers to the tenth commandment of the Decalogue. He declared that this divine code of conduct for man is "holy, and just, and good (Romans 7:12), as the psalmist had pronounced it "perfect" (Psalm 19:1-7).

At this point in a discussion of the law someone usually begins to mutter darkly about an "old covenant," which they assert includes everything in the old Testament. This, they say, ended at the cross. While the cross of Calvary did indeed mean the culmination of many things, it did not strike the moral law from the hearts of God's people. The prophet had predicted, "Behold, the days come, said the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. Which My covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, said the Lord: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel. After those days said the Lord, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people." Jeremiah 31:31-33. Paul picks up this prophecy and points to its fulfillment under the ministry of Jesus Christ as the High Priest in heaven, presenting His shed blood on Calvary as the price of our redemption. Hebrews 8:10.

Far from abolishing God's law, the new covenant ensures its place in the inmost soul of the Christian. One who has accepted the sacrifice of God's own Son in his behalf will henceforth serve God from love, an obedience that is unswerving and unquestioning. This is what Jesus meant when He said, "If you love Me, keep My commandments" (John 14:15), and what John meant when He said, "For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments" (1 John 5:3).

The word of God is clear in stating the way of Christian obedience and love. Why, then, do we

find so many different opinions, sometimes bordering on violent antagonism? Someone has well said that Christian peoples quarrel not over truth but over their creeds. Catholic leaders sometimes say that if Protestants had not separated themselves from the "mother church" there would be no confusion. Agreed. But if there had been no independent thinking, no grasping for truth, would there have been any progress in man's spiritual thinking? If all peoples followed Mohammed or Buddha there would be no confusion as far as religion is concerned. But who will agree that this condition would be ideal? Men should be willing to submit to the teachings of Christ's word; but no one has the right to shackle men's souls with strained and false interpretations of that word. The Bible is truly of no "private interpretation," as Peter wrote; but it is a book for private study. John the revelator said, "Blessed is he that reads, and they that hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written therein." These truths from God's word are to be applied to individual human lives, and therefore must have individual attention. Would that all men might come to those sacred pages in sincerity of heart and ask the help of the Holy Spirit to guide them into the knowledge of God's great plan for the race and for each member of it. Then the confusion and differences would soon cease, and all men be as the sheep of "one fold" followers of the Master Shepherd.



## 17. The Stumbling Block

LEADING Protestant churches teach that the law of God is still binding on all Christians. To confirm this we quote from some of their creeds and confessions of faith.

The Confession of the Waldenses, section 33, states concerning the Decalogue, which is the law of God: "Finally, that we ought to receive the symbol of the apostles, the Lord's Prayer, and the Decalogue as fundamentals of our faith and our devotion. "Quoted by Philip Schaff in *The Creeds of Christendom*, Volume 3, Page 757.

Luther's Small Catechism teaches:

'What does God say about all these Commandments?

"He says this:

"I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me, and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me and keep My commandments."

"What does this mean? Answer:

"God threatens to punish all who transgress these commandments: we should, therefore, fear His anger, and do nothing against such Commandments. But He promises grace and every blessing to all who keep them: we should, therefore, love and trust in Him, and gladly obey His commandments."-Ibid., Volume 3, Page 77.

The Westminster Confession of Faith states in chapter 19 under subdivision 5: "The moral law does forever bind all, as well justified persons as others, to the obedience thereof; and that not only in regard of the matter contained in it, but also in respect of the authority of God the Creator who gave it. Neither does Christ in the gospel any way dissolve, but much strengthen, this obligation."-Ibid., vol. 3, p. 641.

Article 7 of the Thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England also teaches the obligation to keep the Ten Commandments:

"No Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments which are called moral." Ibid., vol. 3, P. 492.

The Methodist Articles of Religion are practically the same as those of the Church of England. "The Twenty Five Articles of Religion were drawn up by John Wesley for the American Methodists, and adopted at a conference in 1784. They underwent some changes, chiefly verbal.... They are a liberal and judicious abridgment of the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England."-Ibid., Volume 3, Page 807.

Article 7 of the Thirty Nine Articles of the Church of England is article 6 of the Methodist Articles. This Methodist article is so much like the article of the Church of England that it is not necessary to reproduce it here.

The New Hampshire Baptist Confession, as Schaff says, is "widely accepted by Baptists."-Ibid., Volume 3, Page 742. This confession states in section 12: "We believe that the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of His moral government. That it is holy, just, and good. And that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible church."-Ibid., vol. 3, P. 746.

These quotations prove that most of the churches teach that the Ten Commandments are still binding on all Christians. Now the question arises, Why do ministers preach that the Ten Commandments are abrogated, or nailed to the cross? The reason is that they try to find a way around the fourth commandment, which says: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor they son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:8-11.

This Sabbath commandment is in the heart of the law of God, and why should it not be as valid as the other nine commandments? The Protestant Creeds teach that the Ten Commandments are "eternal," "unchangeable," that they forever bind all," that "we are bound to keep all His commandments," that "no Christian man whatsoever is free from the obedience of the commandments, which are called moral," and

that “we should . . . gladly obey His commandments,” etc. Yet they contradict themselves by not keeping the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

In order to justify themselves in continuing with a counterfeit Sabbath, which is Sunday, they invent hundreds of excuses, manmade doctrines, traditions, and beautiful words. But these are all in vain. The fourth commandment stands in bold relief in the heart of the law of God, and who dares to change it? Who dares to meddle with this law and mutilate it, when God calls it “perfect,” “holy, and just, and good”? Psalm 19:7; Romans 7:12.

The Sabbath commandment does not specify one day out of seven, but the seventh day. God blessed the seventh day, set it apart for holy use, and rested on it. Genesis 2:1-3. He made it for man (Mark 2:27,28), that is, for Protestants, Catholics, and all others.

Men say that they keep Sunday in place of the Sabbath. But where do they find a text in the Bible that justifies them in doing so? Where is the transfer recorded? If the Protestants have the right to eliminate the fourth commandment, that is, the Sabbath commandment, then why do not Roman Catholics have the right to dispense with the second commandment, that prohibits our bowing down to images with the idea of worship?

Peter said: “We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29. If Catholics want to follow Peter's example and obey God, they also are obliged to keep the Sabbath. If men say that we should keep Sunday, and God says that we should keep the seventh day, whom should we obey—men or God? Peter is very emphatic and positive that we should obey God rather than men, yet Catholics accept what men say and what is contrary to the word of God. They contradict God's word, which Peter tells them to obey. Is this consistency?

The Bible specifies the days of the week as the first day, the second day, third day, fourth day, fifth day, sixth day, or the preparation day, and the seventh day, or the Sabbath day. See Genesis 1:5,8,13,19,23,31; 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11; Luke 23:52-56; Luke 24:1-3. The pagans called the first day of the week, Sunday; the second day, Monday; the third day, Tuesday; the fourth day, Wednesday; the fifth day, Thursday; the sixth day or preparation day, Friday; the seventh day or the Sabbath, Saturday. Saturday is not any day of the seven, but is the seventh day. Sunday is not Saturday, neither is the first day the seventh day. They are two specific days.

Jesus was crucified on Friday, the preparation day. The churches now call it “Good Friday.” On the preparation day Joseph of Arimathea asked Pilate for the body of Jesus. “And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulcher that was hewn in stone, wherein never man before was laid. And that day was the preparation [Friday], and the Sabbath [Saturday] drew on. And the women also, which came with Him from Galilee, followed after, and beheld the sepulcher, and how His body was laid. And they returned, and prepared spices and ointments; and rested the Sabbath day [Saturday] according to the commandment [the Sabbath commandment]. Now upon the first day of the week [Sunday], very early in the morning, they came unto the sepulcher, bringing the spices which they had prepared, and certain others with them. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulcher. And they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus.” Then the angel told them: “He is not here, but is risen.” Luke 23:53-56; 24:1-3, 6.

Here we have Friday, the preparation day. Then the Sabbath drew on, and the women rested according to the commandment. Then came the first day of the week, Sunday, on which Christ rose from the dead.

We have seen from the previous chapter that the commandments are still binding. If they are binding, then the Sabbath is binding also.

The seventh day was announced as a day of rest for mankind at the creation of the world. “Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them. And on the seventh day God ended His work which He had made; and He rested on the seventh day from all His work which He had made. And God blessed the seventh day, and sanctified it: because that in it He had rested from all His work which God created and made.” Genesis 2:1-3.

These verses establish three things regarding the seventh day. God rested on it, blessed it, and sanctified it. To sanctify means to set apart for holy use. Notice that it is the seventh day that God blessed, and not every day or any day of the week. “For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it. Exodus 20:11. It is the seventh day that God blessed and set apart for holy use, and on it we should rest.

For whom did God institute the Sabbath as a day of rest? Was it for Himself or for someone else? Jesus gives the answer. “The Sabbath was made for man.” Mark 2:27. Some say that it was made for the

Jews and that therefore it is the Jewish Sabbath. But God says: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God." Exodus 20:10. The seventh day, not Sunday, is the Sabbath of the Lord. If the Sabbath day is the Lord's, whose day is it? The Lord's day. He calls it, "My holy day." Isaiah 58:13. If the seventh day is the Lord's day, then Sunday is not the Lord's day. God does not have two rest days. Jesus calls Himself the "Lord also of the Sabbath." Mark 2:28. He never stated that He was Lord of the first day. Christ is the Lord of the Sabbath, because He made it. See Hebrews 1:1-3; Colossians 1:15,16; John 1:1-3,10,11; Ephesians 3:9.

Because John speaks of having had a vision on the Lord's day according to Revelation 1:10, some want to apply this to Sunday. But this is assuming too much. The Bible specifies the seventh day, the Sabbath, as the Lord's day.

Others refer you to the early church fathers. Some of the church fathers call Sunday the Lord's day, and it is from their uses of the term that the present-day usage comes. But the Bible does not teach this. It is well known that the church fathers taught other absurd things. Why should we take them as infallible authorities on the Bible?

Church fathers, such as Ignatius, wrote about the Lord's day as being Sunday, but also taught the true Sabbath. "But let every one of you keep the Sabbath after a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law.... And after the observance of the Sabbath, let every friend of Christ keep the Lord's day as a festival. The resurrection day, the queen and chief of all the days [of the week]."-The Ante-Nicene Fathers, volume 1, pages 62, 63.

Sunday advocates quote only what the church fathers say regarding Sunday, and not a word of what they write about the Sabbath. Barnabas is often quoted to prove that Sunday is the Lord's day, but nothing is cited of what he says about the true Sabbath. He says:

It is written concerning the Sabbath in the Decalogue which [the Lord] spoke, face to face, to Moses on Mount Sinai, 'And sanctify you the Sabbath of the Lord with clean hands and a pure heart.... If, therefore, anyone can now sanctify the day which God hath sanctified, except he is pure in heart in all things, we are deceived.... Wherefore, also, we keep the eighth day with joyfulness, the day also on which Jesus rose again from the dead.' -Ibid., Volume 1, Pages 146,147.

Adam Clarke, the great commentator on the Bible, says this about the early church fathers: "But of these [the Fathers] we may safely state, that there is not a truth in the most orthodox creed, that cannot be proved by their authority, nor a heresy that has disgraced the Romish Church, that may not challenge them as its abettors. In points of doctrine, their authority is, with me, nothing. The word of God alone contains my creed. On a number of points I can go to the Creek and Latin fathers of the church, to know what they believed, and what the people of their respective communions believed. But after all this I must return to God's Word, to know what He would have me to believe." - Commentary, Note on Proverbs 8.

The church fathers merely gave their views, as do men of today; but the Bible is the only standard of faith. If we accept all the teachings of the church fathers we would be neither Protestant nor Roman Catholic. Protestants claim not to accept tradition, but the Bible alone. Then why go back to tradition to prove Sunday? Why not stay with the Bible?

In the first place, God gave Ten Commandments in His law, and not nine. "He [God] wrote upon the tables the words of the covenant, the Ten Commandments." Exodus 34:28. God wrote Ten Commandments with His own finger, on two tables of stone, not nine. The Sabbath is in the heart of the law of God. How then can men take the position that the Sabbath is not a part of the Ten Commandments but belongs to the ceremonial law or the law of ordinances?

The Sabbath existed before the ceremonies ever came into existence. Genesis 2:1-3; Exodus 20:8-11. The Sabbath was proclaimed in the Garden of Eden before man sinned. And Jesus says: "The Sabbath was made for man." Mark 2:27. So the weekly Sabbath is not a part of the ceremonial law, since it existed before the ceremonial law was made. The Sabbath existed before man sinned, and the ceremonial law was made after man sinned; how then can the Sabbath be a part of the ceremonial law?

What is the difference between the ceremonial law and the Ten Commandment law? The difference is that the law of God points out the sin, exposes it. "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. See also Romans 7:7; James 2:10,11. The ceremonial law, or the law of ordinances, was a remedy for the sin. See Leviticus 7:37; 9:15; Numbers 29:11.

There is a law of ceremonies. "This is the law of the burnt offering, of the meat offering, and of the sin offering, and of the trespass offering, and of the consecrations, and of the sacrifice of the peace offerings." Leviticus 7:37. These ceremonies "stood only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation." Hebrews 9:10. The time of reformation

was when Christ came and died and did away with all the types or symbols that typified our Lord. When Christ died it was not necessary to keep on bringing the sacrifices of lambs and other animals because Christ was the true Lamb of God to which all these ceremonies pointed. It is this law of ordinances or ceremonies that was nailed to the cross. If we would offer lambs as sacrifices as the ceremonial law enjoined, then we would not believe that Jesus really is the true Lamb.

In the ceremonial law there were Sabbaths besides the Sabbath of the fourth precept of the Ten Commandments. The law of God has a Sabbath that comes every seventh day of the week. Not a seventh day, but the seventh day. Now the theologians want to apply the Sabbath of the Ten Commandments to the ceremonial law. The Ten Commandments constitute one law; and the ceremonies of sacrifices, meat offerings, drink offerings, and certain holy days, constitute another law. The Ten Commandments show sin, and the ceremonial law was a remedy for the sin.

The ceremonial law had yearly Sabbaths, and these ceased with the offerings of lambs, etc., at the cross. Now some of the theologians want to tear the Sabbath out of the Ten Commandments and place it in the ceremonial law, so as to crucify it with the ceremonies at the cross. The ceremonial law speaks about the yearly ceremonial Sabbaths, and the fourth commandment speaks about the weekly seventh day Sabbath. These Sabbaths are different and belong to two different laws.

As soon as man sinned, he transgressed God's law, that is, the Ten Commandments. "For sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. After man sinned the Lord introduced the ceremonies of offerings as a remedy for the sin. We see this to be true in that Abel brought a sacrifice. "He also brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. And the Lord had respect unto Abel and to his offering." Genesis 4:4. Here we have the ceremonies already in operation.

These sacrifices were not introduced until after sin came into the world. The Sabbath was made before sin entered the world. How then could the weekly Sabbath be a part of the ceremonial law when it was made before the ceremonial law existed? Is this possible? How then can men take the position that the weekly Sabbath belongs to the ceremonial law?

If we can take the Sabbath out of the heart of the law of God, then we can take out the other commandments to suit ourselves. No transgressor likes to look at the commandment that condemns him. Sunday advocates do not like to look at the Sabbath commandment, because it condemns them. This is the stumbling block of practically all the Christian churches. The whole world has gone astray on this great vital truth. The whole world has been deceived (Revelation 12: g), and if it were possible the very elect would be deceived (Matthew 24:24). "When the Son of man comes, shall He find faith on the earth?" Luke 18:8.

The law of ceremonies is called "the handwriting of ordinances," because Moses wrote it. "And Moses wrote this law, and delivered it unto the priests the sons of Levi, which bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord." Deuteronomy 31:9. Moses "made an end of writing the words of this law in a book, until they were finished." Then Moses commanded: "Take this book of the law, and put it in the side of the ark of the covenant of the Lord your God." Verses 24,26.

The law of ordinances was written by Moses and was placed "in the side of the ark," while the Ten Commandments were written by God, and were placed inside the ark, as Moses says: "I turned myself and came down from the mount, and put the tables in the ark which I had made; and there they be, as the Lord commanded." Deuteronomy 10:5. See also 1 Kings 8:9; 2 Kings 22:8.

The following texts give some of the ceremonies or ordinances. Numbers 31:21; 19:2,3; 2, Chronicles 35:13; Exodus 12:14,17,43; and all of chapter 23 of Leviticus. In connection with these ordinances there were various ceremonies.

Meat and drink offerings. Numbers 18:10-13; Leviticus 23:27; Hebrews 9:9,10.

Holy days. Leviticus 23:4-7, 2,7, 28.

New moons. 1 Chronicles 23:30,31.

A number of yearly Sabbath days. Leviticus 23:24, 38, 39, 32.

The ceremonial Sabbaths came only once a year and were Sabbaths "beside the Sabbaths of the Lord." Verse 38. The ceremonial Sabbaths fell on any day of the week. They rotated like one's birthday, because they were fixed to a date and not to a certain day of the week. One might fall on a Monday, then the following year on Tuesday, then on Wednesday, and so on.

When Christ died all the types, symbols, or "shadows," as Paul calls them, were done away. They typified Christ. But some persons wanted to continue with these ordinances or ceremonies even after becoming Christians. Paul then wrote to them to correct this error. "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His

cross.... Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days: which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ." Colossians 2:14-17.

The Ten Commandments never were a "shadow" of Christ. They never symbolized or typified Him. The law of ordinances was a shadow. All the sacrifices of lambs, the eating and drinking, the yearly Sabbaths, new moons and holy days that were celebrated in connection with these feasts ceased at the cross. But this does not nail the Ten Commandments to the cross.

The New Testament writers stated a long time after Christ that "sin is the transgression of the law." "Where no law is, there is no transgression." Romans 4:15. "Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4 "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Romans 3:20. "Sin is not imputed when there is no law." Romans 5:13. "Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet." Romans 7:7.

The object of the law is to expose sin. If you take the Ten Commandments away, you destroy the means for exposing sin. If the law were nailed to the cross, how could Paul, John, and other New Testament writers say, "By the law is the knowledge of sin"?

If the Ten Commandments were nailed to the cross with the ceremonial law, then we could steal, kill, commit adultery, lie, and commit any other sin without being guilty, because there would be no law against such acts.

"Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31. If faith establishes the law, it surely does not abolish it. Suppose a pardoned criminal, that is under grace now, goes to hear one of those popular preachers who teaches that when we are under grace the law is done away. As he listens, he begins to reason: "Well, I am under grace, because my pardon shows that I am 'saved by grace' from the jail, and if this does away with the law of the land I can steal again. Because if there is no law against stealing, how can they condemn me? I will watch my chance and rob the bank on the corner, and get enough to take me through life. If they catch me at it, they cannot condemn me, because I am under grace. This preacher says that when a man is under grace, the law is done away."

The person who is under God's grace is the one who is pardoned and is a Christian. The one who is not under grace is the sinner. He is the one that rejects Christ. He is still under the law. The one that is under grace is in harmony with God and His law. He does not steal, commit adultery, lie, or break the Sabbath. But as soon as he loses his hold on God and falls back into his old ways of sin he again is under the law. "What then?" writes Paul, "shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." Romans 6:15.

This proves that when we are under grace we sin not. And if we sin not, we are in harmony with the law of God. There is no sin without the law. This does not mean that we cannot fall from grace again and sin as we did before. We can fall away from God and His grace. See 2 Peter 2:20-22; Exodus 32:32,33; Ezekiel 33:18,19.

Some boast of their freedom from the law. They think that because a child of God is free from the law, the law is abolished. This is not true. Who are the free ones in our country? Are those who break the law free, or those who keep it? Those who keep the law of the land are the free ones. Those who transgress it get behind bars, and lose their freedom. The ones who are in harmony with the law are free. The law has no hold on them. The transgressors are not free.

Some lawbreakers may boast of their freedom; but are they really free? So it is spiritually. Many boast of their freedom, and keep on transgressing. They do not understand what it means to be under grace.

If we sin while we are under grace we must come to the Lord and ask for pardon. John writes: "My little children, these things write I unto you, that you sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and He is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world." 1 John 2:1,2. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse u from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

Paul writes: "Before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterward be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster." Galatians 3:23-25.

An unconverted person is not yet justified by faith. He is under the schoolmaster, that is, the law. It is the law that brings him to Christ. After he accepts Christ and is justified, he is in harmony with God's law. He does not kill, steal, commit adultery, etc., because he is a Christian, and therefore is not under the schoolmaster. The transgressor, the unjustified person, is under the schoolmaster and is driven to Christ by the schoolmaster. After he is in Christ Jesus and is justified by faith, he is in complete harmony with the

law of God, and therefore is not under the schoolmaster.

The law is the medium to bring the sinner to Christ, and Christ helps us to get in harmony with His law. As soon as this takes place, we are no longer under the schoolmaster.

If God's law is rejected, sin ceases to appear sinful, or righteousness desirable. Through such a pernicious teaching the spirit of insubordination is implanted in the hearts of men. A disrespect for authority is fostered, and Christ is offended. The results of the disobedience to God are wickedness and lawlessness.

The prophet Jeremiah declares in clear and pointed language where the root of the evil is that causes troubles, strikes, wars, and perplexities. Hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it." Jeremiah 6:18,19.

Here we have the underlying causes for our bad world and tottering civilization. "They have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it." God is offended. Retribution sooner or later comes to those who displease Him by rejecting His authority. Men stand behind the sacred pulpits declaring that the Bible is not inspired. When modernism becomes the theme of the pulpit, God's holy law is trampled underfoot. We see the results today.

Lawlessness is sweeping the land like an overwhelming tide. Our religious institutions seem to be powerless to stem it. Religious organizations, that should be a bulwark against this evil, have lowered their standards to make it easier for the sinner to be a member of the church. Now but little difference exists between the professed Christian and the non-Christian.

The Sabbath of the Lord, which is found in the heart of the law of God, is being trampled underfoot. Ministers of the gospel, priests, and the whole host of transgressors in the world, have turned against the law of God. The devil himself is fighting it. He is angry against all who keep God's law, especially against those who keep the true Sabbath day holy. Revelation 12:17; Ezekiel 22:26; 46:1; Isaiah 56:2. Why does evil come over the people? "Because they have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it." Jeremiah 6:19.

As individuals may depart from God, so may nations. The Jewish nation rejected Christ. Men cried out: "His blood be on us, and on our children." Matthew 27:25.

The Jews did not see at the time where their rejection of Christ would lead them. But what are the results? They are scattered all over the world and have lost their spiritual influence in the world. So it is with many Protestant churches. They have lost their spiritual power, because they reject the word of God in part or altogether. The law of God which is taught in their creeds is not respected. The Sabbath is disregarded as well as many of the other truths the gospel teaches.

Protestants who once stood for the Bible and the Bible alone, now reject portions of it, because it does not agree with their own ideas. God will not change, nor will He change His word. "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." Matthew 24:35. "Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of Thy righteous judgments endures forever." Psalm 119:160 (Douay, 118:160).

Isaiah writes: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

A message of mercy will go to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people," and warn them against this spiritual Babylon and her wine (false doctrines) and also announce her fall. "He cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. For all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication, and the kings of the earth have committed fornication with her [the church has made unwholesome relations with the state], and the merchants of the earth are waxed rich through the abundance of her delicacies." Revelation 18:2,3.

How could a church warn the whole world against this spiritual Babylon and against her wine, her false doctrines, unless it knew what Babylon and her wine are? How could this church invite the honest to come out of Babylon, unless it was free from those false doctrines and that spiritual confusion? How could this church invite the honest to come out of Babylon, unless it had something that Babylon does not have?

The whole world has sipped of those false doctrines of spiritual Babylon. It is for this reason that there is such a confusion in the religious world today regarding doctrines. The Bible is put aside, and the leaders lull their members on and on in Babylon.

The "mother," which is Catholicism, has formed the false doctrines, and her "daughters" have accepted many of them into their own tenets. As a result we have a spiritual Babylon, a confusion. The Bible is not the cause of the confusion; this results from the false doctrines that have been introduced into

the churches. The plainest and simplest truths of the Bible have been perverted and placed into a false setting, and confusion is the result. The root of this confusion is the “mother” church. The whole world has drunk from the wine of Babylon.

Since the whole world has accepted false doctrines from the papacy, there is a call that comes to Babylon, that the honest in heart should come out. “And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her [spiritual Babylon], My people, that you be not partakers of her sins, and that you receive not of her plagues.” Revelation 18:4 There are many good people in Babylon yet.

A threefold message will go to the world, and it will be preached by a commandment-keeping people. “And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to Him; for the hour of His judgment is come. And worship Him [not evolution or science] that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters. And there followed another angel, saying, Babylon is fallen, is fallen, that great city, because she made all nations drink of the wine of the wrath of her fornication. And the third angel followed them, saying with a loud voice, If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of His indignation. And he shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment ascends up for ever and ever: and they have no rest day nor night, who worship the beast and his image, and whosoever receives the mark of his name. Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14:6-12.

While these messages are going to the whole world, there is a people that keep the commandments of God. Where is there a church that teaches the commandments and keeps them? I know of only one that fits into this picture, and that is the Seventh-day Adventist Church. This is the church that God uses to expose Babylon, its wine, the mark of the beast, the image and the number of the beast. This will be made clearer in the following chapter.

There will be a commandment-keeping people in heaven, and there will be a Sabbath keeping people there. “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord.” Isaiah 66:22, 23. If men do not want to conform to the Sabbath commandment on earth, how can they expect to be in harmony with God over there?

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14.

## 18. The Roman Catholic Church in Bible Prophecy

THE apostle Paul warned in his second epistle to the Thessalonians that a great religious apostasy was arising in his day, and that it would develop as time went on. We quote the apostle's words:

“Now we beseech you, brethren, by the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, and by our gathering together unto Him, that you be not soon shaken in mind, or be troubled, neither by spirit, nor by word, nor by letter as from us, as that the day of Christ is at hand. Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition. Who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped; so that he as God sits in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God. Remember you not, that, when I was yet with you, I told you these things? And now you know what withholds that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now lets will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming. Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12.

Notice the characteristics of this apostasy that was starting already in Paul's time. He declared: “The mystery of iniquity does already work.” When he held an elders meeting at Ephesus he warned them: “For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw disciples away after them.” Acts 20:29,30.

The apostasy was already brewing while Paul was still alive. But after his death the great falling away would be more and more developed, and a “man” would exalt himself and sit “in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God.” He would come “with all power and signs and lying wonders,” and would work “with all deceivableness;” and his followers would not receive “the love of the truth.” Then God would send them “strong delusion, that they should believe a lie.” This “man” would continue his apostate work until the Lord comes and destroys him “with the brightness of His coming.”

We must look for an apostate religious power whose characteristics fit into Paul's prophetic descriptive picture. It is a power that started then and was to get stronger and stronger, and will continue until the Lord comes.

You can go through history and through the Bible, and bring all the evidence possible; and there is no power that fits into this picture like the papacy. Some apply this prophecy to the future; but it cannot be future, because it started back in the days of Paul and was to continue until the end.

This “man” would turn people away from the “truth” that they would “believe a lie.” And what is truth? “Thy word is truth.” John 17: 17. “Thy law is the truth.” Psalm 119:142 (Douay, Psalm 118:142). “Thy commandments are truth.” Psalm 119:151 (Douay, Psalm 118:151). Did the pope turn people away from the Bible, the law of God, and His commandments? He did.

When Paul wrote about this “Man” he had not yet come to full power; there was something still in the way. Paul states: “Now you know what withholds, that he might be revealed in his time. For the mystery of iniquity does already work: only he who now lets will let, until he be taken out of the way.” 2 Thessalonians 2:1-7.

What was it that still held back that “man” from exercising his full power? Paganism and the Caesars at Rome were still too strong for him. Paganism had to be taken out of the way first. This was done gradually, until the Caesars turned their power and the city of Rome over to the pope. He became the head of the state as well as of the church. Paganism and Christianity were united, and modern Catholicism was developed. This great falling away of which Paul speaks came through this means.

Let us take other characteristics that Paul points out and see whether the pope fits in detail into the prophetic picture. This “man” would sit in the temple of God and represent himself to be as God. We shall now quote from Roman Catholic authorities to see whether the pope did this.

Pope Leo XIII wrote in an encyclical letter to the whole church: “The supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires, together with a perfect accord in the one faith, complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God



Himself.” - The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII, page 193.

The same pope further declared in an encyclical letter dated June 20, 1892:- “We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty. “-Ibid., page 304.

We shall quote from another Roman Catholic authorized work, to show how this “Man” of which Paul speaks exalts himself: “The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God.... The Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions.” - P. F. Lucius Ferraris, Ecclesiastical Dictionary, art. “Pope.” (Italics mine.)

These statements from Roman Catholic books need no comment. They express what Paul predicted, that a “man” would sit in the temple of God declaring that he is god. He claims to be king of heaven, of the earth, and of the lower regions.”

Both Catholic and Protestant Bibles say that Christ is “Lord of lords, and King of kings.” Revelation 17:14. “He [Christ] bath on His vesture and on His thigh a name written, King of kings, and Lord of lords.” No pope therefore can be king of heaven, or of the lower regions” under the earth, regardless of his claim for such a title.

Paul wrote that a “man” would arise and assume this position which belongs to Christ. If the pope could sustain his claim to be king of heaven, Christ would lose His position. When John wrote the book of the Revelation, nearly seventy years after our Lord's ascension, Christ still was King of kings, and Lord of lords. Jesus did not turn His kingship over to a “man.”

This “man” would show signs and wonders to help him sustain his position. Let us quote some of them: “Among other wonders it was reported that as a husbandman who was about to plow his field on Sunday, cleaned his plow with an iron, the iron stuck fast in his hand, and for two years he carried it about with him, 'to his exceeding great pain and shame.”-Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, page 575. See also Francis West, Historical and Practical Discourse on the Lord's Day, page 174.

Councils made decrees to enforce the observance of Sunday, but when these proved insufficient the secular authorities were sought to strike terror in the hearts of the people. But the lack of Scriptural authority for Sunday keeping brought embarrassment to these false leaders.

“A zealous advocate of Sunday, who about the close of the twelfth century visited the churches of England, was resisted by faithful witnesses for the truth. And so fruitless were his efforts that he departed from the country for a season, and cast about him for some means to enforce his teachings. When he returned, the lack was supplied, and in his after labors he met with greater success. He brought with him a roll purporting to be from God Himself, which contained the needed command for Sunday observance, with awful threats to terrify the disobedient. This precious document-as base a counterfeit as the institution it supported-was said to have fallen from heaven, and to have been found in Jerusalem, upon the altar of St. Simeon, in Golgotha. But in fact, the pontifical palace at Rome was the source whence it proceeded. Frauds and forgeries to advance the power and prosperity of the church have in all ages been esteemed lawful by the papal hierarchy.

“The roll forbade labor from the ninth hour, three o'clock, on Saturday afternoon, till sunrise on Monday; and its authority was declared to be confirmed by many miracles. It was reported that persons laboring beyond the appointed hour were stricken with paralysis. A miller who attempted to grind his corn saw, instead of flour, a torrent of blood come forth, and the mill wheel stood still, notwithstanding the strong rush of the water. A woman who placed dough in the oven, found it raw when taken out, though the oven was very hot. Another who had dough prepared for baking at the ninth hour, but determined to set it aside till Monday, found, the next day, that it had been made into loaves and baked by divine power. A man who baked bread after the ninth hour on Saturday, found, when he broke it the next morning, that blood started there from. By such absurd and superstitious fabrications did the advocates of Sunday endeavor to establish its sacredness.”-Ellen G. White, The Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan, pages 576, 577. See Roger de Hoveden, Annals, Bohn ed., vol. 2, pp. 528-530.

History proves that there was a Catholic Church in the second century. “The growth of an 'Old Catholic Church with an episcopal constitution in the second and following centuries is generally recognized by church historians. It is also quite generally admitted that the bishops of Rome, the imperial city of the West, successfully claimed a greater and greater influence.”-McClintock and Strong, Cyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature. art. “Roman Catholic Church.”

There were apostasies of various kinds after the apostles were dead, but none of them continued very long. The Roman Catholic Church points out some of those early churches which she considers as the

apostates, but she cannot apply them to the prophecy of Paul in Second Thessalonians, because they all came to an end. The apostasy that Paul speaks about is one that would start then and continue until the end of time, when the Lord would destroy that “man” by the brightness of His coming.

Let us enumerate some of the early churches which the Roman Church calls “heretical.” The Cerinthians, Corpocrations, Marcionites, Docetae, Montanists, Novations, Manichacans, the Arians, and others. None of them lasted more than eight or nine hundred years. Some of them were of a short duration.

Others again started during the fifth century and continued until today, like the Nestorians, Predestinarians and Monophysites. Later came the Paulicians, the Creek Catholic Orthodox Church, the Waldenses, Lutherans, Mennonites, Episcopalians, Unitarians, Congregationalists, Baptists, Universalists, Methodists, Disciples of Christ, Mormons, etc.

There is not a single apostate church that the Roman Church can point to that started soon after Paul's departure and continued until today. So the prophecy of Paul cannot be applied to any of those religions. There is but one that fits into the prophetic picture of Paul, and that is the Roman Catholic Church. She fulfills everything the prophecy specifies, and fits into the time that Paul points out when that “man” would do his baleful work.

If the Roman Catholic Church is the original church founded by Christ, then she must also have the original doctrines that Jesus and the apostles taught. The papal leaders select such portions of the Scriptures as suit their purposes best, and interpret them as they please. The rest of the Bible is kept away from the members so that they might not understand the sacred truths for themselves. The whole Bible is not given to the people exactly as it reads.

The original church of Christ kept the seventh day Sabbath, baptized by immersion, and gave the cup of the Communion to the laity. Peter was married, the bishops were married, the women that labored in the cause of Christ were married. So a church cannot have the original doctrine of the first church, when she teaches the opposite.

Daniel describes the same apostate church by a “horn” coming up, having “the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things,” which Paul describes in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, If you read carefully Daniel 7:1-8,15-25, you will learn there are four symbolic beasts which represent four world kingdoms. Both Protestant and Catholic commentators are generally agreed that the symbol of the lion represents the Babylonian Empire; the bear, Medo-Persia; the leopard, Greece; the terrible beast, pagan Rome; the ten horns that came out of this terrible beast, the ten kingdoms into which pagan Rome was divided.

We quote from the Roman Catholic Douay Bible to prove this statement. See the footnote on Daniel 7:3. Your great beasts. Viz., the Chaldean, Persian, Grecian, and Roman empires.” The footnote on verse 7 says in part: “Ten horns. That is, ten kingdoms, (as Apoc. 17: 12,) among which the empire of the fourth beast shall be parceled.”

So the Catholic Church teaches that these four beasts represent Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, and Rome. The ten horns that came up out of the fourth beast are the ten kingdoms into which Rome was parceled or divided.

Gibbon, in his History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, gives the ten kingdoms as follows:

1. The Alamanni, A.D. 3 5 2, Swabia, Alsace, and Lorraine. (See Gibbon, chap. 10, par. 26; 12:20; 19:20; 36:5; 49:21)

2. The Franks, AD. 3 52, northeast Gaul. (Gibbon 19: 20; 36:5.)

3. The Burgundians, December 31, AD 406. (Gibbon 30: 17.) Located in Burgundy, AD 420. (Gibbon 31:39.)

4. The Vandals, December 31, AD 406. (Gibbon 30:17.) Located in Spain, AD 409. (Gibbon 31:36.)

Settled in Africa, AD 429. (Gibbon 33:5, 6.)

5. The Suevi, December 31, AD 406. (Gibbon 30:17.) In Spain, AD 409. (Gibbon 31:36.)

6. The Visigoths, AD 408. (Gibbon 31:2,14) In southwest Gaul, AD 419. (Gibbon 31:39.) In Spain, AD 467. (Gibbon 36:22; 38:2, 22)

7. The Saxons entered Britain, AD 449. (Gibbon 31:41,42; 38:33; Green's England 1:17; Knight's England 5:6)

8. The Ostrogoths, in Parmonia, AD 453. (Gibbon 35:16.) In Italy, AD 489; final conquest, AD 493. (Gibbon 39:7,8)

9. The Lombards, AD 453, in Pannonia and Noricum, banks of Danube. (Weber's Universal History, sec. 180; Gibbon 42:2;

The Encyclopedia Britannica, art. "Lombards.") In Lombardy. AD 567-8. (Gibbon 45:5-7; Machiavelli's History of Florence, chapters 1,2.)

10. The Heruli, in Italy, AD 475-6. (Gibbon 36:2,8-33.) Given in Source Book, 1940 ed., pp. 594, 595.

(The figures immediately preceding the colon give the number of the chapter, and those which immediately follow the colon, the number of the paragraph.)

Protestants and Roman Catholics are generally agreed on the division of Rome into ten kingdoms. They seem to have no trouble about the prophecy of Daniel so far, but they seem to have much perplexity about the little horn that plucked up three of the ten.

If we know which the ten kingdoms are, it is not so difficult to find the horn or the power that plucked up three of them. Roman Catholics and most Protestants do not care to follow the prophecy clear through, because the shoe begins to pinch here. This power that plucked up three of the ten did things that many Protestants and Catholics don't care to admit.

Let us quote the words of Daniel: "I considered the horns, and, behold, there came up among them another little horn, before whom there were three of the first horns [that is, of the ten] plucked up by the roots: and, behold, in this horn were eyes like the eyes of man, and a mouth speaking great things." "And of the ten horns that were in his head, and of the other which came up, and before whom three fell; even of that horn that had eyes, and a mouth that spoke very great things, whose look was more stout than his fellows. 1 beheld, and the same horn made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.... And the ten horns out of this kingdom are ten kings that shall arise: and another shall rise after them; and he shall be diverse from the first, and he shall subdue three kings. And he shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Daniel 7:8, 20-25.

There is only one power on earth that fulfills this prophecy - the papacy. The three nations that were destroyed of the ten are the Heruli, Vandals, and the Ostrogoths. Elliott says: I might cite three that were eradicated from before the pope out of the list first given; namely, the Heruli under Odoacer, the Vandals, and the Ostrogoths."-E. B. Elliott, *Horae Apocalypticæ*, vol. 3, Page 152. They were plucked up in the following years: the Heruli, AD 493, the Vandals, AD 534, and the Ostrogoths, AD 553.

These three nations had accepted the Arian religion, which was very distasteful to the pope of Rome. They were a thorn in his flesh until they were completely destroyed.

Daniel also declared that this same power, the papacy, that plucked up these three nations, "shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time." Verse 2 5. We shall study this verse now and see whether this prophecy finds fulfillment in the papacy.

Did the pope "speak great words against the Most High"? Roman Catholic authorities write exactly what the prophecy indicates. "The Pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God." "The Pope is of so great authority and power that he can modify, explain, or interpret even divine laws." "The Pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions." Ferraris, *Ecclesiastical Dictionary*, art. "Pope."

"We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty."-Pope Leo XIII, in an encyclical letter dated June 20, 1894, in *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII*, page 304. In this encyclical the pope capitalizes all pronouns referring to himself and to God.

"Christ can forgive all sin. So can the Pope. The Pope is the only man who claims the vicarage of Christ. His claim is not seriously opposed, and this establishes his authority." Extract from a sermon by Rev. Jeremiah Prendergast, S.J. (R.C.), preached in the Church of St. John the Baptist, Syracuse, N.Y., Wednesday evening, March 13, 1912, as reported in the *Syracuse Post-Standard*, March 14, 1912.

Pope Leo XIII wrote: "But the supreme teacher in the Church is the Roman Pontiff. Union of minds, therefore, requires, together with a perfect accord in the one faith, complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself." - *The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII*, page 193.

"God himself is obliged to abide by the judgment of His priests." - St. Alphonsus de Liguori, *Dignity and Duties of the Priest*; or Selva, page 27. These are truly great words against the Most High.

The Roman Catholic Douay Bible states that the little horn "is commonly understood of Antichrist." See footnote on Daniel 7:8. This is true, and finds fulfillment in the papacy. The people of God during the Reformation were generally agreed that the pope was the antichrist. The Waldenses held the

same opinion.

Dr. Peter Allix quotes from a prominent Roman Catholic author these words: "They [the Waldenses] say that the blessed Pope Sylvester was the Antichrist, of whom mention is made in the Epistles of St. Paul, as being the son of perdition, who extols himself above everything that is called God; for, from that time, they say, the Church perished." - Christian Edwardson, Facts of Faith, page I 13.

Edwardson writes: "Up to the close of the Reformation God's people were generally agreed that the papacy was the antichrist foretold in prophecy. The Waldenses taught it. About 1384 A.D. John Wycliffe wrote a book against the papal system entitled: Of Antecrist and His Meynee. In fact, the English Reformers-Tyridale, Cranmer, Latimer, and Ridley -all agreed in pointing to the papacy as the antichrist. John Huss of Blemia, in his De Anatomia Antichristi, did the same. Turning to Germany we find Dr. Martin Luther strong in his convictions on this subject." - Facts of Faith, page 199.

Luther once wrote: "The pope is ... the true antichrist, of whom it is written, that he sits in the temple of God, among the people where Christ is worshiped.... There shall the pope sit and be honored, not above God, but above all that is called God.... So also we see it before our eyes, that many princes and the world regard his law higher and more than the commandments of God.... Cannot this rightly be termed exalting and honoring antichrist above God?"-Luther's Church Post, "Gospels," 25th Sunday after Trinity, par. 2,4, 2-5, Pt. 2, PP. 734, 735. (Quoted in Facts of Faith, page 200)

Luther stated further: "Therefore, let whosoever will doubt, God's word and the proper divine worship convinces me sufficiently that the pope is the antichrist, and the ecclesiastical orders are his disciples, which deceive the whole world."-Ibid., part 1, Page 379. (Quoted in Facts of Faith, page 200) Luther further wrote: "The pope is the real antichrist."-Luther's Reformatory Works, page 278.

Dr. Charles H. H. Wright, in speaking of the Bible prophecy of the papacy as being "antichrist," says: In all ages of the church, from the days of Gregory the Great down to the present, men have pointed to the papacy as the fulfillment of the prophecy. That interpretation is set forth in the homilies of the Church of England and by all the Reformed Churches. The interpretation, however, has been ignored or rejected by critics, for reasons which need not be specified. It can, however, stand all the tests of criticism." Quoted in Daniel and His Prophecies, page 168.

Joseph Tanner writes: "So great hold did the conviction that the papacy was the antichrist gain upon the minds of men, that Rome at last saw she must bestir herself, and try, by putting forth other systems of interpretation, to counteract the identification of the papacy with the antichrist.

"Accordingly, towards the close of the century of the Reformation, two of her most learned doctors set themselves to the task, each endeavoring by different means to accomplish the same end. Namely, that of diverting men's minds from perceiving the fulfillment of the prophecies of the antichrist in the papal system. The Jesuit Alcasar devoted himself to bring into prominence the Preterist method of interpretation.... that the prophecies of antichrist were fulfilled before the popes ever ruled at Rome, and therefore could not apply to the papacy. On the other hand the Jesuit Ribera tried to set aside the application of these prophecies to the papal power by bringing out the Futurist system, which asserts that these prophecies refer properly not to the career of the Papacy, but to that of some future supernatural individual, who is yet to appear, and to continue in power for three and a half years. Thus, as Alford says, the Jesuit Ribera, about AD 1580, may be regarded as the founder of the Futurist system in modern times.

It is a matter for deep regret that those who hold and advocate the Futurist system at the present day, Protestants as they are for the most part, are thus really playing into the hands of Rome, and helping to screen the papacy from detection as the antichrist. It has been well said that 'Futurism tends to obliterate the brand put by the Holy Spirit upon popery. More especially is this to be deplored at a time when the papal antichrist seems to make an expiring effort to regain his former hold on men's minds. Now, once again, as at the Reformation, it is especially necessary that his true character should be recognized, by all who would be faithful to 'the testimony of Jesus.' " Quoted in Daniel and the Revelation, pages 16, 17.

The Roman Catholic Church puts the antichrist after the destruction of the Roman Empire. We quote: "The Roman empire.... was first to be destroyed, before the coming of antichrist." Note on 2 Thessalonians 2:3, Douay. The little horn came up after the Roman Empire was divided into ten kingdoms, and "plucked up" three of the ten. The papacy could not "pluck up" three of the ten before Rome was divided, or before the ten kingdoms existed. But this does not prove that this "man" did not exist before this time. He existed before, but plucked up three of the ten kingdoms after Rome was divided.

The Bible speaks about the "antichrist" in only three chapters, and in every instance he has already come. Here are the verses: "You have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists.... Who is a liar but he that denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denies the Father

and the Son.” 1 John 2:18-22. “This is that spirit of antichrist, whereof you have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world.” 1 John 4:3. “For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist.” 2 John 7.

How can anyone take the position that the antichrist is still future, when these very texts declare that he is here already?

John reveals that he did not believe that antichrist was only one individual, but rather an antichristian tendency in the church. It would be a system dominated by the spirit of antichrist. And in this system Paul writes, a “man” would appear that would do certain things that he points out very specifically. Daniel, too, describes the little horn,” so clearly that no one with an unbiased mind can help but see that it refers to the papacy, as we shall see in this chapter.

The word “anti” means not only “against,” but it also means “in the place of.” James Strong says that the word antichrist comes from anti and cristos. Here is his definition of the word anti: “Opposite, i.e., instead or because of: . . . for, in the room of. Often used in composition to denote ... substitution.”-The Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, “Greek Dictionary of the New Testament,” entries Nos. 473, 500.

This “spirit of antichrist,” is manifested through a “man,” and that “man” would continue until the Lord will destroy him by the “brightness of His coming.” That does not mean that one man would be that old. No! It is a “man” at the head of the system, and when one dies another takes his place until the end of time. This makes many antichrists in that system.

One leader with the “spirit of antichrist” did not accept the apostle John, and endeavored to get the pre-eminence above the rest of the apostles, which is the notable characteristic of the antichrist. We quote John's words to prove that the “spirit of antichrist” worked already in the time of John. “Diotrephes, who loves to have the pre-eminence among them, receives us not. Wherefore, if I come, I will remember his deeds which he does, prating against us with malicious words: and not content therewith, neither does he himself receive the brethren, and forbids them that would, and castes them out of the church.” 3 John 9,10.

Here we see how the “spirit of antichrist” was working already in the time of John. This accounts for the warnings in John's epistles against these “Many antichrists.” 1 John 2:18. The principal spirit of antichrist was to get pre-eminence and run the church according to that spirit.

This “man” would sit in “the temple of God.” Paul writes: “You are the temple of God.” 1 Corinthians 3:16,17. Christians compose the church, and in that church he sits as God. This shows plainly that after the “falling away” some “man” would attempt to take Christ's place in the church.

Let us quote from the writings of the popes themselves to prove what place they say they occupy. Pope Leo XIII wrote that we must give “complete submission and obedience of will to the Church and to the Roman Pontiff, as to God Himself.”-The Great Encyclical Letters of Pope Leo XIII, page 193.

Daniel writes that this “man” “shall speak great words against the Most High, and shall wear out the saints of the Most High, and think to change times and laws: and they shall be given into his hand until a time and times and the dividing of time.” Daniel 7:25.

We have already shown from the writings of the Catholic Church that the pope has spoken great words against the Most High. Here is what Pope Innocent III wrote: Indeed, it is not too much to say that in view of the sublimity of their offices the priests are so many gods.”

The papacy has changed the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday. We will quote from authorized Roman Catholic sources on this point:

“Q. Which is the Sabbath day?

“A. Saturday is the Sabbath day.

“Q. Why do we observe Sunday instead of Saturday?

“A. We observe Sunday instead of Saturday because the Catholic Church, in the Council of Laodicea, (AD 336), transferred the solemnity from Saturday to Sunday.”-Rev. Peter Geiermann, C.S.S.R., The Convert's Catechism of Catholic Doctrine, Fifth ed., 1944, P. 50. This work received the “apostolic blessing” of Pope Pius X, January 2 5, 19 1 0. It is recognized by the pope as authentic, and is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church.

Again we quote:

“Q. Have you any other way of proving that the church has the power to institute festivals of precept?

“A. Had she not such power, she could not have done that in which all modern religionists agree with her. She could not have substituted the observance of Sunday the first day of the week, for the observance of Saturday the seventh day, a change for which there is no Scriptural authority.”-Stephen Keenan, A Doctrinal Catechism, Imprimatur, of John Cardinal McCloskey, archbishop of New York, page

174.

Cardinal Gibbons wrote: "You may read the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, and you will not find a single line authorizing the sanctification of Sunday. The Scriptures enforce the religious observance of Saturday, a day which we never sanctify." - James Cardinal Gibbons, *Faith of Our Fathers*, 76th ed., p. 86.

The Roman Catholic Church has not changed her view of this. Our Sunday Visitor, a Catholic church paper, recently stated: "Many non-Catholics criticize the Catholic Church because some of her doctrines and practices are learned by Tradition. But it does not occur to them that their own hostile attitude towards the church is based altogether on a false 'Tradition.' In fact, much of Protestant doctrine and practice is based on Catholic tradition, such as the observance of the Sunday ... the date for the celebration of Christmas and Easter and Pentecost, and many other things." - Our Sunday Visitor, October 26, 1947. (This paper is one of the official Roman Catholic Church papers in America.)

Protestant scholars recognize that there is no Scriptural authority for Sunday keeping. We shall quote first from authorities of the Church of England. "Take which you will, either the Fathers or the moderns, and we shall find no Lord's day instituted by any apostolical mandate, no Sabbath set on foot by them upon the first day of the week."-Peter Heylyn (Church of England), *History of the Sabbath*, par 2, chapter 1.

"And where are we told in Scripture that we are to keep the first day at all? We are commanded to keep the seventh; but we are no where commanded to keep the first day.... The reason why we keep the first day of the week holy instead of the seventh is for the same reason that we observe many other things, not because the Bible, but because the church, has enjoined it."-Rev. Isaac Williams, B.D. (Church of England), *Plain Sermons on the Catechism*, vol. 1, Pages 334-336.

Another Roman Catholic authority that was approved by Cardinal Gibbons makes this statement: If the Bible is the only guide for the Christian, then the Seventh-day Adventist is right in observing the Saturday with the Jews." - Bertrand L. Conway, *The Question-Box Answers*, 19 11 edition, page 254.

Protestants want to follow the teachings of the Bible, yet they contradict themselves by keeping Sunday in the place of the seventh-day Sabbath. Let us take other Protestant authorities on this Sabbath question.

R. W. Dale (British Congregationalist): "It is quite clear that however rigidly or devoutly we may spend Sunday, we are not keeping the Sabbath.... The Sabbath was founded on a specific divine command. We can plead no such command for the obligation to observe Sunday.... There is not a single sentence in the New Testament to suggest that we incur any penalty by violating the supposed sanctity of Sunday."-*The Ten Commandments*, pages i00, 10 1.

Lyman Abbott (American Congregationalist) declares: "The current notion that Christ and His apostles authoritatively substituted the first day for the seventh, is absolutely without any authority in the New Testament." - Quoted in *Christian Union*, June 26, 1 89c.

Edward T. Hiscox (Baptist), author of *The Baptist Manual*, in a paper read before a New York ministers' conference held November 13, 1893, said: "There was and is a commandment to keep holy the Sabbath day, but that Sabbath day was not Sunday. It will be said, however, and with some show of triumph, that the Sabbath was transferred from the seventh to the first day of the week.... Where can the record of such a transaction be found? Not in the New Testament, absolutely not."

D. H. Lucas (Disciple): "There is no direct Scriptural authority for designating the first day as the Lord's day." - *Christian Oracle*, January 23, 1890.

W. D. Killen (Presbyterian) writes: In the interval between the days of the apostles and the conversion of Constantine, the Christian commonwealth changed its aspect.... Rites and ceremonies, of which neither Paul nor Peter ever heard, crept silently into use, and then claimed the rank of divine institutions." - *The Ancient Church*, Preface.

The great historian Neander says: "The festival of Sunday, like all other festivals, was always only a human ordinance, and it was far from the intentions of the apostles to establish a divine command in this respect, far from them, and from the early apostolic church, to transfer the laws of the Sabbath to Sunday. Perhaps, at the end of the second century a false application of this kind had begun to take place; for men appear by that time to have considered laboring on Sunday as a sin." - Neander, *The History of the Christian Religion and Church* (Rose's translation), page 186.

From the *Encyclopedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature*, we quote the following: "It must be confessed that there is no law in the New Testament concerning the first day."-Article, "Sabbath."

Rev. Paul James Wattson wrote in the Pathfinder, February 6, 1946, that all Christians should come back to the Catholic Church, so that there would be only one shepherd and one fold, Mr. Gene Golles, from Los Angeles, California, answered him in the same paper of March 6, as follows:

“If Rev. Paul James Wattson or any other Catholic priest can prove anywhere in the Bible that the Sabbath Day was changed from the seventh day of the week to the first, I'll give him \$5,000 immediately. When Rev. Wattson can prove from the Bible that God changed this law to the first day of the week, then I and many other 'sheep' will return to the 'one shepherd.’”

A Jesuit priest, T. Enright, wrote an interesting personal letter from the St. Alphonsus' (Rock) Church at 1118 North Grand Avenue, St. Louis, in June, 1905. He was writing to a person who had inquired whether the priest still held open an offer of \$1,000 to anyone who could prove from the Bible that we are bound to keep Sunday holy. The following is the answer, in part:

I have offered and still offer \$1,000 to any one who can prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound, under grievous sin, to keep Sunday holy.

“It was the Catholic Church which made the law obliging us to keep Sunday holy. The church made this law long after the Bible was written. Hence said law is not in the Bible.”

Protestant churches that have branched off from Rome have imbibed some of the wine of Babylon. They follow many false doctrines.

The sure word of prophecy also states that this power would think to change the law. Daniel 7:2.5. How did the papacy undertake to change the law of God? Has that church made an attempt to meddle with the law which the Bible declares “perfect,” and “holy, and just, and good”? Psalm 19:7 (Douay, Psalm 18:8); Romans 7: 12. Yes, she has. We shall quote the Ten Commandments as they are often given in catechisms, changed by the Roman Catholic Church, and compare them with the Ten Commandments as they are in the King James Authorized Version of the Bible.

The Ten Commandments  
Authorized Version of the Bible.

Changed by the Roman Catholic Church.

I  
“Thou shall have no other gods before Me.

II  
“Thou shall not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shall not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

III  
“Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that takes His name in vain.”

IV  
“Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shall not do any work, thou, nor thy son,

I  
I am the Lord thy God; thou shall not have strange gods before Me.”

II  
“Thou shall not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

III  
“Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.”

IV  
“Honor thy father and thy mother.”

nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: for in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it.

V  
“Honor thy father and thy mother:  
that the days may be long upon the land  
which the Lord thy God gives thee.

VI  
“Thou shall not kill.

VII  
“Thou shall not commit adultery.

VIII  
“Thou shall not steal.  
neighbor.”

IX  
“Thou shall not bear false witness  
against thy neighbor.

X  
“Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's  
house, thou shall not covet thy neighbor's  
wife, nor his manservant, nor his maid  
servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any  
thing that is thy neighbor's.”

V  
“Thou shall not kill.”

VI  
“Thou shall not commit adultery.”

VII  
“Thou shall not steal.”

VIII  
“Thou shall not bear false witness against thy

IX  
“Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife.”

X  
“Thou shall not covet  
thy neighbor's goods.”

Here again are the words of the prophet Daniel fulfilled, “He shall . . . think to change times and laws.” Daniel 7:25. The Roman Church has thus attempted to obscure the second commandment, which prohibits using images as objects of worship and bowing down to them. While the commandments are intact in the Catholic Bible, Catholic teachers lay their greatest emphasis on the study of the catechisms. What is written in the catechisms largely influences the thinking of the people, for they are not encouraged to study the Bible. The catechism is their standard of conduct.

Many do not know that the Lutheran Church still has the commandments as they were changed by the pope. Hundreds of Lutherans that I have contacted did not know that the commandments in the Lutheran catechism are different from those in the Bible. The Lutheran Church opposes the Roman Catholic Church, yet by her solemn act of accepting the commandments as they were changed by that apostate church, she follows Rome.

There are thousands of people in the Catholic Church, as well as in Protestant churches, who are confused regarding this Sabbath question. The Bible says, “The seventh day is the Sabbath;” and yet they keep the first day, for which there is no command.

Some priests or ministers of Protestant churches will tell you that the commandments were abbreviated so children might memorize them easier. But the second commandment, that prohibits making and worshiping images, was not merely abbreviated-it was left out completely. Why? Church leaders say that the second commandment is omitted because it is included in the first, and that the last commandment should be divided. But God's law is “perfect,” “holy, and just, and good,” and no man has the right to tamper with these two commandments. Psalm 19:7 (Douay, Psalm 18:8); Romans 7:12.

Inquirers for truth who go to their pastors are often told that Jesus changed the day of rest from Saturday to Sunday. But if the point is pressed a little more, and someone asks for a Bible text that explains



the transition, most pastors evade the issue. "For the leaders of this people cause them to err; and they that are led of them are destroyed." Isaiah 9:16.

Since leaders have not a "thus said the Lord," they invent excuses and set up false arguments. Some say: "Christ is the end of the law," but they do not quote the whole text. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believes." Romans 10:4. If faith could destroy the law, then how could Paul write: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." Romans 3:31. If we establish the law by faith, we certainly do not destroy it.

If the law of the Ten Commandments ended with Christ, how could John write nearly three quarters of a century after Christ that "sin is the transgression of the law"? 1 John 3:4. How could Paul write many years after Christ: I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet? Romans 7:7.

Paul has well told us what kind of men and women do not want to be subject to the law. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7. As long as men are not converted and are carnally minded, they do not care to keep the law. "They that are in the flesh cannot please God." Verse 8.

Great deceptions are used nowadays to keep people from contact with truth. Heathen are warned to stay away from Christianity. Catholic leaders warn their people to stay away from Protestants. Now Protestants warn their people to stay away from each other. Each pastor wants his sheep to stay with him. A frank investigation is not invited, but avoided.

Let us come back and consider the great red dragon of Revelation 12. The great red dragon with the ten horns is pagan Rome. The other dragon is the devil. Revelation 12:9. The red dragon turned his power over to another power. Pagan Rome turned its power, seat, and great authority over to the papacy. Revelation 13:2.

"The dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her Child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a Man-child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her Child was caught up unto God, and to His throne." Revelation 12:4,5.

This red dragon with the ten horns is pagan Rome. The woman is the church, and the male child that was born and was caught up unto God and to His throne is Christ. Pagan Rome through Herod tried to destroy the child Jesus as soon as He was born. All male children under the age of two years were killed, but Joseph and Mary fled to Egypt, and the child Jesus was saved. Matthew 2.

The church was persecuted "a thousand two hundred and threescore days," which makes 1260 years. This woman could not be Mary, because she was not nourished for 1260 years. "And to the woman [the church] were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time [one prophetic year], and times [two years], and half a time [half year], from the face of the serpent." Revelation 12:14. This also makes 1260 years. The Bible uses thirty days to the month, as is the Jewish reckoning. Mary did not live at this time, neither did she live 1260 years. So the woman is a symbol of the church, as it is used in prophetic language.

As we have seen, this period of persecution and domination of the papacy began AD 538 and ended in 1798, when the pope was taken prisoner and received the deadly wound. He died in prison and since that time the power of the papacy has been broken, and the persecution ceased.

Pagan Rome became papal Rome, so John changed the symbols from a great red dragon to a leopard like beast. We quote: "The beast which I saw was like unto a leopard: ... and the dragon [pagan Rome] gave him [papal Rome] his power, and his seat [the capital], and great authority." Revelation 13:2. Here we have the transfer symbolized from pagan Rome to papal Rome. Pagan Rome turned over its power, its capital, Rome, and great authority to the papacy.

This same beast, pagan Rome, had seven heads. Revelation 13:1,2. The seventh head was papal Rome. This head John describes. "And I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death; and his deadly wound was healed: and all the world wondered after the beast." Verse 3. The deadly wound that the papacy received in 1798 is healing, but many Protestants do not realize it. They play into the hands of the papacy themselves. They have not a correct view of the prophecy and they don't want to apply it to the papacy where it belongs, because if they do, they injure their own position. So they protect the papacy to protect themselves.

Notice how John describes the papacy practically with the same words as did Daniel. Let us compare the description.

The little horn of Daniel 7: 2 5 "shall speak great words against the Most High."

The leopard beast "opened his mouth in blasphemy against God." Revelation 13:6.

The little horn “made war with the saints, and prevailed against them.” Daniel 7:21.

The leopard beast made war with the saints and overcame them. Revelation 13:7.

The little horn has “a mouth speaking great things.” Daniel 7:8. See also verses 20, 25.

The leopard beast had “given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.” Revelation 13:5. When one pretends to have the power to forgive sins, he commits blasphemy. Luke 5:21. And if a man places himself in the place of God, this is blasphemy. John 10:33.

Power was given the little horn to have dominion for 1260 years. Daniel 7:25.

Power was given to the leopard beast forty and two months.” Revelation 13:5. Forty-two multiplied by thirty, since there are thirty days in a Biblical month, makes 1260—the number of years.

The power of the little horn shall be taken away at the end of the 1260 years. Daniel 7:25.

The power of the leopard beast is taken away after the forty-two months, or at the end of the 1260 years. “He ... shall go into captivity.” Revelation 13:5,10.

Both rule at the same time, for the same length of time, cover the same territory, do the same work, have the same character and meet the same fate. So the little horn of Daniel 7 and the leopard like beast of Revelation 13 are the same power, which is the papacy.

While the papacy went into captivity in 1798, John saw another beast (nation) that came up out of the earth. “And I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb.” Revelation 13:11.

Notice that all the other beasts came up out of the water, the sea. Now, what does water represent in prophecy? John again gives the answer: “The waters which thou saw, where the whore [the apostate church] sits, are peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues.” Revelation 17:15. So water represents peoples, multitudes, nations, and tongues.

The lion, bear, leopard, and terrible beast with ten horns of Daniel 7 came up out of the water, that is, where there were other nations. But the lamb like beast came up out of the earth. That is, it came up where there were no nations. And it came up when the papacy went into captivity in 1798. So we must look for a nation with these characteristics.

Let us notice that the great dragon had crowns (Revelation 12:3 1 and the ten horns had crowns (Revelation 13:1). Now the prophet speaks about a nation without a crown. So we must look for a nation without a king that came up around 1798, when the papacy received its “deadly wound” and went into captivity. It must be a republican form of government.

The prophet says that “the earth helped the woman [the church].” Revelation 12:16. How did the earth help the persecuted church? The mountains, caves, and cliffs helped the persecuted ones to find refuge. But the earth helped the persecuted church in other ways. The discovery of the New World offered refuge to the persecuted church. “The earth ... swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.” Verse 16.

John Wesley, in his Explanatory Notes Upon the New Testament, written in 1754, applied the figure of the leopard beast of Revelation 13:1-10 to the papacy. Then he speaks about the beast that came up out of the earth, and places it around the end of the forty-two months, or 1798. We quote:

“Another ... beast... But he is not yet come, though he cannot be far off . For he is to appear at the end of the forty-two months of the first beast. And he had two horns like a lamb—a mild, innocent appearance.”

John Wesley understood that the lamb like beast that came up would come around the end of the forty-two months. These forty two months ended when the pope went into “captivity,” in 1798. That is the time when the United States was beginning its rise. The Declaration of Independence was passed July 4, 1776. There is only one country that fits into the prophetic picture, and that is the United States of America.

God blessed America under this liberty-loving form of government. It became the greatest nation in the world. It pains us to note that Bible prophecy pictures this lamb like country as undergoing a change of character. It will yet speak like a dragon. Revelation 13:11.

A nation speaks by its laws. Notice what we are told our nation will yet do: “And he [the lamb like beast, the United States] exercises all the power of the first beast [the papacy] before him, and causes the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast [the papacy], whose deadly wound was healed Verse 12.

The prophet writes that it will say “to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.” Verse 14.

Now, what is the image to the beast? An image is a likeness. The government will place religious laws on the statute books and therefore “give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast

should ... speak.” Verse 15. The image of the beast is a union of church and state.

In times past men have ridiculed this prophecy. They once said that it would be impossible for the Catholic Church to become powerful in the United States; but this opinion is fast disappearing. Some also thought that religious laws could not be passed in Congress; but this time is fast approaching.

What is God's mark, seal, or sign? “Moreover also I gave them My Sabbaths, to be a sign [mark] between Me and them, that they might know that I am the Lord that sanctify them.” “Hallow My Sabbaths; and they shall be a sign [mark] between Me and you, that you may know that I am the Lord your God.” Ezekiel 20:12,20. See also Exodus 31: 13-17.

The Sabbath is God's mark or sign. The papacy also has a sign or mark. If the Sabbath is God's mark, what then is the papacy's mark? A counterfeit Sabbath, which is Sunday.

Sunday laws will be made by the United States of America. Before the Lord comes, those who do not bow down to the image (union of church and state) or accept the mark (Sunday) will be persecuted. Revelation 13:15.

This takes place shortly before the Lord returns to this earth. We quote: “And at that time shall Michael [Christ] stand up, the great Prince which stands for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time. And at that time thy people shall be delivered, everyone that shall be found written in the book.” Daniel 12: 1.

In this troublous time Sabbath keepers will be loyal to the true Sabbath. They will not accept the counterfeit Sabbath, the mark of the beast, and therefore will not have it in their “foreheads.” They will not work on the Sabbath nor respect the counterfeit Sabbath; and therefore will not receive it in their “hands.”

The time of trouble that is before us will yet bring many changes. Nations will go to great lengths when they are in trouble. Though a nation may look frantically for a solution or remedy for its troubles, it often will not bother about the cause. Why not remove the cause? Jeremiah points out in plain language why perplexities and troubles come over nations. The underlying cause is that they have departed from God's word and His holy law. We quote:

“Hear, you nations, and know, O congregation, what is among them. Hear, O earth: behold, I will bring evil upon this people, even the fruit of their thoughts, because they have not hearkened unto My words, nor to My law, but rejected it.” Jeremiah 6:18,19.

The devil then will work mightily through human agents. “And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast.” Revelation 13:13,14.

The devil can bring fire down from heaven to deceive people so that they will accept the image of the beast and his mark, as though they were divinely appointed.

Besides having a counterfeit mark, the papacy, has a name whose number makes 666. “Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” Revelation 13: 18.

Here John introduces this “man” again of whom Paul writes in 2, Thessalonians 2: 1-12. His number is 666. He has a name, a title, which makes exactly 666. What name or title does the pope have? He says that he is the Vicarius Filii Dei. That is, the vicar of the Son of God.

The cardinal who first places the crown upon the head of a newly appointed pope pronounces that he is the Vicarius Filii Dei.

Now, the Bible says: “Here is wisdom. Let him that bath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.” Revelation 13:18.

Let us count it the way the Romans counted. They counted by letters. An “I” represented one, “II” two, ‘V’ five, ‘X’ ten, “L” fifty, “C” one hundred, ‘U’ five hundred, “M” one thousand, etc. “The letter U was originally a cursive or rounded form of the letter V and not distinguished from it. By the tenth century V came to be used by preference as the capital initial form. The two letters, however, were not given separately until about 1800.” The La Crosse, Wisconsin, Tribune, Sept. 16, 1945.

Here is the name and the number of his name.

V . . . . . 5  
I . . . . . 1  
C . . . . . 100  
A . . . . . 0  
R . . . . . 0

I.....1  
U ..... 5  
S .....0

F .....0  
I.....1  
L ..... 50  
I.....1  
I.....1

D ..... 500  
E .....0  
I.....1  
Total . . . 666

Who has the mark of the beast? If Sunday is the mark of the beast, do all Sunday keepers have this mark? No, not at all. This is not what the prophecy indicates. The image is the union of church and state. As soon as this takes place the Sunday law will be enforced, and the nation will “speak.” The true Sabbath will then be called to the attention of all the inhabitants, and each one will have to decide whether he will accept the mark set up by man, or the mark set up by God. The controversy will be between a man-made Sabbath and a God-made Sabbath. When individuals then take their stand with the false Sabbath keepers, they will accept the mark.

Why do you suppose that God had all this written in the Bible? Is it there just to fill space, or to confuse the people; or did God have some particular object in doing so? The Lord knew the great deception that would come over all the world. He therefore sent out the warning beforehand.

Now, whom should we obey? “Peter and the other apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.” Acts 5:29.

“O that thou had hearkened to My commandments! Then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea.” Isaiah 48:18. “Hearken unto Me, you that know righteousness, the people in whose heart is My law; fear you not the reproach of men, neither be you afraid of their reviling.” Isaiah 51:7.

The New Testament teaches: “By this we know that we love the children of God... This is the love of God, that we keep His [God's] commandments: and His [God's] commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:2, 3.

John wrote in Revelation 12:17: “The dragon [the devil, see verse 9] was wroth with the woman [the church], and went to make war with the remnant [the last church] of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.”

“Here is the patience of the saints: here are they that keep the commandments of God, and the faith of Jesus.” Revelation 14: 12.

“For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified.” Romans 2: 13.

“Whosoever commits sin transgresses also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law.” 1 John 34 This law, that points out sin, is the law of the Ten Commandments. “What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet.” Romans 7:7. It is in the Ten Commandments we read, “Thou shall not covet.” “Without the law sin was dead.” Verse 8.

“For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all. For He that said, Do not commit adultery, said also, Do not kill. Now if thou commit no adultery, yet if thou kill, thou art become a transgressor of the law.” James 2:10,11.

“Blessed are they that do His commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the city.” Revelation 22:14.

The Sabbath will continue in the new heavens and in the new earth. “For as the new heavens and the new earth, which I will make, shall remain before Me, said the Lord, so shall your seed and your name remain. And it shall come to pass, that from one new moon to another, and from one Sabbath to another, shall all flesh come to worship before Me, said the Lord.” Isaiah 66:22,23.

I am told of a man who said that he would keep the Sabbath on the new earth, but not here. On this

earth he would keep Sunday, because it is more convenient, and in line with the rest of the world, etc. If this argument, if you can call it such, is sound, then the same person could say: In heaven I will not swear, but here on earth I will continue to curse." Or, "Here on earth I will steal, but in heaven I will quit it."

Men with such reasoning will never get into the kingdom. They expect to live in sin and reject the truth, and then enter the kingdom anyway. "Not everyone that said unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21.

A number of years ago while Evangelist C. T. Everson was holding some meetings in New York City, a number of young men came to him who were convicted of the truths he presented, but who were not willing to surrender, because of obstacles. They said: "Listen, Mr. Everson, we believe that the message you are giving is from God; we believe it is as true as anything that was ever put between the lids of the Bible." Then one of them said, "I can't follow it because mother wouldn't like it." Another maintained that he couldn't do it because his sweetheart might object. Another declared: "I can't do it because my business will not permit it."

These same young men were soon called to the colors by Uncle Sam. They bade their folks good by; they said farewell to their sweethearts; they left their good jobs and downy beds, left all behind them, went over to Europe, and stood in the trenches in mud up to their hips, and lay down upon the cold ground night after night. And when the general said, "Forward! March!" they went over the top in the midst of a rain of bullets; and hundreds like them died and never came back.

"And they did it all for Uncle Sam," Mr. Everson observed later. "And I say, dear friends, if men can do that much for their country's sake, they surely can do something for Jesus Christ, who loved them so much as to give His life for them. Certainly they can do something for Jesus Christ." - Bible Lectures, page 117, Pacific Press Publishing Association, 1929.

If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land." Isaiah 1:19. If we ever will get into the earth made new, we will love God and obey Him. We are all being weighed in the balance, and some will be found wanting. May God help all of us to be willing and obedient through Jesus Christ our Lord, and to keep His commandments that we "may enter in through the gates into the city." Revelation 22:14.

## 19. Who Will Be Saved?

NICODEMUS was impressed with the teachings of Jesus, and one night came to have a talk with Him. Perhaps he expected to have a long discussion with the Master concerning points of minor importance. But Jesus came to the point at once. He knew where Nicodemus needed help. He told him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3.

Jesus laid down the first principle of how we may become a child of God. The new birth is also called conversion or regeneration. This Nicodemus did not understand. He asked the Lord, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Verse 4.

On another occasion Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, Except you be converted, and become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:3. This does not mean that we should become childish, but childlike. A child has confidence in his parents and believes them, if they are honest. So we must trust and believe God.

Conversion, also called the new birth, is plainly taught in the word of God. Peter said: "Repent you.... and be converted." Acts 3:19. Paul and Barnabas on their journey "passed through Phenice and Samaria, declaring the conversion of the Gentiles: and they caused great joy unto all the brethren." Acts 15:3.

It is important then to be converted, or to be born again. Without this experience we will not be saved. Nicodemus did not understand it, though he was a ruler of the people. And there are many like him today.

Many have the opinion that if they belong to some church, they are converted. Nicodemus belonged to a church, too, but he was not converted until later. The church becomes to many a sort of "eternal-life insurance." They look to the church as a means to convert them or to bring them eternal life. Church membership alone saves no one.

The idea that we can develop the good that exists in our nature is another fatal deception. "The natural man receives not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." 1 Corinthians 2:14. Our hearts are evil and we cannot change them through our own efforts. Through education, effort, and the exercise of the will, we may produce an outward change of behavior; but that does not change the heart. A power must work from within and bring conviction to our souls. We must see our own sinfulness. This will only be possible when the Spirit of God comes into our lives.

"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." Job 14:4. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Romans 8:7. It is the Spirit of God that attracts us to God and to the Savior. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. "No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." John 6:44.

When we are convicted and see our sinfulness and turn our eyes to a loving Savior, we begin to appreciate His loving kindness, mercy, and fatherly tenderness. But we must not stop there. We may perceive the benevolence of God and His loving character, and yet be lost.

Paul recognized that "the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good." Romans 7:12. He also stated, I consent unto the law that it is good." Verse 16. Although he recognized that God was good, that His law was good, he cried out in bitterness of soul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from this body of death?" Verse 24, margin. This is the cry that has gone up from millions of burdened souls in all lands and in all ages. There is but one answer to this need. "Behold the Lamb of God, which takes away the sin of the world." John 1:29.

There is nothing good and no true excellence of character apart from Jesus. "Every good gift and every perfect gift" is from God. We have nothing of which to boast. How painful it must be to the ears of Jesus, when He hears men boast of their goodness. Pride is at the bottom of boasting. There is nothing good in us; we are all "sold under sin." "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God." Romans 7:14; 3:23.

God has a way by which the sinner may be reclaimed and brought back to the Father's house. There are two ways before each one of us. One leads to heaven and the other to hell-fire. The prodigal son had to make a decision. He either had to stay in his awful, sinful life, or return to the father. He decided to return. Shouldn't we then avail ourselves of the means provided to return to God? Shouldn't we be willing

to return to the Father and accept the means provided for us to be restored and transformed into His likeness and enjoy fellowship with God?

The Bible teaches us that we should become children of God. Though we may have our name on a church roll and have a baptismal certificate, this is not complete assurance of heaven. We can be baptized church members, and yet be lost.

To become converted to God means more than to join a church. It is a change from a sinful life to a life of righteousness. It is not merely going through a round of ritual. Ritual does not change the heart; this can come only through the working of the Holy Spirit.

When we are converted we come into harmony with the will of God. A man before his conversion might have cursed and used profane language; but after his conversion he is convicted, and does not use such language any more. Before his conversion he could enjoy company where cursing, swearing, drinking, and smoking were done; but now he feels out of place. What makes the difference? It is the working of the Holy Spirit on the heart. How the Holy Spirit does this is unexplainable.

Jesus said: "The wind blows where it lists, and thou hears the sound thereof, but cannot not tell whence it comes, and whither it goes: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." John 3:8.

Some think that God is in much noise. They think the more they can clap their hands, sing and pray and talk loudly, and jump up and down, the more of the Holy Spirit they have. It is a spirit, but not the right kind. You would not expect to see Paul or Jesus jump up and down, scream frantically, clap their hands, and roll on the floor, would you?

When we pray we talk to God. Then why should we shout and scream and become frantic? What do you think of children who do that when they want something from their parents? Why shout to God and scream? Can't God hear us when we speak in a calm and sensible manner?

The pagan priests in the time of Elijah did much shouting, jumping, screaming, and even cut their flesh, when they prayed. They were earnest, but they were wrong. When Elijah prayed, he did it in a calm manner. He said words in an understandable tone and comprehensible way, and God heard him. So does God today.

There are conditions under which God gives us His Holy Spirit. Jesus said: "If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter [the Holy Spirit], that He may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive." John 14: 15-17.

The first condition laid down by the word of God for one who would receive the Holy Spirit is that he love God. If we love God above all things, then we will not steal, swear, commit adultery, break the Sabbath, or covet, etc. We come to harmony with God's law, which is God's will. We do not keep the law to earn heaven, but we keep the law because we love the Lord; and the Holy Spirit brings us into harmony with the law.

Do you love the Lord enough to let the Holy Spirit make you willing to come into harmony with God's holy law? Are you willing to love the Lord enough not to kill, not to steal, not to commit adultery, and not to break His holy Sabbath day every week?

There are persons who claim that they were baptized with the Holy Spirit; yet they are not willing to keep the commandments, as Jesus has taught us to do. Some even go so far as to say that the Ten Commandments were abolished, yet they claim to be led by the Spirit of God. How then could Jesus say: "If you love Me, keep My commandments"? John 14:15,21; 15:10. "If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments." Matthew 19:17.

Love to God is the basis of conversion. For love is the fulfilling of the law." Romans 13:10. We do not keep the law to earn heaven but keep the law as a consequence of the working of the Holy Spirit on our hearts to make us willing and to bring us into harmony with His law.

Some say, "Do you want to be saved by keeping the law?" Then we ask such, "Do you want to be saved by transgressing it?" Isn't the Holy Spirit given to lead us into all truth? Isn't the Holy Spirit given to bring us into line with God? If the Holy Spirit leads you, He will not lead you away from the law, but will bring you into harmony with the law. The reason why men are not willing to get into line with the law of God, is that they love themselves more than they love God. They love their job, their relatives, their church, and perhaps hundreds of others things, more than they love God. How can God lead such persons? It is not possible for them to be led into all truth.

The Lord said that the Spirit "will guide you into all truth." John 16:13. Now, what is truth? "Thy word is truth." John 17:17. The word of God is truth. "Thy law is the truth." Psalm 119:142 (Douay, Psalm 118:142). "Thy commandments are truth." Psalm 119:151 (Douay, Psalm 118:151).

The Bible teaches that the word of God and the law of God are the truth. If the Spirit will lead you into all truth, He surely will not lead you away from the Bible and the law of God!

If a spirit leads us away from the commandments, it is not the right spirit. God's Holy Spirit leads us to the truth, and not away from it.

There are others who say that they love God with all their hearts; and at the same time they teach that the commandments were nailed to the cross. How can they harmonize this with the Scriptures?

The word of God teaches: "We are His witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey Him." Acts 5:32. God gives His Holy Spirit to them that obey Him. If the Holy Spirit convicts you of using profane language, could He lead you if you are not willing to give up your cursing and swearing? Can the Spirit of God lead you, if you are not willing to quit lying? Can you expect the Holy Spirit to lead you into all truth when you are not willing to keep the Sabbath day holy? God gives His Spirit to those that obey Him. Those that transgress the Ten Commandments do not obey Him. They are transgressors. "Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35.

It is very important that we walk in the light as it comes to us. If we do not, we get into the confusion the world is in now. If we are not willing to walk in the light as it shines on our path, darkness will come over us. Some people say: "Well, I just can't see why I should keep the Sabbath day. Why can't I keep Sunday in the place of it? One day is as good as another." The commandment says in part: "Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shall thou labor, and do all thy work: but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shall not do any work." Exodus 20:8-10.

Many people are willing to be led by the Holy Spirit, until they come to something they do not want to do or something that causes them inconvenience. Jesus taught: "If you continue in My word, then are you My disciples indeed; and you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." John 8:31,32. "Be you doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves." James 1:22.

Suppose the Holy Spirit takes you step by step as you read God's word. You learn many things you did not know before. Suppose the Spirit convicts you of cheating, but does not find you willing to quit it; could the Spirit lead you on from truth to truth? No, this would be impossible. The Spirit does not lead you, if you resist. You must be willing. If you are willing to quit cheating, then the Spirit leads you to other truths.

As the Spirit takes you from truth to truth, He might lead you to a truth that is shocking at first, and which you will not be willing to accept. What happens? Back you go in your Christian experience! But the Holy Spirit has not yet forsaken you. He troubles you again and again on this point. So you start out again, and you come to the same truth that you did not want to accept. You resist. Back you go again in your experience. But the Spirit keeps on pleading again and again with you. But every time you refuse. How long will the Holy Spirit keep on pleading with you to accept something you do not want? How long will it take to grieve the Spirit of God away?

The Holy Spirit keeps on pleading with you until you accept or reject and harden your heart against the truth. When you decide not to go one step further, and you definitely reject the truth, then you grieve the Holy Spirit away. Then you become stubborn, and you oppose the very truths the Spirit intended you to receive. If you turn down the Spirit every time He leads you to a truth which you do not want to accept, because it is not convenient, you sin against the Holy Spirit. If you keep up this attitude of mind long enough, you will become hardened against the truth. You thereby commit the unpardonable sin, and are a lost person.

Those who sin against the Holy Ghost do not feel that they are lost. Many are zealous in advancing error, thinking that they are doing the right thing. They feel no need of doing what they knew they should have done. They become indifferent and go their own way, and justify themselves in doing so.

It is dangerous to resist the Holy Spirit of God. It is dangerous to reject truths that God's word teaches. The Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit, and if you reject Biblical truths you reject the teachings of the Holy Spirit. You sin against God.

There are many people that do this. It is therefore important that when the truth comes to us, we accept it wholeheartedly. "Walk while you have the light, lest darkness come upon you." John 12:35.

If you love God you want to be obedient. You will accept the teachings of the Bible, because they are the truth. You will accept the commandments and God's law, because they are the truth. You are willing to obey. If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land." Isaiah 1:19.

Suppose a little boy comes to his mother and puts his arms around her neck and says: "mother, I love you so much. You are the best mother in the world. I love you more than I can tell." The mother says: I am glad, Johnny, that you love me. If you love me so much, will you go and fill the empty wood box?



Daddy will come home soon, and I must hurry to have supper ready.” But Johnny answers: I don't want to get any wood!” The mother replies: “But Johnny, you told me just a minute ago that you loved me so much. Won't you get me some wood? The box is empty.” “Oh,” says Johnny, I love you in the spirit, mother, but deliver me from the wood box and carrying in the wood.”

This is the way some folks treat God. They talk a lot about how much they love God; then when it comes to keeping God's commandments, they try to find an excuse.

“For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments: and His commandments are not grievous.” 1 John 5:3. “Hereby we do know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He that said, I know Him, and keeps not His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” 1 John 2:14. “He that bath My commandments, and keeps them, he it is that loves Me: and he that loves Me shall be loved of My Father, and I will love him, and will manifest Myself to him.” John 14:21. We cannot keep the commandments without loving God. “Love is the fulfilling of the law.” Romans 13:10.

The Bible is the truth, and the law of God is the truth. So if we are led by the Holy Spirit we are led to the Bible and also to the law of God. Any spirit that guides you away from the commandments, or is trying to persuade you that they are nailed to the cross, or that it is not necessary to keep them, is not the right spirit.

As the Holy Spirit leads us into the truth we are to “walk in the light.” If we will not walk in the light, then darkness will come upon us; and great will be that darkness! “Be not deceived; God is not mocked.” Galatians 6:7. “The Lord said, My Spirit shall not always strive with man.” Genesis 6:3. There is a limit to the forbearance of God, when men stubbornly refuse to be led into all truth.

The Bible is the work of the Holy Spirit. “All Scripture is given by inspiration of God.” 2 Timothy 3:16. “Holy men of God spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.” 2 Peter 1:21. Therefore, if anyone does not accept the Bible in full, he is working against the Holy Spirit.

There are persons who claim that the Holy Spirit baptized them, and revealed to them that they need not keep the commandments. How then could the Holy Spirit move the apostle John to write: If you love Me, keep My commandments”? How can the Holy Spirit move men to write the Bible, and move other men and women, who profess that they are led by the same Spirit, to contradict the Bible? It cannot be the same Spirit. If God's Spirit influenced men to write that we should “keep the commandments,” how then can the same Holy Spirit tell you not to keep them? It is not consistent.

If something suggests to you that you need not keep the commandments, and that you can be baptized without keeping them, this spirit is a counterfeit. Therefore we should not believe all the spirits. 1 John 4:1. There are good spirits and there are evil spirits. The good Spirit leads you to the truth, and the evil spirit leads you into confusion and away from the truth. And what is truth? The word is truth, and the law of God is truth. The good Spirit leads you to them, and not away from them.

When the apostles were led by the Holy Spirit and told the people to obey God, their listeners hardened their hearts. They sinned against the Holy Ghost. They did not even want to hear the truth. They closed their eyes to all investigation. They were satisfied with what they had, and did not want anything else. Yet the Holy Spirit touched their hearts. The Spirit moved on them heavily, but they rejected Him and therefore “Were cut to the heart, and took counsel to slay them.” Acts 5:33. When men reject the Spirit they become hardened at heart and go to any length to defend their own belief and error. The men that rejected the message of the apostles followed a spirit; but it was the wrong spirit. Millions are doing so today. “Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leads unto life, and few there be that find it.” Matthew 7:14.

There are multitudes that turn their ears away from hearing the law. When topics are presented with which they agree, they flock to the meetings. But just as soon as a truth is presented that they do not want, they turn away. As soon as a minister preaches on the law, it does not take some very long until they become uneasy. They want all the commandments except the Sabbath one.

Those who willfully turn their ears away from hearing the law are said to sin against God, and their prayers are an abomination. Proverbs 28:9. God knows how He feels about those who reject His authority, and want to crucify it. How does God feel when men trample His holy law under their feet, and swear, commit adultery, are disobedient, kill, break the Sabbath, or break other commandments?

But how will He feel when professed children of God reject His law and substitute a counterfeit day as the day of worship? They openly defy God's authority, then pray to Him to be led into all truth! How is this possible? They reject the very truths into which God intends to lead them. “He that keeps the law, happy is he.” Proverbs 29:18. What attitude do those take that oppose the commandments? One Protestant minister stated that if any of his members were to change church affiliation, he would rather have them

become Roman Catholics than Sabbath keepers. "He that is upright in the way is abomination to the wicked." Verse 27.

There are other persons who think that they need not study the Bible, because, as they believe, the Holy Spirit will guide them into all truths without it. They want to make the Holy Spirit a crutch for their mental laziness. Did not Jesus say: "Search the Scriptures"? John 5:39. Did not the Bereans study daily whether those things were so that Paul preached? Acts 17:11,12.

The Lord does not want us to fold our arms and not study the word. One of the works of the Holy Spirit is to lead us to the truth, that is, to the Bible. If the Bible reveals the truth, do you think that God will perform a miracle to show you the same truths that He already has revealed? God has revealed His will in the Bible through the Holy Spirit, and it is our duty to go and read it. If we have trouble in understanding some things, we should pray, be unbiased, and accept the word. Walk in the light as it comes to you; then you will grow.

"Blessed is the man that walks not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in His law does he meditate day and night." Psalm 1:1,2.

Others again shout frantically and cry to God-not because they love the Lord so much, but because there is a member of the family sick, and they want God to heal him. They want benefits from God, yet are not willing to obey Him. The devil then takes advantage of this situation and helps the sick member of the family. He comes as an angel of light, and in some instances does wonders. He then suggests that it is not necessary to keep God's commandments. He says that God is not so particular, and is merciful. The sick that was helped by the power of the devil thinks that it was from God, and the devil has the victory.

Others can argue that they were baptized by the Holy Ghost without keeping the Sabbath. Why, then, should they begin at all? But how do they know for a certainty that it was the Holy Spirit that baptized them? The devil has power to possess persons. The New Testament has many examples. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Isaiah 8:20.

One of my neighbors had a number of "spiritual gifts." He was prominent in a certain religious center. But his wife would have a black eye now and then, a result of his beating her. Is this the work of the Holy Spirit? Another man preached very earnestly and the people flocked to hear him, until it was discovered that he lived in adultery. These men had the "gifts," but were wicked. How do you explain this? God gives His Spirit to them that obey Him.

The devil comes as an angel of light. "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works." 2 Corinthians 11:13-15.

"Not everyone that said unto Me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that does the will of My Father which is in heaven." Matthew 7:21. God wants us to do His will, and not what we think we ought to do.

"Many will say to Me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Thy name? and in Thy name have cast out devils? and in Thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you." Verses 22, 23.

Many people will be deceived. They thought that it was the Spirit of God that gave these manifestations, when it was done through the power of Satan.

The devil will have power to make fire fall down from heaven in the sight of men so as to deceive. He wants to prove that his falsehoods are true by miracles. People that look for some manifestations, before they are converted, become easy victims. "And he does great wonders, so that he makes fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men, and deceives them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do." Revelation 13:13,14.

Those deceptions will increase as time goes on. Men and women will be deceived because they believe that such manifestations are from God. They forget that the devil has power to do such things, too. "They prophesy unto you a false vision and divinations, and a thing of naught, and the deceit of their heart." Jeremiah 14: 14. "Thus said the Lord of hosts, Hearken not unto the words of the prophets that prophesy unto you: they make you vain: they speak a vision of their own heart, and not out of the mouth of the Lord." Jeremiah 23:16.

The Lord uses men and women to do His bidding that are faithful and obedient. There have been prophets who were faithful, but later departed from God, as in the case of Balaam. The Lord rejects the unfaithful prophets. The words of the prophets agree with the words of other prophets.

Any spirit or imagination that draws a person away from Bible truth is evil. A spirit that suggests that it is not necessary to keep God's holy law is an evil spirit. The apostle John recorded the words of Jesus: If you love Me, keep My commandments." John 14:15. Again he wrote: "Sin is the transgression of the law." 1 John 3:4. Paul wrote: I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shall not covet." Romans 7:7.

The Lord has given warnings and has especially pointed out the things on which people would be deceived. But instead of having these deceived people come and receive more light, they avoid the very ones that have the light and would be able to help them. The devil always wants people to stay away from the light.

This is the reason why ministers warn their members not to study the Bible with those who have more light. Men that are not willing to study the Bible with others are afraid that their own position might not be so secure.

On the Day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit was manifested in a special way. Jesus said that He would send the Spirit, which would convict of sin and righteousness and judgment. John 16:8. The Spirit did come in great measure, and three thousand souls were convicted. They asked: "What shall we do?" It was indeed a notable day. Three thousand persons were baptized and added to the church.

The Holy Spirit brings Jesus into our lives. He makes us godlike. Paul writes: "Christ in you, the hope of glory: ... whereunto I also labor, striving according to His working, which works in me mightily." Colossians 1:27-29.

When Jesus comes into our lives there will be a change wrought. The life of sin will be changed into a life of righteousness. This, however, will not be done unless we love the Lord and are willing to obey Him. This transformation does not come by organization, wealth, social standing, or by titles of learning, but by the surrender of our wills to the will of God. It is a fellowship with Christ. Jesus will have a central place in our hearts. We will talk about Him. We will love Him and keep His commandments as He has asked us to do.

The Holy Spirit is not the monopoly of a particular few, but is given to everybody to draw them to Christ. The reason mankind is not benefited is that men resist the light the Holy Spirit brings to them. They resist the truths of the Bible and keep on transgressing; so no growth is possible.

Before a sinner is converted he must first see his sinful condition. He must see and feel his guilt before a righteous God. Then a conviction takes place in the mind and heart and he cries out: "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Romans 7:24. There must be a turning to God in prayer, a thirst for truth and a turning to the Bible. All this is the work of the Holy Spirit. As we surrender our wills to God, the Holy Spirit will lead us step by step into the marvelous truths of His word.

When Peter preached on the Day of Pentecost, the words pricked the hearts of the sinners and they said, "What shall we do?" The first word Peter said was "Repent." Acts 2:37,38. On another occasion, shortly after, he said, "Repent, . . . and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Acts 3:19.

What is repentance? It is a sorrow for sin and a turning away from it. If we sin and are sorry for it, we ask God to forgive us, and do not keep on sinning in the same way. A change in the life is manifested. "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." 2 Corinthians 5:17. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Ephesians 2:10.

If we have sinned and are sorry merely because our wrong actions bring suffering upon us, we do not experience genuine repentance. A robber might be sorry, not for the crime, but because the police got him. A child in school might cry because the teacher found out that he had stolen a pencil. He did not cry because of the evil, but because he was found out. This is not repentance.

Esau wept after he had lightly esteemed his birthright and had sold it for a mess of pottage. Judas, terrified with his sin of betraying the Lord, exclaimed: "I have sinned in that I have betrayed the innocent blood." Matthew 27:4. He feared the consequence, but he had no heartfelt sorrow for betraying the Savior of the world. The poor publican prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner." He saw his sinfulness and his great need of a loving God. His heart was open for the Holy Spirit to come in and set him free from the power of sin.

The psalmist prayed. "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." Psalm 139:23,24 (Douay, Psalm 138:23,24).

"He that covers his sins shall not prosper: but who so confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy." Proverbs 28: 13. The confession must be made to God, and not to an earthly priest. When Proverbs

was written there were no Catholic priests. Centuries before Christ, men confessed their sins over their sacrificed lambs, and not to a confessional booth. We should confess directly to God, who is the source of our pardon and our help. We need not make long pilgrimages, or mortify our flesh in doing penances. "Who so confesses and forsakes them shall have mercy." If we confess our sins, He [Jesus] is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." 1 John 1:9.

If the conversion is genuine, there is a decided change in the life of a sinner to the life of a child of God. "Put away the evil of your doings from before Mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well." Isaiah 1:16,17.

If you have stolen, return the goods to the owner. Make things right with your fellow beings, as far as it is humanly possible. If the wicked restore the pledge, give again that he had robbed, walk in the statutes of life, without committing iniquity; he shall surely live, he shall not die." Ezekiel 33:15.

A sinner will not see the defects of his own life unless he yields to the convicting power of the Holy Ghost. A confession with an apology to excuse his sin is not true confession. It must be without a reservation, or a perverting of the facts. You must tell God just as it is, and ask Him for forgiveness. He will not turn you down. Believe that He has forgiven you, because He has promised.

After we have confessed our sins honestly and have done everything that is humanly possible to restore what we had robbed; after we have made things right with our fellow men, our wife, husband, family, or any other person we slandered or treated in an unChristlike way, we can claim the forgiveness of God.

It is not easy to apologize to our fellow men, but this step is necessary to our salvation. We should make restitution and confess to God and ask pardon of those whom we have offended. Then the Lord will be very near. "Seek you the Lord while He may be found, call you upon Him while He is near: let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy upon him; ... for He will abundantly pardon." Isaiah 55:6,7. This is what men are not willing to do. They love sin more than God.

After you have confessed your sins to God and have given yourself unreservedly to the Lord, now believe that He has pardoned you. You cannot change past sins, neither can you change your past sinful life. Accept the pardon the Lord has promised, not because of your feelings, but because He has promised. Do not go by feeling, but by faith. With this simple act of believing God, as a child believes the parent, a new life begins in your heart, and you are a child born into the great family of God.

Since you have given yourself to Jesus, you must not draw back. Satan the tempter is still alive. Doubts will arise and you will be sorely tempted again. You may question your whole experience, whether you really are accepted by God. "As you have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk you in Him." Colossians 2:6. I have blotted out, as a thick cloud, thy transgressions, and, as a cloud, thy sins." Isaiah 44:22. Believe this promise. Keep on praying to the Lord to help you. He will never forsake you if you choose to serve Him every day. You might make mistakes again. If you do, go back to the Savior for pardon and help. If you begin to doubt and tremble, look up to the loving Savior. "We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins." Ephesians 1:7. Draw near the Lord, and He will draw near you.

The regenerating power of God has been working on your heart, and a new way of living has begun. The Holy Spirit worked quietly but effectively. You do not need to shout and roll on the floor to show that God's Spirit is working in you. The Lord came to Elijah with "a still small voice." So does He today.

The working of the Holy Spirit is seen in the life. Your bad traits of character, bad habits, evil purposes, and evil surmising are discarded as you take up the better life. There is a marked difference in what you were and in what you are now. The sins you loved before you now hate. The cursing and swearing you did before, now ceases. And if a swear word should slip from your lips because of your long-established habit, you are convicted. How is it that you see the sinfulness of it now where you did not before? The Holy Spirit does this work in you.

If you believe God's word and you have accepted Jesus as your personal Savior, the Holy Spirit will lead you from truth to truth, if you let Him. You might not be led to all truths at the same time, but you will be given new light as you are able to bear it. Then doing God's will becomes a pleasure. You find joy in the victories you gain over self and your sinful life, which are so displeasing to God. You find pleasure in keeping the Sabbath day holy, as well as in keeping the other nine commandments, because the Lord is leading you.

David did not find it a burden or a yoke of bondage to keep God's law. He says: 1 delight to do Thy will, O my God: yea, Thy law is within my heart." Psalm 40:8 (Douay, Psalm 39:9). He found it a

delight to keep God's law. Do you find it that way? Are any of the commandments an obstacle? Is the Sabbath a hindrance to you? If you love the Lord enough you will keep His commandments. If the keeping of God's law is no delight to you, then there is something wrong with you. You are not willing to grow, or you have backslidden, or you never were converted.

To begin a Christian life is not sufficient. We must grow. After we are converted we are, like "newborn babes," to "grow up" to the full stature of men and women in Christ Jesus. 1 Peter 2:2; Ephesians 4:15. The Bible uses different illustrations to show how we are to grow spiritually. Isaiah says that we are like "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that He might be glorified." Isaiah 61:3. "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." Mark 4:28. "They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." Hosea 14:7 (Douay, verse 8). "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can you, except you abide in Me.... Without Me you can do nothing." John 15:4,5. It is not enough to make a beginning in the spiritual life. We must grow. Here is where many fail, and will come short in the day of judgment.

Some persons had a genuine experience at conversion, but do not grow. They depend on their first experience, and make no progress. We must continue to grow.

When we were converted, there were perhaps many things that we did not know, or understand at the time, but if we lived up to the light we had, God accepted our sincerity. But if the Lord sends us additional light we should not reject it, or else we will not be able to grow spiritually, even if we once made a good start. If a grain of corn sprouts, but does not continue to grow, we consider it a failure. So it is spiritually. A person may have a good start; but if he does not grow, there is something wrong. The Spirit of God helps us to progress and leads us from truth to truth. The danger lies in that we are not willing to be led. When we reject truth, we become lukewarm and self-satisfied. The apostle John describes this condition: "Because thou says, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knows not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked." Revelation 3:17.

It is not what we think we are that is important, but what God sees that we are. The fruits of the Spirit as revealed in the life of a converted person are love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." Galatians 5:22,23.

May the Holy Spirit perfect these divine virtues in our lives, preserve us from evil, and prepare us for a better world, where "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes. And there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.... He that overcomes shall inherit all things; and I will be his God, and he shall be My son." Revelation 2 1: 4-7. If you be willing and obedient, you shall eat the good of the land." Isaiah 1:19.

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