

The background of the entire image is a photograph of the interior of the dome of St. Peter's Basilica. The view is looking upwards towards the center of the dome, where a bright light source creates a large, glowing white circle. The architectural details of the dome, including the ribs and the windows, are visible. A band of Latin text is visible on the lower part of the dome's interior.

# Trappings of Popery

REGNI CAELORVM TV ES PETERVS

A small, white, stylized cross icon is positioned above the author's name.

Shaun  
Willcock

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# Introduction

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Bible Protestants loathe the religious system known as Popery, with all its demonic doctrines and abominable practices. They know that Popery is the religion of Antichrist, and that its adherents are blind, deceived, lost souls, worshipping at the shrines of grotesque heathen deities which have been carried over lock, stock and barrel from ancient Babylon, Egypt and Rome, and given Christian names. True Christians, or Bible Protestants (for they are one and the same: not all Protestants are true Christians, but all true Christians are Bible Protestants), reject the great heretical doctrines of Roman Catholicism: such as their blasphemous counterfeit of the Holy Trinity (the Father, the Mother-goddess Mary, and the various false “christs” – the mass-wafer, the crucifix-image, the pope of Rome himself, the priests, and others), their doctrine of salvation by works, their rejection of the all-sufficiency of Holy Scripture, and all the rest. They reject the claims of Papists to be true Christians, and they detest and shun any unholy communion or spiritual fellowship with Papists, knowing that this is to attempt to join Christ to Belial, and is a grievous sin before God.

And yet, despite all this, many Christian churches, and Christian individuals, have retained various *trappings of Popery!* They have held on to these trappings, either out of ignorance, or because they view them as mere trifling matters, or because they simply cannot bear to part with them. But in doing so, they have been very inconsistent and hypocritical. For if Roman Catholicism be the religion of Antichrist, the Great Whore, the Mother of Harlots and Abominations, the

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mystical Babylon (Rev. 17:1-6), then it is *all heathenism*, plain and simple, and *none* of the garments of this harlot system should be worn by the members of the virgin bride of Christ!

Christian man, Christian woman: you believe that the Bible is the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice (2 Tim. 3:16,17), and that the Lord's divine power has given to His people all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3); then you ought *never* to play the part of ungodly Achan, hiding any “goodly Babylonish garment” in the midst of your tent (Jos. 7:21)! The embellishments of Popery should never be retained by those who, by sovereign grace, have clean escaped the clutches of that mystical harlot. Rev.18:4 says that the Lord's people must fully “*come out*” of Popery; but alas! many flee from this “Babylon” like Rachel fleeing from her father's house – with her father's gods hidden amongst her possessions (Gen. 31:19,34,35). And this is exactly how many true Christians “come out” of Romanism: they come clutching certain trappings of Popery which they are reluctant to let go. They reject and forsake the false “gospel” of Romanism, but they hold on to certain trappings. And I am not only referring to those who have been *converted* from Romanism to Christ! For *all* true Christians, even if they were never themselves Romanists, must “come out” of all aspects of Popery, which has been so all-pervading in society and in religious matters for so many long centuries that it has influenced even true Christian churches and it has infected, to some degree at least, even the lives of true Christians.

We hear much about the Protestant Reformation of the sixteenth century, and of how this was a “complete break” with Rome and a “return to the *Bible alone*” in all matters of faith and practice. It certainly is true that multitudes at that time broke free (for various reasons) from Rome's yoke, and it is also true that many were truly set free by the almighty power of the Holy Spirit. And Protestants have claimed ever

since that “the Bible alone is the religion of Protestants.” But we must be very careful here. The Reformation certainly was *not*, by any means, a complete break with Rome! Every single one of the Protestant denominations that came into existence at that time retained various aspects of Popery: some retained *so much*, in fact, that they cannot be called anything less than *harlot daughters* of their Roman mother (Rev. 17:5), no more Christian than she is. Pre-eminent among these would be the Lutheran and Anglican institutions.

The Lord Jesus set down the regulative principle that should govern the worship and service of God when He said, in Matt. 28:20, “Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.” Whatsoever is found in God's Word, we must observe; whatsoever is *not* found in God's Word, we must forsake. It is as simple as that. That is the divine principle that must govern our worship and service.

But to hear many people talk, one would think that the Reformation made such a complete break with Rome that all that is necessary is for a person to belong to one of the Protestant denominations that began at that time, and he or she has then obeyed the divine commandment to “*come out of her*” (Rev. 18:4), as well as that other similar commandment in 2 Cor. 6:17: “*Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing.*” But if indeed these denominations and their members have fully “come out” of Rome, why then do they continue to observe so many Romish things? When true Christians have the courage to examine many of their teachings and practices in the light of Scripture, they find that they have all too often clutched onto as many of those Babylonish trappings as they could.

We must examine these trappings of Popery. Come out – *truly* out – of Babylon, have nothing to do with the harlot or her ways. She says, as the harlot does, “I have decked my bed with coverings of tapestry, with carved works, with fine

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linen of Egypt” (Prov. 7:16). The bed may indeed be adorned, but the woman in it is still a harlot. And if a man flees from the bed, but takes the bedclothes with him, he has not truly or completely fled from the harlot, has he?

The contents of this book (apart from the final chapter) originally appeared as a series of nine articles in *The Bible Based Ministries Magazine*. They have been slightly edited and enlarged for publication as a book.

*Shaun Willcock*

2006



# Chapter One

## Corrupt Bible Versions

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The use of faulty Bible versions based on a faulty text is a trapping of Popery that is tragically, in our day and age, now widespread within Protestant churches.

This is a vast subject, and one which can only be briefly dealt with here. But here is the essence of it: there is the true Greek text of the New Testament, known as the Received Text, or *Textus Receptus*; and there is a false text.<sup>1</sup> And whereas the true text underlies the great King James Version, that accurate and faithful English version of God's holy Word, the false text underlies the overwhelming majority of English versions that have been produced for well over a hundred years now. And the important point to note at this time is that this false text is essentially a *Roman Catholic* text. It is the text underlying the official Roman Catholic Bible, and it is the text which Rome, through her Jesuits and others, is promoting as the basis for the many modern versions now being produced, often by joint Roman Catholic and Protestant translation committees.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> See *The King James Version Defended*, by Edward F. Hills, The Christian Research Press, Des Moines, Iowa, USA, 1984. *The Revision Revised*, by John William Burgon, A.G. Hobbs Publications, Fort Worth, Texas, USA, 1991. *Which Bible?* by David Otis Fuller, Institute for Biblical Textual Studies, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, 1975. See also various articles by the Trinitarian Bible Society, London, England.

<sup>2</sup> *A Common Bible?* and *What is Wrong with the Modern Versions of the Holy Scriptures?* (pamphlets) by the Trinitarian Bible Society, London, England.

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It can, then, with absolute truthfulness, be said that when Christians use one of the modern English versions, they are retaining a Popish trapping; one which Rome is making much use of to undermine Biblical Protestantism and to destroy the doctrines of the Gospel.

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Two:

# Pictorial Representations of Christ

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The commandment of the Lord is: “Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God” (Exod. 20:4,5). “Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry” (1 Cor. 10:14). “Little children, keep yourselves from idols” (1 Jn. 5:21).

We are forbidden from making the likeness of anything for the purpose of worshipping it. But do not think that this only refers to the making of images of *heathen* deities! It includes the making of any supposed images of the true God as well. For He, being the invisible God, a Spirit, cannot be represented in this way at all. *And* (and this is what many Protestants these days fail to grasp) it is just as sinful to make any likeness of the Lord Jesus Christ as well! Romanists fill their homes and their places of worship with images (idols) of Christ, of course, but tragically there are multitudes of Protestants who are quite happy to ape the Harlot Mother in this practice, and to depict the Lord Christ in paintings, books, etc. Now it is true enough that no true Christian (unlike the Romanist) will actually bow down and *worship* the supposed representation of Christ which he has; but even so it is still sinful to attempt to depict Christ in this manner. Why?

In the first place, because any pictorial representation of the Lord Jesus Christ is purely imaginary. It can never be accurate, for no one has the slightest idea what He looks like, there being none alive today who have seen Him with

their physical eyes (2 Cor. 5:16). Any picture of His physical appearance, then, is a lie. And in the second place, even if we did have an absolutely accurate picture of the Lord's physical appearance, we *still* could not depict Him. For Jn. 1:14 says, "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." And 1 Tim. 3:16 says, "God was manifest in the flesh". When God the Son took a human nature, His disciples beheld His glory. They did not only behold His humanity, they beheld the glory of His divine nature! For this glory was seen through the veil of His flesh: the glory of the Son of God!

Jesus, being God, possesses the same divine nature as God the Father (Heb. 1:3; Col. 1:15; Col. 2:9). This is why Jesus could say that he who has seen the Son has seen the Father (Jn. 14:8,9). He is the image of the invisible God, the brightness of the Father's glory.

Now the point is this: how can the glory of Christ's divine nature be depicted in a work of art? It is utterly impossible. In art we can only depict the physical appearance of a man. But if we only depict the *humanity* of Christ (assuming we knew what He looked like, which we do not), we are dividing His Person! For Christ has both a human and a divine nature. He is both God and man! We *cannot* depict His divine nature, and yet if we only depict His human nature, we are not truly depicting Him!

Not even His disciples, who saw Him in the flesh, ever made a likeness of Him. How is it possible for *us* to do so?

Jn. 1:18 says, "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." No images can be made of God, who is a Spirit. But Christ is the very image of God. Christ *is* God! – God the Son. If we depict Christ, we depict God! And yet, we could only depict Christ inaccurately, for the reasons given

above. Which means that, if we depict Christ inaccurately, we depict God inaccurately! What, then, would we have? We would have a similitude of God as a man – but it would be an absolutely false one, just as every single image of Christ that has even been fashioned by man is false! Deut. 4:15,16 is so clear: “Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves; for ye saw no manner of similitude on the day that the LORD spake unto you in Horeb out of the midst of the fire: lest ye corrupt yourselves, and make you a graven image, the similitude of any figure, the likeness of male or female”. An image or a picture of Christ is the similitude, the likeness, of a male; but it is a false likeness! It is a false likeness of His human nature, which none of us have ever seen; and as for His divine nature, it could never be a true likeness of that, for the divine nature can never be depicted!

John Owen correctly stated: “there is a general supposition granted on all hands – namely, that there must be a *view of Christ* and His glory, to cause us to love Him, and thereby to make us conformable or like unto Him. But here lies the difference:– Those of the Church of Rome say that this must be done by the beholding of crucifixes, with other images and pictures of Him; and that with our bodily eyes: we say it is by our beholding His glory by faith, as revealed in the Gospel, and no otherwise.”<sup>3</sup>

“Come out of her, my people!” Popery is a religion of idolatry! And in addition to all her images of the so-called “saints”, and of Mary, and her wafer-idols, she also has supposed images of Christ. Let every Bible Protestant flee from such idolatry as this! Rachel fled with her father's household gods when she fled from that land; and when a

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<sup>3</sup> *Works*, by John Owen, Vol.1, p.393, as quoted in *Pictorial Representations of Jesus Christ* (tract), by D.K. Madden. Published by the author, Sandy Bay, Tasmania, Australia, 1983.

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Christian depicts Christ in any form, he is doing as Rachel did. He is retaining the idols of Rome, even though he may attempt to justify doing so (as doubtless Rachel did) by saying that he does not intend to use them as the Papists use them. Be not deceived! Flee from idolatry, and cast aside this evil trapping of Popery.

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Three:

# Arminianism

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The doctrine of Arminianism is a trapping of Popery, indeed it is a vital part of Popery, yet it is embraced by vast numbers of Protestants. *And moreover (and this is a fact unknown to most Protestants today) it is a doctrine which the diabolical Jesuits of Rome, those secret agents of the Vatican, deliberately injected into Protestantism centuries ago in order to weaken it and destroy it.*

The Puritan Christopher Ness, in his book *An Antidote Against Arminianism*, wrote: “Hence Dr. Leighton calls Arminianism ‘the Pope’s Benjamin, the last and greatest monster of the man of sin; the elixir of Anti-Christianism; the mystery of the mystery of iniquity; the Pope’s cabinet; the very quintessence of equivocation.’ Alike hereunto Mr. Rous (Master of Eton College) addeth, saying, ‘Arminianism is the spawn of Popery, which the warmth of favour may easily turn into frogs of the bottomless pit.’”<sup>4</sup>

Arminianism (the exaltation of man’s supposed “free will”) is the doctrine of unregenerate men throughout the history of the world. Popery, being a religion of unregenerate men, very naturally embraced this error, and has fought against the truth of Scripture regarding divine predestination and election with all its might. Augustus Toplady, the hymnwriter and preacher, in refuting the false notion that Papists hold the doctrine of predestination, very correctly wrote: “Every man who knows what Popery is; every man, who is at all acquainted either

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<sup>4</sup> *An Antidote Against Arminianism*, by Christopher Ness, p.2. Still Waters Revival Books, Edmonton, Canada, 1988. Originally published in London, 1700.

with the ancient or present state of that Church; must consider such an assertion, as the most false and daring insult that can be offered to common sense. Have not the doctrines, called Calvinistic, been condemned in form, and the assertors of them pronounced accursed, by the Council of Trent? Did any man ever read a single Popish book of controversy, written within a century after the Reformation, in which the Protestants are not universally charged (as we still are by the Arminians) with making God the author of sin, only because they universally held predestination? And, for the modern Popish books of controversy, I have hardly seen one, in which the writers of that communion do not exult, and impudently congratulate the Church of England on her visible departure from those doctrines. And, God knows, the Church of Rome has, in this respect, but too much reason for triumph.”<sup>5</sup>

He also wrote: “I must repeat... that Arminianism ‘came from Rome, and leads thither again.’ ”<sup>6</sup>

To prove beyond any shadow of doubt the great enmity which Popery bears towards the true doctrines of Scripture regarding predestination and election, and its full support for the doctrines of Arminianism, listen to these “anathemas”, pronounced by Rome at its Council of Trent in the sixteenth century:

“If anyone saith that man's free-will, moved and excited by God, by assenting to God exciting and calling, no wise co-operates towards disposing and preparing itself for obtaining the grace of justification... let him be anathema” (Decree on Justification, Canon 4). “If anyone saith that, since Adam's sin, the free-will of man is lost and extinguished; or that it

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<sup>5</sup> *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, pp.66,67. Sprinkle Publications, Harrisonburg, Virginia, USA, 1987. Originally published in 1794.

<sup>6</sup> *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, p.54.



is a thing with only a name, yea, a name without a reality, a figment, in fine, introduced into the Church by Satan; let him be anathema” (Canon 5). “If anyone saith that the grace of justification is only attained to by those who are predestined unto life... let him be anathema” (Canon 17).<sup>7</sup> And there is much more along similar lines. Rome hates the scriptural truth, and exalts the false doctrine of man's free will, which is Arminianism.

And this false doctrine was injected into the Protestant churches by the *Jesuits of Rome*! There is very good reason to believe that James Arminius himself, the “Protestant” whose name is forever associated with that false system of doctrine, “drew his poison” (to use Toplady's words) from the Jesuits. Read carefully the following from Toplady, answering those who argued that the doctrines of Arminianism were not originally Popish:

“The Jesuits were moulded into a regular body, towards the middle of the sixteenth century: toward the close of the same century, Arminius began to infest the Protestant churches. It needs therefore no great penetration, to discern from what source he drew his poison. His journey to Rome (though Monsieur Bayle affects to make light of the inferences which were at that very time deduced from it) was not for nothing. If, however, any are disposed to believe, that Arminius imbibed his doctrines from the Socinians in Poland, with whom, it is certain, he was on terms of intimate friendship, I have no objection to splitting the difference: he might import some of his tenets from the Racovian brethren, and yet be indebted, for others, to the disciples of Loyola.”<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*, pp.49,50,53. Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., Rockford, Illinois, USA, 1977. Nihil Obstat: Remigius Lafort, Censor; Imprimatur: John Cardinal Farley, Roman Catholic Archbishop of New York, 1912.

<sup>8</sup> *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, pp.54,55.

Furthermore, “When [Anglican] archbishop Laud’s papers were examined, a letter was found among them, thus endorsed with that prelate’s own hand: ‘March, 1628. A Jesuit’s Letter, sent to the Rector at Bruxels, about the ensuing Parliament.’ The design of this letter was to give the Superior of the Jesuits, then resident at Brussels, an account of the posture of civil and ecclesiastical affairs in England; an extract from it I shall hear subjoin: ‘Father Rector... We have now many strings to our bow. We have planted that sovereign drug Arminianism, which we hope will purge the Protestants from their heresy; and it flourisheth and bears fruit in due season. For the better prevention of the Puritans, the Arminians have already locked up the Duke’s (of Buckingham) ears; and we have those of our own religion, which stand continually at the Duke’s chamber, to see who goes in and out: we cannot be too circumspect and careful in this regard. I am, at this time, transported with joy, to see how happily all instruments and means, as well great as lesser, co-operate unto our purposes. But, to return unto the main fabrick:— Our foundation is Arminianism. The Arminians and projectors, as it appears in the premises, affect mutation. This we second and enforce by probable arguments.’

“The ‘sovereign drug, Arminianism,’ which, said the Jesuit, ‘we (i.e. we Papists) have planted’ in England, did indeed bid fair ‘to purge’ our Protestant Church effectually. How merrily Popery and Arminianism, at that time, danced hand in hand, may be learned from Tindal: ‘The churches were adorned with paintings, images, altar-pieces, etc. and, instead of communion tables, altars were set up, and bowings to them and the sacramental elements enjoined. The predestinarian doctrines were forbid, not only to be preached, but to be printed; and the Arminian sense of the Articles [the Articles of the Anglican institution] was encouraged and propagated.’ The Jesuit, therefore, did not exult without cause. The ‘sovereign drug,’ so lately ‘planted,’ did indeed take deep root downward, and bring forth fruit upward, under

the cherishing auspices of Charles and Laud.”<sup>9</sup>

In quoting from this letter, Toplady correctly concluded: “If we sum up the evidence that has been given, we shall find its amount to be, that Arminianism came from the Church of Rome, and leads back again to the pit whence it was digged.”<sup>10</sup>

Augustus Toplady also wrote: “What Heylin quotes, from a Jesuit who wrote in the time of Charles I., is in great measure true of the present times: ‘the doctrines are altered in many things: as, for example, the Pope not antichrist; pictures; free-will; predestination; universal grace; inherent righteousness; the merit of good works.’ ”<sup>11</sup>

Did the reader take note of the fact that this Jesuit, quoted by Heylin and Toplady, remarked that the Anglican institution had forsaken a number of its original doctrines, including the doctrine condemning “pictures” (see the trapping of Popery dealt with previously), and the doctrines of sovereign grace? This was all part of the sinister and diabolical Jesuit plot to undermine the Anglican institution, and also all Protestant churches.

“Come out of her, my people,” certainly means come out of the Romish Whore's false doctrines. Arminianism, although not invented by Rome, is certainly an important doctrine of Rome, and one which she has used to great advantage to weaken Protestantism. The churches which preach and uphold the teaching of Arminianism are preaching and upholding a Popish trapping!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

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<sup>9</sup> *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, p.55.

<sup>10</sup> *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, p.55.

<sup>11</sup> *The Complete Works of Augustus Toplady*, p.67.

## Chapter Four:

# Infant “Baptism”

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The doctrine of infant “baptism”, both as to its subjects and its mode, is a trapping of Popery that is practiced in vast numbers of Protestant churches, and has caused immense harm. It should rather be called infant *sprinkling*, for it is not immersion, and the meaning of baptism is immersion; but because the phrase is commonly used this way I will retain it for simplicity's sake here.

Much has been written and preached about this issue, and much will yet be written and preached about it, for men who know the scriptural truth about baptism will always earnestly contend for it against this insidious trapping of Popery that is maintained by so many Protestants. John Gill, the godly Baptist pastor and great Bible commentator, perfectly described it when he wrote: “infant baptism is a part and pillar of popery; that by which Antichrist has spread his baneful influence over many nations.”<sup>12</sup> Gill was absolutely correct in this assertion. In the paedobaptist (i.e. infant-sprinkling) Protestant denominations and churches, the Papal Antichrist has retained a foothold, and frequently much more than a foothold, through the Popish practice of infant “baptism”. No matter how sound a church may be in other matters, as long as it retains infant “baptism” it can never be truly free of Popish influence, and without any question whatsoever this false doctrine paves the road to Rome in this day of ecumenicity.

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<sup>12</sup> *Infant-Baptism: a Part and Pillar of Popery*, by John Gill, p.2. The Baptist Standard Bearer, Paris, Arkansas, USA, 1987. Originally published in London, 1766.

As Gill so correctly wrote: "But it is not only a *part* of popery, and so serves to strengthen it, as a part does the whole; but it is a *pillar* of it, what serves greatly to support it; and which furnishes the Papists with one of the strongest arguments against the Protestants in favour of their [the Papists'] traditions, on which, as we have seen, the essentials of popery are founded, and of the authority of the church [of Rome] to alter the rites of divine worship: they sadly embarrass Paedobaptist Protestants with the affair of infant-baptism, and urge them either to prove it by scripture, both with respect to mode and subjects, or allow of unscriptural traditions and the authority of the church, or give it up; and if they can allow of unwritten traditions, and the custom and practice of the church, as of authority in one point, why not in others?"<sup>13</sup>

Now when we examine the teaching regarding infant "baptism" in various Protestant churches, we see just how much Romish doctrine has been retained by them: first, as to the *subjects*; and second, as to the *mode*.

As for the *subjects* of baptism, the New Testament is absolutely unambiguous: the only people who are proper candidates for baptism are *believers* in the Lord Jesus Christ: those who have heard the Gospel, believed it, exercised faith in Christ and repented of their sins; those, in a word, who have been *saved*. Never once, in all of the New Testament, do we read of any infants being baptized. And why not? For the simple reason that an infant is not able to profess faith in the Lord Christ, and to repent of his sins in such a way that it would be made known. Hear the words of Holy Scripture:

Jesus said, "He that *believeth* and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mk. 16:16). Peter said, "*Repent*, and be baptized every one of you in the

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<sup>13</sup> *Infant-Baptism: a Part and Pillar of Popery*, pp.13,14.

name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins” (Acts 2:38). And it says, “Then they that gladly *received his word* were baptized” (v.41). It says in Acts 8:12, “But when they *believed* Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.” The Ethiopian eunuch asked Philip, “what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou *believest* with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God” (Acts 8:36,37). And it was only after the jailor *believed* on the Lord Jesus Christ, and was saved, that he was baptized (Acts 16:31–33).

There is no record anywhere in the inspired Scriptures of any infant being baptized. In the early Church only believers were ever baptized, never infants. Infant “baptism” was a human innovation that was introduced later. And at the time of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, the Protestant denominations that were formed at the time *retained* this Popish practice. And they retain it to this day. It is a part and pillar of Popery; it paves the road to Rome. By this means the Papal Antichrist retains a foothold within these denominations.

And as for the *mode* of baptism, again the New Testament removes all doubt: it is *not* by pouring a little water on the head, or sprinkling the head, or forming the “sign of the cross” on the forehead; it is by *immersion only*. The Greek word, “baptizo”, means to dip or plunge or immerse. That is proof enough. But more than that, the Scriptures show that this is exactly what was done. “And Jesus, when he was baptized, went *up* straightway *out* of the water” (Matt. 3:16): obviously, then, the Lord was *in* the water. “And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was *much water* there” (Jn. 3:23): if John merely poured or sprinkled, he would not have needed much water. “And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they *went down both into* the water,

both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were *come up out of the water*" (Acts 8:38,39): if Philip was merely pouring water on the eunuch's head, they would hardly have needed to go down into the water. "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" (Rom. 6:4): only immersion can symbolise death, burial and resurrection. "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead" (Col. 2:12).

If language has any meaning at all, then beyond any shadow of a doubt the Christians of the first century were immersed in water. No other mode was known to them. And again, any rejection of this mode in favour of something else is to retain a Popish trapping – and sadly, countless Protestant churches have done just that, and do so to this very day.

John Gill, after describing the various ceremonies used by Papists in the administration of infant baptism, wrote: "infant-baptism itself, though two or three doctors of the church [false "doctors" – *S.W.*] had asserted and espoused it, yet it was not determined in any council until the Milevitan Council in 418, or thereabouts, a provincial of Africa, in which was a canon made for Paedobaptism and never till then.... And Austin... observes that it was not instituted, or determined and settled in or by councils; that is, as yet it was not, though it afterwards was in the above council confirmed by the said pope; in which council Austin himself presided, and in which is this canon, 'Also it is our pleasure, that whoever denies that new-born infants are to be baptized, – let him be anathema,' and which is the first council that established infant-baptism, and anathematized those that denied it; so that it may justly be called a part of popery: besides baptism by immersion... was first changed into sprinkling by the Papists; which is not an indifferent thing, whether performed with much or

a little water, as it is usually considered; but is of the very essence of baptism, is that itself, and without which it is not baptism; it being as Sir John Floyer says, *no circumstance, but the very act of baptizing*... who observes that aspersion, or sprinkling, was brought into the church by the Popish schoolmen... and our dissenters, adds he, had it from them; the schoolmen employed their thoughts how to find out reasons for the alteration to sprinkling, brought it into use in the 12th century... sprinkling received only a Presbyterian sanction in times of the civil war, by the Assembly of Divines; where it was carried for sprinkling against dipping by one vote only, by 25 against 24, and then established by an ordinance of Parliament, 1644... and that this change has its rise from the authority of the Pope, Dr. Wall... himself acknowledges, and that the sprinkling of infants is from popery.... so that infant-baptism, both with respect to subjects and mode, may with great propriety be called a part and branch of popery.”<sup>14</sup>

The commandment in Rev.18:4, “Come out of her, my people,” is a commandment to the Lord’s people to come out of this false doctrine of the Romish harlot no less than any other! Paedobaptistic Protestants can write all the books they like, and preach all the sermons they like, in defence of infant “baptism”, but they can never, ever escape or refute the undeniable truth: infant “baptism” is completely unscriptural and utterly Popish in origin. It should be rejected with detestation by all true Christians.

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

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<sup>14</sup> *Infant-Baptism: a Part and Pillar of Popery*, pp.11–13.



## Chapter Five:

# Baptismal Regeneration

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Some Protestant paedobaptists (who do not deserve the name of “Protestants”, for they are Popish at heart) retain more than merely the false Romish trapping of baptizing infants, as unscriptural as that is in itself: they actually go further and retain, in addition, the utterly heretical notion that the baptism of an infant (or, for that matter, an adult) actually *regenerates* that infant or adult. This is the soul-damning Roman Catholic heresy known as *baptismal regeneration*.

According to Popish teaching, when a child is “baptized” he or she is actually *regenerated; born again*. Listen to the official statements of the Council of Trent: “If anyone denies that, by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, which is conferred in baptism, the guilt of original sin is remitted... let him be anathema” (Decree Concerning Original Sin, para.5). “If anyone saith that baptism is... not necessary unto salvation; let him be anathema” (Decree on the Sacraments: On Baptism, Canon 5). “If anyone saith that little children, for that they have not actual faith, are not, after having received baptism, to be reckoned amongst the faithful... let him be anathema” (Decree on the Sacraments: on Baptism, Canon 13).<sup>15</sup>

And Rome's official Code of Canon Law states: “Baptism... is *necessary for salvation*.... By it people are freed from sins, are *born again* as children of God...” (Canon 849).<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*, pp.19,63,65.

<sup>16</sup> *The Code of Canon Law*, by the Canon Law Society of Great Britain and Ireland, p.158. Collins Liturgical Publications, London, UK, 1983. Imprimatur: George Basil Hume, Roman Catholic Cardinal Archbishop of Westminster.

“Baptismal regeneration” is the official doctrine of the “Church” of Rome, and it is a diabolical, soul-damning heresy! It causes the one so baptized to trust in his baptism, not in Christ. Regeneration, or the new birth, is the work of the Holy Spirit alone; it cannot be brought about by the application of a few drops of water to a person's head. Jesus said, “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit”; and, “The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit” (Jn. 3:6,8). All the elect of God are regenerated by the Holy Spirit in His appointed time; and it is a secret work of the Spirit, who blows where He wills, unseen by men. In regeneration the Spirit gives life to the soul; He gives a person a new heart; and that person then repents, and believes on Christ for salvation.

It is true that Jesus said, when talking of these things, “Except a man be born of *water* and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God” (Jn. 3:5); but the entire context shows that the “water” He spoke of was not to be taken literally. The “water” here symbolises the spiritual cleansing that is conveyed through the Word of God, as the *instrument* the Holy Spirit uses in regeneration. This is clear from a comparison of these words with other parts of Scripture, such as Jn. 15:3, Eph. 5:26, 1 Cor. 4:15, Jas. 1:18, and 1 Pet. 1:23.

Now, certain so-called “Protestant” denominations, notably the Anglican and Lutheran (although Anglicanism does not always call itself Protestant), actually retain the soul-damning Popish heresy of baptismal regeneration! Take note of the words of the Anglican priest, spoken when he “baptizes” an infant: “Dearly beloved, forasmuch as all men are conceived and born in sin, and that... none can enter into the kingdom of God, except he be regenerate and born anew of Water and of the Holy Ghost: I beseech you to call upon God the Father... that... he will grant to this Child that thing which by nature he cannot have; that *he may be baptized with*

*Water and the Holy Ghost*, and received into Christ's holy Church, and be made a lively member of the same.” And in prayer, the priest says: “We call upon thee for this Infant, that he, *coming to thy holy Baptism, may receive remission of his sins by spiritual regeneration.*” And afterwards the priest says: “Seeing now, dearly beloved brethren, that *this Child is regenerate* and grafted into the body of Christ's Church...”<sup>17</sup>

Now it is possible for one to carefully interpret these words to mean that regeneration is spiritual, and not brought about by the act of baptism itself, but rather brought about by the Holy Spirit at the very *moment* of baptism; and indeed this appears to be how many men who were associated with the Anglican institution in times past chose to interpret them. It is still utterly false doctrine to assume that a child, at the moment of baptism, is spiritually regenerated; but my point here is simply that they understood that regeneration is *spiritual*, and not brought about by the water itself. But be that as it may, the language is such that vast numbers of people have been completely misled by statements such as these, and have believed, as they watched a “baptism”, that what the Anglican priest was in fact stating, as he baptized the child, was that the child was born again *by* the act of baptism itself! Indeed, this is precisely what vast numbers of Anglican priests have really meant by these words! The doctrine is so close to the Popish one that multitudes of Anglicans have given a Popish interpretation to the words, and have believed in “baptismal regeneration” as a result.

But it gets much worse than this! It is possible to give a different interpretation to the above words *if* one is very careful; but there can be absolutely no mistaking the meaning

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<sup>17</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacraments, and Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church According to the Use of the Church of England*, pp.148,149,152. Cambridge, London, UK.

of the *following* words: in the catechism, to be learned before one is “confirmed” (another Popish trapping itself!), the priest asks who gave the young person his name; to which the reply is, “My Godfathers and Godmothers in my baptism, *wherein* I was made a member of Christ, the child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven”! And later, when asked how many “sacraments” there are, the reply is: “Two only, as generally *necessary to salvation*; that is to say, Baptism, and the Supper of the Lord”! <sup>18</sup> This is nothing but the soul-damning Romish heresy of “baptismal regeneration” – proclaimed by a so-called “Protestant” church!

Very true are the words of John Gill on this point: “and this pernicious notion still continues, this old leaven yet remains even in some *Protestant* churches, who have retained it from *Rome*; hence a child when baptized is declared to be regenerate; and it is taught, when capable of being catechized to say, that in its baptism it was made a child of God, a member of Christ, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven, which has a tendency to take off all concern, in persons when grown up, about an inward work of grace, in regeneration and sanctification, as a meetness for heaven, and to encourage a presumption in them, notwithstanding their apparent want of grace, that they are members of Christ, and shall never perish; are children and heirs of God, and shall certainly inherit eternal life. Wherefore Dr. [John] Owen rightly observes ‘That the father of lies himself could not easily have devised a doctrine more pernicious, or what proposes a more present and effectual poison to the minds of sinners to be drank in by them.’ ” <sup>19</sup> Indeed, considering the eternal consequences for so many multitudes who have dropped into hell trusting in their “baptism” instead of in Christ, we can easily discern the hand of Satan in the creation and promotion of this evil doctrine.

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<sup>18</sup> *The Book of Common Prayer*, pp.164,166-7.

<sup>19</sup> *Infant-Baptism: a Part and Pillar of Popery*, p.19.

C.H. Spurgeon contended against this Romish trapping in a sermon he preached in 1864 entitled “Baptismal Regeneration.” How true are his words: “I am not aware that any Protestant Church in England teaches the doctrine of baptismal regeneration except one, and that happens to be the corporation which with none too much humility calls itself *the* Church of England. This very powerful sect does not teach this doctrine merely through a section of its ministers, who might charitably be considered as evil branches of the vine, but it openly, boldly, and plainly declares this doctrine in her own appointed standard, the Book of Common Prayer, and that in words so express, that while language is the channel of conveying intelligible sense, no process short of violent wresting from their plain meaning can ever make them say anything else.”<sup>20</sup> And he then went on to quote from the Anglican Catechism the words given above.

In the same sermon he went on to make the following powerful point; and it serves to support most fully the assertion of the present treatise, that infant “baptism” is a part and pillar of Popery: “It is a most fearful fact, that *in no age since the Reformation has Popery made such fearful strides in England as during the last few years*. I had comfortably believed that Popery was only feeding itself upon foreign subscriptions, upon a few titled perverts, and imported monks and nuns. I dreamed that its progress was not real. In fact, I have often smiled at the alarm of many of my brethren at the progress of Popery. But, my dear friends, we have been mistaken, grievously mistaken.... This great city [London] is now covered with a network of monks, and priests, and sisters of mercy, and the conversions made are not by ones or twos, but by scores, till England is being regarded as the most hopeful spot for Romish missionary enterprise in the whole world.... Popery is making advances such as you would never believe, though

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<sup>20</sup> *Baptismal Regeneration*, by C.H. Spurgeon, p.315. Pilgrim Publications, Pasadena, Texas, USA, 1975. Originally published by the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit, 1864.

a spectator should tell it to you. Close to your very doors, perhaps even in your own houses, you may have evidence ere long of what a march Romanism is making. And to what is it to be ascribed? I say, with every ground of probability, that there is no marvel that Popery should increase when you have two things to make it grow: first of all, the falsehood of those who profess a faith which they do not believe, which is quite contrary to the honesty of the Romanist, who does through evil report and good report hold his faith; and then you have, secondly, this form of error known as baptismal regeneration, and commonly called Puseyism, which is not only Puseyism, but Church-of-Englandism, because it is in the Prayer Book, as plainly as words can express it – you have this baptismal regeneration preparing stepping stones to make it easy for men to go to Rome. I have but to open my eyes a little to foresee Romanism rampant everywhere in the future, since its germs are spreading everywhere in the present. In one of our courts of legislature but last Tuesday, the Lord Chief Justice showed his superstition, by speaking of ‘the risk of the calamity of children dying unbaptized!’ Among Dissenters you see a veneration for structures, a modified belief in the sacredness of places, which is all idolatry; for to believe in the sacredness of anything but of God and of his own Word, is to idolize, whether it is to believe in the sacredness of the men, the priests, or in the sacredness of the bricks and mortar, or of the fine linen, or what not, which you may use in the worship of God. I see this coming up everywhere – a belief in ceremony, a resting in ceremony, a veneration for altars, fonts, and Churches – a veneration so profound that we must not venture upon a remark, or straightway of sinners we are chief. Here is the essence and soul of Popery, peeping up under the garb of a decent respect for sacred things. It is impossible but that the Church of Rome must spread, when we who are the watch-dogs of the fold are silent, and others are gently and smoothly turving the road, and making it as soft and smooth as possible, that converts may travel down

to the nethermost hell of Popery.... The velvet has got into our ministers' mouths of late, but we must unrobe ourselves of soft raiment, and truth must be spoken, and nothing but truth; for of all lies which have dragged millions down to hell, I look upon this as being one of the most atrocious – that in a Protestant Church there should be found those who swear that baptism saves the soul. Call a man a Baptist, or a Presbyterian, or a Dissenter, or a Churchman, that is nothing to me – if he says that baptism saves the soul, out upon him, out upon him, he states what God never taught, what the Bible never laid down, and what ought never to be maintained by men who profess that the Bible, and the whole Bible, is the religion of Protestants.”<sup>21</sup>

What Spurgeon feared in his day has indeed come to pass: Popery has continued to make giant advances in England. And there can be no doubt whatsoever that the evil, soul-destroying heresy of “baptismal regeneration”, taught in a church falsely called “Protestant”, has been a chief instrument in the hands of the devil by which the religion of Antichrist has made such progress.

Thus does the so-called “Church of England” deceive its members into trusting in their infant sprinkling, believing that this was when they were born again!

But if Anglicanism is bad, Lutheranism is (if possible) even worse! For it is even more blatant. The Lutheran Augsburg Confession of Faith, as well as Luther's own Small and Large Catechisms, leave one in no doubt: “Moreover, this inborn sickness and hereditary sin is truly sin and condemns to the eternal wrath of God all those who are not *born again through Baptism* and the Holy Spirit.”<sup>22</sup> “What gifts or benefits does Baptism bestow? It works forgiveness of sins, delivers from

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<sup>21</sup> *Baptismal Regeneration*, pp.322,323.

<sup>22</sup> *The Augsburg Confession*, Article 2, p.7. Reprinted from *The Book of Concord*, Muhlenberg Press, 1959.

death and the devil, and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe”.<sup>23</sup> “Therefore... the power, the effect, the benefit, the fruit and the purpose of Baptism is to save”.<sup>24</sup> “It is taught among us that Baptism is *necessary* and that grace is offered through it. Children, too, should be baptized, for in Baptism they are committed to God and become *acceptable* to Him.”<sup>25</sup>

Could language be more plain than this? The Lutherans retained the terrible heresy of baptismal regeneration from Rome. Despite being so revered by so many Protestants, Martin Luther himself held to *Roman Catholic doctrine* regarding such essential doctrines as regeneration and salvation! He declared that when (according to him) the devil assailed him, he would answer, “I am baptized.”<sup>26</sup> And how was Luther “baptized”? As an infant, and as a Papist! He looked not to Christ, but to his Roman Catholic infant “baptism”. And there is other evidence, in his own writings, to show that he was a Papist at heart when it came to this doctrine, and yet Protestants choose to ignore it because they cannot bear to see one of their Protestant idols fall off his pedestal.

In my tract entitled *Born Again Through Baptism? The Lutheran Teaching Compared with the Bible*, I wrote: “And thus Luther erred greatly and tragically in his understanding of the new birth; and his followers have done so as well, to the awful detriment of their eternal souls. Like Luther himself, their faith is in their baptism, and not truly in Christ. They have believed a false ‘gospel.’ ”<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> *Luther's Small Catechism*.

<sup>24</sup> *Luther's Large Catechism*.

<sup>25</sup> *The Augsburg Confession*, Article 9, p.9.

<sup>26</sup> *Here I Stand*, by Roland Bainton, p.367. Lion Publishing, Tring, Herts., England, 1987.

<sup>27</sup> *Born Again Through Baptism? The Lutheran Teaching Compared with the Bible*, by Shaun Willcock (tract). Bible Based Ministries, South Africa. Distributed by Contending for the Faith Ministries, 42055 Crestland Drive, Lancaster, California 93536, USA.



Baptismal regeneration is a Romish trapping, and a damnable heresy. No true Christian holds to such a satanic lie; but there are institutions calling themselves Protestant churches which firmly hold to it, thus revealing that they are harlot daughters of their harlot mother, and not true Christian churches. And although no true Christian believes such a lie as baptismal regeneration, sadly there are true Christians who persist in treating Anglicanism and Lutheranism as soundly Protestant and Christian churches. It is high time for this terrible error to cease, and for Christians to preach against these harlot daughters as vehemently as against their mother!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Six:

# Repetitive Prayer; Prayer by Rote

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To pray by rote means to pray in a mechanical manner, by routine, rattling off from memory without proper understanding. The Lord Jesus condemned all such vain repetitions in prayer when He said: “But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking. Be not ye therefore like unto them” (Matt. 6:7,8). This does not mean that Christians must never repeat themselves in their prayers. They certainly may repeat their requests! In fact, we see the Lord Jesus doing so Himself, in Matt. 26:39,42,44; and Paul in 2 Cor. 12:8. We may pray many times about the same matter; but praying mechanically, using *precisely the same words* over and over, words committed to memory, or taken from a book of prayers, and repeated parrot-fashion like some kind of supposedly magic formula – this was indeed the way the heathen prayed to their gods; and it still is. And the Papists, ever willing to ape the heathen in everything, adopted the same method of praying. In direct and blatant contradiction of the words of the Lord Jesus, they brought various repetitive, mechanical prayers into their worship. Like parrots, they learn to repeat prayers by rote, but there is absolutely nothing in this kind of prayer of true spiritual worship, nor indeed can there be; for the Lord forbade this kind of praying, and besides, the Papists are themselves as lost and dead in their sins as the heathen whose method of praying they copied.

Roman Catholics, as is well known, make much use of the rosary in their prayers. The rosary is a string of “prayer beads”, held in their hands by Papists who use them to

assist their memories, to count their prayers, as they recite, mechanically and repetitively, the prayers of the rosary: a form of prayer to Mary, whom of course they worship. Over and over they repeat the same words. A greater violation of our Lord's prohibition of vain repetitions in prayer can hardly be imagined! And as the Lord Jesus said, this was the way the heathen prayed; and indeed, the rosary was not invented by the Papists, but is much, much older than Popery. As documented by Alexander Hislop in his monumental work, *The Two Babylons*:

“Every one knows how thoroughly Romanist is the use of the rosary; and how the devotees of Rome mechanically tell their prayers upon their beads. The rosary, however, is no invention of the Papacy. It is of the highest antiquity, and almost universally found among Pagan nations. The rosary was used as a sacred instrument among the ancient Mexicans. It is commonly employed among the Brahmins of Hindustan; and in the Hindoo sacred books reference is made to it again and again.... In Thibet it has been used from time immemorial, and among all the millions in the East that adhere to the Buddhist faith.... In Asiatic Greece the rosary was commonly used, as may be seen from the image of the Ephesian Diana. In Pagan Rome the same appears to have been the case.... Now, whatever might be the pretence, in the first instance, for the introduction of such ‘Rosaries’ or ‘Remembrancers,’ the very idea of such a thing is thoroughly Pagan.”<sup>28</sup>

In fact, the heathen origin of the rosary is so well-established that even the Catholic Encyclopaedia admits that Rome's own version of its origin is fraudulent! According to legend, in the thirteenth century Mary appeared to the Roman Catholic “saint”, Dominic, and gave him the rosary, and told him to preach about it. The Catholic Encyclopaedia admits this apparition was fraudulent— it was exposed as such

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<sup>28</sup> *The Two Babylons*, by Alexander Hislop, pp.187-8. Loizeaux Brothers, Neptune, New Jersey, USA, 1959. First published in Edinburgh in 1853.

by a famous Jesuit scholar, one of Rome's own children!<sup>29</sup> – and according to ex-priest Peter J. Doeswyck, the fraud was perpetrated by a Dominican named Alain de Rupe in the fifteenth century, who falsely attributed its origin to Dominic in the thirteenth century.<sup>30</sup> It may, however, have been introduced earlier than this, by one Peter the Hermit, in the year 1090.<sup>31</sup> Either way, its origin was in heathenism.

But the rosary is not the only repetitive prayer used by Roman Catholics. The prayer known as the “Lord’s prayer” is also prayed by them in this mechanical, repetitive fashion! Jesus taught, in Matt. 6:9 and the verses following, “After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.” This prayer is commonly known as the Lord’s prayer. But the Lord was *not* teaching men to pray the very words of this prayer, over and over, mechanically and lifelessly! He was merely giving an *outline* of what true prayer should consist of! “*After this manner* therefore pray ye.” The Roman Catholics, however, turned this *example* of what true prayer should consist of, into a *prayer in itself*, to be prayed repetitively.

And this method of praying is used even by many *Protestants*! It is yet another Romish trapping which they have retained. Many Protestants would read the words of Matt. 6:7 and say to themselves, “Thanks be to God, He has opened our eyes to see the vanity and sinfulness of such empty, repetitive prayers. We are not like the heathen and the Papists; we don’t use vain repetitions by praying the rosary.” It is true enough that they do not pray the rosary; but they do not perceive that whenever they repeat the ‘Lord’s prayer’, or any other prayer from a prayer book or anywhere else, they

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<sup>29</sup> *The Catholic Encyclopaedia*, Vol. 13, p.186.

<sup>30</sup> *Ex-Priest Answers Attack by Roman Clergy*, by Peter J. Doeswyck, p.34. Knights of Christ, Inc., Long Beach, California, USA, 1956.

<sup>31</sup> *Christ or Anti-Christ? Facts for Enquirers* (tract). Westminster Standard, Gisborne, New Zealand.

are *as* guilty of using vain repetition as any blinded Papist!

For the plain truth of the matter is that there are more ways to use vain repetitions in prayer, as the heathen do, than simply praying the rosary! In many Protestant churches, the “Lord’s prayer” is recited by the entire congregation, at a given point in the service, every Sunday. And many others recite it regularly in private as well. This is NOT how true Christians ought to pray! The Lord’s people are to offer up *spiritual* prayer to the Father: no other prayer is acceptable to Him. “But the hour cometh, and now is,” Jesus said, “when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth” (Jn. 4:23,24). *True* prayer is in spirit and in truth. The Bible is full of teaching about prayer; but not once in all its pages are we taught to pray repetitively; to pray by rote; to merely repeat words which are found in a “prayer book”, or anywhere else. When we pray, it must come from the *heart*, in our own words. In prayer, we must *converse* with our heavenly Father. A child does not speak to his father in words which he has memorised from a book, but in his own words, coming from the heart. And this is how we are to speak in prayer to the Father. Anything other than this is nothing but vain and heathenish repetition.

As that favoured servant of God, John Bunyan, put it, “He that hath his understanding well exercised, to discern between good and evil, and in it placed a sense either of the misery of man, or the mercy of God; that soul hath no need of the writings of other men to teach him by forms of prayer. For as he that feels the pain needs not to be learned [taught] to cry O! even so he that hath his understanding opened by the Spirit needs not so to be taught of other men’s prayers, as that he cannot pray without them.”<sup>32</sup> And: “It is an easy thing for

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<sup>32</sup> *The Works of John Bunyan*, Vol.1, p.633, “A Discourse Touching Prayer.” The Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, UK, 1991. Reprinted from the edition of 1854.

men to be very hot for such things as forms of prayer, as they are written in a book; but yet they are altogether forgetful to inquire with themselves, whether they have the spirit and power of prayer. These men are like a painted man, and their prayers like a false voice. They in person appear as hypocrites, and their prayers are an abomination. Pr. 28:9. When they say they have been pouring out their souls to God he saith they have been howling like dogs. Ho. 7:14.”<sup>33</sup>

And many Christian parents have fallen into the error (for error it most certainly is!) of teaching their *children to repeat certain prayers by rote!* They mistakenly assume that in this way, their children will learn to pray. Nothing could be further from the truth. Christian parent, I must speak plainly, for the sake of the never-dying soul of your child: if you are doing this, you are doing wrong, and acting foolishly. For one thing, you are causing your child to violate the commandment of the Lord in Matt. 6:7. When you get your child to kneel down by his bed, before going to sleep, and to “say his prayers” by repeating some so-called “children’s prayer”, or even the “Lord’s prayer”, you are causing him to use vain repetitions. And for another thing, this gives your children a false sense of assurance – and this is such a dangerous thing! When a child is thus taught that his prayers are acceptable to the Lord, even though the Lord has not yet saved him from his sins, and he is still unconverted, it removes any sense of urgency about calling upon the Lord *himself* for salvation, *from the heart*. He is lulled into a false sense of security about the state of his own soul, for if he is taught to believe that the Lord already hears and answers his prayers even though he is not converted, then what urgency is there, and what necessity, of turning from his sins?

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<sup>33</sup> *The Works of John Bunyan*, Vol.1, p.637.

Listen to John Bunyan: “My judgment is, that men go the wrong way to learn [teach] their children to pray, in going about so soon to learn them any set company of words, as is the common use of poor creatures to do. For to me it seems to be a better way for people betimes to tell their children what cursed creatures they are, and how they are under the wrath of God by reason of original and actual sin; also to tell them the nature of God's wrath, and the duration of the misery; which if they conscientiously do, they would sooner learn their children to pray than they do. The way that men learn to pray, it is by conviction for sin, and this is the way to make our sweet babes do so too. But the other way, namely, to be busy in learning children forms of prayer, before they know any thing else, it is the next way to make them cursed hypocrites, and to puff them up with pride. Learn therefore your children to know their wretched state and condition; tell them of hell-fire and their sins, of damnation, and salvation; the way to escape the one, and to enjoy the other, if you know it yourselves, and this will make tears run down your sweet babes’ eyes, and hearty groans flow from their hearts; and then also you may tell them to whom they should pray, and through whom they should pray: you may tell them also of God's promises, and his former grace extended to sinners, according to the word.

“Ah! poor sweet babes, the Lord open their eyes, and make them holy Christians. Saith David, ‘Come, ye children, hearken unto me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord.’ Ps. 34:11. He doth not say, I will muzzle you up in a form of prayer; but ‘I will teach you the fear of the Lord;’ which is, to see their sad states by nature, and to be instructed in the truth of the gospel, which doth through the Spirit beget prayer in every one that in truth learns it. And the more you learn them this, the more will their hearts run out to God in prayer. God never did account Paul a praying man, until he was a convinced and converted man; no more will it be with any

else. Acts 9:11.”<sup>34</sup>

“Come out of her, my people,” means that Christians must come out of all the trappings of the harlot religion. Using vain repetitions, as the heathen do, or teaching children to do so, are Popish trappings indeed, to be utterly forsaken by all who know and love the Lord Jesus Christ.

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

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<sup>34</sup> *The Works of John Bunyan*, Vol.1, p.635.



## Chapter Seven:

# The Image of the Cross, and the Sign of the Cross

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The cross was an instrument of punishment used by the Romans. The Lord Jesus Christ was crucified; He died upon a cross of wood. And so, when preaching the Gospel, we preach about the crucifixion, and this is called in Scripture “the preaching of the cross” (1 Cor. 1:18), for it is the preaching of salvation by Christ who was crucified. As believers, we also “suffer persecution for the cross of Christ” (Gal. 6:12); and this means we suffer persecution for believing in and preaching the doctrine of salvation by Christ’s work upon the cross, in dying for His people. He has “made peace through the blood of his cross” (Col. 1:20). We must indeed *glory* in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ (Gal. 6:14); but this means we must glory in the *Gospel of salvation* by His death for us on the cross, and glory in *Christ Himself*, who died on the cross for His elect. It does *not* mean we are to glory in the *wood* on which Christ was crucified! This is made clear by Gal. 6:14; for after writing, “But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ”, Paul adds, “by *whom* [not “by *which*”] the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world.” Whenever we are directed to “the cross of Christ” in the doctrinal portions of the New Testament, we are directed to the *doctrine* of salvation by Christ crucified, and to the Lord Christ Himself, who died upon a cross for His chosen people. We are *not* directed to any superstitious reverence for the cross of wood itself!

And yet this superstitious reverence is precisely what the Roman Catholics have made of the actual cross itself, and tragically they have once again been copied by many who go by the name of Protestants. Millions of people the world

over wear ornamental crosses around their necks, either with or without an image of a crucified man on them; countless numbers of church buildings around the world have a cross prominently displayed; crosses are featured on gravestones, and in all kinds of other places; and furthermore, the sign of the cross is made on the foreheads of infants during “infant baptism” ceremonies, it is made in the air at the close of services, it is made at all kinds of other times. And all of this is justified by saying that Christ died upon the cross, and that the cross is the symbol of Christianity. *Not*, let it be said again, by Papists only, but by millions calling themselves Protestants!

Why this use of ornamental crosses, and of the sign of the cross? It is yet another trapping of the Papal system. The use of the cross, and of the sign of the cross, is a part of Popish worship, and the Papists took it from heathenism; and no true Christian should ever make use of this symbol! We who worship God in spirit and in truth have no need of symbols.

Alexander Hislop, in *The Two Babylons*, gives us much detail about this Roman Catholic symbol:

“In the Papal system, as is well known, the sign of the cross and the image of the cross are all in all. No prayer can be said, no worship engaged in, no step almost can be taken, without the frequent use of the sign of the cross. The cross is looked upon as the grand charm, as the great refuge in every season of danger, in every hour of temptation as the infallible preservative from all the powers of darkness. The cross is adored with all the homage due only to the Most High; and for any one to call it, in the hearing of a genuine Romanist, by the Scriptural term, ‘the accursed tree’ is a mortal offence. To say that such superstitious feeling for the sign of the cross, such worship as Rome pays to a wooden or a metal cross, ever grew out of the saying of Paul, ‘God forbid that I should glory,

save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ' – that is, in the doctrine of Christ crucified – is a mere absurdity, a shallow subterfuge and pretence. The magic virtues attributed to the so-called sign of the cross, the worship bestowed on it, never came from such a source. The same sign of the cross that Rome now worships was used in the Babylonian Mysteries, was applied by Paganism to the same magic purposes, was honoured with the same honours. That which is now called the Christian cross was originally no Christian emblem at all, but was the mystic Tau of the Chaldeans and Egyptians – the true original form of the letter T – the initial of the name of Tammuz.... That mystic Tau was marked in baptism on the foreheads of those initiated in the Mysteries, and was used in every variety of way as a most sacred symbol.... The mystic Tau, as the symbol of the great divinity, was called 'the sign of life;' it was used as an amulet over the heart; it was marked on the official garments of the priests, as on the official garments of the priests of Rome; it was borne by kings in their hand, as a token of their dignity or divinely-conferred authority. The Vestal virgins of Pagan Rome wore it suspended from their necklaces, as the nuns do now. The Egyptians did the same, and many of the barbarous nations with whom they had intercourse, as the Egyptian monuments bear witness."<sup>35</sup>

The cross as a symbol was already in use in Egypt as early as the fifteenth century B.C!<sup>36</sup> In Europe, the ease with which it was accepted as the major symbol of "Christianity" (not true Christianity, but Romanism) owed much to the fact that it had already been a potent religious symbol within European paganism for several millennia.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> *The Two Babylons*, pp.197-8.

<sup>36</sup> *Egyptians*, Vol.1, by Sir G. Wilkinson, p.376. London, 1837-41.

<sup>37</sup> *The Sun Gods of Ancient Europe*, by Miranda Green; see *Journal of Art*, November 1991.

As Hislop states, “There is hardly a Pagan tribe where the cross has not been found” – centuries before Christ. It was worshipped in the religion of the ancient Celts, and in the religion of ancient Mexico – long before Roman Catholic missionaries ever reached that country; it was regarded as a sacred emblem, in ancient Babylon; it was revered among the Buddhists; etc., etc.<sup>38</sup>

Certainly the early Christians did not make any use of the sign of the cross. There is not a word about it in the New Testament; and the history of early Christianity contains no use of it either.

It appears that this pagan symbol of the cross was first brought into a so-called “church” in Egypt. The earliest form of what has been called the cross, which was used on monuments of people who claimed to be Christians in Egypt, was the pagan Tau, also known as the Egyptian “Sign of Life”: a symbol closely associated with the Egyptian deity Osiris and indeed with all the gods of Egypt! And the reason it was used on the sepulchres of Egyptian “Christians” was that these people had not been truly converted, but although they had the *name* of “Christians”, they continued to be devoted to the ancient paganism.<sup>39</sup>

The use of the sign of the cross in the false “Church” was given a great boost when the Roman emperor Constantine, after his conversion to the “Catholic” faith in the early fourth century AD, had this sign placed on the shields of the Roman troops, after claiming to have seen it in a vision.<sup>40</sup> Constantine made the “Catholic Church” the State Religion of the Roman Empire, and the sign of the cross became one of

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38 *The Two Babylons*, pp.199,200.

39 *The Two Babylons*, p.201.

40 *Constantine the Great*, by John Holland Smith, p.102. Hamish Hamilton, London, UK, 1971.

the most important symbols of this religion. It has remained so to this day.

In the Roman Catholic “Office of the Cross”, the cross is actually *worshipped* with the following words: “Hail, O Cross, triumphal wood, true salvation of the world, among trees there is none like thee in leaf, flower, and bud.... O Cross, our only hope, increase righteousness to the godly and pardon the offences of the guilty.”<sup>41</sup> Thus is the blessed Redeemer, Jesus Christ, pushed aside, and the cross of wood worshipped in His place as the Redeemer and Saviour! What vile blasphemy!

And yet, this very idolatry, the worship of wood, was carried over into a so-called “Protestant” church! – the “Church of England”, that daughter harlot of the Mother Whore. False, Romanizing ministers within the Anglican institution, seeking to move that institution ever closer to Rome, published a book entitled *Devotions on the Passion*, in the nineteenth century, in which was contained the following:

“O faithful cross, thou peerless tree,  
No forest yields the like of thee,  
Leaf, flower, and bud;  
Sweet is the wood, and sweet the weight,  
And sweet the nails that penetrate  
Thee, thou sweet wood.”<sup>42</sup>

Who can deny that these wicked men made direct use of the Papist “Office of the Cross” in composing this verse?

The sign of the cross is used in the baptismal service of the Anglican institution. In 1603, justification for using this sign

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<sup>41</sup> *The Two Babylons*, p.200.

<sup>42</sup> *Devotions on the Passion*, as quoted in the *London Record*, April 1842.

was given, and it was stated that “a reverend estimation” for the sign of the cross existed “even in the Apostles’ times”<sup>43</sup> – a statement utterly without scriptural support!

But let it not be thought that those within the Anglican institution are the only ones, going by the name of Protestants, who make use of this symbol. It may only be Anglicans and a few others who make use of the *sign* of the cross; but *many* Protestants, of various denominations, even those who may be considered soundly evangelical in other ways, make use of the *image* of the cross! As pointed out earlier, it is visible around the necks of many who would pride themselves on being free of Romish superstition, and it adorns their places of worship, and the walls of their homes. My brethren, this should not be! Forsake it for what it is, flee from it!

You may protest that you do not worship the cross, as the Papists do; but nevertheless you are holding on to a symbol of heathenism and a trapping of Popery, which has absolutely nothing to do with worship in spirit and in truth. You would not have within your home a Hindu idol, even though you do not prostrate yourself before it as the benighted Hindu does; you would not argue that it is to you merely a piece of art, and therefore, because you enjoy it for a different reason than the Hindu does, you keep it on your mantelpiece! You would not argue this way. Well then, how can you dare to keep upon your person, or in your house, or anywhere else, an idol of ancient heathenism and an idol of Rome? For this is precisely what the image of the cross is. Our Lord was crucified, yes, but this does not make the cross any less heathen, or any less idolatrous! It is most certainly *not* a Christian symbol. We have no need of symbols, as believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. “Come out” of this trapping of Popery no less than all the rest, and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing!

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<sup>43</sup> *The Cross: Its History, Meaning, and Use*, by Baron Porcelli, p.2. The Protestant Truth Society, London, UK.

## *The Image of the Cross, and the Sign of the Cross*

The image of the cross, and the sign of the cross, are unclean things. Have nothing to do with them.

### **The Cross-Wearer**

I am crucified with Christ –  
With Him nailed upon the tree:  
Not the cross, then, do I bear,  
But the cross it beareth me:  
Solemn cross on which I died,  
One with Him, the Crucified.

Shall I take that blood-stained cross,  
Cross of agony and shame,  
Cross of Him who fought my fight,  
Cross of Him who overcame?  
Shall I deck myself with thee,  
Awful cross of Calvary?

Shall I drag thee through the crowd,  
'Mid the laughter that is there;  
Whirl thee through the giddy waltz,  
Bound upon my neck or hair?  
Awful cross of Calvary,  
Shall I deck myself with thee?

Shall I make that lowly cross  
Minister of woman's pride;  
Drawing eyes to me that should  
Fix upon the Crucified?  
Awful cross at Calvary,  
Shall I deck myself with thee?

## *Trappings of Popery*

Shall I call this glittering gem,  
Made for show and vanity;  
Shall I call this gaud a cross –  
Cross of Him who died for me?  
Shall I deck myself with thee,  
Awful cross of Calvary?

Cross of man's device I turn  
From thee to Himself, my Lord;  
What can this symbolic gem  
Do for me? – what peace afford?  
Shall I deck myself with thee,  
Awful cross of Calvary?

I am crucified with Christ,  
Yet I live through Him who died;  
Shall that cross of blood and woe  
Minister to human pride?  
Shall I deck myself with thee,  
Awful cross of Calvary?

– *Unknown*<sup>44</sup>

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

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<sup>44</sup> *The Reformer*, July–August 2002. The Protestant Alliance, Bedford, UK.



# Chapter Eight:

## Popish Festivals

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It is astounding how many Popish festivals and “holy days” are an accepted and never-questioned part of the lives of the vast majority of those today who would call themselves Protestants and Bible-believing Christians, and how powerful an influence these things have upon them. So powerful, in fact, that even to dare to expose such festivals as Christmas and Easter for what they really are is considered in most circles to be tantamount to heresy, and a denial of the birth, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ! But God’s own Word, as well as the records of history, prove beyond all doubt that these “days” are of heathen and Popish origin, and that they should therefore be shunned by all believers and all Christian churches, as being no part of true biblical worship whatsoever.

Consider, first of all, those two great trappings of Popery, the festivals of Christmas and Easter; the most popular festivals on earth. In my book, *The Pagan Festivals of Christmas and Easter*, I have gone into much detail about the Babylonian and Popish origins of these festivals, and thus I will not do so again here. There is far too much information to be compressed into this short section on these Roman Catholic festivals. The reader is however urged to carefully study the biblical and historical evidence.<sup>45</sup> Suffice it to say,

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<sup>45</sup> *The Pagan Festivals of Christmas and Easter*, by Shaun Willcock. Bible Based Ministries, South Africa, 1996. Distributed by Contending for the Faith Ministries, 42055 Crestland Drive, Lancaster, California 93536, USA.

here, that any Christian who is observing these festivals is celebrating, *not* the birth, death and resurrection of Christ, but the supposed birth, death and resurrection of the ancient heathen sun-god! For many centuries ago the false “Church” of Rome took these ancient heathen festivals and simply worked them over, giving them the superficial appearance of being “Christian” festivals, renaming the ancient pagan deities as “Mary” and the “Christ-child”, and retaining all the ritual and paraphernalia that had been part and parcel of the revolting heathen sacrificial system that had its origins in Babylon not long after the Flood, many centuries before the Lord Jesus Christ was manifest in the flesh. Even the true events of our Saviour's birth, death and resurrection were distorted to make them fit the pagan festivities.

The very *names* of these festivals give the game away, for those prepared to look behind the facade. For what is Christmas but “Christ-mass”, or the mass of Christ, so named after the central idolatry and blasphemy of Roman Catholic worship: the so-called “sacrifice” of the mass? “Then look at Easter. What means the term Easter itself? It is not a Christian name. It bears its Chaldean origin on its very forehead. Easter is nothing else than Astarte, one of the titles of Beltis, the queen of heaven, whose name, as pronounced by the people of Nineveh, was evidently identical with that now in common use in this country. That name... is Ishtar”.<sup>46</sup> The word “Easter” is simply the anglicised form of “Ishtar.”

Christmas and Easter have absolutely nothing to do with the true Christ of God. And yet many millions of Protestants readily observe these Romish festivals, while at the same time condemning Popery. This is to speak with a forked tongue indeed! You cannot condemn Popery, and yet keep the Popish festivals in honour of their false “christ”!

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<sup>46</sup> *The Two Babylons*, p.103.

But Christmas and Easter are not the only Roman Catholic “days” which are observed by Protestants. There are a number of others. Again, space does not permit a detailed examination of all of them; but here is a brief summary.

There is the increasingly popular “Valentine's Day”, held every February 14th. This is said to be the day of romance and love. But what is it really? It is nothing less than the ancient heathen Roman festival called the Lupercalia, dressed up (like Christmas and Easter) to appear to be “christianized”. The Romans celebrated this festival, beginning on the eve of February 14th, in honour of the goddess of sexual love, Venus, and they observed it as a *lovers' festival*! It was a time of sexual immorality and lust (and nothing has changed – it still is!). The supposed son of Venus, called “Cupid”, was said to blindly shoot arrows at the hearts of people. And this Roman god Cupid was no other than the Greek god Eros. Eros was the god of sexual love, as seen even in the related word “erotic.”

And in the year 496 AD, the pope, Gelasius, “catholicized” the festival and renamed it “St. Valentine's Day”, after a priest of Rome of that name in the third century! As Valentine had performed marriages secretly, against the edict of the emperor, his name was considered the perfect choice by the pope for this day dedicated to sex!<sup>47</sup>

Thus, once again, a heathen festival became part of “Catholic” worship; and from Rome it has slipped into the lives of many calling themselves “Protestants” as well. And to this day, it retains all the heathen trappings: Cupid, hearts, the

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<sup>47</sup> *Valentine's Day*, by Shaun Willcock (audio tape). Recorded in 1994. Distributed by Contending for the Faith Ministries, Lancaster, California, USA. Also *Holidays: Christian or Pagan*, by Milton Martin (tract), Christian Truth and Victory Publications, Fridley, Minnesota, USA; *Pilgrim Pathway*, January–February 1993, Vol.10, No.1, Pilgrim Brethren Press, Petersburg, Ohio, USA; and *The Two Babylons*, p.189.

date (February 14th), sexual immorality, etc. True Christians should have nothing to do with “Valentine's Day”!

Then there is that Satanist high day that is intertwined with a Roman Catholic festival: the dark and demonic festival of Halloween. In reality of course, *all* these festivals are of the devil, for they all have their roots in the devil's religion; but Halloween is so obviously demonic that it is a wonder any who call themselves Christians have anything to do with it. And yet they do! – thereby showing their blind ignorance of the Gospel of Christ, regardless of the claims they make about themselves.

This festival, under another name, was celebrated by the pagan Druids, those powerful Celtic priest-wizards of ancient times. They practiced human sacrifice and other abominations, and October 31st was their festival of Samhain, the sun god and lord of the dead.<sup>48</sup> They believed that on that day, the dead left their graves and wandered the streets. This explains why the symbols of death are such an integral part of Halloween. On that night, if people had to go out, they would masquerade as ghosts, devils, witches, etc., to (as they believed) be able to blend in with the real ones, and thus avoid recognition!

Although defeated by the Romans, the Druids continued operating underground, and do so to this very day.<sup>49</sup> Halloween is still a high day in the calendar for Satanists and witches. It is a day of occult killings and dark rituals.

The name, Halloween (or Hallowe'en), was originally “hallowed even”, meaning holy evening; the night of October

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<sup>48</sup> *The Dark Side of Halloween*, by David L. Brown, p.5. Logos Communication, Oak Creek, Wisconsin, USA, 1990. Also *What's Wrong with Halloween?* by Russel K. Tardo (tract), Faithful Word Publications, Arabi, Louisiana, USA; *Battle Cry*, September/October 1986, Chick Publications, Chino, California, USA; and *Holidays: Christian or Pagan*.

<sup>49</sup> *The Dark Side of Halloween*, pp.8–11.

31st. And why “hallowed evening”? Here again, we see the slimy hand of the Papacy. The Roman Catholic monks were fascinated by the Druids, and Druids even became monks themselves. And Pope Gregory (“Gregory the Great”, as he was called) incorporated the Druids’ holy day into Romanism (a familiar pattern emerges here, doesn’t it?). Gregory III changed the Roman Catholic festival of honouring the dead on October 31st to November 1st, and it was called “All Saints’ Day”.<sup>50</sup> So the “hallowed evening” was the *night before* this great Popish holy day – Halloween! This is the time when Roman Catholics supposedly honour their dead “saints”. In Mexico, for example, they take a deceased relative’s favourite food to the cemetery on this day, and spend the night around the grave, believing the dead actually feast on the aroma of the food they have brought. They shoot fireworks to frighten away other spirits. Then, on November 1st, they eat the food, and often get drunk in the cemeteries, with people even being killed in the drunken fights that ensue.<sup>51</sup> Thus, the ancient Druid festival of the dead is celebrated today, not only by Satanists and witches, but by Roman Catholics as well! – and *still* as a festival of the dead!

Halloween is thus in every sense a demonic festival, to be shunned by all true believers: “have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness” (Eph. 5:11); “what communion hath light with darkness?” (2 Cor. 6:14); “There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through the fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer” (Deut. 18:10,11); “They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead” (Psa. 106:28); “Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters

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<sup>50</sup> *Hallowe’en*, by Albert James Dager (tract). Media Spotlight, Costa Mesa, California, USA, 1979. Also *Battle Cry*, September/October 1986.

<sup>51</sup> *Holidays: Christian or Pagan*.

unto devils” (Psa. 106:37); “They sacrificed unto devils, not to God” (Deut. 32:17); “I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils” (1 Cor. 10:20).

Even “Mothers' Day” and “Fathers' Day” contain echoes of ancient Popery. Centuries ago, a day for supposedly honouring mothers was observed in England, and known as “Mothering Sunday”. It was held in the middle of the Roman Catholic pre-Easter period known as Lent; and on this day, people attended what they called their “Mother Church” (i.e. the edifice where they had been baptised as Papists, and were thus supposedly “born” into the “Mother Church”), and there they offered gifts to their mothers *and to the “church”*, as tokens of love and gratitude! When one reflects on the fact that Rome calls itself “Holy Mother Church”, and claims that outside of it there is no salvation, one can understand how this made sense to the faithful, blinded Papists; but it is of course completely contrary to the Word of God.

The modern observance of “Mothers' Day” was first suggested by Julia Ward Howe in 1872, as a day dedicated to peace, and for several years she held an annual Mothers' Day meeting in Boston, Massachusetts. In 1887, Mary Towles Sasseen of Kentucky began holding Mothers' Day celebrations. In 1904 Frank E. Hering of Indiana launched a campaign for its observance; and in 1907, Anna Jarvis of Philadelphia began a campaign for the *national* observance of Mothers' Day. And she chose the second Sunday in May.

On May 10, 1908, churches in Grafton and Philadelphia held celebrations. Anna Jarvis' own mother was honoured in a service held in Andrews Methodist Episcopal Church. And at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopalian denomination in 1912, a delegate from the Andrews congregation introduced a resolution recognising Anna Jarvis as the founder of “Mothers' Day”. Finally, on May 9, 1912, President Wilson of the U.S. was authorised to proclaim it as an annual national observance.

As for Fathers' Day, Mrs John Bruce Dodd in 1909 persuaded the ministerial society of Spokane, Washington, to salute fathers with special services. And in 1916, President Wilson officially approved it, with President Coolidge in 1924 recommending national observance.<sup>52</sup>

It is true that the modern-day "Mothers' Day" and "Fathers' Day" may not have a direct connection with Rome. But consider the following. First, the ancient celebration of "Mothering Sunday" was certainly a Papist celebration, and there are definite similarities, suggesting that this was deliberate. Second, whatever Anna Jarvis' reason was for choosing the month of May for the modern-day observance, the fact is that May is the month dedicated to *Mary* in the Roman Catholic institution. And Mary is blasphemously worshipped by them as "Mother of God". Was this just coincidence? Perhaps. But even if it was, do we not discern satanic work behind the scenes, establishing a "Mothers' Day" in the centre of the month dedicated to the "mother goddess" of Rome, known as Mary? And third, why should we as believers follow the dictates of the denomination known as the Methodist Episcopal denomination, or any other for that matter; and why should a special day to honour mothers (or fathers) be forced upon us? What saith the Scripture? "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exod. 20:12); "Children, obey your parents in the Lord" (Eph. 6:1); "Children, obey your parents in all things" (Col. 3:20) – on one day of the year only? No – every single day of the year! Many make a big fuss of their parents on one day of the year, to ease their guilty consciences, because for the rest of the year they show them no honour whatsoever. As Christians, we must obey the commandment of the Lord, and honour our parents constantly. We do not need a special day in the year to do it!

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<sup>52</sup> *Mother's Day and Father's Day*, by Shaun Willcock (audio tape). Recorded in 1990. Distributed by Contending for the Faith Ministries, Lancaster, California, USA.

## *Trappings of Popery*

It is our ongoing privilege and duty.

“Come out of her, my people”, then, means to come out of Romish festivals and special “days” no less than Rome’s many other abominations.

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*



## Chapter Nine:

# The Distinction Between "Clergy" and "Laity"

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How often do we hear pastors referred to as "clergymen" or "the clergy", and their congregations as "laymen" or "the laity"! And yet no such distinction is to be found in the Word of God. It simply does not exist. Why, then, are such terms used? And why is such a distinction made between those in the ministry and those who are not?

The Oxford Universal Dictionary says of the word "clergy": "The clerical office; the clerical order; the body of men set apart by ordination for religious service in the Christian church." *And then* it adds: "originally a term of the Catholic church." Aha! Now we are getting to the root of the matter. It also refers the reader to 1 Pet. 5:3. And to that very text we will turn in a moment.

Under the word "laity" we find the following: "The body of the people not in orders, as opposed to the clergy." Well, even the concept of "Holy Orders" is Popish, for the Papists have their "Sacrament of Holy Orders" when a priest is ordained. "Laymen", then, is a term referring to the common people, those not exalted to the high position of the priest by the so-called "Sacrament of Holy Orders."

Clearly, then, this "clergy/laity" distinction originated within Romanism. And thus when any true Christian minister, or Christian church, or any true Christian in general, uses these terms, and thereby makes such a distinction, he is perpetuating this trapping of Popery. He is perpetuating a false doctrine, condemned by the teaching of the New Testament.

For the New Testament emphatically teaches the doctrine

of the *priesthood of all believers*. In the Old Testament under the law, there was a special priesthood, but now under the New Testament every single Christian, without exception, is a priest unto God! Peter, writing to believers in Christ, stated: “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, *an holy priesthood*, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. 2:5); and, “But ye are a chosen generation, *a royal priesthood*, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light” (v.9). John wrote, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us *kings and priests* unto God and his Father” (Rev. 1:5,6). Every child of God is a priest unto God, offering up spiritual sacrifices. And what are these? Such sacrifices as “the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name” (Heb. 13:15); and the sacrifice of good works: “But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased” (Heb. 13:16; also Phil. 4:18); and the presentation of our bodies as living sacrifices (Rom. 12:1).

The ministers of the Word, the pastors of the churches, are not priests in any special sense; they, along with *all* believers, form the priesthood of the New Testament Church: a *spiritual* priesthood, offering the same *spiritual* sacrifices. Rome, separating a class called the “clergy” from another class called the “laity”, does so because within Romanism the “clergy” are men who supposedly stand between God and the congregation, as Old Testament priests did and as heathen priests still claim to do, and offer up *physical* sacrifice – namely, the so-called “sacrifice of the mass”, the central idolatry of Roman Catholicism, wherein Christ (it is falsely claimed) is offered up as an “unbloody sacrifice” to God.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> *The Documents of Vatican II*, “Dogmatic Constitution on the Church” and “Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy”, edited by Walter M. Abbott, S.J. Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1966. Nihil Obstat: Felix F. Cardegna, S.J. Imprimatur: Lawrence Cardinal Shehan, Archbishop of Baltimore, 1966.

## *The Distinction Between “Clergy” and “Laity”*

But the Papists have failed to understand the glorious doctrine of the New Testament, that Christ has come as the High Priest of His chosen people (Heb. 3:1; 7:11-28; 9:11-28), and has offered up Himself *once*, for the sins of His people (Heb. 7:27; 9:26,28)! His glorious priesthood is unique to Himself, and unchangeable (Heb.7:24), and He shares it with no mortal man. No pastor is a priest in this sense, nor is there any need for one to be, for Christ Jesus alone and forever is the Priest of His elect! No pastor offers physical sacrifice, for there is no need for any sacrifices now: Christ has come, He offered up *Himself*, once, for the sins of His people! Nothing can be added to His own great sacrifice. Pastors, and deacons, and indeed *all* Christians, are priests *only* in the sense that they offer up spiritual sacrifices, of praise, prayer, etc., as seen in the verses given above.

The “clergy/laity” distinction, then, is unscriptural, and Popish, and should never be perpetuated by Bible-believing Protestants.

The Oxford Universal Dictionary pointed us to 1 Pet. 5:3. And this is most interesting indeed, because in actual fact this verse *condemns* any supposed “clergy/laity” distinction as is found within Roman Catholicism. In this verse, Peter is writing to the elders, the pastors, of the churches of Christ (for elders and pastors are one and the same in the New Testament); and he says, “Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, but being ensamples to the flock.” A pastor is not to lord it over the flock, for it is God’s heritage. When the verse is read in context (vv.1-4), we find that pastors are to feed the flock of God; they are to take the oversight of it, willingly, of a ready mind, and not for what they can make for themselves from doing so; and they are not to lord it over the flock, for they are the under-shepherds. Christ Jesus is the Chief Shepherd.

Now here is the astounding thing: Rome made a distinction between “clergy” and “laity”; the “clergy” being the priests,

and the “laity” being the people under them. And this error has been perpetuated within Protestantism to this very day. *And yet* – this verse (1 Pet. 5:3) tells us, in fact, that the *true* “clergy” are the *people*, the flock of Christ! For the Greek word for “heritage” is the word from which “clergy” is derived!

Here are the comments of John Gill, that eminent scholar and servant of Christ, on this particular verse:

*“Neither as being lords over God’s heritage, etc. Or clergy; meaning not ecclesiastical persons, as presbyters, and deacons, who are supposed to be under the government of bishops... such cannot be designed, because they are presbyters, or elders, which are here exhorted not to use such tyrannical power and authority; wherefore the flock, or church of God, the people of Christ, and members of churches, in common, are here intended... who are the lot, portion, and inheritance of God, and Christ... the word clergy is common to all the saints, and not to be appropriated to a particular order of men, or to officers of churches”.*

Here are the comments of Matthew Poole on the same verse: *“Over God’s heritage; the Lord’s clergy, the same as flock before... The church of Israel is often called God’s inheritance, which as it were fell to him by lot, (as the Greek word signifies,) and which was as dear to him as men’s inheritances are to them.... Accordingly now the Christian church, succeeding it [Israel], is called God’s inheritance, and the word clerus is no where in the New Testament peculiarly ascribed to ministers of the gospel.”*

And Matthew Henry comments on the verse as follows: *“They [i.e. the members of the Church of God] are also dignified with the title of God’s heritage or clergy, his peculiar lot, chosen out of the common multitude for his own people, to enjoy his special favour and to do him special service. The word is never restricted in the New Testament to the ministers of religion.”*

The truth, then, is that the *true* “clergy” are *all* the people of God, said in this verse to be “God’s heritage.” Is it not astounding and tragic, then, that this word, a word describing *all* God’s elect, has been applied by the hierarchy of Rome to a distinct class of men, supposedly constituting a *special priesthood*, and that this monumental error has been perpetuated within Protestantism? How astounding that a word given by the Holy Spirit to all saints, and meaning the heritage of the Lord, has been used to prop up the false distinction between the priestly class and the rest of the people, even though there is *no* priestly class in the New Testament, and even though this word is *never* used in this way in the New Testament! The entire false “clergy/laity” doctrine is built on a lie!

The New Testament teaches the priesthood of all believers. Rome not only denies this, but goes even further: that antichristian Harlot actually *curses* anyone who teaches the biblical truth! Here is that very curse, just one of many pronounced at the Council of Trent in the sixteenth century, and still in force today: “If anyone saith that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood... *let him be anathema* [accursed]” (On the Sacrament of Order, Canon 1).<sup>54</sup> Why such an extreme reaction? The reason is not difficult to find. Here it is, from the Council of Trent: “And if anyone affirm that all Christians indiscriminately are priests of the New Testament... he clearly does nothing but confound the ecclesiastical hierarchy”.<sup>55</sup> Ah, they can’t have that, can they? They can’t have their beloved ecclesiastical hierarchy confounded! It is too important to them, to their power, their wealth, their status and influence! They care nothing for what the New Testament teaches, they care only for their hierarchy,

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<sup>54</sup> *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*, p.156.

<sup>55</sup> *Dogmatic Canons and Decrees*, p.154.

which exalts them above other men in the minds of millions, and enables them to maintain their authority over the souls and bodies of their duped subjects.

It is all about power. And this trapping of Popery, this distinction between “clergy” and “laity”, has been kept up within most Protestant denominations, because many within the Protestant “clergy” often exercise a similar priestly power over their flocks as Roman Catholic priests do! In direct contradiction of God’s Word in 1 Peter 5, they lord it over their flocks, for filthy lucre! Vast numbers of men (and now, increasingly, women too, contrary to Scripture!) enter the so-called “clergy” as a profession, a career, for the purpose of making a living and a good one at that, and because they desire to be lords in the eyes of the people, and to lord it over them, with great power and authority, as heathen priests have always done, in all false religions. The spirit behind Popery, the spirit of error, the spirit of Antichrist, is at work within most of the Protestant denominations as well. And to be a “clergyman” gains, for multitudes, a good living, the respect of the people, a cushy and comfortable career, power and influence. They are hypocrites, who “love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward” (Matt. 6:5). “But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they... love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi” (Matt. 23:5–7).

Let the *true* servants of Christ make no such heathenish and Popish distinction between themselves and the flocks they serve! The office of the pastor is indeed a high calling, and the flocks of Christ are told “*to know them* which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; and to *esteem them very highly in love* for their work’s sake” (1 Thess. 5:12,13). They are commanded: “Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the

*The Distinction Between “Clergy” and “Laity”*

word of God” (Heb. 13:7); and, “*Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves*” (Heb. 13:17). No Christian should fail in these things! For those called as pastors, as ministers of the Word, are Christ's own gift to His churches (Eph. 4:8–16). But no pastor is a priest in any special sense, and no church of Christ should follow the Romish Harlot in making an unscriptural distinction between pastor and people. No priest but Christ! And no other “clergy” but the entire flock of Christ, which is God's heritage!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Ten:

# Ministerial Titles

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The title, “pope”, comes from the Latin word “papa”, which means “father”. And the pope of Rome, as is well known, calls himself, and is called by his spiritually blind devotees, “Holy Father”. And yet the Lord Jesus Christ spoke only of *God* the Father in this way, with great reverence: “Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me” (Jn. 17:11). *Only* the heavenly Father should *ever* be addressed as “Holy Father”. No mortal man can ever assume such a title to himself, without committing blasphemy. This the Roman Antichrist has done.

In addition, every single priest of Rome the world over is called “Father” by Papists, and even by many others as well. The word “Father” is put in front of their names, as in “Father O’Hagan” or “Father Bertolucci”. It is a *title* given to them, very respectfully and very readily by almost everyone.

And yet the Lord Jesus was very, very specific: “And *call no man your father* upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven” (Matt. 23:9). It is a title which many Anglican priests take to themselves as well, and they are no more entitled to it than Romish priests. It is a direct violation of the Lord’s words.

There is also a rank within the Roman Catholic hierarchical structure known as “Monsignor”. This word means “My Lord”, which in essence is the same as “My Master”. Again, the Lord Jesus said, “But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren”; and, “Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ” (Matt. 23:8,10). As God is their Father, and Christ is their Master, believers in Christ are taught not to give such



spiritual titles to men.

And for these reasons, Christian believers and Gospel ministers through the centuries have, correctly, refused to honour the Roman Antichrist or his priestly disciples (or anyone else for that matter) with the title of “Father”. They have obeyed the words of the Lord in Matt. 23:8–10. “Call no man your father upon the earth”; “Neither be ye called masters.” And in this they have done well.

*And yet...* while correctly condemning the use of such a title as “Father”, and refusing to apply it to any priest, or to allow it to be applied to *themselves* as ministers of the Gospel, many Gospel ministers have, all too often, taken *other* distinguishing titles to themselves! And in doing so, they have concentrated solely on the *specific terms* used by the Lord Jesus in Matt.23, and not on the *principle* He was in fact teaching.

They have refused to call any man “Father”, and have not allowed any man to apply this title to themselves either; but they have missed something very important in Jesus' words: although the Lord used the examples of “Rabbi”, “Father”, and “Master”, the principle that He was laying down was that *no distinguishing titles of any kind* should be given to, or assumed by, the Lord's true servants!

We have considered His words in verses 8–10 of Matt.23. But note, now, the *very next* two verses: “But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant. And whosoever shall exalt himself shall be abased; and he that shall humble himself shall be exalted” (vv.11,12). The very word, “minister”, means simply a servant. To minister is to serve. The Lord's ministers are the Lord's servants. And since when does a servant have fancy titles?

Think about it! Roman Catholic priests are also called “Reverend”. Why is it that so many Protestant ministers are willing to reject the Papist title of “Father”, but not the

equally Papist title of “Reverend”? What the Lord taught in Matt. 23:8–12 applies to *all* distinguishing titles of a spiritual nature! And yet vast numbers of Christian ministers are quite content to be called “Reverend this” and “Reverend that.” But what does the Word of the Lord say? Of the Lord Himself it says in Psa. 111:9, “He sent redemption unto his people: he hath commanded his covenant for ever: holy and reverend is his name.”

Holy and reverend is *His Name*! It is the only place in our English Bible where this word is used – and it refers to the LORD! He is to be feared and revered by men. Now the Bible does speak of men showing “reverence” to other men, on account of their position or relationship; and the meaning is that they show deep respect. This is right and proper in its place. A man may indeed be a reverend person in the sense that he is worthy of respect and reverence on account of his position, age, or character. Mephibosheth and Bathsheba did reverence to David because he was the king (2 Sam. 9:6; 1 Kings 1:31), wives are commanded to reverence their husbands (Eph. 5:33), children are to give reverence to their fathers (Heb. 12:9); and as Scripture commands Christians to *esteem very highly* the ministers of the Gospel (1 Thess. 5:12,13), this means that they are to reverence them in the sense given above, i.e. they are to show deep respect to them on account of their office.

But reverencing the pastor, in the sense of showing respect to him because of the office into which the Lord has called him, is an entirely different thing from giving him the *title* of “Reverend”! The distinguishing *title* is what is wrong, not the giving of respect. Let the following serve to explain this. The Lord Jesus Christ said, “Call no man your father upon the earth”; and yet Paul wrote, “I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers: for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel” (1 Cor. 4:14,15). In saying this, Paul was

claiming in a certain sense to be their spiritual father! He had “begotten” them; they were his “sons”. And they were to acknowledge him as such. *But* (and this is most important) – did he walk around calling himself “Father Paul”? Or did he insist that others call him this? No. They knew that he was, in a secondary sense, their spiritual father (God Himself being their Father in the primary sense), and they would say so; but he did not take the term “Father” as a distinguishing title! And likewise, no Gospel minister should so use the term “Reverend”! His flock should indeed reverence him in the biblical sense of the word; but he should not take this word as a distinguishing title.

Some, even, are referred to as “Reverend Doctor”, because they have a doctorate in theology; and so the distinguishing title grows even longer, and sounds even more impressive. Where in all of this is the *humility* which is meant to characterise the servants of the lowly Jesus? Far, far too many of those men claiming to be servants of the One who was “meek and lowly in heart” (Matt. 11:29) are men who love to “receive honour one of another, and seek not the honour that cometh from God only” (Jn. 5:44). They love to have titles bestowed upon them, and to be greeted by their titles in public places, for they love to be honoured of men (Matt. 23:5-7). Christ, who is God, and dwelt in the highest heaven from all eternity, “made himself of *no* reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant” (Phil. 2:7); but many claiming to be *His* servants seek to have a *great* reputation in the world. It is as music to their proud ears to hear themselves referred to as “Reverend” or (better yet) “Reverend Doctor”; just as it was to the Pharisees to hear men greet them with cries of “Rabbi! Rabbi!” (Matt. 23:7).

“Let me not, I pray you, accept any man’s person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. For I know not to give flattering titles; in so doing my maker would soon take me away” (Job 32:21,22).

But let us now take this even further. What about the scriptural designation of a man called by God into the ministry of the Word and the oversight of a flock – the term “*Pastor*”?

Many, who would agree that a Gospel minister should not be given the title of “Reverend”, are perfectly happy to accept the title of “Pastor” before their names. They will introduce themselves as “Pastor So-and-so”, and they will be content for other men to refer to them as “Pastor So-and-so” as well. And they will justify this by saying that they *are* pastors, and therefore they may use this title.

But this is not so at all. The same principles, as given above, apply in this case. Yes, it is true that a Gospel minister is a pastor; and as we have already seen, he is to be revered (in the scriptural sense of this word), and he is often the spiritual father (in a secondary sense, under God) of various believers too; and yet he is not to use these terms as distinguishing titles. So, likewise, with the term “Pastor.” A man who is a pastor (which means a *shepherd*) of the Lord's flock is to be acknowledged and esteemed as such by the members of the flock; but this does not mean he has to take this word as a title! Where in all of the New Testament do we see any man doing so? Nowhere. In fact, we do not even find the *apostles* walking around and calling themselves, and one another, “Apostle Paul”, or “Apostle Peter”. Read Acts 12:17, 15:13,14,25, Gal. 1:18,19, 2:9, or 2 Pet. 3:15, and see how the apostles referred to one another: they used nothing more than their names, or they referred to one another by the term of “brother”, common to all the saints. Well, if the *apostles* did not walk around addressing one another as “Apostle this” and “Apostle that”, then why do *pastors* feel the need to do so? Sadly, we must trace the reason to the same source as the desire for any other special title: pride.

It is very right for believers to know them which labour among them, and are over them in the Lord, and admonish them; “and to esteem them very highly in love for their

work's sake" (1 Thess. 5:12,13). "Let a man so account of us," wrote Paul, "as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. 4:1). True pastors must be (scripturally) revered. The pastor must be acknowledged and treated as the pastor. But he does not need to walk around with a title before his name! Let him be content to be as his Lord and Master: meek and lowly. Let this trapping of Popery – this fondness for flattering ministerial titles – be rejected by all the Lord's faithful ministers! "But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Ye 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" (Matt. 20:25–28).

This is what the godly Arthur W. Pink wrote on this matter:<sup>56</sup>

"What strange methods God sometimes employs in teaching His children much needed lessons. This has recently been the writer's experience. He has been approached by a 'University' to accept from them a degree of 'D.D.' Asking for time to be given so that he might prayerfully seek from God, through His written Word, a knowledge of His will, fuller light came than was expected. He had very serious doubts as to the permissibility of one of God's servants accepting a title of (fleshly) honour. He now perceives that it is wrong for him to receive it, even complimentary. Various friends, as a mark of respect, have addressed us as 'Dr. Pink.' We now ask them to please cease from doing so. Let it not be understood that we hereby condemn other men for what they allow. No,

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<sup>56</sup> "Doctor" or "Brother"? by Arthur W. Pink (tract). Chapel Library, Pensacola, Florida, USA.

to their own Master they stand or fall [this was an incorrect application of the Scripture in Rom. 14:4 – *S.W.*].

“The principal passages which have helped us we now mention, praying that it may please God to also bless them to others. First, to the false comforters of Job, Elihu (God's representative) said, ‘Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give *flattering titles* unto man’ (Job 32:21). Second, ‘Be not ye called Rabbi’ or ‘Teacher’ (Matt. 23:8), which is what ‘Doctor’ signifies. Third, John 5:44 reproves those who ‘receive honour one of another,’ and bids us seek ‘the honour that cometh from God *only*.’ Fourth, none of the Lord's servants in the N.T. ever employed a title: ‘Paul, an apostle,’ but never ‘the apostle Paul.’ Fifth, the Son of God ‘made himself of *no* reputation’ (Phil. 2:7) – Is it then fitting that His servants should now follow an opposite course? Sixth, Christ bids us learn of Him who was ‘meek and *lowly*’ (Matt. 11:29). Seventh, one of the marks of the Apostasy is ‘having men's persons in admiration because of advantage’ (Jude 16). Eighth, we are bidden to go forth unto Christ outside the camp ‘bearing His reproach’ (Heb. 13:13).

“For these reasons it does not seem to us to be fitting that one who is here as a representative and witness for a ‘despised and rejected’ Christ should be honoured and flattered of men. Please address us as ‘Brother Pink.’ ”

Oh for the same humility among *all* the Lord's servants as Brother Pink manifested!

We do not like the present-day uncritical hero-worship of Charles Haddon Spurgeon in many quarters, but we own that he was one of the Lord's greatly-used servants; and in his characteristically humorous fashion he wrote well on this subject:<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> *Fragments of Popery Among Nonconformists*, by C.H. Spurgeon. Originally published in *The Sword and the Trowel*, 1874. Reprinted by Chapel Library, Pensacola, Florida, USA.

“It seems rather odd to us that a man should print upon his visiting card the fact that he is a reverend person. Why does he not occasionally vary the term, and call himself estimable, amiable, talented, or beloved? Would this seem odd? Is there any valid objection to use such a set of adjectives after the fashion is once set by employing the term *reverend*?

“If a man were to assume the title of reverend for the first time in history it would look ridiculous, if not presumptuous or profane. Why does not the Sunday-School teacher call himself ‘the respectable John Jones,’ or the City Missionary dub himself ‘the hard-working William Evans?’ Why do we not, like members of secret orders and others, go in for Worthy Masterships and Past Grands, and the like? I hope that we can reply that we do not care for such honours, and are content to leave them to men of the world, or to the use of those who think they can do some good thereby. It may be said that the title of reverend is only one of courtesy, but then so was the title of Rabbi among the Jews, yet the disciples were not to be called Rabbi. It is, at any rate, a suspicious circumstance that among mankind no class of persons should so commonly describe themselves by a pretentious title as the professed ministers of the lowly Jesus. Peter and Paul were right reverend men, but they would have been the last to have called themselves so. No sensible person does reverence us one jot the more because we assume the title. It certainly is in some cases a flagrant misnomer [some cases? in all, it would seem to us! – *S.W.*], and its main use seems to be the pestilent one of keeping up the unscriptural distinction of clergy and laity. A lad fresh from college, who has just been placed in a pulpit, is the Reverend Smith, while his eminently godly grandfather, who has for fifty years walked with God, and is now ripe for heaven, has no such claim to reverence. A gentleman of ability, education, and eminent piety preaches in various places with much zeal and abundant success, but he is no reverend; while a man of meagre gifts, whose principal success seems to lie in scattering the flock, wears the priestly

prefix, having a name to be revered when he commands no esteem whatever.

“This may be a trifle, many no doubt regard it so; why, then, are they not prepared to abstain from it? The less the value of the epithet the less the reason for continuing the use of it. It would be hard to say who has a right to it, for many use it who have not been pastors for years, and have not preached a sermon for many a day; what on earth are they to be revered for? Other men are always preaching, and yet no man calls them reverend, but why not? The distribution of this wonderful honour is not fairly arranged. We suggest that, as the wife is to see that she reverence her husband, every married man has a degree of claim to the title of Rev., and the sooner all benedicts exercise the privilege, the sooner will the present clerical use of it pass out of fashion. We wonder when men first sought out this invention, and from whose original mind did the original sin emanate. We suspect that he lived in the Roman Row of Vanity Fair, although the Rev. John Bunyan does not mention him. One thing is pretty certain, he did not flourish in the days of the Rev. Paul, or the Rev. Apollos, or the Rev. Cephas.”

May the Lord convict His people of these things, that they may separate from this Popish trapping along with all the rest!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*



## Chapter Eleven:

# Ministerial Garb

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Just as ministers of the Gospel are not to take any distinguishing *titles* to themselves, so they are not to wear any distinguishing *clothes*. Any form of attire which distinguishes the servant of Christ from other men is merely aping the priests of Rome, and acting as if he were a special priest himself.

How clear the words of the Lord Jesus! “Beware of the scribes, *which love to go in long clothing*, and love salutations in the market places” (Mk. 12:38). “But all their works they do for to be seen of men: 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, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi” (Matt. 23:5-7). Note how priestly titles went hand in hand with priestly garments. The Jewish religious leaders loved to be noticed, and praised, by other men! They loved the way other men gave place to them, and greeted them with their special titles; and to make certain that the “common people” noticed them, and treated them “properly” (in their estimation), they wore distinctive clothing: it was longer than the clothing of other men, and the borders of their garments were enlarged: the fringes on the borders of their garments (see Num. 15:38; Deut. 22:12) were longer than those on the garments of the ordinary people. The “common people” were left in no doubt when a priest walked down the street!

But think about this: if the Jewish priests were guilty, how much more so are the Popish priests, who go so much further in their distinctive apparel! For the Jewish priests merely lengthened the borders of their garments; but the Popish priests go to far greater lengths to be seen of men! From the

priest of Rome in his distinctive black outfit with his white “dog-collar”, to the lordly cardinal in his scarlet and purple, all the way up to the pope of Rome himself, the leaders of the Roman Catholic hierarchy are instantly recognisable the world over by their distinguishing garb. Exactly like their priestly Jewish predecessors, but on an even greater scale, they do all their works for to be seen of men: they wear special clothing, they love the highest positions, and greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, “Father, Father”, and many other titles. Every action, and every item of their clothing, is saying to the world, “I am a priest of Rome. I am not as other men. Stand by thyself, come not near to me; for I am holier than thou” (see Isa.65:5).

Now such behaviour, such pride, is to be expected in a man who is a servant of the devil, not Christ; a man who dares to allow other men to refer to him as “another Christ” (for this the priest blasphemously does). But it is *not* what should be displayed by a humble minister of the Lord Jesus Christ! And yet, all too often, it certainly is.

Ever since the Protestant Reformation, vast numbers of Protestant ministers have worn “clerical” clothing, and in doing so they have imitated the Popish practice. In many, probably most, Protestant denominations, the pastor wears “clerical garb”, little different in appearance from that worn by the priest of Rome. Yet another sign of just how much of the old Harlot's ways were maintained by those who claimed to break away from her.

We have seen, in this study, that the distinction between so-called “clergy” and “laity” is completely unscriptural, itself carried over from Popery. And without question, the wearing of distinctive “clerical” garments has been maintained, *precisely* in order to keep up the “clergy/laity” distinction. And it has worked!

But there is not a word in all the New Testament

commanding Christian ministers to wear special, distinctive clothing. Paul did not, Peter did not, John did not, nor any other apostle of Christ. And if the *apostles* did not, why do *pastors* think they should? It is utterly contrary to the New Testament doctrine of the priesthood of all believers. “Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ”; “But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people” (1 Pet. 2:5,9). Peter was not writing these words only to the pastors of the churches, but to *all* Christians! Each and every believer, as we have seen, is a spiritual priest offering the spiritual sacrifices of prayer, praise, etc. The pastor of the local church is not some other kind of priest! Old Testament Israel had a special priesthood, by the appointment of God; but in the New Testament *every* believer is a priest, and all together form the priesthood of all believers, the holy priesthood, the royal priesthood, described by Peter. The pastor of the church is its shepherd, under Christ, and he is to be recognised and esteemed as such; but he is *not* a priest and should *not* wear priestly garments. The religions of the world have their earthly priests, but Christ Jesus is the only Priest, and the High Priest, of His people!

In August 1865, in his periodical, *The Sword and the Trowel*, C.H. Spurgeon published an article which was aimed at the Anglicans of his day. He reproduced a portrait of an Anglican “minister” in his priestly robes; and next to it he wrote the following:<sup>58</sup>

“Who is this gentleman? You guess him to be a Romish priest; and so indeed he is, but he is not honest enough to

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<sup>58</sup> *Against Romish Anglicanism*, by C.H. Spurgeon, originally published in *The Sword and the Trowel*, August 1865. Reprinted in Geese *In Their Hoods: Selected Writings on Roman Catholicism by C.H. Spurgeon*, compiled and edited by Timothy F. Kauffman, pp.176-7. White Horse Publications, Huntsville, Alabama, USA, 1997.

avow it. This, with the exception of the face, is a correct representation of a clerical gentleman, well known in the south of England, as a notorious clergyman of that religious association, which is commonly, but erroneously, called 'The Church of England.' We can assure the reader that our artist has faithfully given the robes and other paraphernalia with which this person makes a guy of himself. We beg to ask, what difference there is between this style and the genuine Popish cut? We might surely quite as well have a *bona fide* priest at once, with all the certificates of the Vatican! There seems to be an unlimited license for papistical persons to do as they please in the Anglican Establishment. How long are these abominations to be borne with, and how far are they yet to be carried?

"Protestant Dissenters, how can you so often truckle to a Church which is assuming the rags of the old harlot more and more openly every day? Alliance with true believers is one thing, but union with a Popish sect is quite another. Be not ye partakers with them. Protestantism owed much to you in past ages, will you not now raise your voice and show the ignorant and the priest-ridden the tendencies of all these mummeries, and the detestable errors of the Romish Church and of its Anglican sister."

Spurgeon was exactly right. However, although Anglicanism is the most obvious culprit in aping the Harlot, most of the other "Protestant" denominations do so as well. And in this matter of the robes worn by their ministers, they may not be as ornate, or quite as Popish as those worn by Anglican priests, but they are no less a trapping of Popery! A *simplified* priestly garment is still a distinguishing priestly garment! It is still unscriptural. It is still donning the rags of the old Harlot of Rome! Remember how "slight" (in the estimation of men) was the change made to the garments of the Jewish religious leaders!

Achan, in the Old Testament, said, "I saw among the spoils

a goodly Babylonish garment”; and he coveted it, took it, and hid it in his tent (Jos. 7:21). It was an accursed thing (v.1), and the anger of the Lord was kindled. The Roman Catholic religion comes from ancient Babylon, and its priests are the modern representatives of the priests of Babylon; and their clerical robes are “Babylonish garments” indeed. Let the faithful servant of the Lord, the Protestant Gospel minister, have nothing to do with this trapping of Popery!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Twelve:

# Ministerial Wealth

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The Lord Jesus said of Himself, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Matt. 8:20). He was so poor that He had to borrow a penny to illustrate what He was teaching (Matt. 22:19). And although He graciously allows His servants, the men called to minister His Word, to own more than He did in this world (1 Cor. 9:1–14; 1 Tim. 3:1–5), they are still to be content always with the basic necessities of food and clothing (1 Tim. 6:8; Phil. 4:11), and to flee from the sin of covetousness (1 Tim. 6:9–11), not feeding the flock under their care for the sake of “filthy lucre” (1 Pet. 5:2); even though it might mean being “in hunger and thirst”, and “in cold and nakedness” (2 Cor. 11:27). And indeed in much poverty, amidst many very trying circumstances, the Lord’s faithful servants have often laboured through the centuries.

Not so the high-ranking servants of the pope! Although vast numbers of nuns (the female slaves of the Papal system) and many priests have laboured on in extreme poverty in the service of Antichrist, the bishops and cardinals of Rome have lived surrounded by luxury and wealth. They have often lived in beautiful palaces, enjoying the very best and daintiest foods, surrounded by servants, travelling in luxury, and able to squirrel away huge nest-eggs for themselves and their families (including, all too often, their secret wives, their lovers, and their illegitimate children).

Peter the apostle – whom Rome claims (falsely) was the first pope – said to the lame man who asked alms of him, “*Silver and gold have I none*; but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk” (Acts

3:6). No, the popes of Rome, with all their vast wealth, are not the successors of Peter; but they are the true successors of *Judas*, who was a thief, a son of perdition (Jn. 12:6; Jn. 17:12) – just as the popes are, and always have been (2 Thess. 2:3).

But consider, for a moment, the wealth of many *Protestant* ministers today! Are they any different from the bishops of Rome? No, they are not. Many of them live in ornate mansions, they drive the very best cars, they wear the most expensive suits, their fingers drip with silver and gold. Peter wrote that pastors are to feed the flocks, “*not for filthy lucre*”; but the “ministry” (if such it may be called) is a lucrative living for many men today!

It was not that long ago when, as a general rule, virtually the only so-called “Protestant” ministers (not that they deserved the name) who wallowed in the lap of luxury were Anglican bishops. *They* were the ones who lived in palaces or mansions like the bishops of Rome, and who gorged themselves on the best food (and alcoholic wine!) like the bishops of Rome, and who threw lavish parties and enjoyed the very best of everything this world has to offer. And that was expected, even though it was horrible to see, for Anglicanism is a harlot daughter of Rome, the Mother of Harlots (Rev. 17:5).

Yes, it was generally only Anglican bishops who lived like their Romish counterparts. But not any more! No, today we see all kinds of so-called “Protestant” ministers living high-flying lives!

These men know nothing of the sacrificial life which the Lord Jesus Christ lived on earth. They profess to be His followers, but they resemble the bishops of Rome far more than they do the humble servants of Jesus of Nazareth. And it is not only the men caught up in the heretical Charismatic “prosperity movement” of more recent times. No, there are men in the “ministry” in churches which would say they have nothing to do with that false doctrine, who are “*lording*” it over

their flocks, and fleecing them (1 Pet. 5:1–3). “His watchmen are blind: they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand: they all look to their own way, every one for his gain, from his quarter. Come ye, say they, I will fetch wine, and we will fill ourselves with strong drink; and to morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant” (Isa. 56:10–12). These are “men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, *supposing that gain is godliness*” (1 Tim. 6:5). This is a trapping of Popery indeed, this fleecing of the flocks for personal enrichment. It is a mark of Popery, *and* of Popery’s spiritual daughters. For such men, the “ministry” is merely a means to making money. It is a *living*, nothing more; a career, and a lucrative one at that.

It is certainly true that “the labourer is worthy of his reward” (1 Tim. 5:18). “Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel” (1 Cor. 9:14). A faithful minister of the Gospel is entitled to an adequate and generous support, from the members of the flock (1 Tim. 5:17). They should see to it that he is well taken care of. But he is *not* to lord it over them, *using* them to accumulate great riches for himself! This is not following in the footsteps of Christ or the apostles, and it is not living a life above reproach, a life of simplicity, as becomes a minister of Christ. When a man, claiming to be a pastor, a teacher of the Word, exalts himself, enriches himself beyond what is decent or comely, insists on only the very best of this world’s goods, and knows nothing of self-sacrifice or self-denial, then where do we see the humble Nazarene in him? We do not. And we are not to receive him as a true servant of Jesus. When a *Protestant pastor* lives as a *Papist prelate*, then this is what he is at heart, and this is how he must be viewed, and treated: “*From such withdraw thyself*” (1 Tim. 6:5).

There is a tale told (whether it actually happened or not, I



do not know) of the pope of Rome proudly saying to the artist Michelangelo, after showing him the wealth of the Vatican: “You see, the Church can no longer say, Silver and gold have I none.” To which Michelangelo replied, “But nor can it say, Rise up and walk.” As we look at so many “Protestant” churches and ministers today, with all their wealth and opulence, is it not true that the vast increase of “silver and gold” has come with a corresponding loss of any real spiritual power, any message of hope for spiritually crippled, lame men and women, lying impotent in their sins? The apostles had no silver and gold, but the Holy Spirit was in them with power. Many “ministers” today have much silver and gold; but where is the power of the Holy Spirit?

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Thirteen:

# Denominational Hierarchy

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The New Testament is clear: each local church is to be autonomous; independent; self-governing. Acts 2:42 says, “And they continued stedfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.” Before the completion of the books and epistles which make up the New Testament, the local church in Jerusalem, and later other local churches as well, held fast to the doctrine of the apostles; for they were the men who laid down the doctrinal foundation of the Church (Eph. 2:20). Their doctrine was Christ’s doctrine. And local churches today must do precisely the same: they must continue steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine. The only difference is that the apostles are no longer with us, and the teaching of the apostles is written down in the pages of the New Testament.

Paul and Barnabas established local churches in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, which at first did not have any elders of their own; and Acts 14:21–23 says, “And when they had preached the gospel to that city, and had taught many, they returned again to Lystra, and to Iconium, and Antioch.... And when they had *ordained them elders* in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they *commended them to the Lord*, on whom they believed.” No denomination was formed! These new elders were simply commended to the Lord. They were autonomous churches! And *each church had its own elders*. And the same truth is seen from Acts 13:1 and Acts 20:17,28,32. In Acts 20:32, Paul said to the elders of the church at Ephesus, “And now, brethren, I *commend you to God*, and *to the word of his grace*”. He commended them to God and to His Word – *not* to any denominational hierarchy.

Over and over again the New Testament teaches the autonomy of the local church. For example, in Matt. 18:15–17, we have the Lord’s instructions on what should be done when one brother trespasses against another. And in v.17 the Lord says, “And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.” Clearly, the matter is to be reported to the local church, and dealt with *by* the local church. And the church’s action is *final*. There is no higher “court of appeal!” There is no denominational hierarchy to which the matter may be referred!

In 1 Cor. 5, the local church at Corinth was instructed to discipline a member (who had committed a terrible sin) *on its own*. There was no hierarchy, no president, no advisory board of any denomination to which the church had to go!

In Revelation chapters 2 and 3, each of the seven local churches was dealt with as independent from the others, and given separate instructions.

Exactly what *is* a denomination? It is not a church. It is not the Church universal – for it is not the entire Church around the world. And it is not a local church either. What, then, is it? It is nothing scriptural. There is *no* scriptural warrant for the existence of denominations. Where, then, did the idea come from? As with so much else that is unscriptural, it came from Rome.

The churches of Christ were all independent churches in the first century AD. But what happened? As time passed, churches began to band together, to form associations and denominations. And through all this time *false* churches were growing and developing as well, full of false doctrines and unregenerate members. And under the Roman emperor Constantine in the fourth century, the so-called “Catholic Church” became the official religion of the Roman Empire, with the emperor essentially at its head. A denomination

had formed! A denomination of false “churches” claiming to teach the truth. Then, in 533 AD, after the demise of the western emperor, the eastern emperor, Justinian, constituted the false bishop of Rome as *Head* of all churches. And in 538 AD, Belisarius established the supposed “supremacy” of the so-called “Church” of Rome.

Then in 607 AD, the emperor Phocas issued a decree in which he declared the pope of Rome to be the Head of the (so-called) “Universal Church” – the head over all churches.

Thus the terrible monstrosity of the Papacy arose and developed through those centuries: a “State Church”, no less; a gigantic religious denomination, with a pope at its head, claiming jurisdiction over *all* churches, and demanding obedience and submission from all!

And here, indeed, is one of the terrible dangers of denominational systems: little popes are created; and given enough time and enough power, little popes become big popes.

And tragically, the Protestant churches that were formed at the time of the Reformation, and afterwards, did not shake off this Popish trapping: they retained the denominational idea. They continued the notion of a group of churches bound together within a denominational structure, with a man, or a group of men, at the head of the structure, even though the denomination would stretch across countries, even continents, in time! And this has given rise to many evils. In this the Protestant denominations sadly aped the Mother Whore of Rome.

Now certainly, true Christian churches should maintain happy and blessed fellowship with one another, especially when a number of sound churches are found within close geographical proximity to one another. But this is by no means the same thing as establishing a rigid denomination. A

pastor is to have the oversight of a local church – nowhere in Scripture do we see a pastor having the permanent oversight of an entire *cluster* of churches. And a flock of the Lord’s people must be subject, in all lawful matters, to their pastor – *not* to a denominational president or board!

Some have argued that a denominational “covering” is necessary to prevent a local church going astray. This is nonsense. Denominations can go astray too! – and most have, on a massive scale! There is no escaping the fact that the majority of denominations today are liberal, ecumenical, even syncretistic, and are condoning and promoting all kinds of unscriptural doctrines and practices! And this departure from the truth was not prevented by their hierarchical structures – far from it! In truth, it is almost always the leadership that goes astray first. And when a *denomination* departs from the truth of God’s Word, the damage is far, far more extensive than when a single local *church* does so!

Each local church is to be independent before God, and subject only to His Word. That is all-sufficient. The Bible, and the Bible alone!

Moreover, it is far, far more difficult for a denomination to examine its doctrines and practices in the light of God’s Word, and to change what needs to be changed, than it is for a local church. The structure is too large, and conformity is expected. Most denominational systems were founded by one man, primarily; and just as there were contentions in the church at Corinth, with one saying, “I am of Paul”, and another, “I of Apollos”, and another, “I of Cephas” (1 Cor. 1:11–13); so the same thing happens in denominations, except – on a far larger scale! The problem, then, is far worse. As a general rule, denominations stick to the teachings of their founder. They are not open to the possibility that their founder may not have been correct on every single point. And every church within the denomination is bound to maintain the *status quo*.

Churches within denominational structures are controlled by men who are far removed, geographically, from the local churches; which is unscriptural in itself. How possibly can such men have the care of all the members at heart? They do not even know all the members! – and the members do not know them. Yet all the churches within the denomination are bound to bow to the decisions emanating from the denomination’s headquarters far away – which prevents them from acting solely in accordance with God’s Word.

Denominations concentrate too much power in the hands of a few men. As noted earlier, they tend to create little popes – and little popes have a tendency to eventually become big popes. This can be traced, historically, in the rise of the Papacy. Originally, even the false “church” of Rome was far more localised than it later became. But as time passed, the ambitions of worldly men drove them to try to reach greater and greater heights of power. And thus the false Roman “bishop” grew in influence and authority, with ever-increasing power and jurisdiction being put into his hands.

And although no Protestant denomination will ever reach the heights attained by the Roman Catholic institution, the fact remains that denominationalism has no basis in Holy Scripture, but is, rather, a Popish trapping, which inevitably creates little popes; and moreover, when a denomination falls into doctrinal error or sinful practice, the damage is far, far greater than when a local church does the same. The Word of God is all-sufficient for every single local church, and the pastors of each church are given by the Lord for the oversight and instruction of that flock; and no local church needs anything or anyone else. Denominationalism, like all other Romish trappings, should be cast off by all faithful churches of Christ.

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Fourteen:

# Praeterism and Futurism

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There are, essentially, three main systems of biblical prophetic interpretation:

1. *The Historicist system.* This system of prophetic interpretation holds the prophecies of Daniel, Revelation, and elsewhere, to be “history divinely written beforehand”. In other words, *history fulfils Bible prophecy*. History is but the outworking, in time, of divine prophecy. The Lord, in His prophetic Word, told His Church beforehand what would come to pass in time. The book of Revelation, in particular, describes events which have occurred from the beginning of the Christian era until now, and which will yet occur until the second coming of Christ and the judgment day.
2. *The Praeterist system.* According to the advocates of this system, all the prophecies relating to the second coming of Christ, etc., were fulfilled in the first century AD.
3. *The Futurist system.* According to the advocates of this system, the prophecies of Revelation, etc., are still to be fulfilled at some unknown point in the future, and all within the space of a very short time, consisting of just a few years.

The most popularised, and probably the most popular, system of prophetic interpretation today is the Futurist system. But this was not always so. For centuries, the vast majority of Protestants were committed to the *Historicist* system.

So what happened to bring about this huge shift? In a word: *Jesuitism!* Protestants today have swallowed this

Popish, Jesuit trapping of Futurism, hook, line, and sinker: a prophetic interpretation that was designed by the Jesuits of Rome to deflect the Protestant world away from the Historicist interpretation of Bible prophecy!

Let us see how this was accomplished. Of necessity this can only be a very brief examination of this subject.

At the time of the Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth century, it was the firm conviction of Protestants, steeped as they were in the biblically-sound Historicist system of prophetic interpretation, that the Roman Papacy was the prophesied Antichrist (2 Thess. 2), and that the Roman Catholic religion was the Great Whore (Rev. 17). In sermons and literature, the pope of Rome was declared to be the Antichrist of God's Word. And Protestants everywhere were firmly convinced of it. The works and the doctrines of Rome left them in no doubt. The evidence fitted the scriptural picture perfectly. And this firmly-held, scriptural conviction greatly nerved Protestants to resist the evils of Romanism, even amidst much persecution and suffering.

The diabolical Jesuit Order was created in the sixteenth century, its purpose being to halt, drive back, and conquer the forces of Protestantism. And the Jesuits realised that there was simply no way for Rome to regain the ground she had lost, *unless* they were able to deflect Protestants away from the conviction that the pope of Rome was the Antichrist and the "Church" of Rome was the Great Whore of Revelation. As long as that conviction persisted, Rome could make no headway.

The Jesuits, therefore, came up with two alternatives to the Historicist system of prophetic interpretation: *Praeterism* and *Futurism*.<sup>59</sup> The two theories conflicted – deliberately.

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<sup>59</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 116, October 1994. John W. Robbins, Hobbs, New Mexico, USA.



This was designed to create confusion, and it succeeded. Two Jesuits, Alcazar and Ribera, were commissioned by their Order to produce two opposing theories of prophetic interpretation, in order to confuse the Protestants and deflect them away from the truth that the Roman Papacy is the prophesied Antichrist. In the words of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: “Under the stress of the Protestant attack there arose new methods on the Papal side and their authors were Alcazar and Ribera.”<sup>60</sup>

First, the *Praeterist* view, which is far less popular than Futurism. Praeterism was devised by the Spanish Jesuit priest, Luis de Alcazar (1554–1613).<sup>61</sup> He put forward the teaching that John the apostle wrote about events which occurred in his own time, in the first century AD, and that therefore the book of Revelation dealt with events in the old Roman Empire, which was of course long past; and thus all those prophecies were *fulfilled*. It was incorrect, then, according to this view, to see the pope of Rome as the prophesied Antichrist: Revelation was fulfilled centuries before in the past. The word “Praeterism” is derived from the Latin, and means that the events in Revelation are “before” (i.e. fulfilled).

Praeterism has been adopted by many liberal “Protestants”, as well as, sadly, by many Protestants who are by no means liberals, but who hold to a “post-millennial” interpretation of prophecy – which is another error.

Now to examine the *Futurist* view, which tragically has attained immense popularity among Protestants today.

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<sup>60</sup> *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, 11th edition, Vol.23.

<sup>61</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, by Duncan McDougall, p.13. True Christian Believers, Southwick, Massachusetts, USA. Also published by Pilgrim Brethren Press, Petersburg, Ohio, USA, 1990. See also *The Trinity Review*, No.116, October 1994.

The Spanish Jesuit priest, Francisco Ribera (1537–1591), devised this system, and published it in a very large commentary on the book of Revelation.<sup>62</sup> He taught the very opposite of Praeterism! He taught that the book of Revelation dealt with *future* events, to occur *just prior* to Christ's return. He taught that Antichrist was someone who would only appear in the far-distant future, at the very end of the world – so there was no need for anyone to either view the pope of Rome as the Antichrist, or to be at all concerned about who he would be.

His theory essentially went like this:

The first few chapters of Revelation deal with Rome at the time of John the apostle in the first century AD, but the rest deal with the distant future;

Antichrist will be a single individual at the end of the world; he will abolish Christianity, rebuild the temple in Jerusalem, and be welcomed by the Jews;

His work will last for three and a half years;

The Middle East will be the geographical location of the great conflict with Antichrist.

Does all this sound familiar? To anyone well-versed in the Futurist theory of prophetic interpretation, it should! It is essentially the view that has been propagated by countless Protestant preachers and authors for many, many decades now! It is almost certainly the dominant view held by most professing Protestants today!

Later, Ribera's theory was expanded by other Roman Catholic scholars, becoming the dominant *Roman Catholic view*, long before it became the dominant *Protestant view*! The Roman Catholic cardinal, Roberto Bellarmine

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<sup>62</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.14. See also *The Trinity Review*, No. 116, October 1994.

(1542–1621), the great controversialist and the foremost apologist of the Counter-Reformation, declared that the biblical prophecies about Antichrist in the writings of Daniel, Paul and John had nothing to do with the Papacy. He published a defence of the Papal religion, and in it he sought to “prove” that the Antichrist, far from being the pope of Rome, was a single individual at the end of time.<sup>63</sup>

Significantly, it was *admitted* by the Roman Catholic author, G.S. Hitchcock, that both Futurism and Praeterism were inventions of the Jesuits! This is what he wrote in his book, *The Beasts and the Little Horn*: “The Futuristic school, founded by the Jesuit Ribera in 1591, looks for Antichrist, Babylon, and a rebuilt temple in Jerusalem, at the end of the Christian dispensation. The Praeterist school, founded by the Jesuit Alcazar, explains the Revelation by the Fall of Jerusalem or by the fall of Pagan Rome in 410 AD.”<sup>64</sup>

The Jesuit Futurist theory was to receive some new twists in the early 19th century, through the writing of yet another Jesuit, Emmanuel Lacunza (1731–1801). He was to add to the theory the germ of the idea of a “rapture” *before* the second coming of Christ, which was progressively developed by others into the “pre-trib rapture” doctrine within Futurism.<sup>65</sup>

Lacunza taught this theory in a book, which was published in 1812, entitled *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*. The book was written in Spanish, and Lacunza, a Chilean of Spanish descent, wrote under the *assumed name* of “Rabbi Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra”! As a good Jesuit agent, working to undermine Protestantism, Lacunza concealed his true identity and pretended to be a converted Jewish rabbi, so

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<sup>63</sup> *Disputationes de Christianae Fidei Adversus Huius Temporis Haereticos*, by Roberto Bellarmine, published between 1581 and 1593.

<sup>64</sup> *The Beasts and the Little Horn*, by G.S. Hitchcock, p.7. Quoted in *The Trinity Review*, No. 116, October 1994.

<sup>65</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.15.

as to deceive the Protestant world. He succeeded.<sup>66</sup>

It was the perfect disguise, because the Jesuits had so persecuted the Jews in Spain that none would suspect anything. It would also guarantee that the Vatican would *condemn* Lacunza's book, putting it on its index of forbidden books! This of course made the book even more acceptable to Protestants – the fact that Rome had condemned it.

In the book, Lacunza taught that there would be a *gap* between what is now referred to as the “rapture” and Christ's second coming. *This* was the origin, in embryonic form, of the immensely popular “pre-trib rapture” teaching within Protestantism today! He did not teach a *seven-year* gap between the two events, as is popular today – but the doctrine itself was taught: the rapture would occur first, “much before” Christ's second coming; and then Christ would return with the saints to earth, destroy Antichrist, and then establish His “millennial kingdom”. At the time, the prevalent Roman Catholic view was that there would be a gap of only a few minutes between the “rapture” and the second coming,<sup>67</sup> so when Lacunza wrote that the “catching up” would occur “much before” Christ's return, he could have meant an hour, or a day – it is impossible to tell. But regardless of how brief a period he had in mind, there was still a gap between the “rapture” and the second coming in his teaching. And in time to come, the period of time between the two events was extended to seven years, with the “tribulation” supposedly occurring in between. Lacunza had sown the seed which would grow and develop through the teaching of others, as shall be explained below.

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<sup>66</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, pp.15,21-3. Also *The Origin of Dispensational Futurism And Its Entry Into Protestant Christianity*, by H.C. Martin, p.6. Parkes, N.S.W., Australia, 1973.

<sup>67</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, by Dave MacPherson, pp.264-5. Millennium III Publishers, Simpsonville, South Carolina, USA, 1995.

In addition, Lacunza taught that during the so-called “Millennium”, the Jewish animal sacrifices would be reinstituted. This of course is now the belief of “pre-trib rapture, pre-millennial” Protestants today, even though it is a horrible doctrine, the denial of Christ’s all-sufficient atoning sacrifice for the sins of His people!

In 1816 a complete edition of Lacunza’s book was published in London by the diplomatic agent of the Republic of Buenos Aires. Copies of the book found their way into the library of the Anglican archbishop of Canterbury, a library maintained for the use of the English people. Thus it had now been published in the English metropolis, and could be accessed by learned Englishmen, although it was still in Spanish.<sup>68</sup>

The question of course arises: if Futurism was a Jesuit invention, *how did it enter Protestantism?* The Jesuits wanted it to be accepted by the Protestant world, but how did Protestants, who were so utterly opposed to Roman Catholicism, come to accept this Popish trapping?

The answer is, by deceit and treachery. In the 19th century, within the Anglican institution (the falsely-named “Church of England”), a movement occurred which came to be known as the “Romeward movement.” Samuel R. Maitland (1792–1866), an Anglican curate and later librarian to the Anglican archbishop of Canterbury, was the first notable “Protestant” scholar to accept the Jesuit Ribera’s Futurist theory about Antichrist.<sup>69</sup> And remember – Lacunza’s book was now in the library of which Maitland was the librarian! Maitland admitted openly that his prophetic views were the same as those of Romanism; and in 1826 he began to publish his views in a series of pamphlets on prophecy, in which he taught

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<sup>68</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, pp.23-5.

<sup>69</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 117, November 1994; and *The Origin of Dispensational Futurism And Its Entry Into Protestant Christianity*, p.7.

the Jesuit theory of Futurism. Was this coincidence? No. Maitland got his ideas from Lacunza and Ribera.<sup>70</sup>

Following hard on the heels of Maitland's first booklet, a man called Burgh, in Ireland, published a book teaching a similar theory of a future Antichrist, evidently copied from Lacunza as well;<sup>71</sup> and between 1826 and 1828, Burgh's lectures on Revelation, and Maitland's *The Prophecies of Antichrist* and *First and Second Enquiries into the Prophetic Periods of Daniel and the Revelation* advanced the Jesuit Lacunza's theory, and began to do great damage to the cause of Protestantism.

Maitland's views were accepted by James H. Todd (1805–69), professor of Hebrew at the University of Dublin, and this man strongly attacked the Historicist interpretation of prophecy. His views, too, were published and widely circulated.<sup>72</sup>

Todd's views were enthusiastically endorsed by John Henry Newman (1801–90), an Anglican priest who converted to Roman Catholicism, later becoming a cardinal. He was a leader of what was known as the Oxford Movement, or Tractarian Movement, which was leading Anglicanism towards absorption by Rome. Five years *before* he became a Romanist, Newman wrote a tract entitled *The Protestant Idea of Antichrist*, and in it he said: "We have pleasure in believing that in matters of Doctrine we entirely agree with Dr. Todd.... The prophecies concerning Antichrist are as yet unfulfilled".<sup>73</sup>

The Oxford or Tractarian Movement was immensely influential in causing English Protestants to move away from the Historicist interpretation of prophecy, to which their

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<sup>70</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, pp.25–7.

<sup>71</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.28.

<sup>72</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 117, November 1994.

<sup>73</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 117, November 1994

forebears had so firmly held.

But that was not all. Another extremely influential leader, and a man who played a large part in moving many away from Historicism, was Edward Irving (1792–1834), a Scottish Presbyterian minister who was deposed on charges of heresy.<sup>74</sup> Irving moved away from the Historicism of Scottish Presbyterianism and embraced Futurism.<sup>75</sup> He later organised what became known as the Catholic Apostolic Church, in Britain.<sup>76</sup>

Irving was a forerunner of the Pentecostals of today, believing that the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit would be restored,<sup>77</sup> and in 1831 his followers began (as they believed) to “speak in tongues” and “prophecy” (they were deceived, of course). And it was at this time that the Irvingites began to promote the idea that the saints would be “raptured” before the rise of the future Antichrist and before the second coming of Christ. But how did the Irvingites get hold of such an idea?

Remember that the Jesuit Lacunza’s book in Spanish had been published in London in 1816, and that he had written under an assumed name of a rabbi. Well, Edward Irving stated that a friend of his, and another person, translated and revised portions of Lacunza’s book; and “we resolved that the two friends should proceed as before to complete the work, and that I should charge myself with the superintendence of its publication.”<sup>78</sup> Only Irving, however, is listed on the title page as the translator. The English translation of Lacunza’s

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<sup>74</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, p.2.

<sup>75</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 117, November 1994.

<sup>76</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.30.

<sup>77</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, pp.56-7.

<sup>78</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, pp.56-7.

book was published by Irving in London in 1827.<sup>79</sup> He *knew* that he was publishing a translation of a Jesuit's book, for he revealed who the real author was; and his Scottish Presbyterian training ensured that he would have known of the Jesuits and of how dangerous they were; and yet he still went ahead!<sup>80</sup>

And ever since his time, many Protestant Futurists, who have never heard of the Jesuit Lacunza, have known of "Rabbi Ben-Ezra" – yet they have no idea that "Rabbi Ben-Ezra" did not exist, and that in fact when they quote from "Ben-Ezra" they are quoting the lies of a Jesuit priest named Lacunza!

So Irving got the germ of the idea of a "rapture" before the second coming from the Jesuit Lacunza's book. And shortly after he published his English translation of Lacunza's work, his followers began to proclaim the idea of a "two-stage" coming of Christ: a secret "rapture" first, followed by Christ's return some time later. Irving himself claimed to have heard a "voice" telling him to preach a "secret rapture" doctrine. So, obeying this "voice", he began to proclaim that Christ was to come twice: first, *for* His saints, and then later *with* His saints (after a seven year period).

In truth, however, Irving got his more developed "secret pre-trib rapture" idea from a teenaged Scottish girl, Margaret MacDonald. In 1830 this girl, who was very open to occultic influences,<sup>81</sup> claimed to have had a vision of the end times; and she sent handwritten copies of her "revelation" to certain ministers – including Irving. Her "revelation" included a version of the "pre-trib rapture": essentially a "partial rapture" of some Christians but not others. And Irving embraced her "vision" with enthusiasm.<sup>82</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> *The Coming of Messiah in Glory and Majesty*, Volumes 1 and 2, by Juan Josafat Ben-Ezra; translated from the Spanish by Edward Irving. L.B. Seeley and Son, London, 1827.

<sup>80</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.30.

<sup>81</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, pp.2,51-2.

<sup>82</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, p.6.



It would appear that Margaret MacDonald, who was bedridden and spent much of her time reading, her family having an extensive library, and who was very close to Irving, had read a copy of Irving's translation of Lacunza's book, and had then taken Lacunza's teachings a step further by developing on his idea of a "rapture" before the second coming.

Other "spirit manifestations" began to occur in Irving's church, led by Robert Baxter, who gave "prophecies" which the congregation accepted as truth. It is significant that at a later time, Baxter renounced some of his own views as being of Satan!<sup>83</sup> If only the "pre-trib rapturists" of today would do the same thing! Baxter admitted that he had obtained his views of a "two-stage" coming from Irving in 1831.

Thus we can trace the development: Irving got the germ of the idea of a "rapture" before the second coming from Lacunza; Margaret MacDonald, who heard Irving preach and who in all likelihood had also read Irving's translation of Lacunza's book, developed it further into a secret "pre-trib" rapture; and Irving and later other Irvingites developed it even further, including adding the idea that the "tribulation" would last for seven years between the "rapture" and the second coming.

In 1833 a cheaper, abridged edition of Irving's translation of Lacunza's book became available to the public. And in that same year the "Oxford Movement" – also known as the "Anglo-Catholic Movement" – began. The purpose of this movement was to destroy Protestantism and to advance Romanism in England. Maitland's theory of a future Antichrist was used, by the Anglo-Catholic apologists such as Newman, Pusey, etc., to defend the Papacy from Protestants' attacks.

Thus the Irvingites adopted the deceptive theories of the

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<sup>83</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.34.

Jesuits Ribera and Lacunza, and of an occult-influenced teenaged girl with notions of being a “prophetess”; and the doctrine of the “secret pre-trib rapture” is an essential part of “Protestant” Futurism today.

But how did it spread from the heretical Irvingites to so much of the Protestant world?

From the Irvingites, the “secret pre-trib rapture” error was embraced by the Plymouth Brethren; and from *them* it spread throughout the world.

This is what happened. John Nelson Darby (1800–82) was one of the founders of the Brethren and a committed Futurist.<sup>84</sup> He had been an Anglican curate before he founded the Brethren, and an Anglo-Catholic in doctrine,<sup>85</sup> and was very close to the brother of the Roman Catholic cardinal, John Henry Newman.<sup>86</sup> He was a believer in the “pre-trib rapture”, and admitted that he was knowledgeable about both the Jesuit Lacunza’s book and also Irving’s teachings by 1829.<sup>87</sup> The fact that Irving was a heretic did not appear to bother Darby. Darby very obviously “imbibed the Irvingite theories about prophecy”, as one 19th-century journal put it.<sup>88</sup> He wanted to be known as the *originator* of the “pre-trib rapture” teaching, and many of his followers earnestly believe that he was; but this was simply not so. He copied Irving extensively.<sup>89</sup>

He stated that he believed in the “pre-trib rapture”

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<sup>84</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 117, November 1994; and *The Rapture Plot*, p.87.

<sup>85</sup> *The Origin of Dispensational Futurism And Its Entry Into Protestant Christianity*, p.8.

<sup>86</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, p.45.

<sup>87</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, pp.99,100.

<sup>88</sup> *The Contemporary Review*, October 1885.

<sup>89</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, pp.88-91,105-6.

theory from 1827<sup>90</sup> – the very year that Lacunza’s book was published! This was not coincidental.

Just like the Roman Catholics, Darby wanted to keep his followers ignorant of Church history. He supplied his own writings to take the place of the great Christian works. Ignorance of Church history means that men will not view the popes of Rome as the Antichrist; and Darby certainly did not believe this.<sup>91</sup> In his writings, he taught the “secret rapture” theory. He also added yet another aspect to the Futurist theory: dispensationalism.

Darby’s followers were teaching the “secret pre-trib rapture” error by 1831. And then, the Brethren in Ireland developed the theory in their Powerscourt meetings in 1833. These meetings were attended by Darby, as well as by some Irvingites. The condensed version of Lacunza’s book was published that same year.

Thus did Jesuit Futurism enter the Irvingites, and then the Plymouth Brethren with a new addition – via the false Charismatic “prophecies” of the Irvingites!

This was what the scholar S.P. Tregelles, who participated in the Powerscourt conferences, had to say: “I am not aware that there was any definite teaching that there should be a Secret Rapture of the Church at a secret coming until this was given forth as an ‘utterance’ in Mr. Irving’s church from what was then received as being the voice of the Spirit. But whether anyone ever asserted such a thing or not, it was from that supposed revelation that the modern doctrine and the modern phraseology respecting it arose.”<sup>92</sup> Clearly, Tregelles believed that the Plymouth Brethren had received the teaching from the Irvingites.

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<sup>90</sup> *The Rapture Plot*, pp.130,132.

<sup>91</sup> *The Rapture of the Saints*, pp.46-8.

<sup>92</sup> *The Hope of Christ’s Coming*, p.35; quoted in *Millennial Studies: a Search for Truth*, by George L. Murray, p.138, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, Michigan, USA, 1960.

But the Plymouth Brethren are a comparatively tiny sect within Protestantism. How is it that Futurism, through them, spread to so many other churches and denominations?

In 1878 a great conference was held in America, with another being held in 1886, where the Futuristic doctrines were promoted. And as many prominent men attended these, some of whom went on to found theological colleges, the teaching continued to spread. Also, between 1883 and 1897, a series of meetings was held in Niagara, where Futurism was advocated.

Most important of all, Darby had an immensely popular propagandist: C.H. Scofield.

Cyrus Scofield (1843–1921) was a Congregational minister. He thought very highly of Darby's teaching, having studied Darby's writings for a number of years.<sup>93</sup> And the entire Futurist theory, with the more recent additions as well, was added, by Scofield, to the Bible he produced in 1909, known as the Scofield Reference Bible. In the Introduction, Scofield acknowledged his debt to the Brethren movement – but without naming it. Instead, he named Walter Scott, a leading man in the Brethren, as an “eminent Bible teacher.”

And it was via the Scofield Reference Bible, in particular, that Futurism came to be so widely accepted within Protestantism. For this reference Bible promoted dispensational Futurism throughout Protestant America, and indeed the world, so that today, multitudes of Bible colleges, etc., teach it as Gospel truth. The Scofield Reference Bible should be shunned by all true Christians, and not only for its promotion of Jesuit Futurism (but that is what is being examined here).<sup>94</sup>

And as these false teachings spread, so did confusion

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<sup>93</sup> *The Trinity Review*, No. 117, November 1994.

<sup>94</sup> See *The Incredible Scofield and His Book*, by Joseph M. Canfield. Ross House Books, Vallecito, California, 1988.

spread amongst Protestants – exactly what Rome had always wanted, and exactly why she had used the Jesuits Ribera, Alcazar and Lacunza to promote theories of prophetic interpretation directly at odds with the Protestant Historicist understanding which had served biblical Protestantism so well for so long. As a result, instead of seeing in the Papacy the fulfilment of the prophetic Scriptures, much of Protestantism now looks for a “secret rapture”, a future Antichrist, etc., etc. This has aided the satanic Ecumenical Movement tremendously.

Astounding, isn’t it? Protestants have readily accepted a doctrine of the diabolical Jesuits of Rome as being the truth of Holy Scripture!

The line can be traced: Ribera – Lacunza – Maitland – Irving – Darby – Scofield. Futurism has a very corrupt lineage indeed!

And let none say that none of this matters! On the one hand, there are the many who passionately promote the false, Jesuit system known as Futurism, causing immense confusion and promoting false doctrine; on the other hand, there are those who say that the study of Bible prophecy is unimportant, and that we should not be concerned about all these things. This is an error equally as bad as the first! In fact, as Futurists have fallen for a Jesuit deception, so those who throw up their hands and say it is all too complicated, and prophecy should just be left alone, have fallen right into the trap the Jesuits sought to set when they promoted the two deliberately conflicting theories of Praeterism and Futurism – the trap of sowing such confusion in Protestant ranks that many would just give up and say the study of prophecy was not worth the effort.

Bible prophecy speaks of danger and tribulation occurring throughout the centuries *before* the gathering together of the

saints unto Christ, which occurs *at* His return – not after some secret “rapture” which whisks the saints away from all trouble on earth! What would be the point of the book of Revelation, with all its warnings, being given by the blessed Spirit of God, if believers are to be “raptured” before all these things take place?

The Jesuits cannot give us the true interpretation of Bible prophecy! Nor can an occult-influenced Charismatic girl! True Christians should *never* go to such corrupt sources for their understanding of prophecy! Jesus said, “A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit” (Matt. 7:18).

Bible prophecy *should* be studied, indeed *must* be studied, by every true Christian. It is part of God’s holy Word, and should never, ever be neglected, or dismissed as unimportant. In beginning his teaching on the second coming of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the gathering together unto Christ of the saints alive at the time, Paul writes, “*But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning*” these things (1 Thess. 4:13). All believers are to know the truth about these things, and not be tossed to and fro by false doctrines, especially those which originated in the minds of the Jesuits, those greatest enemies of the true Church and the true Gospel in existence!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4).*

## Chapter Fifteen:

# Popery in the Heart

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In this concluding chapter I want to address one more trapping of Popery, and it is the most deadly of all: it is *Popery in the heart*. J.C. Philpot put it so well:

“‘The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth’, not from some sins, not from many sins, not from a thousand sins, not from a million sins, but ‘the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from *all* sin.’ This is indeed the balm, when the conscience is cut and gashed, bleeding and sore, to allay the smart, to soothe the pain, to bring together the edges of the wound and to make it kindly heal. Is there any other remedy? Search the whole round of duties; run through the wide catalogue of forms and ceremonies; examine every cell and nook of the monastery, the convent, and the confessional; weigh every grain of human merit and creature obedience; tithe with the utmost nicety the anise, mint, and cummin of self-imposed observances; hold up the hair shirt, the bleeding scourge, the jagged crucifix, the protracted fast, the midnight vigil, the morning prayer, and the evening hymn, and see whether all or any of these can heal a wounded conscience. But why do I mention these things? Are there Papists or Puseyites before me? No. But because there really is no medium between faith in Christ’s blood and full-blown Popery. As between grace and works, Christ’s blood and human merits, there is no real medium, so there is no standing ground between experimental religion and Popery, between absolution by Christ and absolution by the Pope. The Pope’s real ‘see’ is the human heart. To drive out this Antichrist and bring in Christ is the main work of the Spirit, the grand aim and end of the gospel.

“This is the reason why the Lord, in His wonderful dealings

with the soul, makes it sink so deeply and feel so acutely. It is to drive out heart-popery.... thousands are Papists in heart who are Protestants in creed. How many, for instance, there are who would fain heal themselves – some by duties, some by doctrines, some by resolutions, some by promises, some by vows, some by false hopes, some by ordinances, some by the opinion of ministers, some by church membership! What is this but a subtle form of Popery? How many heal themselves in this slight way! and every one will do so till the wound is opened up and deepened by the Spirit of God. Then all these vain and inefficacious remedies are seen in their true light. They do not speak peace to the conscience; they bring no sense of pardon to the soul; the love of God does not accompany them; the fear of judgment is not taken away; the grave has still its terrors, and death has still its sting. All these remedies, therefore, are found in the case of the child of God to be utterly inefficacious, because they cannot heal the wounds, the deep wounds, that sin has made.”<sup>95</sup>

*Heart-Popery!* We have examined many trappings of Popery in this book; and it is right, it is necessary, that every true Protestant casts off these “Babylonish garments”. Popish trappings have no place in Bible Christianity. The Bible, and the Bible alone, is the religion of Protestants. “All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim. 3:16,17). For our doctrine, reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness, we need nothing but Scripture! This is absolutely all-sufficient to furnish the Christian unto all good works! What need have we for either the doctrines or the practices of Rome? None whatsoever. More than that, it is nothing less than *sinful* to even attempt to

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<sup>95</sup> *Sermons by the late J.C. Philpot*, Vol. 1, pp.7,8. Gospel Standard Trust Publications, Harpenden, Herts., England, 1977.



attach any Popish trapping to the true Christian faith. Every true Christian must utterly detest, and reject, all that is not found within the Word of God, as regards how he worships and serves his Lord and Master.

But I have been speaking of the true Christian. What about those who are Protestants in creed but Papists in heart? A man may refuse to use the corrupt Bible versions, and detest pictorial representations of Christ; he may proclaim himself a believer in sovereign grace, and wax eloquent against Arminianism; he may speak out against infant “baptism” and baptismal regeneration, defending believers’ baptism and spiritual regeneration by the Word and the Spirit; he may advocate true spiritual prayer and condemn vain repetitive prayer, and he may refuse all usage of the image and sign of the cross; he may keep himself separate from all Popish festivals; he may stand firm for the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, rejecting any “clergy/laity” distinction, and he may agree fully that ministerial titles should not be given and distinguishing ministerial garb should not be worn; he may condemn the lavish lifestyles of so many “ministers”; he may see the danger of denominational hierarchies clearly; and he may embrace the Protestant prophetic interpretation while rejecting the Roman Catholic systems; he may do all this and more, *and yet* – he may be a Papist in heart! For if he is in any sense, or to any degree, *trusting in* the doctrines he holds in his head or the duties he performs, the church he belongs to or his pastor’s opinion of him, the fact that he was correctly baptized or the fact that he knows the truth about Rome – if he is *trusting in anything other than Christ alone* for his everlasting salvation, he is a Papist in heart!

What, after all, is at the very heart of Popery? It is this: salvation by one’s own efforts. And what is the very heart of the true Gospel of Christ? It is this: salvation by God’s grace alone, through faith in Jesus Christ alone! And untold multitudes of Protestants are trusting in their church, or their duties, or their doctrines, instead of solely in the Lord Jesus Christ!

Let it be well understood: sound doctrine, and true Christian practice, *are* important. Very much so! But they are the *evidences* of true saving faith, they are not the *means by which* men are saved! Yes, certainly, there are doctrines which are necessary to be known and believed for salvation: such truths as the Person and Work of the Lord Jesus Christ; salvation by grace through faith; etc. We must know who Christ is, and what He came to do, before we can be saved by believing in Him (e.g. Rom. 10:8–14; 1 Cor. 15:1–4; 2 Jn. 9,10). But we are *not saved* by merely ticking off a list of doctrines which we believe intellectually, and patting ourselves on the back because we have orthodox brains and are therefore on our way to heaven. There are untold millions of souls in hell, who were orthodox in doctrine while on earth! A man may pride himself on having sound doctrine in the head, who does not have Christ in the heart!

We are not saved by lining up a list of orthodox doctrines in our heads. We are saved by the Lord Jesus Christ alone. *And then* – having *been* saved by faith in Him – we will desire to cast off all false doctrines and practices, all Popish trappings, so as to observe only what Christ Himself commanded (Matt. 28:20). Not *in order* to be saved, but because *we are* saved, and we love Him, and desire above all else to live as pleases Him!

I urge my readers, therefore: do not put the cart before the horse! Do not say, “I am a Christian, because I do not keep Christmas and Easter”, or, “I am a Christian, because I’ve been baptized by full immersion.” These things do not make you or anyone else a Christian! A true Christian is one who has believed with all his heart in the Lord Jesus Christ and repented of his sins, trusting in Him alone for salvation, having renounced all his own works, and cast himself upon the Lord Jesus Christ as his only hope. If this is not true of you, then you are not as yet a true Christian!

All men, by nature, are Papists at heart, for Popery is the religion of the unregenerate man. It is as old as the fall of man at the beginning of the world, for it is nothing but man's attempt to earn his own salvation; and that is the heart of all false religion the world over. This is the common denominator of Popery, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, all the cults, and all other false religion anywhere in the world. It is man in rebellion against God. It is man saying, "I will earn my salvation by my own efforts." It is man saying, "I will *do* this, I will *do* that."

All men are Papists at heart; it is the religion of the natural man. And tragically, many who call themselves Bible believers are still in precisely the same unregenerate state as any Papist. They are just as determined to earn their own salvation – by accumulating a list of doctrines, however biblical they may be, and by doing certain things, however biblical they may be. And they pat themselves on the back and say, "At least *I* am not a Papist! At least *I* have turned my back on Arminianism, and baptismal regeneration, and all these other Popish trappings!" – and yet they are deceived souls, trusting in all the wrong things for their salvation. Salvation is by faith in Jesus Christ – nothing else! Sound doctrine, and godly conduct, must *follow* salvation, and will *witness* to one's salvation; but sound doctrine and godly conduct *do not save a soul!* They are the *fruits* of true salvation, not the *means* of it.

Forsake all Popish trappings, yes! Forsake them, detest them, turn from them! But first – make certain that your own *heart* is free from that soul-damning heart-Popery that whispers peace to your soul, when there is no peace. Make certain, first of all, that you are a true Christian, saved by God's free grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ alone! And then you will want to be free of all Popish trappings, not because you want to impress God with your superior

knowledge or better practices, but because you *love* Him, your God and Saviour, and desire with all your heart to live as He has commanded in His Word, to the glory of His Name alone!

*“Come out of her, my people...” (Rev. 18:4)*

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*By the same author:*

## SATAN'S SEAT

There is a powerful and sinister institution at work in the world, claiming to be Christian but in reality antichristian, which is all the more deadly because it appears so beautiful and holy to so many. According to the Word of God, fully supported by the historical evidence which perfectly fits the prophetic picture, this is the *Roman Catholic Institution*. This biblical truth has been believed by countless numbers of God's people through the centuries, but it is not believed by the multitudes of modern-day "Protestants", caught up in the pursuit of "unity" with the Roman Catholic Institution. It is the purpose of this book to bring the truth to light.

*Satan's Seat* traces this religio-political system from its origins in ancient paganism to its final prophetic destruction. It has been written so that the Christian reader will have, in his hands, a book which gives a panoramic view of centuries of history. Fully documented and easy to read, it also presents the Gospel to Roman Catholics, Protestants, and others.

## "HOLY WAR" AGAINST SOUTH AFRICA

In April 1994, after decades in which South Africa was torn apart by a Red revolution of horrifying proportions, the Communist-controlled African National Congress came to power. Here is the true story, written by one who lives in SA: the story of a beautiful land drenched in blood and tears. Fully documented, this book demonstrates that the SA revolution would never have succeeded were it not for the enthusiastic, active and sustained support of the Vatican, the World Council of Churches, and other religious institutions, who threw their weight behind the Communist revolutionaries. This was, in a very real sense, a religious revolution, waged as much with terribly distorted interpretations of the Bible as with bullets, and directed as much by those paying allegiance to the Vatican, and to Geneva, as to Moscow.

This book pulls no punches: the mask of piety and holiness which these religious institutions wear is ripped away. In addition, the absolute sovereignty of God in controlling all events is shown throughout.

## THE PAGAN FESTIVALS OF CHRISTMAS AND EASTER

Multitudes worldwide celebrate the festivals of Christmas and Easter every year. For many, these festivals are simply holidays, times for merriment and revelry. For the majority of those who profess to be Christians, however, they supposedly commemorate the birth, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. But what is the *truth* about these two festivals? Were they appointed by the Lord, to be kept by His Church? And if not, *where did* they originate?

This book is an in-depth examination of these festivals, in the light of God's Word. They are shown to be of Babylonian and Roman Catholic origin, and furthermore, to be perversions of what the Bible really teaches about the birth, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. No true Christian should have anything to do with them. Fully documented.



