

THE PAPAL DOMINION IS NOT CHRISTIANITY

Tract Twenty

A series of Tracts presenting a Protestant view of Church history, tracing the roots of the true Church from New Testament times right up to the present day. Showing how the apostasy developed in the Papal Dominion, and then looking at what has happened in the last two hundred years WITHIN evangelicalism in North America. Men who still claim to be Protestant Evangelicals now want to combine with the Papal Dominion to form the ecumenical-read-Catholic-church, with the pope of Rome as the Universal Primate of this religious conglomerate. We will see, as history unfolds that in the last two hundred years non-catholics have sought to assist, and many are still working to assist in what Edward Elliott regarded as the theological suicide of Protestantism, in his battle with the Tractarians in England, in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

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The Protestants explained the fact that their doctrinal affiliations lay with those who had been condemned by the medieval church, such as Wycliffe and Huss, and armed themselves with a defense against catholic charges of innovation and particularity. The visible church, far from being an infallible custodian of the truth, was itself a battlefield between the children of light and the children of darkness.

D. M. Loades,

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... As between the world and the kingdom of Christ there is a continual repugnance, so between the two parts of this visible church aforesaid growth great variance and mortal persecution, insomuch that sometimes the true church of Christ hath no greater enemies than those of its own profession and company.

John Fox, the Martyrologist

Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. You shall know them by their fruits (Matthew 7:15).

The Lord Jesus Christ

(Are there any false prophets today coming to the church as sheep and yet are wolves? Or have the wolves all disappeared; and no longer exist?)

All the efforts of the Roman Catholic Church since (the Reformation) have been directed to the work of Counter-Reformation "to re-establish the political and social order of pre-Reformation times... The political and social order that resulted from the Reformation, both in Europe and America, is regarded by the Roman Catholic Church as pagan and anti-Christian

L. H. Lehmann,

converted Roman Catholic priest

INTRODUCTION

GOD'S WAR

One of the greatest proofs of the almost total ignorance of a knowledge of church history is the way the word CATHOLIC is used today; not only by the secular news media, not only by the Papal Dominion; not only by the ecumenical "non-catholics" but even by those who purport to be defending the truth and contending for the faith. There is nothing that demonstrates the victory of the Papal Dominion in America today; than the use of the word "catholic" to describe the religion of the Papacy.

The ecclesiastical field has now been conceded to the popes of Rome and their religion. The Reformers, the Puritans, and the Protestants who followed them did NOT concede the ecclesiastical field to the popes of Rome and their false religion. They set forth in their teachings; and in their confessions of faith; what the true Catholic Church was and is; and also to avoid any possible confusion with the Papal Dominion, they also set forth what this great world wide false religion was and is. They did not pussy-foot around as the Tractarians, and the modern men who follow the Tractarians, do. They defended with scriptural arguments their teaching about the Body of Christ; the Catholic Church on earth. And clearly contrasted the Catholic Church with the Papal Dominion of Antichrist.

As we have already seen, the hermeneutical war of the Reformation was real then; and it is still real today. The Reformation was not a study in irenics; it was a profound, long-drawn-out, polemical and hermeneutical struggle. Indeed, it can be said that the Reformation was TOTAL exegetical warfare. Millions of those who followed the hermeneutics of the Reformers, were killed in sieges, wars, and massacres. Yet the reason for the devil, and his antichristian forces, launching such lethal

persecution against those who followed the Reformers, was basically HERMENEUTICAL. It was because they sought to build their church on an exegesis of Scripture ALONE! This is what the Protestant Reformation was all about: THE EXEGESIS OF HOLY SCRIPTURE!

The EXEGESIS of Scripture brought to the world the IDENTITY OF THE TRUE Christian Church; the identity of the Head of that Catholic Universal Body of Christ; and the identity of the great enemy of Christ and His Church. Many of the great truths that the Protestant reformers and the Puritans brought to light; have since been lost. First, through the efforts of the Jesuits; then through the efforts of the Tractarians; and now through the efforts of those engaged in the irenic dialogues of the ecumenical movement.

Ignorance is a great evil. The Lord Jesus Christ said, "You shall know the truth; and the truth shall make you free." • Therefore where the truth is not known the worse forms of slavery and tyranny rule. Men have been conscious of the ignorance of truth in the church. For where the ignorance of the gospel reigns, there the god of this age is triumphant. For he seeks to blind the MINDS of those that believe not the gospel; to keep that glorious message of truth from shining into their ignorant hearts and minds.

Even some men, enveloped in the darkness of medieval religion, could see the gross ignorance of their times. Archbishop Peckham, in his Constitutions of AD 1281, dwelt on the "illiteracy of the clergy" • of his times; and the evils arising from it. He stated that,

The ignorance of priests precipitates the people into the pit of error; and the folly of boorishness of clerks, who are commanded to instruct the minds of the faithful in the catholic faith, sometimes INCREASES ERROR rather than doctrine.

Shortly after that time, Bishop Quivil of Exeter, in 1287, said that,

Since ignorance was the mother of all errors and ought above all to be shunned by priests, whose office consisted in preaching and teaching, each archdeacon should inquire which vicars, rectors, or priests were "enormously illiterate" • and report them.

The degree of ignorance at this time can be seen by the criteria used to show what "enormous illiteracy" meant. It meant the inability "to say by heart the commandments, seven sins, seven sacraments, and the creed." • This meant that you were not considered "enormously illiterate" • if you could repeat this meager amount of knowledge. Meaning also that the ignorance of the gospel was not even mentioned. Surely, according to the Bible, the ignorance of God's Word and the glorious gospel revealed there, is the worst ignorance of all!

Amid the plethora of electronic devices; and the information tsunami of the internet; there are still three great "ignorances" in North America today. 1. The ignorance of God's inspired, infallible, and inerrant Word. 2. The ignorance of the great doctrines, and a systematic theology built upon those doctrines, derived from the Word of God. 3. The ignorance of the titanic struggle of the Protestant Reformers and those who followed them to maintain these great truths in the face of a determined demonic onslaught from hell, that was out to eradicate such truths from the minds of men. Indeed, they sailed through very bloody seas to maintain and to spread the glorious doctrines of redeeming grace to lost sinners everywhere.

As the old archbishop said, ignorance "increases error." • It certainly can never DIMINISH error or overcome error. Only the truth, known, and taught, can ever diminish or overcome error.

The true identity of the Christian Church is not even known today by writers who repudiate the Papal Dominion. This disturbing fact highlights the loss of the identity of the true Catholic Church, that is present everywhere today.

The whole effort to write a Protestant view of Church history, has been, still is, and will continue to be, to demonstrate that the,

PAPAL DOMINION HAS NEVER BEEN THE BODY OF CHRIST; THE BRIDE OF CHRIST, THE CATHOLIC-UNIVERSAL-CHURCH ON EARTH; THAT IT IS NOT NOW THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON EARTH; AND THAT IT WILL NEVER BE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ON EARTH.

During the Dark Ages the true Catholic Church existed here and there where the persecuting evil system of the Papal Dominion could not extirpate it. It was mainly an underground church; just as it is in many countries of the world today.

These Dissenters NEVER conceded that what they called the Great Wild Beast of the Apocalypse manifesting itself in the garb of the Papal Dominion, that was so grievously persecuting God's elect, was the Catholic-Universal-Body of Christ on earth. They regarded it as the Mystery of Iniquity, which was present when Paul wrote his epistle to the Thessalonians; and which had developed into the great falling away from the truth, and which then manifested itself in history, in the form of the antichristian Papal Dominion.

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THE IDENTITY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH BASED UPON THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

One of the MAIN teachings, that came out of the hermeneutics of the Reformers, was the truth that the Papal Dominion was not the Catholic Church. All the Reformers taught that the Papal Dominion was the Antichrist.

Today, the term CATHOLIC CHURCH is now applied indiscriminately by the news-media to the Papal religion ruled by the pope of Rome. And he is called over and over again "the Head of the Catholic Church." • It is obvious that the word CATHOLIC needs examination; for almost everyone misconstrues its meaning today.

When teaching students about the "Catholic Epistles," • strange looks come upon their faces. Indeed, some churches that still say the Apostles' Creed have changed the word "catholic" • to "Christian." • We believe in the Holy Christian Church. • They do not repeat the Creed as it has been repeated for generations. • "We believe in the holy Catholic Church." • Showing how the ecclesiastical field had now been almost universally conceded to the emissaries of the Papal Dominion.

True Protestants rejoice with the Protestant Reformers and those who followed them, and marvel at their grace and power in NEVER conceding the ecclesiastical field, the soteriological field, the eschatological field, and indeed the historical field, to the Jesuits of Rome. They stayed on these exegetical battle fields; wielded the sword of the Spirit; and waged a good hermeneutical warfare; and remained at their posts through some of the worst times of church history to win their theological war. Their weapons were not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Up until Vatican II, the Papal Dominion called itself the Roman Catholic Church. After Vatican II the word ROMAN was dropped and the pope and his Papal Dominion, sought to steal the name of the true church of God's elect, and give it to their false religion.

Since then the term Catholic Church has become synonymous with the Papal Dominion; and the antichristian pope is now everywhere addressed as the head of the Catholic Church. It was a masterstroke of the Devil to try to take the Name of the true Body of Christ, and to dethrone Christ as the true Head of His universal Church, the home of God's elect, and give it all to Antichrist.

The efforts of the Protestant Reformers and the Puritans, in dismissing the pope as the head of the true church and identifying him, and his apostate religion, as Antichrist were at one time, widely known throughout Protestant Churches and beyond them. Their exegesis was later attacked by the Jesuits so successfully, that it is virtually unknown in what are still called "Bible-believing" circles today.

The ignorance of Protestant history is monumental today. The hermeneutical labors of the Reformers and the Puritans to showcase the scriptural basis of the true Catholic Church on earth, have been eclipsed by the Jesuits, repudiated by the Tractarians, ignored by evangelicals, so as to become virtually unknown in the "non-Protestant" churches and academia today. At one time such truths were universally known in Protestant Churches and were adopted into their creeds which still exist today.

Cardinal Manning, during the Tractarian era in England, said that few Protestants then knew anything about their creeds. This was true a hundred and twenty years ago. It is so much worse now than then. The ignorance of the creeds of Protestantism is now almost total. Yet at one point in history, millions subscribed the creeds of Protestantism. In the following pages we will look at excerpts from the writings of some of the Reformers. Then at relevant passages from the different creeds of Protestant churches, and then at the argument from church history, all in order to establish what constitutes the true church of God's elect, headed up by the Lord Jesus Christ, in contrast to the enduring deception and corruption of the Papal Dominion.

MARTIN LUTHER

Luther, early on in his ministry, began to have questions about the Papal Dominion in which he was laboring. He began to criticize certain errors and practices in the only "church" he had ever known. He had very little in the way of a precedent to follow. He was feeling his way along step by step.

In his early work, *The Papacy in Rome*, he leveled certain accusations against the Papacy. In his later writings he would become much more convinced of the evils in the Papal System. Finally he came to regard the whole Papal Dominion as the antichrist.

Luther, in his debate with Eck made some points early on in his ministry against the pope as the Head of the Church.

Eck claimed that,

“There is in God’s Church a primacy derived from Christ Himself. The Church militant has been set up in the likeness of the Church triumphant. But this latter is a monarchy, wherein everything ascends hierarchically to its sole head – God Himself. Therefore it is that Christ has established a similar order upon earth. How monstrous would the Church be without a head.”

1:

Aubigne, Merle, *History of the Reformation*, Vol. II,

N. Y. Robert Carter, N. Y., NY, 1843, p. 47.

LUTHER, turning to the assembly,

“When the doctor declares that it is most needful that the Church universal have a Head, he says well. If there be any one among us who affirms the contrary, let him stand forth. I hold no such thing.”

2:

Ibid., p. 48.

ECK, “If the Church militant has never been without its one Head, I would beg to ask who he can be, but the Roman Pontiff?”

Luther, raising his eyes to heaven,

“The Head of the Church militant is Christ himself, and not a mortal man. I believe this, on the authority of God’s testimony, whose word says, “He must reign until his enemies be put under his feet. Let us then no longer give ear to those who put away Christ to the Church triumphant in heaven. His kingdom is a kingdom of faith. We see not our Head, and yet we are joined to him.”

3:

Loc.,cit.

ECK, not discomfited, and turning to other arguments, resumed:

“It is from Rome, as St. Cyprian tells us, that sacerdotal unity proceeded.”

LUTHER, “As regards the Western church, agreed. But is not this Roman Church herself derived from that of Jerusalem? And to speak correctly, the church of Jerusalem was mother and nurse of all the churches.”

4:

Loc.,cit.

ECK, "St. Jerome affirms, that if authority above that of all other churches is not lodged with the pope, there will be in the Church as many schisms as there are bishops."

LUTHER, "I admit it, that is to say, that if all the faithful were consenting, this authority might, agreeably to the principles of human legislation, be rightfully ascribed to the chief Pontiff. Neither would I deny that if the whole body of believers should consent to acknowledge as first and chief bishop "the bishop of Rome, or of Paris, or of Magdeburg, it would be our duty to acknowledge him as such," "from respect to this general consent of the whole church: but that is what the world has never seen nor ever will see. Even in our own day, does not the Greek church withhold her consent to Rome?"

5:

Ibid., p. 49.

As Eck appealed to the authority of the Fathers, Luther resolved to defeat him by the Fathers themselves.

"That my construction of the word," said he, "is truly what St. Jerome intended, I will prove by his own epistle to Evagrius. Every bishop, says he, whether of Rome or of Eugubium, whether of Constance or of Regium, whether of Alexandria or of Thanis, has the same honour and the same priestly rank. The influence of wealth, or the humility of poverty alone, makes their difference of standing."

From the Fathers, Luther passed to the decrees of the Councils, which recognize in the bishop of Rome only the first among his peers. "We read," said he, "in the decree of the Council of Africa, "Let not the bishop of the chief See be called Prince of the Pontiffs, or Sovereign Pontiff, or any other name of that sort, but simply bishop of the first See." "If the monarchy of the bishop of Rome were of divine right," continued Luther, "would not this decision be heretical?"

6:

Loc.,cit.

Eck at this time realized he was up against someone who knew the early writers better than he did. So he then resorted to a different tactic. He thought he would tie Luther's position into the heretics of the Middle Ages. He said, "Did not the Bohemians deny the primacy of the Supreme Pontiff, the doctor (Luther) has recalled these heretics to my recollection. His inferences which he has drawn are entirely favorable to their errors."

7:

Ibid., p. 51.

Eck definitely played to the gallery here, for a great round of applause broke forth from his partisan supporters after he linked Luther to the heretics. Luther replied that he did not love schism and the Bohemians were wrong in separating from the Church. At this time Luther had not advanced far on his pilgrimage. He would later openly support the Bohemians.

This took place during the morning session of the debate. It broke up for lunch.

Some believe that his friends told him that he had gone too far in condemning the Bohemians. So at two o'clock in the afternoon the debate resumed. Luther broke the silence by saying clearly:

Among the articles of John Hus and the Bohemians, there are some that are most agreeable to Christ. This is certain. There is only ONE church universal. And again: That it is not necessary to salvation that we should believe the Roman church superior to others. It matters little to me whether Wyclif or Hus said it. It is the truth.

8:

Ibid., p. 52.

This caused an even greater uproar. Duke George said that Luther was mad. From that moment on he was the enemy of Luther. Other subjects were debated but none surpassed the one on the pope's primacy for interest and dissension. D'Aubigne said the debate "inflicted an open wound on the Papacy." • Luther closed the debate by observing that Eck avoided the Holy Scriptures as a devil flees from the cross, adding, that he preferred the authority of the Word of God with all due respect for the fathers.

In speaking of the claim to universal power on the part of the pope, Luther says,

Let a layman ask such Romanists and let them answer why they despoil and mock all the divine orders and rant so violently about this power, though they cannot show at all why it is necessary or what it is good for. For ever since it has arisen, papal power has accomplished nothing but the devastation of Christendom, and no one is able to show anything good or useful that has resulted from it.

9:

Luther, Martin, Select Writings of, Fortress Press, Philadelphia, 1967, Vol. I, p. 207.

Luther says, that for the benefit of the blockhead (that is the man he is answering) and for those led astray by him, he must speak bluntly.

The Scriptures speak of the church quite simply and use the term in only one sense... according to the Scriptures, the church is called the assembly of all believers in Christ on earth... This community or assembly consists of those who live in true faith, hope, and love. As Paul says in Ephesians 4:5, "One baptism, one faith, one Lord, Though they be a thousand miles apart in one body. Yet they are called an assembly in spirit because each one preaches, believes, hopes, loves, and lives like the other... This really means a spiritual unity, and because of it men are called a communion of saints. This unity of itself is of itself sufficient to make a church, and without it no unity, be it of place, of time, of person, of work, or of whatever else, makes a church.

10:

Ibid., p. 211.

Luther then considers the subject of the Head of the church. He says first, that, "The true church may not and cannot have a head on earth, and no one on earth, neither bishop nor pope can rule over it. Only Christ in heaven is the head and He rules alone."

11:

Ibid., p. 217.

He continues:

In the second place, it is proved by the nature of the head. For in the nature of every head joined to a body, it infuses life and feeling and activity into all its members.

Now, no man can instill into the soul of another, or into his own soul, true faith and the mind, will, and work of Christ, but Christ himself must do this. For neither pope nor bishop can produce in a man's heart faith or anything else a Christian member should have. But a Christian must have the mind and will which Christ has in heaven, as the Apostle says in I Corinthians 2:16, 3:23. It may also happen that a Christian member has the faith which neither pope nor bishop has, how then can the pope be his head?...

Who has ever seen a live animal with a lifeless head. The head must give life to the body, therefore it is clear that on earth there is no other head of the spiritual church but Christ alone. Moreover, if a man were its head here below, Christendom would perish as often as a pope dies, for the body cannot live when the head is dead.

12:

Ibid., p. 212.

St. Paul stands strong and immovable in Ephesians 4:15-16 giving to Christendom but one head and saying, "Let us be true Christians and grow up in every way into Him who is the head, into Christ from whom the whole body joined and knit together by every joint with which it is supplied, when each part is working properly, makes bodily growth and unbuilds itself in love..."

Thus it is clear that the holy church is not bound to Rome, but is as wide as the world. The assembly of those of one faith, a spiritual and not a bodily thing.

13:

Ibid., p. 221.

He then gives his opponent an elementary lesson in logic.

You argue your major premises, which no one questions, and assume the correctness of your minor premises, which every one questions, and then you draw the conclusions to suit yourself.

Listen to me, and I will give you a better lesson in logic. I agree with you in saying that everything that is typified by the high priest in the Old Testament must be fulfilled in the New, as Paul said in I Corinthians 10:6. Thus far we agree. Now you continue: St. Peter or the pope was typified by Aaron. I say no. What can you do then? On what foundation have you built: on your own dreams, and yet you boast you will argue against me with the Scriptures?

14:

Ibid., pp. 214-216.

The "learned Romanist" • who was debating with Luther had claimed that the pope was a type of Christ. Luther answered him.

I say that Aaron was a type of Christ and not the pope... In the first place Christ is a spiritual priest for the inner man, for He sits in heaven and makes intercession for us as a priest, teaches us inwardly and does everything a priest should do in mediating between God and man, as St. Paul says in Romans 3:24-25, and in the whole epistle to the Hebrews Aaron is the type...

Second in order not to bring my own thoughts I have the passage from Psalm 110:4, "The Lord has sworn and will not change His mind, you are a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedek." • Can you cite a passage like that about St. Peter? Or the pope? For, I think that you will not deny that this passage refers to Christ... and in many other places... Thus we see how beautifully the Romanists treat the Scriptures and make out of them what they like, as if they were a nose of wax to be pulled around at will.

15:

Loc.,cit.

Again Luther says,

We have proved from the Scriptures that Christ is the high priest of the New Testament. Clearer still is Paul's comparison of Aaron and Christ in Hebrews 9: 6-12 where he wrote, "the priests go continually into the outer tent, performing their ritual duties, but into the second only the high priest goes, and he once a year, and not without taking blood which he offers for himself and for the errors of his people. By this the Holy Spirit indicates that the way into the sanctuary is not yet opened as long as the outer tent is still standing... But when Christ appeared as high priest of the good things to come, then through the greater and more perfect tent not made with hands, that is, not of this creation, he entered once for all into the Holy Place, taking not the blood of goats and calves but his own blood thus securing an eternal redemption.

What say you to this, my learned Romanist? Paul says the High-Priest typified Christ, you say St. Peter. Paul says Christ entered not into a temporal building; you say he is in the temporal building in Rome. Paul says Christ entered once and obtained eternal redemption, and Paul makes the type to be altogether spiritual and heavenly, while you make it to be earthly and external. What can you do now?

16:

Loc.,cit., pp. 226-227.

In his later studies on popedom as he called it, he set forth thirty reasons why the books of the pope were burned.

Here are some of these reasons:

Articles and Errors in the Canon Law and Papal books on account of which they are rightly to be burned and shunned.

Next to God the salvation of all Christendom depends on the pope.

The statement, "I believe in one holy church, etc." is opposed to this. All Christians, then, would have to perish as often as the pope is wicked.

The rock on which Christ builds his church, Matthew 16:18, is called the Roman See, although Christ alone is that very rock, I Corinthians 10:4.

No one on earth can judge the pope, also no one can judge his decision, rather he is supposed to judge all people on earth.

This is the main article. In order that it may become deeply imbedded, it is always quoted again and again through many chapters and almost through the whole canon law, so that it indeed appears as though the canon law were devised only in order that the pope could freely do and leave what he wished. If this article stands, then Christ and His Word are defeated. But if it does not stand then the whole canon law, together with the pope and See, are defeated.

He holds to be true and fosters the great unchristian lie that Emperor Constantine has given him Rome, land, empire, and power on earth.

Against this Christ says, Matthew 6:19, "Do not lay up for yourselves treasures on earth;" likewise, "You cannot serve God and mammon" Matthew 6:24.

No one who is married is able to serve God, even though Abraham and many saints have been married and God himself established marriage without a doubt. Thus the Antichrist again rises above God.

17:

Luther, op.cit., Vol. II, pp. 61-67.

Luther also set forth all the unscriptural and antiscritptural inventions that smothered the Papal Dominion in worthless religious exercises from one year's end to the next.

The things which have been practiced and custom in the pretended church.

1. Indulgences
2. Sacrificial masses and the innumerable ways of doing them
3. Abuse of the ban
4. Purgatory
5. Poltergeist
6. Innumerable pilgrimages

7. Vigils
8. Masses for the dead
9. Anniversary masses
10. Masses at four weeks
11. Soul-baths
12. Veneration of saints, some of whom were never born
13. Saint's day without measure
14. Mary made a common idol with countless services, celebrations, fasts, hymns, and antiphons
15. Butter letters
16. Countless relics, with fraud
17. Innumerable brotherhoods
18. Celibate life
19. Dedications of churches
20. Dedications of altars
21. Dedications of images with indulgences
22. Baptism of bells with two-hundred godfathers on one rope
23. Distinctions of foods
24. Distinction of days
25. Distinction of dress
26. The compulsory of seven, or canonical hours
27. Sunday procession, a spectacle
28. Extreme unction, for death, not for health
29. Sacrament of marriage
30. Sacrament of priesthood
31. Sacrament of confirmation
32. Acolytes

33. Tonsurists

34. Lectors

35. Subdeacons

36. Prayers to St. Bridget

37. The same kind of prayers with prayer books replete with honors to God

He continues the list,

Tonsures Candles

Chasubles Flags

Albs Censers

Surplices Fonts

Cowls Monstrances

Churches Pyxes

Chapels Chalices

Altars Organs

Altar cloths Bells

Lights Holy water

Candlesticks Holy salt

Images Incense

Tablets And all sorts of food

Crucifixes

In Lent:

Ash Wednesday

Hunger cloths

Veiling of images

Keeping fasts, except for the clerics

Litany of the saints

Hymns to Mary of an evening

Confession torture

Penance and satisfaction

Long prayers

Palm-ass

Palm-shooting

Palm-swallowing

Palm crosses

Compulsory confession

Compulsory communion

Kissing and idolizing the cross

Burying the cross

Half-mass on good Friday

Singing psalms at the (holy) grave

Dark-mass

Not ringing, but clattering the bells

Passion sermons eight hours long

Consecrating the fire

Easter candles

Lifting the cross out of the grave and carrying it as in a play

Consecrating cakes on Easter Day

Procession on St. Mark's Day

Cross weeks

Ascension at nones

The Holy Ghost on Pentecost

Corpus Christi procession

The Assumption of the Blessed Virgin

Church dedications

Festivals of patron saints

Community weeks

St. Burkart's Day

Ember days

All Saints' Day

All Souls' Day

St. Martin's goose

Advent, more to serve Mary than Christ

The Rorate mass

The Conception of the Blessed Virgin

Three Christmas masses

The *Apparuit* and music.

18:

Luther, op.cit., Vol. IV, pp. 106-109.

Luther called all this "the Pretended church."

Luther said the mark of a standing or falling church was the article of Justification by faith alone.

Schaff, with others, have disagreed here with Luther.

However, the Bible agrees with Luther. Luther came to see that Justification by faith alone was the entrance into Christ and into His church.

Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God. Augustine wrote of the need of vivifying grace, the grace that makes a dead sinner come alive to God. As far as Adam's helpless race is concerned: justification by faith alone is the key truth. For nothing else registers until a man is justified by faith alone in the finished work of Christ.

The Papal Dominion is a dead dominion. There is no life there. It does not matter how many great tomes men may have written about God; about a world view; about the Church; about Christ; all such works have the marks of a dead sinner. A man who is personally dead to the truth; dead to Christ; and dead to the grace of God; cannot write anything but dead work. According to the Word, the Adamic race is dead in trespasses and in sins. So until a person comes out of this state of death nothing else matters. For until a dead sinner has peace with God he remains under the wrath of God.

So it does not matter what he writes about God; about a world view; even if he was to get some things correct; it would do him no good personally. He would still be under the wrath of God and lost forever. A justified man may learn many things about the divine trinity; and about a world view arising from that Divine Trinity; but he will never know such truth until he is justified. For before his justification he is spiritually dead. Therefore, dead to the truth, dead to God, and dead to the Church. A good personal friend of mine learned the Shorter catechism by heart and was able to repeat all the answers, so as to win a reward for his diligence. Yet just a few years later he became a Mormon and has languished ever since in that most pathetic of all cults, where a man can read hieroglyphics by putting on magic spectacles. My friend learned many great theological truths while learning the catechism, but he was never justified by faith alone in the finished work of Christ; so all the learning went past him for he was still dead in trespasses and in sins.

Luther was looking at the church from the stand point of man. He rightly saw that until a man was saved by grace; he knew nothing about the grace that saves. He remained dead to grace. However, when a man was justified he immediately had peace with God; and therefore began to understand truths about God that would enable him to build a good world view. Schaff said Christ was the mark of a standing or falling church. But surely Luther understood that. He reveled in being justified by faith and having peace with God THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. He recognized surely, as well as any man who ever lived, that Christ alone was the one who justified the believing sinner. Luther's eyes were opened when he read that "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes." • The justified man will hunger and thirst for righteousness and his pursuit of sanctification, but he cannot do that until he is justified by the merits of Christ's righteousness alone. The justified man will learn many truths; but he will learn none that affect him until he is justified. The saved man will learn many truths about the Grace that saved him; but he will learn none until he is saved by grace alone.

Luther looked at the Papal Dominion in which he himself was reared, and he saw nothing but a system of works religion that spelled out clearly DEATH rather than life. The whole edifice of the Papal Dominion was a mausoleum of death. The parade of human inventions had brought death; not life to those who entered her doors. A litany of liturgy and sacraments produced nothing but spiritual death. Luther looked at them all and concluded it was all pretense.

The very statuary and images and relics "deadmen's bones" all spoke of lifelessness and spiritual darkness. The statues did not breathe. The relics did not breathe. Dead saints, heads, and statues did not breathe. All the art and all the architecture gave off the pallor of death and lifelessness. Even though millions of pages were written about such things, by thousands of men. Even though millions of people bowed and scraped before the lifeless images. There was nothing but death and darkness. Holy water may have been splashed here and there; but it gave no life to anything or anybody.

The very Mass, the central object of worship, was a dead thing. Here, men calling themselves priests of a false religion, moved about an altar of sacrifice holding up a piece of bread and calling it god, and anathematizing all who denied that it was god and that it deserved to be worshiped as god. All this abominable practice was nothing but the exclamation point of death. A dead god, a dead statuary; dead images, dead relics; and to crown this sepulchral setting, the promise of punishment in purgatory, a dead place that exists in minds deadened to the truth that could save them from such a litany of death; the VIVIFYING POWER OF THE MESSAGE OF the glorious gospel. That through this man Jesus is preached unto us the forgiveness of sins so that all who believe can now be justified from all things that they could not be justified under the law of Moses.

The Lord Jesus Christ, when BELIEVED, JUSTIFIES the helpless child of Adam, and gives him or her peace with the living God; gives him the pure holy and perfect righteousness of Christ; imputed to him by faith alone, this is why Luther cried out that justifying faith is the article of a standing or falling church. Because it gave LIFE to the DEAD and brought every other truth it is possible to know into focus and into the possibility of knowing. Luther realized LIFE FROM THE DEAD was primary; everything else as far as Adam's helpless race FOLLOWED; it did not PRECEDE the necessary giving of LIFE to the DEAD. Augustin's VIVIFYING Word preceded everything else as far as sinful man is concerned. Luther said,

We can understand the heavy temptations of that everlasting predestination, which terrifies many people, nowhere better than from the wounds of our Saviour, Christ Jesus, of whom the Father commanded, saying: "Him shall ye hear." • But the wise of the world, mighty, the high-learned, and the great, by no means heed these things, so that God remains unknown to them, notwithstanding they have much learning, and dispute and talk much of God; for it is a short, conclusion: Without Christ, God will not be found, known, or comprehended.

If now thou wilt know, why so few are saved, and so infinitely many damned, this is the cause: the world will not hear Christ; they care nothing for him, yea, contemn that which the Father testifies of him: "This is my well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." •

Whereas all people that seek and labor to come to God, through any other means than only through Christ (as Jews, Turks, Papists, false saints, heretics, &c.), walk in horrible darkness and error; and it helps them nothing that they lead an honest, sober kind of life, affect great devotion, suffer much, love and honor God, as they boast, &c. For seeing they will not hear Christ, or believe in him (without whom no man knows God, no man obtains forgiveness of sins, no man comes to the Father,) they remain always in doubt and unbelief, know not how they stand with God, and so at last must die, and be lost in their sins. For, "He that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father," (I John, ii.) "He that believeth not the Son, shall not see life, but the wrath of God remains upon him." • (John, iii.)

19:

Cooke, Ronald, *Best of Luther's Table Talk*, self-published, pp. 29-30.

REFERENCES

JOHN CALVIN

John Calvin had Luther's insights about the papacy and the usurpation of the popes of Rome into the headship of the Church. Calvin demonstrates that the popes, even though they were called the Bishop of Rome, did not perform any of the functions of a biblical bishop, or overseer. He also pointed out that the religious house in Rome was not a church and therefore could never be the "mother of churches." •

This they must concede to me? What is not a church and a bishop? What is not a church cannot be the mother of churches; he who is not a bishop cannot be the prince of bishops. Do they then wish to have the apostolic See at Rome? Let them show me a true and lawful apostolate. Do they wish to have the supreme pontiff? Let them show me a bishop. What then? Where will they show us any semblance of the Church? They call it one indeed and have it repeatedly on their lips.

Surely a church is recognized by its own clear marks; and "episcopate" is the name of an office. Here I am not speaking of the people but of the government itself, which ought to perpetually shine in the church. Where in their church is there a ministry such as Christ's institution requires? Let us remember what has already been said of the presbyter's and bishop's office. If we test the cardinals by that rule, we shall admit that they are nothing less than they are presbyters. I should like to know what one Episcopal office quality the pontiff has. The first task of the bishop's office is to teach the people from God's Word. The second is to administer the sacraments. The third is to admonish and exhort, also to correct those who sin and to keep the people under holy discipline. What of these offices does he perform? Indeed, what does he even pretend to do. Let them say, therefore in what way they would have him regarded a bishop, who does not even in pretense touch any part of this office with his little finger.

1:

. Calvin, John, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1960, Vol. II., p. 1143.

Following the apostasy of Pope John XXII, Calvin looks at what he calls the "Moral Abandonment of the popes," and their relationship to one place on earth, the city of Rome.

Therefore, I return, whence I digressed. To bind Christ, the Spirit, and the church to a place, whoever may rule there, even if he be a devil, is still considered the vicar of Christ and head of the church because it was once Peter's see—"this, I say, is not only impious and insulting to Christ, but extremely absurd and alien to common sense. The Roman pontiffs either have for a long time been quite devoid of religion or have been its greatest enemies. Therefore, they no more become vicars of Christ because of the see which they occupy than an idol, when it is set in God's temple, is to be taken for God. (II Thess. 2:4). Now, if their morals be brought under judgment, let the pontiffs answer for themselves what one recognizable characteristic of a bishop they possess... For their office is to curb the people's license with severe discipline... Yet because they themselves together with their household, with almost the whole college of cardinals, and with the whole flock of their clergy, have been prostituted to all wickedness, filthiness, and uncleanness, and to all kinds of crimes and misdeeds, so that they resemble monsters rather than men—"in this they reveal themselves to be anything but bishops... And it seems to me I have quite sufficiently proved what I intended; even in Rome which had once been the head of churches, today it is not worthy of being regarded among the smallest toes of the church's feet.

2:

Ibid., pp. 1147-1148.

I deny that their pontiff is the chief of the bishops, since he is no bishop. But here O God, at what point shall I begin with his doctrine or his morals?... This I say: since the world today is flooded with so many perverse and impious doctrines, full of so many kinds of superstitions, blinded by many errors, drowned in such great idolatries—"there is none of these evils anywhere that does not flow from the Roman See, or at least draw strength there. There is no other reason why the pontiffs rage with such madness against the reviving doctrine of the gospel, and stretch every nerve to suppress it... He will be no vicar of Christ, who by persecuting the gospel with furious efforts, openly professes himself to be Antichrist, will he? He will be no successor of Peter, who strives with fire and sword to demolish all that Peter built up, will he? He will be no head of the church who, by cutting off and dismembering the church from Christ its own true head, will he? Of old, Rome was

indeed the mother of all churches; but after it began to be the seat of Antichrist, it ceased to be what it once was.

3:

Ibid., p. 1144.

Calvin deals with the apostasy of Pope John XXII.

But let us imagine that the impiety of the pontiffs whom I mentioned is hidden, because they have neither published it by preaching nor by writings, but have betrayed it only in table, in bedchamber, or at least within walls. However, if they wish this privilege (which they allege) to hold good, let them expunge from the list of the popes John XXII, who openly asserted that souls are mortal and die along with bodies until the day of resurrection. And that you may mark that the whole See with its chief props was then utterly fallen, none of the cardinals opposed this great madness, but the School of Paris impelled the king of France to force him to recant. The king forbade his subjects to communicate with John unless he should promptly repent, and publish this by herald in the usual way. Compelled by this necessity, the pope abjured his error, as Jean Gerson, who was then living, testifies. This example relieves me from having to dispute with my opponents any longer over their statement that the Roman See and its pontiffs cannot err in faith, because it was said to Peter: "I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail" (Luke 22:32). Surely with such a foul kind of fall did John XXII fall from the true faith that here is a notable proof of posterity that not all are Peters who succeed Peter in the bishop's office. Yet of itself this claim is also so childish it needs no answer. For if they wish to apply to Peter's successors everything that was said to Peter, it will follow that they are all Satans, since the Lord also said this to Peter: "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me" (Matt. 16:32). Indeed, it will be as easy for us to turn back this later saying upon them as for them to cast the other against us.

4:

Ibid., pp. 1146-1147.

John Calvin wrote plainly in his exegesis of I Timothy 3:14.

Consequently this communication relates to the ministry of the Word (the church is the pillar and ground of the truth) for if that be removed, the truth of God will fall to the ground. Not that it is less strong, if it be not supported by the shoulders of men, as the same Papists idly talk; for it is a shocking blasphemy to say, that the word of God is uncertain, till it obtain from men what may be called a borrow so certainly. Paul simply means what he states elsewhere in other words, that since our "faith is by hearing," there will be no faith, unless there be preaching. (Rom. X.17.) Accordingly in reference to men, the Church maintains the truth, because by preaching the Church proclaims it, because she keeps it pure and entire, because she transmits it to posterity. And if the instruction of the gospel be not proclaimed, if there are not today ministers who, by their preaching, rescue truth from darkness and forgetfulness, instantly falsehoods, errors, impostures, superstitions, and everything of corruption, will reign. In short, silence in the Church is the banishment and crushing of the truth. Is there anything at all forced in this exposition?

Having ascertained Paul's meaning, let us return to the Papist. First, by applying this eulogium to themselves, they act wickedly; because they deck themselves with borrowed feathers. For, granting that the Church were elevated above the third heaven, I maintain that it has nothing to do

with them in any manner. Nay, I even turn the whole passage against them; for, if the Church "is the pillar of truth," it follows that the Church is not with them, when the truth not only lies buried, but is shockingly torn, and thrown down, and trampled under foot. Is this either a riddle or a quibble? Paul does not wish that any society, in which the truth of God does not hold a lofty and conspicuous place, shall be acknowledged to be a Church; now there is nothing of all this in Popery, but only ruin and desolation and therefore, the true mark of a Church is not found in it. But the mistake arises from this, that they do not consider, what was of the greatest importance, that the truth of God is maintained by the pure preaching of the gospel.

5:

Calvin's Commentaries, Baker Book House, Grand Rapids, MI, Reprint, 2009, Vol. XXI, pp. 90-91.

Calvin comments on Christ's name above every name that is named in heaven and earth and in the world to come:

Above every name that is named. Name is here taken for largeness, or excellence; and to be named means to enjoy celebrity and praise. The age that is to come is expressly mentioned, to point out that the exalted rank of Christ is not temporal, but eternal; and that it is not limited to this world, but shines illustriously in the kingdom of God. For this reason, too, Isaiah calls him, (Isa. Lx 6) The Father of the future age. In short, the glories of men and angels are made to hold an inferior place, that the glory of Christ, unequalled and unapproached, may shine above them all.

And gave him to be the head. He was made the head of the Church, on the condition that he should have the administration of all things. The apostle shews that it was not a mere honorary title, but was accompanied by the entire command and government of the universe. The metaphor of a head denotes the highest authority. I am unwilling to dispute about a name, but we are driven to it by the base conduct of those who flatter the Romish idol. Since Christ alone is called "the head" all others, whether angels or men, must rank as members; so that he who holds the highest place among his fellows is still one of the members of the same body. And yet they are not ashamed to make an open avowal that the Church will be AKEPHALON "WITHOUT A HEAD, if it has not another head on earth, besides Christ. So small is the respect which they pay to Christ that if he obtain undivided the honor which his Father has bestowed upon Him, the church is supposed to be disfigured. This is the basest sacrilege. But let us listen to the Apostle, who declares that the Church is His body, and, consequently, that those who refused to submit to Him are unworthy of its communion. (Emphasis his).

6:

Ibid., p. 217.

One of the main hermeneutical advances the Protestant Reformers made was in the exegesis of Scripture concerning the true Head of the Church and the true Church itself. The Reformers lifted out of the Scripture the truth that the universal-catholic-Church had nothing whatsoever to do with the great false religious system of the Papal Dominion ruled over by the antichristian popes of Rome. They believed and expounded scriptures like Ephesians 1: 18-23.

The exceeding greatness of HIS power to us-ward (TOWARD US) who believe according to the working of His mighty power, which He wrought in Christ when He raised Him from the dead, and

SET HIM at His own right hand in the heavenlies ABOVE all principality, and power, and might, and DOMINION, and EVERY NAME that is NAMED, not only in this world, but also that which is to come: And has put ALL under His feet, and gave HIM to be the HEAD over all things to the CHURCH WHICH IS HIS BODY, the FULNESS OF HIM THAT FILLS ALL IN ALL.

REFERENCES

THE CREEDS OF PROTESTANTISM

The more I study the exegesis of the Protestant Reformers, the more I realize the errors I was taught in college and seminary not only about eschatology; but about church history. The importance of Church History cannot be overemphasized. For I was basically taught a church history where the antichristian popes were said to be the head of the Catholic Church. When indeed, they were no such thing. The Catholic Church is the universal BODY OF CHRIST over which Christ ALONE is the HEAD; and indeed the FULNESS that fills all in all.

Christ's BODY is the true universal catholic church on earth. The Papal Dominion is the historical development of the Mystery of Iniquity, that has been at work in the Church since Paul wrote to the Thessalonians; certainly not the Body of Christ.

The great hermeneutical revolution brought about through the ministry of the Reformers, was only achieved amid the most brutal massacres, persecution, and inquisition unleashed upon them and their followers by the minions of the Papal Dominion. Princes, like William I, of Orange, were assassinated. Countries were invaded and brutal massacres carried out in an attempt to halt the spread of the hermeneutical upheaval. It was military warfare and military tactics carried out against a theological and exegetical blitzkrieg. The sheer amount of Bibles, and portions of Scriptures, translated into the languages of different nations, and printed across Europe, was simply unstoppable by military conquest, massacre, and bloodshed. The weapons of the Reformers were not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of the strongholds of the Papal Dominion.

The Papal Dominion had to rely on physical and military force to try to stop the spread of biblical exegesis. It was a war they could not win. It was the lack of biblical exegesis that was the downfall of all papal claims. The Papal Dominion CLAIMED it was the Catholic Church. This claim was not based on biblical exegesis but rather on ecumenical councils, forged manuscripts, trickery, intrigue, conspiracy, and force.

In trying to write a basic outline of church history, it is impossible to do it, without looking at the issue of exegesis and theology. History is not theology. Yet history, that is history looked at from a Christian standpoint, and not the atheistic standpoint of evolution; cannot be written without paying close attention to theology. For as we were taught in Sunday School: history is simply HIS (Christ's) STORY. Indeed, apart from Christ, and all the theological truths that arise from His Person; His Work; and His Word; it is IMPOSSIBLE to write a true Protestant history of the Christian Church.

The exegesis of the Protestant Reformers carefully expounded the Written Word. They believed that the written Word was the ONLY authority for faith and practice in the Church. Following the Reformation various Protestant churches put out their confessions of Faith. They all dealt with the doctrine of the Church and the true Head of the church. There was no confusion generated as to

what comprised the Church and who was the ONLY Head of the Church. The following is a sampling of the comments made in various Protestant Confessions of Faith.

The Irish Articles of Religion, AD 1615

Agreed upon by the Archbishops and Bishops and rest of the Clergy in Ireland, in the Convention holden at Dublin in the year of our Lord 1615, for avoiding of diversities and opinions and the establishing of consent true religion.

The article on the head of the church reads:

The Bishop of Rome is so far from being the supreme head of the universal Church of Christ, that his works and doctrine do plainly discover him to be that Man of Sin, foretold in the Holy Scriptures, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and abolish with the brightness of His coming.

The Baptist Confession of 1688

This is the most generally accepted Confession of the Regular Baptists in England and in the Southern States of America. It appeared first in London, 1677, then again in 1688 and 1689 under the title *The Confession of Faith* put forth by the elders and Brethren of many congregations of Christians baptized upon their profession of their faith in London and the Country. (It was adopted by the Philadelphia Association of Baptist churches and hence is also called the *Philadelphia Confession of Faith*.)

Article 4 of the Baptist Confession reads:

The Lord Jesus Christ is head of the Church, in whom, by appointment of the Church, in whom, by appointment of the Father, all power for the calling, institution, order and government of the Church is invested in a supreme and sovereign manner; neither can the Pope of Rome, in any sense, be head thereof, but is no other than Antichrist, that Man of Sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself above all that is called God; whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

Confessio Fidei Scotianae II

Scottish Confession and National Covenant AD 1580

In the introduction to this confession the following statement is made:

And therefore we abhorre and detest all contrite religion and doctrine, but chiefly all kynde of papistrie in general and particular heads, even as they ar now damned and confuted by the Word of God and Kirk of Scotland. But in special, we detest and refuse the usurped authoritie of that Romane Antichrist upon the Scriptures of God, upon the Kirk, the civil magistrate, and consciences of men; all his tyrannous laws made upon indifferent things againis our Christian libertie. His erroneous doctrine against the sufficiencie of the written word, the perfection of the law, the office of Christ, and His blessed Evangell.

His corrupted doctrine concerning originall sinne, our natural inhabilitie and rebellion to God's law, our justification by faith onlie, our imperfect sanctification and obedience to the law... his five bastard sacraments; with all his rites, ceremonies, and false doctrine... His blasphemous opinion of

transubstantiation... His blasphemous priesthood; His prophane sacrifice for the sinnis of the deade and the quicke: his canonization of men, worshipping of imagerie... his purgatory, prayers for the dead; his multitude of advocates or mediatours, with manifold orders, and auricular confessions. His justification by warkis; warkis of supererogation, merits, pardons, peregrinations, and stations; his holie water, baptism of belles, his wardlie monarchie and wicked hierarchie... His erroneous and bloodie decrees made at Trente, with all the sybcryvars and approvers of that cruele and bloodie Band conjured againis the Kirk of God.

Declaration of the Faith and Order Owned and Practiced by the Congregational Churches in England at Savoy, Oct. 12, 1658

In article IV the *Savoy Declaration* states:

There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but it is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition that exalts himself in the Church against Christ, and all this called God, whom the Lord shall destroy with the brightness of His coming.

The *Savoy Declaration* was also adopted by the American Congregationalist meeting in historic Synod of Boston in 1680. It was also later adopted by the Synod of Saybrook in 1708.

The Helvetic Confession of 1566 rejects the Pope and the Papacy and the tyranny and corruption which such brings to the church.

The Church can have no other head than Christ. He is the one universal pastor of all His flock, and has promised His presence to the end of the world. He needs, therefore, no vicar, for this would imply His absence. We reject the Romish fiction concerning an official head and title of the servant of the servants of Christ; for experience proves that this is an empty boast, and that the Pope makes himself an enemy of Christ, and exalts himself above God, sitting in the temple of God, and showing himself that he is God.

The Westminster Confession of Faith is also very clear as to what the true Church is; and who is the Only Head of it.

I. The Catholic or universal church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all.

II. The visible church, which is also catholic or universal under the gospel consists of all those throughout the world that profess the true religion, together with their children; and is the kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, the house and family of God; out of which there is no salvation.

III. Unto this catholic visible church Christ, has give the ministry, oracles, and ordinances of God, for the gathering and perfecting of the saints in this life, to the end of the world; and does by His own presence and Spirit, according to His promise, make them effectual thereunto.

IV This catholic church has been sometimes more, sometimes less visible. And particular churches which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the gospel is taught and embraced, ordinances administered, and public worship performed more or less purely in them.

V. The purest churches under heaven are subject both to mixture and error; and some have so degenerated as to become no churches of Christ; but synagogues of Satan. Nevertheless, there shall always be a church on earth to worship God according to His will.

VI. There is no other head of the church but the Lord Jesus Christ; nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; but is that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalts himself in the church against Christ; and all that is called God.

All these Confessions set forth the clear teaching of the Bible concerning the Headship of Christ; and His Body which is the universal-catholic Church militant on earth; and in heaven triumphant. And they all carefully distinguish the great antichristian body of the Papal Dominion from the true church, so that none can possibly be deceived into thinking the Roman Catholic system is the catholic church.

Bishop Ussher, in his Sum and Substance of the Christian Religion, deals at length with the Christian Church. He asks the question and then he answers it:

What is meant by the Catholic Church?

The whole universal company of the elect that ever were are, or ever shall be gathered together in one body; knit together in one Faith, under one Head Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:4-5).

For God in all places, and of all sorts of men had from the beginning, has now, and ever will have an holy Church, that is God's whole or universal Assembly, because it comprehends the whole multitude of all those that have, or ever shall believe unto the world's end.

The whole number of believers and saints by (their) calling make one body, the Head whereof is Christ Jesus. Eph. 1:10, 22-23. Having under Him no other Vicar, and so the pope is not the head of the Church, for neither property nor office of the Head can agree with him.

Bible Protestants of the past knew what they believed about the Church, the Body of Christ, and its ONLY true Head. They also knew that the pope was not the Head of the Catholic or universal Church but that this was only his blasphemous and false claim to be its head. Obviously millions of self-proclaimed Bible-believers today have no such knowledge. The following digression painfully bears witness to this widespread ignorance today.

A BRIEF RELEVANT DIGRESSION

At the very time I was writing some of this material on the identity of the true Church and its true Head, the news that Kirsten Powers had been converted was being publicized. However, the main error that was the focus of the various articles was that she had become a convert to the Papal Dominion.

Many people today, because of the great ignorance of church history, know little or nothing about the great war of the Protestant Reformation, over the identity of the true catholic church of God's elect. Therefore what happened in the recent case of Kirsten Powers of Fox News, means little or nothing to them.

Indeed, millions of “non-Protestants” • know little or nothing about the Protestant Confessions of Faith. And even, if they do know something about their confession of faith, they would need to examine it closely today, because it may have been changed from its original wording.

The PCA put out their bowdlerized

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* The word bowdlerize means to expurgate, to remove from, or modify parts of a book that is considered improper or offensive to fine taste. It is taken from Thomas Bowdler, who published an expurgated edition of the works of Shakespeare, in 1818. He removed what he considered vulgar or lewd references used by Shakespeare.

copy of the Westminster Confession of Faith, when they were starting their new denomination. They simply removed part of the original sixth article on the Church, that referred to the pope as Antichrist.

Some “Bible-believers” • have now learned the tricks of the trade from the Jesuits, and engage in deception to help the cause of the Papal Antichrist in the modern world. The truth of the Christological war is now EXCISED,-EXPURGATED,-REMOVED from the writings of past Protestants by self-proclaimed Bible believers. So the Jesuits do not have to work nearly as hard as they once did in Protestant America. Now, in once-Protestant America the non-Protestants do the work for them. The classic example of such an expurgation can be seen in what the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association did to Halley’s Hand Book.

One of the more glaring cases of ecumenical expurgation of material damaging to the Papal Dominion, was the re-issuing of 750,000 copies of Halley’s Handbook, by the Billy Graham Association in 1964. About forty pages of Halley’s original work were removed. The forty pages selected for removal bore testimony to the evil teachings, persecutions, and massacres of the Papal Dominion in the Dark Ages, when men viewed this wicked dynasty of the popes as Antichrist.

Halley concluded this section of his work, with these words:

The story of the Papacy has been written as a background to the Reformation, in the belief that we ought to be familiar with the Wherefore of the Protestant Movement and the Historical Foundations of our Protestant Faith. Some of the things told herein seem unbelievable. It seems inconceivable that men could take the religion of Christ and develop it into an unscrupulous Political Machine on which to ride to world power. However, all statements made herein may be verified by reference to any of the complete Church Histories.

1:

Halley, Henry, *Bible Handbook*, self-published, Chicago, IL, 1955, p. 651.

This section of Halley’s book was deceptively removed by the Billy Graham Association before it sent out hundreds of thousands of copies of its own bowdlerized version of Halley’s Handbook. Such expurgations in no way change history, nor alter the truth about what Halley wrote, concerning the Papal Dominion one iota. However, they do tend to hide the truth from the unsuspecting readers of such deceptive material.

Halley also wrote,

The description of Babylon the Great Harlot seated on the Seven-headed ten-horned Beast, while it may have ultimate reference to a situation yet to appear, yet it exactly fits Papal Rome. And there is, SO FAR NOTHING ELSE THAT IT DOES FIT... (emphasis added).

2:

Loc.cit.

Watch out for all the BOWDLERIZING that now goes on in ecumenically oriented circles. See also the modern translation of Bengel's Gnomon by Charlton T. Lewis and Marvin R. Vincent. In this translation of Bengel, his section on the Man of Sin and the Antichrist, is simply removed by the two translators. They wrote,

Bengel proceeds to compare this passage with the Apocalypse (ie., II Thess. Ch 2) and infers that Antichrist here spoken of is the Pope, or the Papal power of Rome. This view is now generally abandoned, for controlling reasons... We therefore OMIT the remainder of Bengel's argument, which has little weight in our day.

3:

Bengel, Johann, Gnomon, Vol. II, p. 496.

Why can men not give the content of the man's work they are translating? I wanted to see what Bengel wrote and decided for myself whether I would follow it or not. Not knowing German, I still, to this day, do not know what Bengel said, even though I paid a good price to purchase his two massive volumes on the New Testament. I did not get what he wrote: I got the modern bowdlerized copy of what he wrote.

Many men have now replaced the Reformers' identity of Antichrist with their own view. This change came about first of all through the Jesuits; and then more recently, historically speaking, through the Tractarians. However, the Reformers' position must still be given as they expressed it; even if modern men now no longer follow the Reformers in their view. We must not CHANGE history to suit what many believe today concerning the identity of Antichrist.

If the Billy Graham Association was going to re-issue its paperback edition of Halley's Bible Handbook, they should have faithfully given out what he wrote; not a bowdlerized copy of it, much more suited to our ecumenical times; but certainly not a truthful edition of his work.

The truth is, the Protestant Reformation started a great historical war. This war was fought first bibliographically over SOLA SCRIPTURA; the Bible ALONE, the only authority in the church. Then it was fought soteriologically, over justification by faith alone in the finished work of Christ; then it was fought christologically between Christ and the Papal Antichrist; and then ecclesiastically over the identity of the true catholic church of God's elect; and the antichristian system of the Papal Dominion. These wars, struggles, battles, and debates helped in the spread of the reformation geographically across Europe and on into the Western Hemisphere. These wars have never ended. They will continue until Jesus comes again. The big difference between the times we are covering and modern times, is that very, very few have any interest in carrying on the polemic of the Reformers today against the enduring corruption, error, and blasphemy of the Papal Dominion.

Indeed, while Roman Catholics and agnostics criticize certain aspects of the Papal Dominion; men who are supposed to know their Bibles and biblical doctrines have little to say.

The failure to make a clear-cut distinction between the Papal Dominion and the true Catholic Church of God's elect, can be seen in the bizarre case of Kirsten Powers, the Fox News analyst. Much publicity was given to her alleged conversion from atheism to Christianity. She was said to have been brought to "faith" through the ministry of a PCA Church.

Later, even more publicity was given to her odyssey when she left "evangelicalism" and converted to the Papal Dominion. Every account that I saw reported this debacle as a "conversion to the Catholic Church." Not one account that I read got it right. She perverted to the Papal Dominion. I do not know if she ever joined a Protestant Church or not.

If she did, then she left this Protestant Church which is part of the universal church "the Body of Christ" headed up by Christ; in order to join the antichristian Papal Dominion.

On October 9, 2015, she announced on television that "tomorrow I am going to become a Catholic." She received high fives from Kimberly Guilfoyle and Eric Bolling, as they rejoiced with her. Monsignor Charles Pope, in first speaking about her original "coming to faith," claimed that while he rejoiced with her, he hoped on a personal level, that she would come to a full union with the Catholic Church.

A lot of absolute drivel was then reported with such lines as "Deo Gratiâs" welcome home. "There is no greater joy than crossing the Tiber." "Welcome home to the Catholic Church." All through this debacle the term "Catholic Church" was used to describe the apostate Papal Dominion. Indeed, the ecclesiastical field was conceded to the papal Antichrist and his religion.

Perhaps if the PCA had left in the last section on the Catholic Church; and her pastors had taught it, Kirsten Powers might have received some light and been taught that the Papal Dominion is not the Catholic Church. Certainly, the original Confession of Faith did not fail to distinguish between the false and the true. That faithful clear-cut distinction between the true Catholic Church and the Papal Dominion set forth in the original Westminster Confession of Faith and all these other Confessions of Faith; should be printed, promoted, defended, and widely disseminated; instead of being expurgated by the weak scholars of today, who think it necessary to concede the ecclesiastical field to the emissaries of the Papal Dominion, and their errors, in North America today. Many so-called "Reformed" men, as Dr. John Robbins and Sean Gerety said, "are not Reformed at all."

Those who followed the Protestant Reformers, the Puritans, the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Congregationalists, the Reformed, the Methodists, and even the older Episcopalians and Anglicans and the Lutherans, all regarded the Catholic "Universal Church the home of God's elect; whose only Head is the Lord Jesus Christ who regards his ONE BODY "HIS UNIVERSAL BODY "HIS CATHOLIC BODY" as His ONLY BRIDE. There is only ONE body of Christ; and only ONE Bride of Christ; and it is NOT the Papal Antichristian Dominion.

REFERENCES

In theology, there is no room for originality properly so-called, for its whole materials are contained in the actual statements of God's Word; and he is the greatest and best theologian, who has most accurately apprehended the meaning of the statements of Scripture "who by comparing and

combining them“has most fully and correctly brought out the whole mind of God on all the topics on which the Scripture gives us information.

William Cunningham

To the question, “Where is the supernaturally revealed will of God to be found?” • Cunningham gave his famous answer:

The Protestant answer is, that it is to be found in the canonical Scripture, excluding the Apocrypha, and NOWHERE ELSE. The popish answer is that it is found partly in the written Word, including the Apocrypha, and partly in unwritten traditions, i.e., doctrines and precepts alleged to have been delivered orally by Christ and His apostles, and to have been handed down in unbroken succession in the church. Protestants (teach) that we have not the slightest ground to believe that God ever intended that any part of His revelation should be handed down by tradition...

And secondly there is not in existence any one doctrine or precept not contained in or deducible from the written Word. Thus we establish what divines commonly call the perfection of the Sacred Scripture, as the ONLY record or repository of the will of God, to the exclusion of all oral tradition.

William Cunningham

Scottish Theologian

THE PAPAL DOMINION EVEN BEFORE THE REFORMATION WAS A LIMITED DOMINION

The ancient church after the time of the Apostles was divided between the Western Latin Church and the Eastern Orthodox Church. In those days the bishop of Rome did not rule over the two religious systems. The Bishops of Rome only tried to rule over the Latin religion.

The British church Newspaper carried an article recently under the headline, “Pope and Patriarch kiss but do not make up.” • The article reported that,

The 1,000 year split between Rome in the west and the Orthodox in the east is kept alive today by Rome’s poaching in Orthodox territory and the refusal of the Orthodox to surrender to the pope’s claims to primacy. The meeting which is said to have taken two years of secret planning does not represent any significant break through... The meeting ended with an appeal to Mary: Let us with hope turn to the Most Holy Mother of God, invoking her with the words of this ancient prayer: “We seek refuge under the protection of your mercy, Holy Mother of God, May the Blessed Virgin Mary, through her intercession, inspire fraternity in all those who venerate her, so that they may be reunited, in God’s own time, in the peace, and harmony, of the one people of God.” •

William Cunningham points out clearly that the visible apostasy, called the Church, was divided long before the Reformation. He wrote that,

Whatever claims may be put forth by the Roman Church, may with at least equal plausibility be advanced by the Greek Orthodox Church. It exposes the CLAIM which the Papists are accustomed to adduce in opposition to the Protestants, to the possession of the WORLD as the CATHOLIC antecedent to the Reformation

1:

Cunningham, William, *Historical Theology*, Banner of Truth Trust, Edinburgh, Scotland, Reprint, Vol. I, p.448.

(Emphasis added).

Cunningham correctly reduces the sovereignty of the popes of Rome to a mere CLAIM. This is what the popes of the Papal Dominion have done through the centuries: they have CLAIMED to be both the temporal and spiritual rulers of the world. When all they ever ruled over was totalitarian Christendom; which was a far cry from universal rule either in the world or in the Church.

Cunningham addressed this monstrous CLAIM of the papal antichrists.

The claim of the Church of Rome of being as it were, in POSSESSION of the WORLD as the ONE CATHOLIC CHURCH OF CHRIST for many centuries before the Reformation, is refuted by plain and palpable facts, and especially by the existence of the Greek Church, and other churches in the eastern part of the world. The Greek Church stands at least, upon a level with the Latin Church... The Greek has, at least, as good a CLAIM as the Latin Church to a regular visible succession of office-bearers, and of outward organization, from the time of the Apostles to the Reformation, and indeed to the present day.

2:

Loc.cit.

Cunningham here, addresses the two religious systems of the Papal Dominion and Eastern Orthodoxy, as "churches" • He is doing this to make his argument that the popes of Rome NEVER ruled over the WHOLE church at any time. However, he wisely adds that,

If Scripture be adopted as the standard of true churches, (there are obviously) very serious errors in matters both of doctrine and practice, that can be established against the Greek Church, (and by) the same standard against the Church of Rome.

3:

Ibid., P. 447.

Cunningham here is looking at the claim of the popes of Rome to the effect that they ruled over the whole "church." • That is, what historians call the "church," • not necessarily what really constitutes the true Church. He rightly adds, that if we start with Holy Scripture, then what was regarded as the two main "churches" • in the Dark Ages were not really biblical churches at all. They simply were called "churches" • by historians; but as time went on, they became more and more apostate as far as the truths of Scripture are concerned. In essence both really became Cults of Mary rather than churches of the Lord Jesus Christ. As is amply demonstrated in the common prayer of both pope and Metropolitan addressed to Mary, not to Christ. Even if we take the historians view of the church, even then the popes of Rome NEVER ruled over such an institution; they simply ruled over the western expression of it; not the WHOLE expression of it. So the pope only CLAIMS to be the head of what he calls the "church" • when in reality no pope has ever been the head of the eastern institution that also took the name "church." •

Even back in the time of Cyprian, the universal rule of the bishop of Rome was denied. In his famous work *The Unity of the Catholic Church*, he sets forth this unity, not under ONE head but in ecclesiastical synods or councils. He said that this unity finds its legitimate expression in the collective episcopate, not in the rule of a single man. Away back then Cyprian (martyred in AD 258) argued against the tradition put forth by Stephen, the bishop of Rome at that time, his rebuke of the Bishop of Rome has been repeated many times:

“Custom without truth is only ancient error.” •

4:

McClintock and Strong, op.cit., Vol. II, p. 626.

It is true that others took some of the things that Cyprian wrote upon which to base their arguments for papal primacy; but he also wrote other things that militate against such a conclusion. His appeal; to the authority of councils, like so many others, assume them to be general or ecumenical councils that simply were not. McClintock and Strong note that so-called ecumenical councils, or general councils, in essence were in reality far from universal in scope.

The Greek term OIKOUMENE, meaning general or universal occurred first at the fifth Canon of Constantinople AD 381. No such assembly was held, or could be held, before the establishment of the Christian religion over the ruins of paganism in the Roman empire. Their title to represent the whole Christian world is not valid. After the 4th century the lower clergy and the laity were entirely excluded from the councils, and bishops only admitted. The number of bishops gathered at the greatest of the councils constituted but a small portion of the entire episcopate of the world. The ecumenical councils which are generally admitted to bear that title most justly were rather Greek than general councils. In the strict and proper sense of the term, therefore, no ecumenical council has ever been held.

5:

Ibid., pp. 537-538.

(Emphasis theirs)

McClintock and Strong also point out that the popes did NOT call or preside over the first councils.

The Romanists hold that the pope alone can convene and conduct ecumenical councils, which in theory are supposed to represent the universal church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. In matters of faith councils profess to be guided by the Holy Scriptures and the traditions of the Church... The Roman claim is not sustained by history. The emperors called the first seven councils and either presided over them in person or by commissioners; and the final ratification of decisions was also left to the Emperor (Not the bishop of Rome).

6:

Ibid., p. 539.

Even Malachi Martin, the modern defender of the Papal Dominion, recognized that the popes of Rome did not rule over the Catholic Church. The very title of his work: *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Church*, demonstrates that he was not including the Eastern Orthodox “Church” • in his

thesis. He goes in to some detail to show that the Greeks and Latins hated each other and indeed massacred each other at various times.

Cunningham summed up his comments on this subject, in this way:

It is manifest that the CLAIM set up by the Romish Church to be regarded as having been virtually in possession of the Christian world for centuries before the Reformation, as THE WHOLE CATHOLIC CHURCH of Christ, is ALTOGETHER DESTITUTE OF FOUNDATION.

7:

Cunningham, op.cit., p. 448.

(emphasis added).

REFERENCES