

A Study of Roman Catholicism

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I. Purpose of Paper.

A. Compare and Contrast Roman Catholic Doctrine against the Scriptures.

B. Understand how the Catholic Church began and its influence upon the world today.

C. Determine if the Roman Catholic Church is "the one true Church".

D. Examine other Catholic Church Practices and determine if the Scriptures support such practices.

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III. Church History.

taken from Catholicism Against Itself, Vol. I, Lambert, O. C., 1956.

A. New Testament Period.

1. Items of Worship.

The items of worship were few and simple, having nothing to appeal to pride or vain glory: prayer; singing, unaccompanied with instruments of any kind; the Lord's Supper; and contribution on every Lord's Day.

2. New Testament Church Government.

Every local congregation was an independent unit. There was no super-government of any kind tying these congregations together, or exercising authority over them. There were only two kinds of officers in a congregation -- the elders and deacons. Every congregation had a plurality of each. The deacons were to assist the elders in order that the elders may concentrate in looking after the spiritual needs of the congregation. These elders were on a perfect equality. They were sometimes called pastors or bishops, and were always married men, with believing children.

3. No Clergy--No Denominations--No Missionary Societies--No Monasteries.

It was several hundred years after New Testament time before there was any such distinction as clergy and laity. All were simply Christians. There were no denominations. There were no missionary societies other than the church itself, and contributions for missionary work were sent to the missionaries themselves instead of a board of some kind. Every Christian was a priest and Christ was the only High Priest. Besides this they had no priests. There were no such things as monasteries in that day among Christians.

4. Christianity--the Persecuted Religion.

For approximately three hundred years after the church began, paganism was the popular religion, supported from the public treasury. Several times during this period fierce persecution was aimed at the church by the heathen authorities, in which a countless number sealed their testimony with their blood. Many also denied the faith. But because of its simplicity and the fact that it was the unpopular religion, they were spared the contaminating influence of those who used religion as means of personal advancement.

B. Period of Apostasy.

1. Apostasy Began Early.

Even in the days of persecution there was a very perceptible slipping away from the original moorings. Almost every detail of divine order was being gradually changed to conform to human ideals. The New Testament predicted this (I Tim. 4, II Tim. 4, II Per. 2, Gal. 1, II Thes. 2, Acts 20). In fact this apostasy was beginning to manifest itself in apostolic times. It continued to increase until the sixteenth century when the reformation movement started the main current of religion back toward the Bible, though by no means was this very desirable end attained in that day. It was about three hundred years later, or about one hundred and fifty years ago, that men decided to go back to the original ground, and as yet only a small minority have decided to do so. The greater number of those who claim to follow Christ have chosen to pitch their tents at various points on the road from Rome to Jerusalem. Most of those wearing the general title Protestant, are nearer Rome than Jerusalem. They are indebted to Rome for their model of church policy and most of their faith and practice.

2. Human Creeds--Precepts and Commandments of Men.

The early church had no creed except the sacred writings, and this continued until 325 AD., when the Nicene Creed was formulated, and an attempt was made to bind it upon Christians. Through the ages, other human creeds were written, or rather the old ones were remodeled. Soon after the formulation of the Nicene Creed, force began to be applied to compel conformity. This effort increased in intensity until the thirteenth century and remained at "white heat" for three hundred years, during which time millions were tortured to death by the dominant party. When the Reformation started they did not dispense with human names, creeds and doctrines, but simply remodeled them, removing some of the objectionable features. Luther, the greatest leader of this period, went on the platform of retaining all this rubbish that had accumulated through the ages, unless it was specifically forbidden in the Scriptures. If they had purposed to retain nothing unless expressly commanded, they would have gone back to New Testament Christianity. For, in reality, nothing is Christianity that the Scripture does not teach. Luther seemed, in a hazy way, to realized this, for he said: "The Pope in condemning Huss has condemned the Gospel. I have gone five times as far as he, and yet I greatly fear I have not gone far enough."

3. Jews Cease to be Dominant Party.

At first it was the Jewish Nation which offered the most stubborn opposition to Christianity, but about a generation after the establishment of the Church her capital city, Jerusalem, was taken by the Romans. After this, the influence of the Jewish Nation upon Christianity was greatly diminished. It is true that many people to this day claim to be Christian and at the same time try to bind some of the Law of Moses upon men. For more than a hundred years after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus, there existed a Judaizing party in the Church called Ebionites.

4. Development of the Monarchical Bishop.

As we have noted before, each congregation had a plurality of elders of equal rank governing each congregation, and one of the first steps, in the great departure from the divine pattern, was to make one of these men more important than the rest. This began nearly a hundred years after the beginning of the Church. These soon began to meet

together, from the different congregations, at some central point, to discuss religious matters, and thus Councils began. Whatever was decided on in these councils or synods was bound upon the people when they returned to their home congregations. Finally, they dispensed with the plurality of elders. After this point, we read of the bishop of this or that place.

5. Other Aspects of the Apostasy.

Christianity soon became widely scattered, and, giving way to local customs and notions, began to put on different aspects in different countries. Later on, these different developments were incorporated into one system. In those days there were three great theological schools: Alexandria, under Clement and Origen; Asia Minor, under Irenaeus; Carthage, in North Africa, under Tertullian and Cyprian. These all had different ideas, and all were very noticeably different from the New Testament. In the course of time, the preacher evolved into a priest; the Lord's Supper gave way to the Eucharist and the Mass; Repentance became Penance; and the meeting place became the Church. But let us not think that these things came about at one time. The changes were so gradual that most people seemed not to realize it. This was rendered especially easy because there were no public schools and few could read and write. There were no printing presses and, consequently, few books. Because Greek soon ceased to be the language of the people, it became increasingly difficult for those who could read to know the New Testament teaching.

6. Hereditary Sin and Infant Baptism.

The doctrine of hereditary, total depravity began to be believed by the majority in the third century and the companion doctrine of infant baptism soon followed. The New Testament doctrine of believers baptism became the exception, and finally, after many centuries, became practically obsolete.

7. Dissenters.

It is evident that there never was a time through the centuries that there were not a few who opposed the dominant party. Usually, while opposing some innovation, they themselves easily accepted others. Usually, there were several dissenting parties, none of them opposing the same thing nor accepting the same thing. While the history of these minority parties is meager, and no doubt distorted, there does not appear to be a party through the Medieval Age which could lay claim to being apostolic in all it taught and practiced.

8. Orthodoxy and Heresy.

While the New Testament meaning of the word heresy is party or sect, it soon began to mean anything contrary to the majority opinion. The purpose of human creeds is to try to force unity, by compelling the minority to conform. When Constantine became Emperor of Rome early in the fourth century and seeing that Christianity was ascending in importance while paganism was rapidly losing its hold, he nominally embraced Christianity, though in reality he was never a Christian. The Council of Nicene was called by Constantine and the Nicene Creed adopted, and force began to be applied to bring about unity, because unity is a valuable political asset. Whereas, during the days of Pagan Rome the Emperor was the Pontifex Maximus of Paganism, Constantine, after

embracing nominal Christianity, retained the title. In the days of Pagan Rome, the Emperor was the protector of the state religion and he began to assume the same role with reference to Christianity. Paganism was now persecuted.

9. Heathenizing Effect of Public Patronage.

Christianity now became the state religion. Heathens were driven from their magnificent temples and these were given to the Christians. They were filled with beautiful sculpture, which they hesitated to discard, so their names were changed and they began to be venerated as the Virgin Mary and the various saints. Christianity was now popular and millions forsook heathenism and were soon prominent in the "Christian" cause. The apostasy which had grown steadily under persecution now spread much more rapidly. Unconverted pagans flocked to Christianity by countless thousands and began clamoring for the retention of their time honored "traditions". We can easily see that the natural consequence of such circumstances would be a hybrid religion, becoming more like heathenism and less like Christianity as time went on. Christianity possessed none of the mysterious and pompous ceremonies so desirable in a state religion, so heathenism was laid under tribute in every quarter of the earth to adorn it for its new role.

10. The First Human Creed.

As we have already noted, Constantine looked upon himself as the Pontifex Maximus, or high Priest of Christianity, and inasmuch as unity in a state religion is very desirable from a political standpoint, he called the Nicene Council for the purpose of devising some means of forcing unity. In order that they might have some measuring stick they formulated the Nicene Creed. After this, force began to be applied to those who did not easily subscribe to it.

11. New "Catholic" Party.

Those who wrote this new creed thereby expressed themselves as dissatisfied with the Scriptures, which had been the only creed of the millions who had lived and died Christians up to this time. When this new creed was written a new party was born, requiring a new designating term. This is the origin of the name "Catholic". While there had been growing schisms in the Church from Apostolic times, there are now two distinct bodies, those who subscribed to the new creed, and designating themselves by the new name "Catholic", and those who were still content with the Scriptures as their creed and with the name it authorized.

12. Catholics Persecute from the Start.

From the time of the formulations of this new party with a new creed and new name, persecution of the minority began. Corruption in church government have always been in the direction of centralization and autocracy. Public patronage hastens this departure also. As new usurpations were attempted, the usurpers were ready, always, with a forgery to make the people believe their claims were ancient. When this was not obtained willingly it was accomplished by force.

13. Rome Given a Free Hand.

About sixty years after nominal Christianity was made the state religion, the capital of the Roman Empire was moved from Rome to Constantinople. This soon led to a division in the Catholic Church. Like many church divisions that have occurred since, it was more political than doctrinal. After the moving of the capital from Rome to Constantinople, the Bishop of Rome was free to continue his usurpations without interference. He began to assume temporal power and appropriated the heathen designation of Pontifex Maximus. Roving hordes from the North began to overrun the Western Empire; the people began to look for leadership and the arrogant bishop stepped into the breach, and before long began to be accepted as their leader.

14. Development of the Five Patriarchates.

As aggressive as was the Bishop of Rome, it took several hundred years for him to reach the zenith of his power. The development was from the college of co-equal elders or bishops in every congregation, to one bishop for each congregation. Then the diocesan bishop; after this, five Patriarchs; still later, we have a period of rivalry between Rome and Constantinople; and then the period of the supremacy of Rome. During the fourth and fifth centuries the octopus of ecclesiasticism had developed to the stage of the five Patriarchs whose territory together comprised the known world. They were located at Jerusalem, Antioch, Alexandria, Constantinople and Rome.

15. Rome and Constantinople.

Rome, the old capital, and Constantinople, the new capital, had the advantage of the other claimants, and toward the close of the fifth century became rivals for the supremacy. As has already been stated, Rome had the opportunity to exercise self reliance because the Emperor was no longer near, and when the Western Empire was overthrown, in the year 451 AD., practically all hindrances were removed. While Rome was practicing self reliance and entrenching herself as a political power, the Eastern Church was subservient to the political rulers. It is but natural that finally Rome should triumph. The final separation between Greek "Catholics," and Roman "Catholics" came about in the year 1054.

16. Neither Greeks or Romans are "Catholics".

The word Catholic is a Greek word meaning universal. There never was a time when there were not dissenters. Therefore the party calling itself Catholic was never universal, because all men did not believe as it did. When they divided as "Greek Catholics" and "Roman Catholics" their claim to being universal was even more ridiculous.

17. The Golden Age of the Papacy.

Roman Catholic historians and theologians unanimously refer to the period from the twelfth to the sixteenth century as the Golden Age. The Catholic Church was making and unmaking rulers. The horrible Inquisition was flourishing in its death-dealing work, in every nation. Political and religious liberty had been reduced almost to the vanishing point. Her Golden Age was the darkest period of the world's history for the rest of the world. Persecution against free thought, free speech, and free worship, which was

begun in the fourth century, and increased in intensity until the fourteenth, was now the principle concern. Every horrible device that diabolical ingenuity could invent was kept busy night and day torturing and killing the non-conformists. No one knows now many millions of lives were sacrificed on the altar of conscience. This is the point in history when the hierarchy reached full flower.

18. The Reformation.

These excesses existed for four hundred years and there was feeble and ineffective resistance. It was not until after the invention of printing that the long night of ignorance and oppression began to break and a new day dawn. In one country after another, the enraged masses, weary of its outrages, shook off the shackles. Rome resisted every effort toward civil and religious liberty but was unable to withstand the Word of God. Piqued and sullen, she now bides her time, hoping to be, again, the mistress of the world.

19. The Restoration.

In the early part of the nineteenth century people from many cultures, and in widely separated places, decided to discard human names, creeds, and practices, and reproduce on earth, again, exactly what the Lord ordained nineteen centuries ago, believing that the Scripture completely furnished the man of God into every good work. To this plea this work is dedicated, that men from every where may have "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism".

IV. Catholic Church Today.

The Roman Catholic Church is the largest body of "Christians" in the world. In fact, this church has more followers than all other "Christian" groups combined and more than any non-Christian religion. About 1 billion people -- nearly a fifth of the world's population -- are followers of the Roman Catholic faith. Of these people, about 55 million live in the United States, and about 12 million live in Canada.

Most Roman Catholics live in Europe, North America, and South America. In France, the Republic of Ireland, Italy, Spain, and almost all Latin-American countries, nearly all the people belong to the church. The church operates schools, universities, hospitals, orphanages, and homes for the aged in these and other countries with large Catholic populations. In a few nations, Catholics have formed strong political parties.

The papacy within this Church is the oldest continuing absolute monarchy in the world. To millions the pope is the infallible interpreter of divine revelation and the vicar of Christ; to others he is the fulfillment of the biblical prophecies about the coming of the Antichrist.

V. Did Christ Authorize the Catholic Church and the Papacy in Matt. 16:13-20?

A. Opening statement.

1. So many so called "Christian" groups today have used scripture to justify their existence and beliefs. The Roman Catholic Church is no different. This Church has based its existence upon Matt. 16:16-21. If the Catholic Church is correct with its interpretation of these passages, then the Catholic Church is the one true Church. If it is not correct, then this Church has no scriptural foundation or authority to exist from our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Scriptural Foundation - Matt. 16:13-20?

"Now when Jesus came into the district of Caesarea Philippi, He began asking His disciples, saying, 'Who do people say that the son of Man is?' 14 And they said, 'Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.' 15 He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.' 17 And Jesus answered and said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.' 18 'And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades shall not overpower it.' 19 'I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' 20 Then He warned the disciples that they should tell no one that He was the Christ."

B. The Catholic's Position.

1. The Roman Catholic Church believes Jesus is telling Peter in verse 18 that the Church would be built upon him. They say that Peter means rock and this fits the statement that the Church would be built upon Peter, the rock. This statement by Jesus then instituted the office of the papacy with Peter being the first pope. Also, this verse singles out Peter from the rest of the Apostles by Jesus directly addressing Peter.

2. Further, the Roman Catholic Church believes Jesus in verse 19 gives Peter the authority to institute, modify and/or delete doctrine and "church policy".

C. Setting of this Scripture-- Who is Jesus?

1. These set of verses begins with Jesus asking a question of "Who do men say that I am?"
2. Then Jesus asks his Apostles, "Who do you say that I am?"
3. Peter responds to this question by saying that he was the Son of God.
4. Jesus then tells Peter that flesh and blood did not reveal this to him but the heavenly Father did. And from previous events, we know Peter's response was not an instant revelation from the Father but rather a statement reflecting the many incidents before this time that revealed Jesus was the Son of God. For example, during the baptism of Jesus, God the Father spoke and said "This if My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased.", Matt. 3:17. Another example is when Jesus was walking on the water going to the boat and the Apostles proclaim, "You are certainly God's Son!", Matt. 14:33.
5. Then Jesus ends this discussion by telling his Apostles not to tell anyone that He was the Christ.

D. Construction of Sentence Does Not Favor Catholic's Interpretation.

1. "Thou" (KJV) or "You" (NASV) is a second person pronoun and modifies Peter.
2. The construction of this sentence presents an awkward interpretation if the church would be built upon Peter. The scriptures would read "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this Peter I will build My church".
3. If Jesus taught what Catholics teach, He would have said, "Thou (or You) are Peter and upon you I will build my church".

E. Peter and Rock are Different Words.

1. The Catholics would say to this argument that "Peter" and "rock" are the same words. Hence, "this rock" refers to Peter.

2. However, Peter and rock are different words. Translated from Greek the word Peter is "petros", a masculine gender whereas rock translated is "petra", a feminine gender. These words in New Testament times and in the Greek Language had come to have different meanings. The word "Peter" means pebbles, a detached stone, boulder, or a stone that might be thrown or easily moved; whereas "rock" means a rock, ledge or cliff that can not be easily moved.

3. The words "rock" and "Peter" are defined below according to "An Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words", W. E. Vine, M.A., Merrill F. Unger, Ph.D., & William White, Jr., Ph.D., Thomas Nelson Publishers, New York, 1984.

a. Rock = 1. Petra denotes a mass of rock, as distinct from petros, a detached stone or boulder, or a stone that might be thrown or easily moved. For the nature of petra, see Matt. 7:24, 25; 27:51, 60; Mark 15:46; Luke 6:48 (twice), a type of a sure foundation (here the true reading is as in the R.V., "because it had been well builded"); Rev. 6:15, 16 (cp. Is. 2:19, ff.; Hos. 10:8); Luke 8:6, 13, used illustratively; I Cor. 10:4 (twice), figuratively, of Christ; in Rom. 9:33 and I Pet. 2:8, metaphorically, of Christ; in Matt. 16:18, metaphorically, of Christ and the testimony concerning Him; here the distinction between petra, concerning the Lord Himself, and Petros, the Apostle, is clear (see above).

F. Is Catholic Church's Position Supported with Other Scriptures?

1. Assuming the Church is built upon Peter, do other scriptures support this interpretation?

2. Other scriptures support that the Church is to be built upon Jesus Christ the Son of God which is the rock that Jesus is referring to in Matt. 16:18.

a. "For no man can lay a foundation other than the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ", I Cor. 3:11.

b. "Having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone", Eph. 2:20.

c. "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ -- this Jesus whom you crucified", Acts 2:36.

1) God the Father has made Jesus the Lord -- Lord of the Church, Lord over all things.

d. "He is also head of the body, the church; and He is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; so that He Himself might come to have first place in everything", Col. 1:18.

G. Catholic's Position Makes Peter the Foundation and Gives Him Preeminence. Is this Position Supported by Other Scriptures?

1. In this same chapter, Jesus condemns Peter for resisting God's will that the Christ would suffer and die.

a. "But He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are a stumbling block to Me; for you are not setting your mind on God's interests, but mans "', Matt. 16:23.

2. In Chapter 17:1-8 during the transfiguration of Jesus, God the Father speaks and says to listen to Jesus rather than Moses or Elijah who were gathered with Jesus. Peter was with Jesus along with John and James. Yet God the Father says to listen to Jesus and does not mention Peter's "supposed" preeminence over James, John or Jesus.

3. Peter had a golden opportunity to mention himself as the head of the Church but listen to what he says in I Pet. 2:5-7: "You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. For this is contained in Scripture: 'Behold I lay in Zion a choice stone, a precious corner stone, and he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.' This precious value, then, is for you who believe. But for those who disbelieve, 'The stone which the builders rejected, this became the very corner stone'".

4. Is the Church to be built upon a man who denied Christ three times even when Peter said himself that he would not deny Christ, Matt. 26:33, 69-75?

5. Is the Church to be built upon a man who Paul condemned because Peter committed a sin against the Gentiles in Antioch, Gal. 2:11-14?

6. In Matt. 19:28, Jesus said that the 12 apostles would sit on 12 thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel. Please note that Peter is not singled out but all 12 apostles are given this authority.

a. "And Jesus said to them, 'Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel'".

7. A similar statement was made by Jesus to all the apostles and not just Peter.

a. "And when He had said this, He showed them both His hands and His side. The disciples therefore rejoiced when they saw the Lord. Jesus therefore said to them again, 'Peace be with you; as the Father has sent me, I also send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit'. 'If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them, if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained'", John 20:19-23.

8. Today, the Pope receives homage from the laity. They kiss his hand and do many other acts of homage. But Peter who is the supposed first pope rejects any homage as he did when Cornelius began to pay him homage. Note Acts 10:25-26: "And when it came about that Peter entered, Cornelius met him, and fell at his feet and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, 'Stand up; I too am just a man.'"

a. Jesus taught his disciples to reject exalting titles such as "Father".

b. "But do not be called Rabbi; for One is your Teacher, and you are all brothers. And do not call anyone on earth your father; for One is your Father, He who is in heaven", Matt. 23:8-9.

9. In Gal. 2:6-9, Paul denies others - including Peter - preeminence. Paul argues emphatically that his apostleship was not from men, and specifically mentions Peter, Gal. 1:11,12,18. Paul received his ministry some years after Peter had been given the "keys", but Peter was not consulted or informed and in fact had nothing to do with it (Acts 9, 22, 26). Paul wrote thirteen epistles containing 2,023 verses whereas Peter wrote only two containing 166 verses.

10. Letter to Rome (Romans) c. 58 AD. It is debatable as to whether Peter was ever in Rome, but allow that he was as Catholic tradition asserts, and the Roman letter presents unexplainable problems to the primacy accorded him by the Roman Catholic Church.

a. Peter never mentioned.

According to Catholic tradition, Peter was the Bishop of Rome, c. 42-67 AD. So, in 58 AD. he would have been right in the midst of his rule there. Although 26 people are specifically mentioned in Rom. 16:3-16, Peter is noticeably absent. Note also that in the letters Paul wrote from Rome, c. AD. 61-68 (Eph. Phil., Col., Philemon, II Tim.), he never mentions Peter though he mentions many of his fellow-workers. Note especially Col. 4:10-11.

b. Rom. 1:11 -- Could Paul grant them a spiritual gift that Peter could not?

H. What is the Rock?

1. Clearly from the above evidence, Peter is not the rock. Then, what is the rock?
2. Jesus begins this discussion on who do men say that He was?
3. Peter provides the answer that He is the Christ, the Son of the living God.
4. It is upon Peter's confession of who Jesus is that the Church is built upon.

I. Keys of the Kingdom.

1. Scripture, Matt. 16:19.

"I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

2. Catholic's position.

a. The Roman Catholic Church believes that Jesus Christ gave Peter the power to add, change and/or delete doctrine and "church policy" by the statement made by Jesus in Matt. 16:19.

b. It is clear from these scriptures that 1) Jesus asks the question to all His apostles, 2) Peter answers the question and 3) Jesus responds directly to Peter by saying "Simon Barjona, because flesh and blood did not reveal this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I also say to you that you are Peter".

3. Imagery.

a. It is obvious that some imagery is being used in this verse because Jesus did not literally give Peter a set of keys.

b. These verses in Matt. 18 are being mentioned by Jesus when they were in Caesarea Philippi. This city was strategically located on the lower slopes of Mount Hermon. The Romans maintained a garrison here because this city had a

commanding view of the plains to the North and to the West to Lake of Galilee. This city was surrounded by walls which was the normal architecture of that day. To enter the city, one had to enter through large gates.

- c. The word "keys" have been used many times in the Bible to refer to giving someone the power to act or have authority. The imagery of course is that keys open or close doors.
- d. The word "kingdom" refers to the rule and authority over an establishment, people or organization.

4. Keys given to all apostles.

- a. At first glance, it appears that verse 19 is directed only to Peter. However, does this accord with rest of scripture i.e. was Peter the only one to receive the keys of the kingdom?
- b. In John 20:19-23, Jesus is gathered with his apostles after His resurrection from the dead. In vs. 23, Jesus says, "If you forgive the sins of any, their sins have been forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they have been retained". This verse shows the power given by Jesus was not just to Peter only but also to the rest of the Apostles.
- c. Additional evidence supporting this position can be found in the Acts of the Apostles. Here in this book, we find the Apostles working miracles, teaching with the authority given by Jesus, and the Christians continuing in the Apostles doctrine, Acts 1:2,8,13,2:4,42,3:7,14:9-11. Peter was not the only person that was given this power.

5. How were they given this power?

- a. In John 20:22, the scripture says, "And when He had said this, He breathed on them, and said to them 'Receive the Holy Spirit' Did the Apostles receive the Holy Spirit at this point or was this statement indicating a future event when they would receive the Holy Spirit? We know from Acts 2 that the Apostles received the Holy Spirit on Pentecost Day; hence, this statement in John 20:22 indicates a future event.
- b. Other scriptures confirm these statements.
 - 1) In John 14:26, Jesus tells his Apostles, "But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said to you."
 - 2) Also, in John 16:13, Jesus continues this discussion with His Apostles, "But when He, the spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; for He will not speak on His own initiative, but whatever He hears, he will speak; and he will disclose to you what is to come."
 - 3) Again, Jesus says to His Apostles in Luke 24:49, "And behold, I am sending forth the promise of My Father upon you; but you are to stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high."

6. What was this power given to the Apostles in Matt. 16:19?

- a. The Catholic Church maintains that this power given was the ability to change, modify and / or delete doctrine that the pope deems appropriate.
- b. From the previous verses, we know that the Holy Spirit was to guide the Apostles in everything that Jesus said and teach the Apostles all things. The

Apostles were to be Ambassadors of Christ to carry out his doctrine and not their own self directed doctrine.

c. The power given to the Apostles was the power given to them by Christ through the Holy Spirit to preach the gospel. By their preaching and the hearers obedience to it, the kingdom of heaven would be opened up to those believers. We find this happening In Acts 2 as Peter and the rest of the Apostles preached the gospel for the first time. The Jews on that day heard the gospel, believed it and asked the Apostles what they must do to be saved. Peter and the rest of the Apostles responded in Acts 2:38, "Peter said to them repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." This is the power that Jesus gave the Apostles in Matt. 16. And we find the people continuing in the Apostles Doctrine as recorded in Acts 2:42.

J. Quotes from Catholic Literature/Documents vs. Scripture.

1. Jesus is the Head of the Church in Heaven whereas Peter is the Head of the Church on Earth according to the Roman Catholic Church.

a. The Jesus as taught in the Bible is the head of the church on Earth and in Heaven. There is no man who is head of the Church on earth. Christ has all authority both in Heaven and Earth.

"And seated Him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:20-23).

b. But notice who the Catholic Church teaches is the head of the church:
"Every nation has its ruler, an emperor, king or president. God in establishing his church ordained that at the head of this church there should be one man, a monarch, endowed with supreme power. This man is the Pope" (The Register, America's National Catholic Newspaper, June 16, 1963).

2. Roman Catholic Church teaches we need to be united with the pope.

a. The Bible teaches that we have to be united with Christ in order to be right with God.

"And if ye belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise" (Gal. 3:29).

b. But compare what the Catholic Church teaches.

"The test that shows a person to be a member of the true church is union with the Pope. He is the head of the church and if we are not in union with him we are out of the fold" (Religion, A Secondary School Course, Raymond Campion).

3. The Bible says it is necessary to be subject to the authority of Jesus in order to have salvation.

a. Scripture.

"Any one who goes to far and does not abide in the teaching of Christ, does not have God; the one who abides in the teaching, he has both the Father and the Son" (II John 9).

b. What does the Catholic Church say?

"Now therefore we declare, say, determine, pronounce that for every human creature it is necessary for salvation to be subject to the authority of the Roman Pontiff" (Catholic Encyclopedia, 15 Volumes Special Edition under the auspices of K. of C. Catholic Truth Committee, The Encyclopedia Press Inc., New York, 1913, Vol. XV, p. 126).

K. Other Consideration about Peter as Head of the Church & the Papal Office.

1. For Catholics to prove their claim that the Pope is the head of the church they must prove four things.

- a. That Christ instituted the office of Pope.
- b. That Peter was the first Pope.
- c. That Christ ordained a succession of Popes.
- d. That the Bishops of Rome have been the rightful successors.

2. Did Christ establish the office of Pope?

- a. It is plain that no one can hold an office that never was. There can be no office of president of the United States unless the constitution provides for it. There can be no pope unless the New Testament calls for it.
- b. An office with the magnitude of being head and monarch would certainly be in the New Testament somewhere.
 - 1). The qualifications, work, and requirements of the Levitical priesthood were fully defined by Moses.
 - 2). Qualifications and duties of elders of a local congregation are plainly stated in the New Testament (I Tim. 3:1-7, I Peter 5:1-3).
 - 3). The New Testament mentions apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors (Eph. 4:11-12).
- c. But no where does the Bible speak of the office, qualifications, appointments, or function of a pope. Why silent of such an awesome office?

3. Was Peter the First Pope?

- a. Catholics maintain the church is built upon Peter. This subject was discussed at length in the previous section.
- b. Catholics appeal to "church fathers" not the Bible for most of their teaching and especially that of the pope since the Bible never mentions the term. But a speech delivered before the Vatican Council as late as 1870 showed that even the church fathers did not believe the papal office is found in Matt. 16:18. Arch Bishop Kenrick of St. Louis showed that church fathers showed five different interpretations of the Lord's words to Peter.

- 1). 17 authorities asserted that the rock was Peter.
 - 2). 8 affirmed that it was all the apostles.
 - 3). 44 claimed it was Peter's confession.
 - 4). 16 believed it was Christ himself.
 - 5). A few said it was the faithful.
- c. Catholics teach that Peter's prominence in the New Testament proves his preeminence.
- "After the reception of the Holy Spirit on Pentecost, Peter is the first to address the people, Peter works the first miracle. In the first 12 chapters Peter's name occurs 53 times, more often than all the other apostles taken together. Peter resided at the conference in Jerusalem, which is evidence of his acknowledged position as head" (Father Smith Instructs Jackson, 1963, p. 69).
- 1). This is their proof of preeminence in Peter.
 - 2). But when you look at Acts 13-28, Paul's name appears 130 times, Peter's only twice.
 - 3). Nothing at all is said about Peter presiding at the Jerusalem meeting about whether Gentiles should keep the law. He was the first speaker recorded after a long debate, but equal time was given to Paul and Barnabas and James. It was James who led the group on writing the letter to Gentile churches.
 - 4). Paul wrote at least 13 letters of the New Testament, Peter only two. Paul rebuked Peter to his face for being a respecter of persons (Ga. 2:11-15). If Catholic logic was correct about establishing preeminence in one man, it would have to be Paul, not Peter.
- d. Peter did not fit the Papal mold.
- 1). He had a wife (Matt. 8:14, I Cor. 9:5).
 - 2). He would not allow a man to bow down before him (Acts 10:26).
 - 3). He was never referred to with a religious title (Matt. 23:8-12, II Peter 1:1).
 - 4). He never claimed to be head, neither did any other writer. Paul referred to him as only one of the pillars (Ga. 2:9).

4. Did Christ ordain a succession of popes?

- a. The constitution of our country calls for a president, not for George Washington to be president. If it had called for George Washington to be president, there could be no other.
- b. If Jesus taught that the church is built on Peter, it can be built on no other. If Peter is the rock, that doesn't make any man today a rock.
- c. Peter was an eyewitness (II Peter 1:16, Acts 10:39-41). He performed miracles and spoke an inspired message by the Holy Spirit. No pope today can do such.

"Moreover, the Pope enjoys no particular inspiration; he does not suddenly decide that something should be defined as a doctrine of the church. There is only one infallibility, that of the church as a whole -- which when necessary the Pope may give expression to" (Denver Catholic Register, August 1985).

5. Are the Popes claimed by Rome the rightful successors?

- a. Even if Christ did establish the "papacy" and Peter was the first Pope and Christ did establish a line of successors, Rome can still not prove that their popes are the true successors.

- b. Since inspiration gave no guidelines for appointment, how could we know who was the rightful choice?
- c. Catholics must prove, not assume.
 - 1). That Peter was the first bishop in Rome.
 - 2). That the Bishops in Rome were to be his successors.
 - 3). That all 260 successors are true ones.
 - 4). That each of them truly served as supreme head and ruler of the church.
- d. There is no biblical evidence that Peter was ever in Rome. Paul wrote a letter to Rome, specifically gave greetings to 26 Christians there, but never mentioned Peter. Paul was later in prison in Rome and wrote at least four letters from there. He mentioned several that were with him in Rome but never mentions Peter. If Peter was there, he forsook Paul (II Tim. 4:16).
- e. There is no claim for a universal bishop until 588 AD. and the man who did it (John the Faster) lived in Constantinople, not Rome. Gregory the Great, a canonized Catholic Saint, rebuked him for assuming a title which neither Peter nor Paul assumed. Where was the pope before then? In the first of the fifth century there were five areas around the Mediterranean claiming a church father (Rome, Constantinople, Antioch, Jerusalem, and Alexandria). Where was the pope then? Innocent III (1198-1216) was the first to use the term, the vicar of Christ (Catholic Encyclopedia, 15 Volumes Special Edition under the auspices of K. of C. Catholic Truth Committee, The Encyclopedia Press Inc., New York, 1913, XV, p. 403).
- f. Tertullian, Irenaeus, Eusebius, Jerome, and other early writers disagree as to the successors of Peter. Some popes were elected through bribes, some were made and unmade by kings. At times there were two or three all claiming the title.

VI. Catholic Church Discourages Reading the Bible.

Parts were taken from Catholicism Against Itself, Vol. I, Lambert, O. C., 1956.

Note: References to Catholic Literature contain the official stamp of "Imprimatur" unless otherwise noted.

A. The Bible was used by the Early Church and Could be Understood.

1. The Catholic Church admits that the New Testament Church during the first four centuries used the Bible only.

a. "There was far more extensive and continuous use of Scriptures in the public service of the early Church than there is among us", Catholic Dictionary, Addis & Arnold, The Catholic Publication Society Co., NY., 1887, p. 509.

b. "Our present convenient compendiums -- the Missal, Breviary, and so on were formed only at the end of a long evolution. In the first period (lasting perhaps till about the fourth century) there were no books except the Bible, from which lessons were read and Psalms were sung. Nothing was written, because nothing was fixed", Catholic Encyclopedia, 15 Volumes Special Edition under the auspices of K. of C. Catholic Truth Committee, The Encyclopedia Press Inc., New York, 1913, Vol. IX, p. 296.

2. If the Roman Catholic Church were the same institution as the New Testament Church, she would have the same attitude toward the Bible. They, also, would need no other book.

3. Their own translation of the New Testament (Douay), says that the Scriptures instruct us "for every good work", II Tim. 2:16-17.

4. Catholic New Testament says we may understand the Bible.

"How that, according to revelation, the mystery has been made known to me, as I have written about in a few words; as you reading, may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ", Eph. 3:3-4.

5. However, the Catholic Church says that we need the Holy Spirit to understand the Bible. However, this position is contrary to the above scripture.

"For the Scripture is not like other books. Dictated by the Holy Ghost, it contains things of the deepest importance, which in many instances are very difficult and obscure. To understand and explain such things there is always required the 'coming' of the same Holy Spirit." The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII, Benziger Bros., New York, p. 277.

B. According to the Catholic Church, Bible reading is dangerous and Catholics in the past have not been allowed to read the Bible.

1. Bible reading can lead men away from Christ.

a. "The reformation produced indeed an exaggerated individualism, which by declaring every man equally competent to find out the doctrine of the Savior from his own private reading of the Scriptures, has led millions to the utter denial of Christ." The Question Box, Bertrand L. Conway, The Columbus Press, NY., 1913, p. 131.

b. There is a similar statement from Archbishop Spalding in his book, called *Micellanae*, M. J. Spalding, Webb, Gill and Levering, Louisville, Ky., p. 392.

2. The Bible is not fit to be read by all -- Pope forbids it.

a. "More than this, parts of the Bible are evidently unsuited to the very young or to the ignorant, and hence Clement XI condemned the proposition that the reading of the Scriptures is for all. These principles are fixed and invariable but the discipline of the Church with regard to the reading of the Bible in the vulgar tongue has varied with varying circumstances. In early times the Bible was read freely by the lay people,...New dangers came in during the Middle Ages ... To meet these evils, the Council of Toulouse (1229) and Terragona (1234) forbade the laity to read the vernacular translations of the Bible. Pius IV required bishops to refuse lay persons leave to read even the Catholic versions of Scripture unless their confessors or parish priests judged that such reading was likely to prove beneficial." Catholic Dictionary, Addis & Arnold, The Catholic Publication Society Co., NY., 1887, p. 82.

b. "The translation of writers, also ecclesiastical, which have until now been edited by condemned authors, are permitted provided they contain nothing contrary to sound doctrine. The translation of the books of the Old Testament may in the judgment of the bishop be permitted to learned and pious men only, provided such translations are used only as elucidation of the Vulgate Edition for the understanding of the Holy Scriptures and not as the sound text. Translations of the New Testament made by authors of the first class of this list shall be permitted to no one, since great danger and little usefulness usually results to readers from their perusal. But it is with such translations as are permitted or with the Vulgate Edition some annotations are circulated, these may also, after the suspected passages have been expunged by the theological faculty of some Catholic University or by the general inquisition be permitted to those to whom the translations are permitted. Under these circumstances the entire volume of the Sacred Books, which is commonly called *biblia Votabli*, or parts of it, may be permitted to pious and learned men. From the Bible of Isadore Clarius of Brescia, however, the preface and introduction are to be removed, and no one shall regard its text as the text of the Vulgate Edition." Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Number 3, H. J. Schroeder, B. Herder Book Company, St. Louis, London, 1950.

c. "Since it is clear from experience that if the Sacred Books are permitted everywhere and without discrimination in the vernacular, there will by reason of the boldness of men arise therefrom more harm than good, the matter is in this respect left to the judgment of the bishop or inquisitor, who may with advice of the pastor or confessor permit the reading of the Sacred books translated into the vernacular by Catholic Authors to those who they know will derive from such reading no harm but rather an increase of faith and piety, which permission they must have in writing. Those, however, who presume to read or possess them without such permission may not receive absolution from their sins till they have handed them over to the ordinary. Booksellers who sell or in any way supply Bible written in the vernacular to anyone who has not this permission, shall lose the price of the books, which is to be applied by the bishop to pious purposes, and inkeeping with the nature of the crime shall be subject to other penalties which are left to the judgment of the same bishop. Regulars who have not the permission of their superiors may not read or purchase them. Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent, Number 4, H. J. Schroeder, B. Herder Book Company, St. Louis, London, 1950.

d. "As it has been clearly shown by experience that, if the Holy Bible in the vernacular is generally permitted without any distinction, more harm than utility is thereby caused, owing to human temerity; all versions in the vernacular, even by Catholics are altogether prohibited, unless approved by the Holy See, or published under the vigilant care of the bishops with annotation taken from the Fathers of the Church and learned Catholic Writers." The Great Encyclical Letters of Leo XIII, Benziger Bros., New York, p. 413.

VII. Mass.

A. According to Catholic Church, Jesus is offered as a sacrifice perpetually in the mass.

1. "The sacrifice of the Mass is the consecration of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, and the oblation of this body and blood to God, by the ministry of the Priest, for a perpetual memorial of Christ's sacrifice on the cross, both having the same victim and High Priest - Jesus Christ" (Faith of our Fathers, James Cardinal Gibbons, Jno. Murphy Co., Baltimore, Md., 1917, p. 254).

2. "This sacrifice is identical with the sacrifice of the cross.... It is a propitiatory Sacrifice, atoning for our sins, The celebrant recites at Mass the following prayer, "Receive O Father Almighty, Eternal God, this immaculate victim, which I, thy unworthy servant, offer to Thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offenses and negligence, for all here present, that it may avail me and them to life everlasting" (The Faith of Millions, Rev. John O'Brien, 1963, p. 315).

B. In the Bible, Jesus Christ was offered once for all time.

1. "For Christ did not enter a holy place made with hands, a mere copy of the true one but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor was it that he should offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood not his own. Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages he has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself...having been offered once to bear the sins of many...", (Heb. 7:24-28).

2. "By this will we have been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest stands daily ministering and offering time after time the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins; but He, having offered one sacrifice for sins for all time, sat down at the right hand of God" (Heb. 10:10-12).

3. "For by one offering he has perfected for all time those who are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14).

VIII. Catholic Doctrines Concerning Mary.

A. The Catholic Church teaches that Mary was sinless like Christ.

1. Quote from the Catholic Church.

"By a special privilege of Almighty God, Our blessed Mother was free throughout her life from all actual sin, both mortal and venial" (Baltimore Catechism, 1941, p. 47).

2. The Bible plainly teaches that Jesus committed no sin (I Peter 2:22) and treats him as unique (Heb. 7:26-28).

- a. I Pet. 2:22 -- "Who committed no sin, nor was any deceit found in his mouth".
- b. Heb. 7:26-28 -- "For it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners and exalted above the heavens; 27 who does not need daily, like those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first for His own sins, and then for the sins of the people, because this He did once for all when He offered up Himself. 28 for the Law appoints men as high priests who are weak, but the word of the oath, which came after the Law, appoints a Son, made perfect forever."

3. The Bible says that Jesus Christ was Mary's Savior. If Mary was free from sin, she would not need a Savior.

- a. Lk. 1:46-47 -- "And Mary said: 'My soul exalts the Lord, And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior' "

3. All men except Jesus Christ have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

- a. Rom. 3:10 -- "as it is written, 'There is none righteous, not even one'".
- b. Rom. 3:23 -- "for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God".

B. The Catholic Church teaches that Mary is a mediator between man and God just like Jesus.

1. Quotes from the Catholic Church.

- a. "If you are terrified by the thunders of heaven, go to Jesus, and if you fear Jesus, run to Mary. She will show her breasts to the Son and win his compassion, as the Son shows his wounds to the Father (St. Bernard, Our Father's Faith and Ours, P. 339-340).
- b. "What places us in possession of the things of heaven is - not Jesus alone - but the blessed pair, the woman and her seed. Hence to separate Mary from Jesus in religious worship is to destroy the order established by God Himself" (Legion of Mary, p. 247).

c. "If Mary is left out, God's plan is not conformed to, no matter what one's prayer and works and strivings be. If Mary is not there, the grace is not given" (Legion of Mary, p. 314).

2. The Bible teaches that Jesus Christ is our only mediator.

a. Heb. 4:14-16 -- "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession. For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."

b. Heb. 7:25 -- "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

c. Heb. 10:19-22 -- "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; And having an high priest over the house of God".

C. Other False Doctrines about Mary.

1. Mary was a perpetual virgin.

a. Luke 8:19-20 -- "And His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. And it was reported to Him, 'Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You.' "

b. Matt. 13:55-56 -- "'Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? And His sisters, are they not all with us? Where then did this man get all these things?'"

IX. Catholic Practices vs. Bible Authority.

Parts were taken from Catholicism Against Itself, Vol. I, Lambert, O. C., 1956.

Note: References to Catholic Literature contain the official stamp of "Imprimatur" unless otherwise noted.

A. There are many practices of the Catholic Church which are not found in the New Testament. Consequently, these practices are not authorized by Jesus Christ and are then man made religion. Some of these practices are listed below.

B. Doctrine.

1. Canon.
2. Confessional.
3. Absolution.
4. Mass.
5. Infant Baptism.
6. Missal.
7. Catechism.
8. Penance.
9. Purgatory.
10. Lent.
11. Christmas.
12. Extreme Unction.
13. Crucifix.
14. Ashes.
15. Celibate.
16. Mortal Sin.
17. Stations of the Cross.
18. Sacraments.
19. Holy Water.
20. Rosary.
21. Original Sin.
22. Immaculate Conception.

C. Catholic Organization and Offices.

1. Pope.
2. Archbishop.
3. Vicar.
4. Clergy.
5. Laity.
6. Diocese.
7. Jesuits.
8. Franciscans.
9. Dominicans.
10. College of Cardinals.

D. Garb of the Clergy.

1. Crown.
2. Mitre.
3. Ring.
4. Stole.
5. Cardinal's Red Hat.
6. Habit.

E. Vessels & Articles.

1. Censor.
2. Chalice.
3. Baptismal Font.
4. Balm.

XII. Conclusions.

A. Jesus Christ established the Church during the first century as recorded in the Bible. There is no mention of the Catholic Church in the Bible.

B. According to historical records. The Roman Catholic Church was established during the Third Century. The Nicene Council in 325 AD was instrumental in setting up this Church.

C. Today, the Roman Catholic Church is the largest "Christian" denomination in the world today and has a pronounced effect on over 1 billion people.

D. Jesus Christ did not authorize the Catholic Church in Matt. 16:18. When Jesus said "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church", the rock is not Peter himself but instead the rock is the confession that Peter made in the preceding verses. In that confession, Peter said Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. Hence, the one true Church is built Jesus Christ and not Peter, a mortal man. This is consistent with other scriptures in the Bible.

E. There are many practices and doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church which are contrary to Scripture. Some of the major ones are as follows. In the past, the Catholic Church has discouraged and even some cases prohibited Bible study and reading. In the mass ceremony, the Catholic Church believes Jesus is offered as a perpetual sacrifice every time mass is performed whereas Scripture clearly points out Jesus was sacrificed one time only. The Catholic Church believes that Mary is a mediator just like Christ whereas the Scriptures do not even identify her as such.