

Errors of the Roman Catholic Church

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There are many honest people in the Roman Catholic church, just as there are countless sincere souls in Protestant denominations. We believe all are entitled to know the truth (John 8:32), and that men and women of honesty and sincerity will at all costs leave error and come to the word of God. We plead with you to carefully and prayerfully consider some errors of the Roman Catholic Church.

Claims to Be the Only True Church of Christ; Essential to the Salvation of Every Soul. In the syllabus of pope Pius IX, articles 15-18 affirm the way of eternal salvation is found only in the true Church of Christ - the Catholic Church. The Scriptures teach, “There is one body...” (Ephesians 4:4), the Savior of which is Christ (Ephesians 5:23). The body of Christ is the church of Christ (Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:24). The Catholic Church is no more the Lord’s church than the Titanic was Noah’s ark!

Takes Power Away from the State and Vests It in the Church. The eighty articles in the syllabus of pope Pius IX, as to the “disabilities of the state” and the “rights and powers of the church [the Roman Catholic Church]” as defined by the pope himself, may be summed up as follows: It is the right of the Roman Catholic Church to establish mercenaries and auxiliaries of a foreign power in every nation, to force the multitudes in every race and country to submit to her chief bishop, the pope, as their king, who claims the right to set priests before rulers in every country with power to declare void the laws of any nation or country. *Civilta Cattolica*, an official publication of the Roman Catholic Church, referred to the syllabus as “a charter of ecclesiastical dominion over all civil society.” New Testament teaching

makes a distinction between the church and the civil state (Matthew 16:18; Romans 13:1-7).

Avows to Have Given the World the Bible. The document officially known as *The Dogmatic Constitution On Catholic Faith*, commonly called *Vatican Decrees*, mentions “the word of God written and handed down as we received it from the Catholic Church...” The world is not indebted to the Roman Catholic Church for the Bible. The Catholic Church was the institution that made every effort to withhold the Bible! The Council of Trent declared, “If the holy Bible, translated into the vulgar tongue, be indiscriminately allowed to everyone, the temerity of men will cause more evil than good to arise from it...If anyone shall have presumption to read it or possess it without written permission (of priest or bishop) he shall not receive absolution till he have first delivered up such Bible to the Ordinary.” Jesus said, “Search the scriptures...” (John 5:39). The apostle Paul exhorted men to read and understand the will of the Lord (Ephesians 3:4; 5:17). The Holy Spirit dictated, “Blessed is he that readeth...” (Revelation 1:3).

Claims Sole Right to Interpret Scripture. According to the Vatican Decrees, it belongs to the Catholic Church, “to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scripture; and therefore it is permitted to no one to interpret the Sacred Scripture contrary to this sense, nor, likewise, contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.” This denies man the right to think for himself. If this be true, why did Paul commend those in Berea as being “more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched

the scriptures daily, whether those things were so” (Acts 17:11)? Why did Paul command the Thessalonians, “Prove all things; hold fast that which is good” in 1 Thessalonians 5:21? And why did John warn, “Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world” (1 John 4:1)? The Catholic Church sets plain Bible teaching “at open variance with the doctrine of Holy Scripture as it has been ever understood by the Catholic Church.” And they regard any other understanding of Scripture as “perverse opinions!”

Affirms the Primacy of Peter. According to the “First Dogmatic Constitution on the Church of Christ,” published in the Fourth Session of the Holy Oecumenical Council of the Vatican, Christ “set blessed Peter over the rest of the Apostles...” It is further stated, “We, therefore, for the preservation, safe-keeping, and increase of the Catholic flock, with the approval of the sacred Council, do judge it to be necessary to propose to the belief and acceptance of all the faithful, in accordance with the ancient and constant faith of the universal Church, the doctrine touching the institution, perpetuity, and nature of the sacred Apostolic Primacy, in which is found the strength and solidity of the entire Church, and at the same time to proscribe and condemn the contrary errors, so hurtful to the flock of Christ.” Again we are told, “the primacy of jurisdiction over the universal Church of God was immediately and directly promised and given to blessed Peter the Apostle by Christ the Lord... And it was upon Simon alone that Jesus after his

resurrection bestowed the jurisdiction of chief pastor and ruler over all his fold...If any one, therefore, shall say that blessed Peter the Apostle was not appointed the Prince of all the Apostles and the visible Head of the whole Church Militant; or that the same directly and immediately received from the same our Lord Jesus Christ a primacy of honor only, and not of true and proper jurisdiction: let him be anathema.”

Where, in the Scriptures, did the Lord set Peter over the rest of the apostles and bestow upon him authority He did no confer to the other apostles? The charge given in Matthew 16:19 was given to all the twelve, without regard to any special primacy of one (Matthew 18:18). The teaching of the Lord, in Matthew 19:27-28, where Jesus told the twelve they would occupy thrones of authority judging the twelve tribes, the whole church, by their apostolic word, shows equality in office and authority of all the apostles, with no primacy vested in any one of them. The claim that upon Peter was conferred a singular mission and to him was entrusted a sole power contradicts Luke 22:24-30, in which Christ taught there would be no primacy among the apostles.

The Roman Catholic Church has the shoe on the wrong foot! The apostle Paul penned, “But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed” (Galatians 1:8). The anathema of heaven does not rest upon those who deny Catholic dogma; the anathema of heaven rests upon those who deny gospel teaching!

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