

THE DOGMATISM OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Billy Bland

INTRODUCTION:

1) Our Lord established His church.

(1) “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

(2) Desires that all come to a knowledge of the truth.

(3) “Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

(4) God has not made truth difficult to understand.

2) It doesn't take long for one to see the contrast in the simplicity of the Lord's church and the complexity of the Roman Catholic Church.

(1) This complexity did not develop overnight (took many years).

(2) However, the alert disciple should not have been surprised. Jesus had given a warning.

(3) “Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves” (Matthew 7:15).

3) Paul also had warned them.

(1) “Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears” (Acts 20:28-31).

(2) “Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth” (1 Timothy 4:1-3).

4) Two of the “doctrines of devils” mentioned specially apply to the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church..

(1) Forbidding to marry.

(2) Abstaining from meats.

I. THE “NOT SO” DOGMATIC DOCTRINES.

1) Although strict adherents to the Roman Catholic faith set forth dogmatic positions, some of their practices have fallen upon hard times.

(1) Mr Frank Meads writes: The Roman Catholic Church today finds itself in an era of change, tension, and some dissension. Pope John XXIII and Vatican II brought about new programs and approaches in the fields of ecumenism, religious liberty, the liturgy, biblical studies, and social action... A Catholic Pentecostal Movement stressing the charismatic gifts of speaking in tongues, healing, interpretation, and prophecy now claims 300,000 Catholics meeting in charismatic prayer groups across the country. Dissension is found in questioning of celibacy, birth control, abortion, the authority of bishops, and the anti-sex positions of many of the Fathers (sic) of the early church.

(2) And, although Paul VI reaffirmed the church’s position of no form of birth control except total or partial abstinence from sex relations in marriage, many of the catholic theologians protested and in fact, many of the European “hierarchies” interpret the papal position “in light of the freedom of the individual conscience.”

2) Many Roman Catholic theologians do not consider the doctrines of the “infallible pope” as all that infallible.

3) Once Catholics were forbidden to eat meat (except fish) on Friday, now it is different.

4) Our Lord, who changes not ; is not the author of the Roman Catholic Church.

5) “For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed” (Malachi 3:6).

II. DOGMATIC DOCTRINE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH REGARDING THE INSUFFICIENCY OF THE BIBLE.

1) Much of the source material that I will be refuting comes directly from the Roman Catholic Church. Its source is “Saint Benedict Center” whose headquarters is located in Richmond, New Hampshire.

2) On their purpose, they write; **Saint Benedict is a Catholic crusade which is dedicated to a twofold purpose:**

(1) The propagation and defense of the Catholic Church’s unchangeable dogma, extra *ecclesiam nulla salus* (outside the Church, there is no salvation).

(2) Tthe conversion of the United Sates of America to the Roman Catholic Faith.¹⁾

3) They affirm “The Bible is insufficient”.

(1) Under the heading “The Catholic Religion Proved By the Protestant Bible,” they assert; This booklet recalls how Christ’s Church existed 350 years before the New Testament was under one cover and over 1400 years before it could be printed; which completely refutes the “Bible only” theory of today’s 400 sects. Meanwhile the Protestant Bible itself proves the marks, attributes and basic doctrines of the ancient one-faith-fold-shepherd Church of Christ-as shown herein.

(2) By this statement they are trying to “prove” that since the Bible wasn’t under one cover until 350 yrs after Christ (**their assertion!**), the oral teaching of the Pope and the Roman Catholic Church was the standard of authority and **not the Bible**.

(3) This is **impossible** because there was no Roman Catholic Church at that time. They would like for the world to think that the Roman Catholic Church gave us the Bible! If the Roman Catholic Church would give up its traditions and return to the Bible they would give up Roman Catholicism and be new Testament Christians!

(4) The New Testament Christian in the first century had the New Testament in the form of the inspired apostles and their writings.

(5) When God gave the apostles the divine revelation, it was at that point canonical (inspired and received!).

4) This inspired revelation was written down.

(1) “I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read unto all the holy brethren” (1Thessalonians 5:27).

(2) “And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea” (Colossians 4:16).

(3) all truth - “Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come” (John 16:13).

5) God is the **One Who** determined canonicity, not the Roman Catholic Church!

(1) J.I. Packer notes: “The Church no more gave us the New Testament Canon than Sir Isaac Newton gave us the force of gravity. God gave us gravity by His work of creation, and similarly He gave us the New Testament canon, by inspiring the individual books that make it up.”²

(2) God **determines** New Testament Canonicity, man **recognizes** canonicity.

6) They affirm; “Jesus did not write any of the New Testament nor did He command His apostles to do so.”

(1) Listen to words; “Our Lord Himself never wrote a line, nor is there any record that he ordered his Apostles to write; He did command them to teach and to preach.

(2) COMMENT: If reading the Bible were a necessary means of salvation, Our (sic) Lord would have made that statement and also provided the necessary means for his followers.³”

7) Please note here that they argue that “reading the Bible” is not a necessary means of salvation. But of course listening to a Catholic priest is!!.

(1) They overlook that reading the Bible was very important in the eyes of Jesus.

(2) “And he answered and said unto them, Have ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning made them male and female,” (Matthew 19:4).

(3) “Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)” (Ephesians 3:4).

8) Regarding that Jesus never wrote any book of the New Testament, the fact is; every line of the Bible is written by His authority.

(1) “When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,) He left Judaea, and departed again into Galilee” (John 4:1-3).

(2) Every word of the New Testament dedicated by the blood of Jesus.

(3) “For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins” (Matthew 26:28).

(4) Would Jesus dedicate it with His blood and then say but don’t worry about reading or heeding it?!!

9) The Roman Catholic Church is simply wrong in saying that Jesus never commanded His apostles to write any books of the Bible.

(1) “Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea” (Revelation 1:11).

(2) “If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord” (1Corinthians 14:37).

10) When one heard what was written, he heard the Spirit’s message!

(1) “He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God” (Revelation 2:7).

(2) If hearing the Spirit is necessary to salvation, then reading the Bible - the Spirit's message - is necessary to salvation!

11) Again; "Not all apostles wrote the New Testament, thereby proving that the Bible is not essential to salvation." (Say - some apostles adopted "preaching only")

(1) I wonder what the apostles preached??!!

(2) Does anyone think they **might** have preached the Bible?!

(3) Now to some that would be a novel idea!

12) The Roman Catholic Church does not want you placing faith in the Bible

(1) They say you might be led astray!

(2) They just people to listen to the priests of the Roman Catholic Church.

II. DOGMATIC DOCTRINE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH REGARDING THE POPE AS "VICAR" OF CHRIST AND IS INFALLIBLE.

1) The Roman Catholic Church rests upon the "primacy of Peter."

(1) It is taught that Peter is the first Pope and that all other popes descend from him.

(2) "Just as Peter was the rock on which Christ built His Church, so will the successors of St. Peter carry on his office, infallibly protecting the precious deposit of faith and exerting primacy of honor and jurisdiction over the whole church."

2) The word (infallible itself means exactly what the dictionary tells us, "incapable of error or deception." Interestingly enough no person on the face of the earth, except the Vicar of Christ, would dare insist on such a prerogative of office, and get away with it. Non-Catholics are constrained by force of truth to reverence the man who claims to speak for Jesus Christ on earth, whether they accept his authority or not. No matter how great a leader, in his own realm, the head of any false religion might be, he would be laughed to scorn if he ever had the audacity to claim that his solemn words were guaranteed protection from error by God Himself. The head of the Roman Catholic Church maintains such; and he is *not* laughed to scorn, though he is hated by many; rather, he is treated quite seriously wherever he goes. And no matter how proud certain heads of state might be, they suddenly become a little less sure of themselves when awaiting a papal audience in the Vatican. The atmosphere of authority, a divine atmosphere, is overwhelming, as many non-Catholics have testified.⁴

3) It is stated that none could make such a claim and get away with it except the Vicar of Christ. Who says he has gotten away with it. Does the Bible accept such false claim? Does God, Christ and the Holy Spirit accept such claims?

4) They claim that “non-catholic are constrained by force of truth to reverence the man who claims to speak for Jesus Christ.

(1) I do not reverence the pope.

(2) They claim that when pope speaks “ex cathedra” that is when discharge of the office of pastor or teacher cannot err and ir-reformable

(3) If ir-reformable - isn't it strange that Catholics can now eat meat on Fridays.

(4) Says that pope is treated quite seriously wherever he goes - yes so were many other leaders but that did not prove them right.

5) Study of the Roman Catholic Church reveals that not only do they want power over the church but over the world.

(1) History has shown where they exercised authority over Kings.

(2) Pope Gregory VII exercised authority over King Henry IV of Germany and excommunicated five of Henry's counsellors.

(3) Henry was left without a kingdom. In order to be forgiven by the pope and reinstated as king, Henry was forced to lay aside his royal garments and make a journey over the Alps in the dead of winter and approach the pope in his palace at Canossa. After being forced to stand outside the castle for three days, with his bare feet in the snow, he was admitted into the pope's presence in bended knees.⁵

6) Innocent III believed that he was the “vicegerent of God upon earth.”

(1) He believed himself to be the successor to St. Peter and that he possessed “authority, not only over the church, but over the world.”⁶

(2) So according to the history of Roman Catholicism all must submit to the pope, including kings and presidents.

7) Was Peter a pope? Was the church built upon Peter?

(1) “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18). (Peter - Petros - mas.; church - rock petra fem.)

(2) “For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ” (1Corinthians 3:11).

(3) Peter was a married man. “And he arose out of the synagogue, and entered into Simon's house. And Simon's wife's mother was taken with a great fever; and they besought him for her” (Luke 4:38).

(4) An elder. “The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed.” (1Peter 5:1).

8) Popes are not rebuked, Peter was rebuked by Paul.

(1) “But when Peter was come to Antioch, I withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed. For before that certain came from James, he did eat with the Gentiles: but when they were come, he withdrew and separated himself, fearing them which were of the circumcision. And the other Jews dissembled likewise with him; insomuch that Barnabas also was carried away with their dissimulation. But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews? We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles,” (Galatians 2:11-15).

(2) Peter did not claim papal authority.

(3) “And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man” (Acts 10:25-26).

9) Jesus Christ is the only head of the church.

(1) “For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body” (Ephesians 5:23).

(2) “And hath put all things 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 filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22-23).

III. DOGMATIC DOCTRINE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

REGARDING NO SALVATION OUTSIDE THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

1) According to Catholic teaching, there is no salvation outside the Roman Catholic church.

(1) The most Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes and preaches that none of those existing outside the Catholic Church, not only pagans, but also Jews and heretics and schismatics, can have a share in life eternal; but that they will go into the eternal fire which was prepared for the devil and his angels, unless before death they are joined with Her; and that so important is the unity of this ecclesiastical body that only those remaining within this unity can profit by the sacraments of the Church unto salvation, and they alone can receive an eternal recompense for their fast, their almsgivings, their other works of Christian piety and the duties of a Christian soldier. No one, let his almsgiving be as great as it may, no one, even if he pour out his blood for the Name of Christ, can be saved unless he remain within the bosom and the unity of the Catholic Church. (Pope Eugene, the Bull *Cantate Domion*, 1441)

(2) Where has God ever stated that salvation is in the Roman Catholic Church? If one could find the Roman Catholic Church in the Bible, might could start looking there!

(3) No where does one read of such false doctrines as “holy water,”

“Penance,” “Mass,” “Extreme Unction,” “Purgatory,” “transubstantiation,” etc.

(4) All of these represent departures from the Word of God.

2) There is but “one body” .

(1) “There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;” (Ephesians 4:4).

(2) That body is “the church” “And hath put all things 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 filleth all in all” (Ephesians 1:22-23).

(3) It is not the Roman Catholic Church.

3) Jesus built His church.

(1) “And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it” (Matthew 16:18).

(2) It contains all the saved.

(3) “Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved” (Acts 2:47).

4) The church of Christ is neither Catholic, Protestant, nor Jewish.

(1) Established 33 AD

(2) In the city of Jerusalem.

(3) It is never referred to as the Roman Catholic Church.

IV. DOGMATIC DOCTRINE OF THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH REGARDING MARY.

1) All who studied the Bible know that God highly favored Mary.

(1) “Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel” (Isaiah 7:14).

(2) “And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end” (Luke 1:31-33).

(3) Joseph and Mary must have been a wonderful couple)

2) “Mary as the Mother of God.”

(1) Throughout writings “Mary as the mother of God”

(2) She did not give birth to God.

(3) God (Jesus) existed from all eternity.

(4) “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made” (John 1:1-3).

(5) “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God” (Psalm 90:2).

3) “Mary as a “mediatrix”.

(1) Some claim that Mary has certain influence upon Jesus today. Nevertheless, by this companionship in sorrow and suffering already mentioned between the Mother and the Son, it has been allowed to the **August Virgin** to be the most **powerful mediatrix** and advocate of the whole world with her Divine Son (Pius IX ineffabilis)... But Mary, as St Bernard justly remarks, is the channel.... “**she is the neck of Our Head, by which He communicated to His mystical body all spiritual gifts.**”⁷

(2) Bible affirms one mediator.” For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;” (1Timothy 2:5).

4) Mary is not regarded as having influence upon Jesus regarding His Headship of the church.

(1) “Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation. While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Matthew 12:45-50).

(2) “And it came to pass, as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it” (Luke 11:27-28).

5) “Immaculate conception”.

(1) The false doctrine of original sin is what gave birth to this doctrine of immaculate conception. (From Adam).

(2) Says all are conceived in sin (born sinners). But “that the Most blessed Virgin Mary in the first instant of her conception was free from all stain of original sin.”⁸

(3) Bible does not teach “inherited sin”.

(4) “At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 18:1-4).

(5) “The soul that sinneth, it shall die. The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father, neither shall the father bear the iniquity of the son: the righteousness of the righteous shall be upon him, and the wickedness of the wicked shall be upon him” (Ezekiel 18:20).

6) Soul comes from God, not man.

(1) “The burden of the word of the LORD for Israel, saith the LORD, which stretcheth forth the heavens, and layeth the foundation of the earth, and formeth the spirit of man within him” (Zechariah 12:1).

(2) “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?” (Hebrews 12:9); (pure as the driven snow).

CONCLUSION:

1) These are but a few of the dogmas of the Roman Catholic Church.

2) There are many people involved in the Roman Catholic Church, no doubt many of them are sincere individuals. But most likely have not checked out the claims of Catholicism in light of the Bible.

3) Some have investigated and have come out of Roman Catholicism to become a New Testament Christian.

1. "Mission And History," Saint Benedict Center, Internet WWW.catholicism.org, 1999
2. Norman Geisler and William Nix, A General Introduction To The Bible, (Chicago, IL: Moody Press, 1986), P. 211
3. "The Catholic Religion Proved By The Protestant Bible," Saint Benedict Center
4. "Infallibility of the Pope," Saint Benedict Center
5. John D. Cox, Church History, (Murfreesboro, TN: DeHoff Publications, 1990), P. 43
6. Ibid
7. "Ad Diem IIIvm Laetissimvm - Encyclical of Pope Pius X on the Immaculate Conception," Saint Benedict Center
8. Ibid