

# The Roman Catholic Church in History: Part I

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## The Papacy - Was Peter The First Pope?

In order to understand Catholic theology and psychology, we must recognize that Rome maintains that she alone is the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. We must also know what the Roman Church teaches concerning Protestants, and concerning final authority in things spiritual.

### Papal Claims

The Roman Catholic Church makes the following claims: (a) the Pope alone is successor to the Apostles; (b) he is the Vicar of Jesus Christ; (c) he alone is the guide and director of all Christendom; (d) by his own declaration he is "the way, the truth, and the life". He is absolute head of the Roman Church. It is interesting to note that in Italy early in 1958, for the first time in recent history, a civil court ruled a Roman Catholic bishop guilty of defamation of character because he accused a couple of living in sin and concubinage since they had not been married by a Catholic priest. As a result, the late Pope Pius XII cancelled the celebration of his birthday because he considered this overruling of ecclesiastical authority an omen of difficulties that were coming for the Roman Catholic Church. In effect, his statement is a tacit admission that the Roman Church is perhaps uneasy about her power and authority in one of her greatest strongholds - Italy. We should not forget that the decision of the court was overruled by a higher court under intense Papal pressure. But the fact that in Catholic Italy such a thing happened at all is, to say the least, food for thought.

The Roman Papacy brings up almost automatically the interesting question of, "Was Peter the first Pope?" The question demands some background if a satisfactory answer is to be given. According to Catholic teaching, when the Roman popes speak, they are speaking infallibly, without error: they are speaking as God, and Roman Catholics are to obey them as God (that is, in any area proclaimed to be under the heading of "faith and morals"). I quote now from *The Bull of Pope Boniface VIII*, entitled *Unum Sanctum*, which can be found in many Catholic reference books:

"We declare, affirm, define, and pronounce it to be necessary to salvation for every human creature to be subject to the Roman Pontiff." Cardinal Manning,

certainly an authority, states that this decree is "infallible, and beyond all doubt, an act *ex cathedra*."

This is *the* teaching of the Catholic Church concerning the *authority* of the Pope. Such statements are tremendously important because they reveal the extreme dogmatism of the Roman Church. Pope Pius IX stated: "I alone, despite my unworthiness, am the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Jesus Christ. I alone have the mission to guide and direct the Barque of Peter. I am the way, the truth, and the life. They who are with me are with the Church; they who are not with me are out of the Church. They are out of the way, the Truth, and the life. Let men well understand this, that they be not deceived or led astray by *soidisant* Catholics who desire and teach something quite different from what the head of the Church teaches."

This, then, is the position of the Roman Popes. "I am the way, the truth, and the life; I alone, and despite my unworthiness, am the successor of the Apostles, the Vicar of Jesus Christ." A vicar is "a deputy, one who acts for another" - in this case for Jesus Christ. For Roman Catholics, the words of John XXIII on matters of faith and morals are as infallible as if they came from the throne room of Jehovah Himself. Failure to believe them incurs excommunication.

I will now quote some very interesting statements from the Roman Catholic Catechism, which are taught in all Catholic schools. Then we will go on to the "proofs" that the Catholic Church uses to establish that Peter was the first pope. First of all, Lesson II on the Church clearly states:

"The Church is the congregation of all those who profess the faith of Christ, and partake of the same sacraments and are governed by their lawful pastors under one visible head." The word Church here implies the religious society founded by Jesus Christ which, of course, they maintain is the Roman Catholic Church. Listen, further, to some of the statements which they make. Concerning the Lord Jesus Christ: "He rules, governs and preserves the Church." But how does He do it? "Through the ministry of His Apostles and their successors." Who is the visible head of the Church? "Our Holy Father the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, is the Vicar of Christ on earth and the visible head of the

Church." Other names of the Pope: "Sovereign Pontiff, Father of Christendom, His Holiness."

In contrast to this position, turn in the Catholic Bible to the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel and you will find a statement concerning the Person of God the Father *made* by the Lord Jesus Christ – a statement tremendously important when considering the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church on the Papacy. Only once in the entire Bible and in this passage (also known as "the High Priest's prayer") does Jesus Christ use this term. I want you to note to Whom He applies it. Christ said: "And I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I am coming to Thee Holy Father, keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given me, that they may be one, even as we are one." (John 17:11) The Scripture, then, plainly speaks of a Holy Father but the Scripture speaks of but *one* Holy Father. The Scripture speaks exclusively of the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ! The Roman Catholic Church has therefore taken the very title of God Himself and has bestowed it upon sinful men. They have given to every succeeding pope the title, "Holy Father", and yet the Scripture says there is but *one* Holy Father and out of the mouth of Jesus Christ, His Son, this title is given to God His Father. "Holy Father, keep in Thy name those whom Thou hast given me."

This is significant, because the Lord Jesus Christ many times used language that the Roman Catholic Church has adopted. The interesting thing, however, is that Christ's usage of the terms is frequently the direct opposite of what the Catholic Church claims for them, as seen in the case of John 17:11. Sometimes, they do not even hesitate to disobey His expressed commands. For example, every priest is designated "Father", or given the honorary title of spiritual father. John XXIII and his papal predecessors have been given the title "Holy Father" chiefly because this sets them apart or designates that they are in some way different from other men - that they have a special office. Yet it was the Lord Jesus Christ, in the Gospel of Matthew, Who made a statement most damaging to this Roman Catholic teaching. I quote from the Roman Catholic Douay version of the Bible: "And call no one on earth Father, for *one* is your Father who is in heaven. Neither be called master for *one only* is your master, the Christ. He who is greatest among you shall be your servant." (Matthew 23:9) But this is not true of the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The Catholic Church divides its people by means of an autocratic, self-perpetuating hierarchy consisting of the pope, cardinals, arch-bishops, bishops, monsignors, and

priests. Under them are the laity, those who are taught by those who are allegedly above them in spiritual authority. They are, very literally, the servants of this hierarchy, not the reverse. To know this is true, you need only go to St. Patrick's Cathedral and watch a Roman Catholic bow subserviently before a cardinal or bishop and kiss his ring. You need only notice that one of the ceremonies of Roman Catholic teaching is bowing before the Pope, prostrating oneself before him, and the kissing of his toe.

It is common knowledge that Roman Catholics have an almost superstitious respect for their priesthood, particularly for the priests' hands since they allegedly handle God (the Host) at the sacrifice of the Mass, as Roman Catholic theology teaches. Roman Catholic teaching maintains that the priest, after he is ordained, (though he himself may be a terrible, openly reprobate individual), so long as he is performing the rites of the Church is, when he consecrates Mass, in reality, validly performing a divine work.

A few weeks ago, when I was riding in a subway in New York City, I sat bolt upright while looking at the various advertisements. One of the signs said: "A Prayer to God, Send us more Christs." I blinked and looked up again in amazement. Sure enough, it read: "Send us more Christs." On closer inspection I found it was a prayer to the Virgin Mary to send the Catholic Church more "Christs". And these "Christs", the poster said, were "missionaries", "teachers", and "priests"! Such teachings of the Catholic Church rarely get out that far into the public eye for Protestants to fully understand, but every priest, after ordination, believes he possesses the authority of Christ. They are often referred to in foreign countries, where the Catholic Church is much more open and bold concerning certain of her teachings (Mexico, Spain, and South America), as almost divine beings who have the power and authority to not only forgive sins, but to bless and curse in God's name. You will find this in many, many Roman Catholic statements published in these countries and some even in the United States.

Relative to the Catechism statement; "Our Holy Father the Pope, the Bishop of Rome, the Vicar of Christ on earth", etc., the Scriptures teach us that the Vicar of Christ on earth", according to the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth chapters of the Gospel of John, is none other than the Holy Spirit, the third Person of the Trinity.

"And I will ask the Father and He Will give you another Advocate ... the Spirit of truth" ... "When He is come ... He will teach you all the truth." (John 14:16-17, 16:13-14)

Who, then, is the true Vicar of Christ on earth? It is the Holy Spirit. He it is who guides the Christians. It is not necessary for a visible head of the Church to exist even if there were a thousand denominations. As long as they were agreed on the fundamentals of the Christian Faith and were possessed of the same Spirit, the Holy Spirit of God, there would be no confusion sufficient to jeopardize the effective proclamation of the grace of Christ and the faith that delivers the soul from death. Such agreement on basic issues does exist in Protestantism and "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (II Corinthians 3:17)

Now, let us go a bit further into the Roman Catholic teachings concerning the Pope. The Pope is called the "Vicar of Christ" because he allegedly "represents" Christ and acts in the name and place of Christ over the whole Roman Catholic Church. Why does the Church need a visible head? The Roman Catholic Catechism states their answer:

"The Church, as a visible society, needs a visible head to preserve unity in faith, morals, and government throughout the world."

Yet it is the specific function of the Holy Spirit, as taught by Jesus Christ, to preserve exactly what the Pope is supposed to preserve: faith, morals, and government throughout the earth! There is a direct contradiction between the office of the Papacy and the office of the Holy Spirit, for it is the Holy Spirit Who is the third Person of the Godhead. It is He Who indwells the believer; it is He Who makes intercession for us; it is He Who is our friend, our companion, our "comforter", not the "Vicar of Christ" of the Roman Catholic Church. (See John 14:26; 15:26; 16:7.) It is good to bear this in mind that the Unity of the Body of Christ is not dependent upon outward organization, but upon spiritual fellowship.

We shall now progress to a very interesting section of Scripture with which every Catholic is familiar: [St. Matthew 16:18](#). I do not know how many times I have talked to Roman Catholic people who have referred me to this passage of Scripture. They have said to me:

"You know, your church began with Calvin", or "Your church began with Knox", or "Your church began with Luther or Zwingli, (or someone else); but the Roman Catholic Church alone began with Jesus Christ." They almost always turn to this reference to "prove" their point. Even if a Catholic does not know his Bible at all, you can always be certain that this is one verse in his Bible that he knows very well. We should read the context of this passage carefully, because if we just

quote verse eighteen, we miss the heart of what Jesus was saying.

Beginning with verse thirteen, we read: "Jesus having come into the district of Caesarea Philippi began to ask his disciples saying, 'Who do men say that I, the Son of man, am?' But they said, 'Some say John the Baptist, others Elias, and other Jeremias, or one of the prophets.' He said to them, 'But whom do you say that I am?' And Simon Peter answered and said 'Thou art The Christ, the Son of the Living God.'

"Then Jesus answered and said, 'Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jona: for flesh and blood have not revealed this unto thee, but my Father in Heaven. And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give to thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.' And then He strictly charged His disciples to tell no one that He was Jesus the Christ."

Now, I would like to ask a question at this point--a question that I always ask my Roman Catholic friends. I often say to them, "Let's not get into an argument about Peter and the Rock and things of this nature. The important things we want to get into our minds is this: who is the one Person that should have understood what Jesus said better than anyone, whether he be a Roman Catholic Pope, a bishop, a priest, or a Protestant theologian?" Invariably the average Catholic will say, "Peter, of course: he was the one to whom Jesus was speaking." With this, we readily agree.

Now in this connection I would refer you to the second chapter of Peter's first epistle. I point Catholics to this chapter rather than mere interpretations given by any Protestant theologian, which I am sure from experience they are unwilling to accept. I refer them to the supposed first Pope, for I am certain that they are willing to take what he has to say as *the* correct interpretation of what Jesus said to him in Matthew, the sixteenth chapter.

I quote from the Roman Catholic Bible: "Draw near to Him, a living stone, rejected indeed of men but chosen and honored by God. Be you yourselves as living stones, built thereon into a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." Hence, the Scripture says, "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious, and he who believes in it shall not be put to shame!" "For you, therefore, who believe, is this honor. But to those who do not believe, A stone that the builders rejected, the same has become the *head* of the corner and a stumbling stone and a rock of offense. To those who stumble at the

word and who do not believe, for this, also they are destined. You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a purchased people that you may proclaim the perfection of Him who has called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

When you read Peter's statement in context, one understands immediately what he is talking about. It is that simple. Peter here tells every Christian that he is a little "stone", built up into a spiritual "temple", and Jesus Christ is the cornerstone. To illustrate it, Peter quotes Isaiah, the prophet, who was speaking prophetically of the coming Messiah. If Peter really was the "cornerstone", this question must be explained by the Catholic Church: Why didn't Isaiah say, "Behold I lay in Rome a chief cornerstone?"

If Peter was allegedly Bishop of Rome and Vicar of Christ, and if the Church is built on him, it cannot be built in Zion, which is in heaven--the heavenly Jerusalem--it must be built *here* on the earth, and its foundation must rest at St. Peter's Basilica! If Peter was the Rock, then Isaiah, the prophet, would have to have written, "Behold, I lay in *Rome* a chief cornerstone", but he did not because Isaiah, the prophet, was not speaking about Peter--and Peter himself said so!

Isaiah, the prophet, was speaking about Jesus Christ, "Behold, I lay in Zion (the city of God) a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious, and he who believes in it shall not be put to shame." ([Isaiah 28:16](#), Douay version) The Greek here very clearly reveals that the word translated "it" can also be rendered "Him". I prefer, instead of saying "it", to say "Him" because you cannot believe on an "*it*": you can only believe on a *Person*. Here the Person is the Lord Jesus Christ as Peter points out.

The Catholic Church then must explain the phrase, "Whoever believes on *Him*, shall not be put to shame." After all, Peter was certainly not the one who was going to be believed upon. If people believe in Peter, they *will* be put to open shame, for Peter was but a sinner saved by grace. To believe in Christ as the "cornerstone", as Peter says He is, will not put anybody to shame. It is also significant, when you read verse nine of the Catholic version of the Bible, to notice that Peter in writing to Christians (see [I Peter 1:1-9](#) and [2:24-25](#)), (not to a pope, or to cardinals, or to bishops, or to priests), makes this amazing statement: "You, however, are a chosen race, a royal priesthood."

Think of that, every Christian is a member of the priesthood. We are all priests before God--"a holy nation, a purchased people"--that you, (not the clergy alone), "may proclaim the perfections of Him who has

called you out of darkness into His marvelous light." That is the true teaching of the Scripture, we're all members of a new priesthood. In [Revelation 1:6](#), we are told that Christ "hath made us a Kingdom and Priests to God and His Father." There is, then, a priesthood of *all* believers. If you are a Roman Catholic outside of Christ, and you want to know what your position will be if you accept the Lord Jesus Christ and trust Him alone for your salvation, here is the truth from Scripture.

God says you do not need a pope, a cardinal, a bishop, or a priest--God says *you* will be a priest, a member of a "holy priesthood", and He is going to use you, as a Christian, to bring people out of darkness into His marvelous light. This is a wonderful promise from the Word of God and it only needs to be accepted and acted upon to validate its truth experientially in the Christian life.

How, then, should we understand [Matthew 16:18](#)? We could take the Greek and show how there is a *play* on words; we could give you grammatical explanations, but you would be more confused than edified, because a knowledge of Greek is essential. Therefore, I will just ask you to think about the following: Who should understand better than anybody else what Jesus said? The answer must be "Peter". What does Peter say? Peter says, "We're all little stones, and we are built up into a spiritual temple, made of other little stones (i.e. other believers, the Church), and Jesus Christ is the "cornerstone". Therefore, upon Whom was the Church built? Upon Jesus Christ: "Behold, I lay in Zion a chief cornerstone, chosen and precious: and he that believes in Him shall not be put to shame."

Now, let's go one step further. What more do the Scriptures say concerning the Stone? The second chapter of Ephesians, the twentieth verse, is one of greatest texts in the New Testament dealing with the subject of the foundation Stone of the Christian Church. Certainly, if we are to be edified, we must draw upon the source that deals most thoroughly with the problem of the Papacy and Roman Catholic teaching--we must deal with the Bible.

Again from the Roman Catholic Bible, let me quote what the Holy Spirit says concerning these things: "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles, and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him, the whole structure is closely fitted together and grows into a temple, holy in the Lord. In Him, you are being built into a dwelling place for God in the spirit." There is no mention of Peter here; there is no mention that the Church is built upon Peter as the rock. "You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the

prophets" --Peter, it is true, is in there, but the whole structure does not rest upon Peter; it rests upon Jesus Christ, the "chief cornerstone".

In [I Corinthians 10:4](#), we learn, as we do over and over again in the Scripture, that Christ is considered a Rock. This verse--[I Corinthians 10:4](#)--concerns Christ, and it uses the illustration of the wilderness travels of the Jews [--for in the wilderness the children of Israel partook of the blessing of Christ], and it cites a specific instance which is important: "... all ate the same spiritual food, all drank the same spiritual drink, for they drank from the *spiritual rock* and *the rock was Christ*." Christ then is consistently described in Scripture by the metaphorical usage Rock. The whole foundation of Roman Catholicism admittedly rests upon Peter as *the rock*. Once you have shown that Christ is the Rock, there is no apostolic succession. There is no authority for the claim of the Roman Catholic Church and there is no basis to their claim that they are the "only true Church of Christ".

That this claim is made by the Catholic Church, and that their dogmatism goes far beyond anything that the Protestant Church maintains, no informed person denies.

I quote the Roman Catholic Catechism on this point: "Why did Christ found the Church? Christ founded the Church to teach, govern, sanctify, and save all men. By what means does the Church sanctify and save all men? The Church sanctifies and saves all men by means of the Mass, the Sacraments, and special blessing and devotions. To save their souls, Catholics must, 1. Believe all the teachings of the Church; 2. Keep the commandments of God and the Church; 3. Pray to God and worthily receive the Sacraments." I think this quotation is very important. Here, out of a Roman Catholic Catechism, comes vindication for Father Feeney of Boston, who was unfrocked by the Catholic Church because they said he was teaching a doctrine they did not believe, and because he would not keep silent on the subject and submit to discipline. His doctrine was this: "Unless you belong to the Roman Catholic Church, you will be lost." In effect, he was saying, "There is no salvation outside the Roman Catholic Church." He was excommunicated for refusing to keep silent on this point, though Rome has never denied her official teaching on the subject-which teaching, incidentally, Feeney was propagating.

Pope Pius XII never fully answered Fenney's special plea, based on sound authority, because to answer his plea would be to admit what the Roman Church has always taught.

Once again I quote the Roman Catholic Catechism: "Are all people bound to belong to the Catholic Church? All are bound to belong to the Church, and he who knows the Church to be the true church and remains out of it, cannot be saved. Why are all bound to belong to the Church? All are bound to belong to the Church because Christ founded it for all nations and for all times, and it alone possesses the *means* that is necessary for salvation. What is the meaning of the saying, 'Outside the Church there is no salvation'? This means that whoever, through his own fault, willfully remains outside the True Church will not be saved."

I repeat it for emphasis: "This means that whoever, through his own fault, willfully remains outside the True Church, will not be saved." The Jesuits have a doctrine called, "Invincible Ignorance". If you are so invincibly ignorant that you cannot understand that the Catholic Church is the True Church, God will somehow pardon you and accept you, *if* you do not oppose the Catholic Church. That doctrine dooms all Protestant Christians according to Roman Catholic theology, because according to our belief as taught in the Scripture, we "willfully through our own fault" remain outside the Roman Catholic Church.

The true position of the Roman Church is very clear. This is taught in their parochial schools and is a very well known fact in ecclesiastical circles. The average Catholic may not be aware of it, but this is the teaching of his Church; this is what he is taught in his high school, and this is what he must, when pressed, believe. The late Bishop Ronald Knox of England, as quoted by Time Magazine, put it even more bluntly when he stated, "All the identification discs in Heaven will be Roman Catholics."

Further evidence as to the Roman Church's true position is shown in this quotation from "The American Ecclesiastical Reviews": "No one can have a real objective right to practice any but the true religion, and Catholics believe that Catholicism *is the only true religion* which God commands all men to accept. Every other religion is false and opposed to God's plan for man's salvation..." (January, 1946, pages 35-37)

### **History And Papal Tradition**

In view of Rome's assertions previously quoted, and her insistence on historical vindication, it might be profitable to examine some instances that do not favor her claim to either unbroken Apostolic succession or papal infallibility. Gregory I was the first pope of any great renown or of whom we have a reliable historical

record. He lived about the year 590 AD. Gregory I, or Gregory the Great, was once faced with a dispute concerning Communion. In this dispute he made some pertinent statements. I quote Gregory's "ex cathedra" pronouncement concerning Communion because it is just the opposite of the "ex cathedra" statement by the Roman Catholic Church today. Gregory said: "Cursed be anyone that does not receive both bread and wine and teaches others not to take both bread and wine."

According to another equally infallible Pope and the Council of Trent: "Cursed be anyone who teaches that we must receive both bread and wine." Here are two papal injunctions, both of which allegedly come from God, in which Catholics are cursed both coming and going. If they take the bread and the wine, they are cursed by the pronouncement of the Church today. If they do not receive both, they are cursed by the Church yesterday. Any way you look at it--if they take bread and wine, or if they do not take bread and wine--they are still cursed by a pope and, strangely enough, they are speaking on matters of "faith and morals" and are, therefore, allegedly infallible!

There are quite a few other statements made by popes that make fascinating reading, but I think the most fascinating is the fact that a number of the popes in Roman Catholic history took it upon themselves to argue with one another to the point that, at one time (1378-1417), there were *three* lines of Papal claimants all claiming to be the successor to St. Peter; all of them trying to occupy the chair of Rome; all of them fighting and plotting against one another to get there. These three Popes, Gregory XII, Clement VII, and Alexander VII, all gave way to Martin V in 1417, but in the interim the "faithful" followed all three. Their conflicting pronouncements and "divine" decrees notwithstanding, yet Rome still claims the true succession from Peter has never been broken.

It is also an historical fact that the infamous Borgia family, the most notorious poisoners in the history of the world, had as their father Alexander VI, Pope of Rome. Alexander obtained the chair of Peter by simony, lived an immoral life and practiced simony and immorality, even after he ascended the papacy\*. With his son, Caesar, he tried to unify Italy under the Borgia crest. These are some of the examples in the development of the Papacy. Yet the Roman Church says that Alexander VI, even in his wickedness and in his assent to the murder of other people, was still the Vicar of Christ on earth; and that in matters of "faith and morals" he could do no wrong. Other highlights in papal intrigue include the false reigns of Popes Christophorus, Sergius III,

John X, and John XI from 903-936 AD.--all of whom disgraced their office--and considerable evidence has been adduced from reputable sources to the effect that Pope John VIII was a woman!

We could look into other aspects of the Papacy. But the important thing is that the Word of God teaches us that the Papacy does not rest upon Scriptures, it rests upon tradition; it rests upon the teachings of a group of people who, through the ages, have built an entire organization upon little more than the premise that they have a divine right to rule.

In the midst of discussion with Roman Catholics over the historicity of Papal tradition, a very significant often neglected fact should be brought to bear. This is the fact that until 1870 the papacy was *not* considered infallible and was only rendered so after much protest from noted Catholic leaders had been silenced by papal pressure. One such noted leader was Bishop Joseph George Strossmayer, who joined twenty-one Archbishops and sixty-four Bishops in voting *against* the elevating of Pope Pius IX to the position of an infallible interpreter of truth for Catholics. At the famous eighty-fifth General Congregation of the Vatican Council, July 13, 1870, Bishop Strossmayer delivered a vigorous defense of his position, extracts of which we shall quote as a brilliant summarization and critique of the massive folly of papal infallibility.

"Well, venerable brethren, here history raises its voice to assure us that some popes have erred. You may protest against it or deny it, as you please, but I will prove it. Pope Victor (192) first approved of Montanism, and then condemned it. Marcellinus (296-303) was an idolater. He entered into the temple of Vesta, and offered incense to the goddess. You will say that it was an act of weakness; but I answer, a vicar of Jesus Christ dies rather than become an apostate. Liberius (358) consented to the condemnation of Athanasius, and made a profession of Arianism, that he might be recalled from his exile and reinstated in his See. Honorius (625) adhered to Monothelism: Farther Gratry has proved it to demonstration. Gregory I (785-90) calls anyone Antichrist who takes the name of Universal Bishop, and contrariwise Boniface III (607-9) made the patricide Emperor Phocas confer that title upon him. Paschall II (1088-99) and Eugenius III (1145-53) authorized dueling; Julius II (1509) and Pius IV (1560) forbade it. Eugenius IV (1432-39) approved the Council of Basle and the restitution of the chalice to the church of Bohemia; Pius II (1458) revoked the concession. Hadrian II (867-872) declared civil marriages to be valid; Pius VII (1800-23) condemned them. Sixtus V

(1585-90) published an edition of the Bible, and by a Bull recommended it to be read; Pius VII condemned the reading of it. Clement XIV (1769-1774) abolished the order of the Jesuits, permitted by Paul III and Pius VII re-established it. Pope Vigilius (538) purchased the papacy from Belisarius, lieutenant of the Emperor Justinian. Pope Eugenius III (IV in original) (1145) imitated Vigilius. St. Bernard, the bright star of his age, reproves the pope, saying to him: "Can you show me in this great city of Rome anyone who would receive you as pope if they had not received gold or silver for it?"

"You know the history of Formosus too well for me to add to it. Stephen XI caused his body to be exhumed, dressed in his pontifical robes; he made the fingers which he used for giving the benediction to be cut off, and then had him thrown into the Tiber, declaring him to be a perjurer and illegitimate. He was then imprisoned by the people, poisoned, and strangled. Look how matters were readjusted; Romanus, successor to Stephen, and after him, John X, rehabilitated the memory of Formosus.

"But you will tell me these are fables, not history. Fables! Go, Monsignori, to the Vatican Library and read Platina, the historian of the papacy and the annuals of Baronius (AD 897). These are facts, which, for the honor of the Holy See, we would wish to ignore.

"I go on. The learned Cardinal Baronius, speaking of the papal court, says (give attention, my venerable brethren to these words), 'What did the Roman church appear in those days? How infamous! Only all-powerful courtesans governing in Rome! It was they who gave, exchanged and took bishoprics; and horrible to relate, they got their lovers, the false popes, put on the throne of St. Peter.' (Baronius AD 912)

"Look now. The greatest number of these anti-popes appear in the genealogical tree of the papacy. And it must have been this absurdity that Baronius described; because Generbardo, the great flatterer of the popes, had dared to say in his Chronicles (AD 901): "This century is unfortunate, as for nearly 150 years the popes have fallen from all the virtues of their predecessors, and have become apostates rather than apostles."

"I can understand how the illustrious Baronius must have blushed when he narrated the acts of these Roman popes. Speaking of John XI (931), natural son of Pope Sergius and of Marozia, he wrote these words in his annals -- 'The holy church, that is, the Roman, has been vilely trampled on by such a monster.' John XII (956), elected pope at the age of eighteen, through the influence of courtesans, was not one whit better than his predecessor.

"I grieve, my venerable brethren, to stir up so much filth, I am silent on Alexander VI, father and lover of Lucretia; I turn away from John XXIII (1410), who, because of simony and immorality, was deposed by the holy Ecumenical Council of Constance.

"I do not speak of the schisms which have dishonored the church. In those unfortunate days the See of Rome was occupied by two competitors, and sometimes even by three. Which of these is the true pope? ... Could you do it (decree the infallibility) and maintain that avaricious, incestuous, murdering, simoniacal popes have been vicars of Jesus Christ? Oh, venerable brethren! To maintain such an enormity would be to betray Christ worse than Judas ... Let us turn to the teaching of the Apostles, since without that we have only errors, darkness, and false traditions.... What must I do to be saved? When we have decided that, we shall have laid the foundation of our dogmatic system firm and immovable on the rock, lasting and incorruptible, of the divinely inspired Scriptures ... (do not) let them make Pius IX a god, as we have made a goddess of the Blessed Virgin. Stop, stop, venerable brethren, on the odious and ridiculous incline on which you have placed yourselves. Save the church from the shipwreck that threatens her, asking for the Holy Scriptures alone for the rule of Faith which we ought to believe and to profess. I have spoken; may God help me!"

To what Bishop Strossmayer said, all Protestants can heartily agree. The papacy as a system then is built upon false premises. However, the pity is that power politics silenced him and his worthy supporters. The teaching of the Scriptures is that Jesus Christ is the "chief cornerstone". "Other foundation can no man lay than that which is laid, Christ Jesus." (1 Cor. 3:11)

To study the Papacy is to learn a valuable lesson-- to learn that when we surrender to men what we are commanded to surrender only to the Holy Spirit, spiritual tyranny and slavery of the human mind and the souls of men can come about.

With Thomas Jefferson, we in America today, might well say: "We have sworn, on the altar of Jehovah, eternal hostility against all forms of tyranny over the minds of men." "I say 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 ... You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and the prophets, Jesus Christ being the chief cornerstone ... and the stone which the builders rejected has become

the head of the comer ... whosoever believes in Him shall not be ashamed." ([Ephesians 2:20](#), [1 Peter 2:6-7](#))

\*Ludwig, Pastor, *History of the Popes*, (Vol. 5, pages 363, 385; Vol. 6, page 140)

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