

## Lies And Deceptions Of The Roman Catholic Church : Part 1

Copyright 1994 - 2010 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : April 1, 2010

Last Updated : April 1, 2010

False Roman Catholic Doctrines: The One True Faith? Was Peter The First Pope?, The "Acts Of Peter" And Peter's Crucifixion, Christ Died Once For All Men, "Acts Of Peter" A False Gospel, No Scriptural Evidence That Peter Ever Went To Rome, Fall Of Babylon, Did Peter Visit Babylon?, Paul Rebukes The Galatian Brethren, Become All Things To All Men In Order To Save Some Of Them, Paul Goes To Jerusalem, Peter Travels To Antioch, Paul Rebukes Peter, Paul Was Apostle To The Gentiles While Peter Was The Apostle To The Jews, Roman Catholic Church Did Not Exist During First Century, First Century Home Churches, True Christian Church Is Not A Physical Place Or Building, Spiritual Body Of Christ Is True Church And Household Of God, Jesus Chose Three Men To Lead His Church: Peter James & John, Origin And Meaning Of Apostle Peter's Aramaic Name: Cephas

Being as I live in an area of the world which is dominated by the Roman Catholic Church, every now and then, I will engage in a conversation with a Roman Catholic. When this happens, invariably, the conversation will turn towards the erroneous Roman Catholic-held doctrines which boastfully claim, among other things, that the Roman Catholic Church is the Church which was established by Jesus Christ, that the Apostle Peter was the first pope of said Church, and that Roman Catholicism is -- according to Roman Catholic beliefs -- "the one true faith". In their quest to convince us non-Catholics of these misguided beliefs, they will point to a few Bible verses that are found in the New Testament. One of these Scriptures is Matthew 16:18, which reads as follows:

"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, KJV

The traditional Roman Catholic interpretation of this verse is that Christ is saying that the Apostle Peter is the rock; and that with this pronouncement, Jesus is also establishing Peter as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. But is this really what the Lord is telling us in that verse, or is it possible that common Roman Catholics have been purposely misled by their church's hierarchy in the Vatican?

Another verse of Scripture which was recently shared with me by a Roman Catholic is the following, written by the Apostle Paul:

"But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth."  
1 Timothy 3:15, KJV

According to the person who wrote to me, the previous verse proves that the Roman Catholic Church is the Church that was established by Christ, and that it is the Church to whom He gave authority in the world. If you were to ask any devoted

Roman Catholic, they will indeed tell you, and quite proudly so, that the Roman Catholic Church is "the pillar and ground of the truth". Whenever the pontiff in Rome makes any kind of pronouncement, it is viewed by dedicated Roman Catholics as coming directly from the Mouth of God; after all, the pope is the "Vicar of Christ" -- or at least so they say. So again I ask: Is this truly what the previous verse means?

Hopefully, after you have read this series, and examined the Biblical evidence which I will be presenting in it, you will be able to arrive at your own informed, and Biblically-sound, conclusions.

Let's begin our examination with a look at the Apostle Peter. While I have already written an article about Peter entitled "Peter: Faith Tried In The Fire", let us just take a brief look at the manner of his death. The commonly-held belief is that after years of faithfully serving the Lord, the Apostle Peter was crucified upside down on a Roman cross outside of the city of Rome. While it appears later in other works, the original source of this questionable doctrine is the closing chapters of a non-Biblical apocryphal work known as the "Acts of Peter". I have a copy of it, and I have read it; and to be honest, like so many other apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works that I have read, I seriously doubt that it is Divinely Inspired because some of its contents clearly contradicts the accepted Canon -- that is, the Bible -- and is quite strange.

To give you an idea of what I am talking about, consider that according to this manuscript, the reason why Peter was killed was because, as a result of his alleged evangelism in Rome, some of the Roman women were coming to the Christian faith, and no longer desiring to have sexual relations. In one case, there was a certain Roman prefect by the name of Agrippa who had four concubines. After hearing Peter preach, these four women wanted to remain chaste, and so they refused to engage in sex with Agrippa. Meanwhile, there was another Roman who was a friend of Caesar by the name of Albinus, who had a wife named Xanthippe. Similar to the four concubines, she too had heard Peter preach, and as a result, she no longer desired to have sexual relations with her husband. Enraged, Agrippa and Albinus conspired together to have Peter killed.

So according to the story, Peter is apprehended and led away to be crucified. Prior to actually being hung on the cross, Peter gives the gathered crowd a long, flowery speech. Then, while he is actually hanging on the cross upside down, Peter gives yet another speech before finally dying, which doesn't sound like anything that you will find him saying in the New Testament. The crucifixion was executed without the consent or knowledge of Nero. Upon learning of Peter's crucifixion, Nero becomes very angry with Agrippa because, according to the manuscript "he desired to punish him [Peter] more sorely and with greater torment, because Peter had made disciples of certain of them that served him, and had caused them to depart from him".

Now, if the previous paragraphs sound strange to you, allow me to share one more section of the "Acts Of Peter" with you. It states that initially, Peter was going to flee from Rome in order to save his life; however, before he could escape, "Jesus" appeared to him and told him to go back and get up on that cross:

----- Begin Quote -----

"And as he went forth of the city, he saw the Lord entering into Rome. And when he saw him, he said: Lord, whither goest thou thus (or here)? And the Lord said unto him: I go into Rome to be crucified. And Peter said unto him: Lord, art thou (being) crucified again? He said unto him: Yea, Peter, I am (being) crucified again. And Peter came to himself: and having beheld the Lord ascending up into heaven, he returned to Rome, rejoicing, and glorifying the Lord, for that he said: I am being crucified: the which was about to befall Peter."

----- End Quote -----

Now, tell me folks; do you honestly believe that any of the previous paragraphs that I just shared with you are inspired by God? Does it sound like the inspired Word of God that you are familiar with in the KJV? Are you able to recognize the glaring Scriptural contradiction that is found in that last paragraph alone? If not, let me give you a little help:

"Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin ONCE: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God."

Romans 6:9-10, KJV

"But this man, [Jesus] because he continueth ever, hath an unchangeable priesthood. 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. For such a high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; Who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people's: for this he did ONCE, when he offered up himself."

Hebrews 7:24-27, KJV

"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in ONCE into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us."

Hebrews 9:11-12, KJV

"For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: Nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; For then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now ONCE in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself . . . So Christ was ONCE offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Hebrews 9:24-26, 28 KJV

"By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE for all."

Hebrews 10:10, KJV

"For Christ also hath ONCE suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:"

1 Peter 3:18, KJV

As you can clearly see, the real Word of God, the inspired Word of God, tells us that Jesus died for our sins one time, and He is not going to do it again. Please notice the very last verse. Even the real Apostle Peter tells us this; yet in the "Acts Of Peter", we see another very strange-sounding "Peter", as well as another "Jesus" who appears to be willing to be crucified again. Thus, by studying the real Word of God, we can quickly determine that the "Acts Of Peter" is a false gospel which preaches another Jesus. Now consider the warning of the Apostle Paul:

"For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him."  
2 Corinthians 11:4, KJV

That word "bear" is derived from the Greek word "anechomai", which means to hold one's self erect and firm, to sustain, to bear, or to endure. So I believe that what Paul is saying there is that if someone should come to us preaching a false gospel and another Jesus, we should stand firm against them.

The reason why I shared the previous story with you from the "Acts Of Peter" is to emphasize a very important point, and that is this: As I briefly mentioned a moment ago, the "Acts Of Peter" is the oldest known manuscript where Peter's alleged crucifixion in Rome is recorded. At later dates, other writers also mentioned it, or referred to it, but this is believed to be the oldest source. That being the case, we must assume that this apocryphal work must be where the story originated. As I said, personally, I don't accept this as the inspired Word of God for a moment; and yet millions of Roman Catholics around the world, and even some non-Catholics, have bought into this story, and believe that it is true. Personally, I find this fact alarming, and it makes me wonder exactly how many other Roman Catholic doctrines find their origin in such uninspired strange and doubtful works. That is my point.

Based upon the following verses which can be found near the end of the Gospel of John, it appears that there may be some truth to the belief that Peter was crucified; but that this occurred in Rome, and in the manner described in the "Acts Of Peter" is questionable, because there is absolutely no record of it anywhere in the accepted Canon of the Scriptures:

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, When thou wast young, thou girdedst thyself, and walkedst whither thou wouldest: but when thou shalt be old, thou shalt stretch forth thy hands, and another shall gird thee, and carry thee whither thou wouldest not. This spake he, signifying by what death he should glorify God. And when he had spoken this, he saith unto him, Follow me."  
John 21:18-19, KJV

The act of the Apostle Peter stretching forth his hands, and being carried somewhere against his will, does suggest that Jesus may be saying that Peter would be crucified in his old age. However, it is precisely because of these verses, that I have a difficult time reconciling the Roman Catholic doctrine which claims that Peter went to Rome where he became the very first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Are we to believe then that the Romans actually murdered their very first pope? Granted, murderous plots were a rather common occurrence in ancient Rome; nevertheless, in my view, something seems very

wrong with this picture. Both accounts cannot be true. Either Peter died a martyr as a humble servant and an Apostle of the Lord, following Jesus' own example of self-sacrifice, or else he became the powerful, popular pope and bishop of Rome, of Roman Catholic myth. As Jesus stated in the Gospel of Luke:

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."  
Luke 9:23-24, KJV

The Apostle Peter not only bore his symbolic cross in life, as is evidenced by the persecutions that he and his fellow Apostles endured in the Book of Acts, but apparently in death as well.

As I've pointed out before, this Roman Catholic doctrine that claims that Peter went to Rome finds absolutely no support in the Scriptures. According to the Bible, all indications are that Peter's travels remained primarily within the borders of Israel. In fact, Peter -- together with the Apostles James and John -- guided the Early Christian Church from Jerusalem, and not from Rome. To my knowledge, there are only two places in the Scriptures which suggest that Peter ever physically left Israel. One of these is found at the very end of Peter's first Epistle where he writes:

"The church that is at Babylon, elected together with you, saluteth you; and so doth Marcus my son."  
1 Peter 5:13, KJV

The impression given here is that the Apostle Peter may have possibly made an apostolic visit to the Christian Church that had been established in the ancient city of Babylon. By this time, however, Babylon would have no longer been the grand metropolis that had been established by the Babylonian kings, and later by the Persians and Greeks as well. Accordingly, the Greek lexicon states the following concerning the demise of Babylon:

----- Begin Quote -----

Cyrus had formerly captured it, but Darius Hystaspis threw down its gates and walls, and Xerxes destroyed the temple of Belis. At length the city was reduced to almost solitude, the population having been drawn off by the neighbouring Seleucia, built on the Tigris by Seleucus Nicanor.

----- End Quote -----

As I explain in a number of other articles, the fall of the city of Babylon was a fulfillment of some of the prophecies of the ancient Israelite Prophets, and was due to the fact that the Babylonians, under the leadership of Nebuchadnezzar, invaded, captured and destroyed Jerusalem. This included the complete destruction of the temple of Solomon, as well as the theft of all of the holy golden objects which had been in it.

Returning to the topic at hand, in their desperate attempt to prove that Peter went to the city of Rome where he allegedly became the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church, there are those Roman Catholics who claim that Peter's use of the name Babylon in the previous verse is a coded reference, and that in reality, he was writing from Rome. Again, allow me to make it clear that there is absolutely no Scriptural evidence to

support this belief. The idea that Peter is referring to the city of Rome is speculation at best; and our Christian faith is not based on questionable conjectures and speculations; it is based on the actual record that we find in the Scriptures.

Another possibility is that Peter may not have been writing from Babylon. If we consider that Jerusalem was the spiritual and physical hub of the First Century Christian Church, and that communications, materials and Disciples flowed through it all the time, it may be that Peter was merely conveying a message from the Christian Church at Babylon, to the brethren he was addressing in his Epistle. While this is a personal speculation on my part, I do believe that it does have some merit. However, for me personally, the issue of where Peter was writing from is not really important. What is important, is the contents of his Epistle.

The second piece of Scriptural evidence which points to the Apostle Peter temporarily leaving Jerusalem is found in the Apostle Paul's Epistle to the brethren at Galatia. Galatia was a province of Asia Minor. The Apostle Paul himself was from Cilicia, which was another province of Asia Minor. In our modern day, Asia Minor is known as Turkey.

As I explain in other articles, in this Epistle, the Apostle Paul delivers a rather stern rebuke to the Christian brethren in Galatia, due to certain disturbing events which transpired after Paul had established a new Church there. These events centered around the fact that Paul had stirred up considerable controversy amongst the Apostles and Elders in Jerusalem, due to the fact that as he traveled throughout that part of the Mediterranean region, he preached that circumcision was not necessary for Salvation. In contrast to the stern, Law-bound Jewish Disciples in Jerusalem, Paul was also considerably more liberal regarding what he ate, as well as more lax when it came to other Jewish customs. The reason why Paul adopted this evangelical approach, as he explains in his Epistles, was so that he could win more souls to Christ, as we see by these verses:

"For though I be free from all men, yet have I made myself servant unto all, that I might gain the more. And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law; To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law. To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you."

1 Corinthians 9:19-23, KJV

At any rate, in the first and second chapters of the Epistle, Paul briefly relates the story of his conversion, and how he was at first held at arms length by the leadership of the Early Church, which resided in Jerusalem. After three years, Paul finally went to Jerusalem, where he stayed with Peter for fifteen days. Paul then relates that at least fourteen years later, when the dispute regarding circumcision arose, he again went to Jerusalem in order to sort out the problem; at which time he states that James, Cephas and John -- who were viewed as the Elders in Jerusalem -- extended the hand of fellowship to Paul. Paul relates that it is sometime after these events that the Apostle Peter went to visit him in the city of Antioch, which was the capital of Syria, founded by

Seleucus Nicanor -- one of Alexander the Great's four top generals -- in 300 B.C.

It is during this visit by Peter that the situation explodes. Paul publicly rebukes Peter due to Peter's clear hypocrisy, and Paul's long-time traveling companion -- Barnabas -- ends up abandoning Paul over this same issue, as we see here:

"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?"  
Galatians 2:11-14, KJV

It is interesting to note that Peter's first Epistle, where Babylon is mentioned, was in fact addressed to the Galatians, and other brethren who dwelt in the provinces of Asia Minor, as we see here:

"Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia,"  
1 Peter 1:1, KJV

As I said a moment ago, other than these two occurrences in the Scriptures, I am not aware of any other evidence in the New Testament which points to Peter having left Israel all that often, and most certainly never having gone to Rome in order to supposedly claim his title as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Furthermore, in my mind, I can't think of any reason for Peter to have done this. As I have already stated, and as you will see even more clearly in a moment, Jerusalem was both the physical and the spiritual hub of the First Century Christian Church. Finally, the Scriptures also emphasize that Peter was the Apostle to the Circumcision -- that is, the Apostle to the Jews -- while Paul was chosen by God as the Apostle to the Uncircumcision -- that is, to the heathen, or the Gentiles. It is for this reason that Paul was destined by God to eventually travel to Rome, where he would be a great witness, and ultimately surrender his life for the Lord, while Peter was not. For example, Paul writes:

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."  
Galatians 2:7-9, KJV

One other overwhelming fact which makes this Roman Catholic claim of Peter going to Rome to become the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church so baseless, and so ludicrous, is that the Roman Catholic Church did not even exist during the First Century. As I point out in such articles as "Where Are The First Century Churches?", a physical so-called "Christian"

empire consisting of church buildings, grand cathedrals, and amassed power and wealth was totally nonexistent during the time of the first Apostles. Let us not forget that our faith was still young, weak and just beginning to get its bearings. It is so evident in the Bible that the First Century Apostles and Disciples met in the fields, as well as in the homes of people who had been won to the Christian faith. Home-based churches were the only ones in existence at the time. Equally important is the fact that the True Church is not a physical place or building; it is the Body of Believers who can meet and worship wherever and whenever it happens to be the most convenient. Consider these verses:

"As for Saul, he made havock of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women committed them to prison."

Acts 8:3, KJV

"Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the firstfruits of Achaia unto Christ."

Romans 16:5, KJV

"The churches of Asia salute you. Aquila and Priscilla salute you much in the Lord, with the church that is in their house."

1 Corinthians 16:19, KJV

"Salute the brethren which are in Laodicea, and Nymphas, and the church which is in his house."

Colossians 4:15, KJV

"And to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus our fellowsoldier, and to the church in thy house:"

Philemon 1:2, KJV

"And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house,"

Acts 20:20, KJV

In light of the fact that the Roman Catholic Church wasn't even in existence during the First Century, we must question how it is that certain Roman Catholics can point to a verse like 1 Timothy 3:15 -- which I shared earlier, and which was written during the latter half of the First Century -- and make the claim that it establishes the existence of, as well as the authority of, the Roman Catholic Church. It is simply impossible. You cannot attribute a verse to an entity which did not even exist at the time. So to reiterate a point, it is totally impossible for Peter to have been the pope of an entity which had not yet come into existence.

In examining a few other verses, we can also determine that in 1 Timothy 3:15, the phrase "house of God" is not referring to a physical building, church or worldly church hierarchy as some Roman Catholics believe; it is in fact referring to the spiritual Body of Christ, and its members, who make up the household, or family, of God. Again, consider the following verses:

"Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ."

1 Peter 2:5, KJV



"Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;"  
Ephesians 2:19, KJV

But this is not the only problem with this claim of the Roman Catholic Church. It is also important to point out that in choosing the leadership of the Early Church who would carry on the work which He had begun, Jesus selected three men and not one -- Peter, James and John -- as we clearly see by the following verses:

"And after six days Jesus taketh Peter, James, and John his brother, and bringeth them up into an high mountain apart,"  
Matthew 17:1, KJV

"Then cometh Jesus with them unto a place called Gethsemane, and saith unto the disciples, Sit ye here, while I go and pray yonder. And he took with him Peter and the two sons of Zebedee, and began to be sorrowful and very heavy."  
Matthew 26:36-37, KJV

"And he suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, and James, and John the brother of James."  
Mark 5:37, KJV

"And after six days Jesus taketh with him Peter, and James, and John, and leadeth them up into an high mountain apart by themselves: and he was transfigured before them."  
Mark 9:2, KJV

"And they came to a place which was named Gethsemane: and he saith to his disciples, Sit ye here, while I shall pray. And he taketh with him Peter and James and John, and began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy;"  
Mark 14:32-33, KJV

"And when he came into the house, he suffered no man to go in, save Peter, and James, and John, and the father and the mother of the maiden."  
Luke 8:51, KJV

"And when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."  
Galatians 2:9, KJV

Please note that in that last verse, "Cephas" is the Aramaic name that Jesus gave to the Apostle Peter, as we see here:

"And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called Cephas, which is by interpretation, A stone."  
John 1:42, KJV

The Aramaic name "Cephas" is used to refer to Peter a total of six times in the New Testament. In addition to the above occurrence, the Apostle Paul uses it five times in two of his Epistles. While Cephas means "stone", and may possibly lead some of you to believe that it validates the Roman Catholic claim that Peter is the rock of whom Jesus was referring, as we continue our examination of the Scriptures, you will see that there is a substantial amount of Scriptural evidence which actually proves otherwise.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

This file was written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

End Of File

## Lies And Deceptions Of The Roman Catholic Church : Part 2

Copyright 1994 - 2010 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : April 1, 2010

Last Updated : April 1, 2010

Peter James & John Led Early Church From Jerusalem Not Rome, Rome Persecutes Early Christian Church: Nero To Diocletian, Emperor Nero And Great Fire Of Rome Of 64 AD , The Annals Of Tacitus, Roman Catholic Church Begins Persecuting Christians And Other Non-Catholics During 4th Century: Inquisitions, Christian Crusades, Bloody Mary And The Marian Persecutions, Foxe's "Book Of Martyrs", Heretical Doctrines Of The Roman Catholic Church: Transubstantiation, Infallibility Of Pope, Mary's Alleged Immaculate Conception, Mary's Alleged Bodily Assumption To Heaven, RCC Boast Of Being Only Vehicle For Salvation, Supposed Superiority Of Roman Catholic Church, Holy Trinity Doctrine, False Belief That Water Baptism Is Necessary For Salvation, Apostolic Succession, Why Jesus Chose Three Men To Lead First Century Church, Triumvirate Of The Early Church, Presbyterianism And Elders Of Equal Status, A Servant Of All, Scriptural Evidence Which Proves That Paul Was In Rome But Not Peter, Paul And His Writing Companions, Additional Comments On Apostolic Succession

That these three Apostles -- Peter, James and John -- together continued to lead and instruct the Early Church from the city of Jerusalem -- and not from the city of Rome as the RCC likes to falsely claim -- is rather evident from verses such as the following, that are found in the Book of Acts, as well as in Paul's Epistle to the Galatians:

"When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question . . . And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them . . . And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter . . . Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren . . . And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia . . . And as they went through the cities, they delivered them the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem."

Acts 15:2, 4, 6, 22-23, 16:4, KJV

"Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus. Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."

Galatians 1:17-19, KJV

So exactly where was the spiritual leadership of the Early Church located? In the previous verses we are told five times

that they were in the city of Jerusalem. The only thing that the Apostles and Disciples of the Early Church saw emanating from the evil city of Rome -- and for two hundred and fifty years no less, from Nero to Diocletian -- was persecution, torture and death.

It appears that this persecution of Christian Disciples in Rome may have started as a result of the Great Fire of Rome of 64 AD. According to certain historical sources, Emperor Nero, who would have been a young man of twenty-seven years old at the time, was under suspicion of having committed an act of arson. Realizing this, he found an easy scapegoat in the Christians of Rome. Concerning Nero's treachery and this terrible persecution, in his "Annals", the Roman senator and historian, Tacitus, writes the following:

----- Begin Quote -----

"Consequently, to get rid of the report, Nero fastened the guilt and inflicted the most exquisite tortures on a class hated for their abominations, called Christians [or Chrestians] by the populace. Christus, from whom the name had its origin, suffered the extreme penalty during the reign of Tiberius at the hands of one of our procurators, Pontius Pilatus, and a most mischievous superstition, thus checked for the moment, again broke out not only in Judaea, the first source of the evil, but even in Rome, where all things hideous and shameful from every part of the world find their centre and become popular. Accordingly, an arrest was first made of all who pleaded guilty; then, upon their information, an immense multitude was convicted, not so much of the crime of firing the city, as of hatred against mankind. Mockery of every sort was added to their deaths. Covered with the skins of beasts, they were torn by dogs and perished, or were nailed to crosses, or were doomed to the flames and burnt, to serve as a nightly illumination, when daylight had expired."

----- End Quote -----

To continue, once the Roman Catholic Church had established itself during the 4th Century, as I explain in a number of other articles, it began to persecute, torture and slaughter all those who opposed its doctrines and practices, including non-Catholic Christians. Many of these evil acts were done in the name of supposedly purifying the laity of heresies. It is an established historical fact that these tragic events did occur, as is evidenced by the various Inquisitions -- that is the Medieval, Spanish, Portuguese and Roman Inquisitions -- the so-called "Christian Crusades", the English persecutions instigated by Bloody Mary during the time of the Reformation -- referred to as the Marian Persecutions -- and Foxe's Book of Martyrs. Thus, the so-called "Holy Mother Church" became the "Holy Terror of Europe" as literally millions have been persecuted, tortured and murdered during her bloody reign.

What I find so ironic about this bloody history of the Roman Catholic Church, is that while the Vatican claims that these actions were necessary to purge out heretical doctrines, to this day the Roman Catholic Church continues to embrace quite a few heretical doctrines which find absolutely no support in the Scriptures. These include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Transubstantiation - This is the erroneous belief that the "holy eucharist" is transformed into the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ during communion, which is really akin

to cannibalism. The Bible strictly prohibits the drinking of blood in both the Old and the New Testaments.

2. The infallibility of the pope. Supposedly, because he is the alleged "Vicar of Christ", the Roman pope never makes a mistake in his teachings. In fact, devout Roman Catholics are convinced that the pope's word even supersedes the Bible; so if there is a doctrinal contradiction, the pope is assumed to be right. In the Bible, we are told that God magnifies His Word above His very Name, as we see here:

"I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy name for thy lovingkindness and for thy truth: for thou hast magnified thy word above all thy name."  
Psalms 138:2, KJV

If God Himself magnifies His Word above His very Name, is it not also right that we should honor and exalt His Word above the words of any mere human, even if that human is the pope? Furthermore, if the pope contradicts Biblical teachings, then he is the liar, and not God. Consider this:

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."  
Romans 3:4, KJV

3. Mary's so-called "Immaculate Conception". Contrary to the Scriptures which plainly teach us that we are all born in a state of sin, this belief teaches that Mary was born without sin; but please consider Biblical truth:

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."  
Psalms 51:5, KJV

"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"  
Romans 3:23, KJV

"Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"  
Romans 5:12, KJV

"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)"  
Ephesians 2:5, KJV

"Then said Jesus again unto them, I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go, ye cannot come . . . I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins."  
John 8:21, 24, KJV

4. Mary's so-called bodily "Assumption" to Heaven. Contrary to the Bible which teaches us that all people die at least once -- see Hebrews 9:27 -- and that our physical bodies decay in the ground, Roman Catholic doctrine teaches that Mary experienced no bodily decay and went straight to Heaven, both body and spirit. The truth, however, is that the only people who will not experience physical decay in the ground are those who are still alive at the time of Christ's Return. They will be changed instantaneously. Please refer to such articles as "Death: Final Battle, Final Victory" and "The Great Tribulation And The Rapture". Following are a few

verses for your consideration:

"Behold, I shew you a mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed."

1 Corinthians 15:51, 52, KJV

"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17, KJV

5. Mary's perpetual virginity. Contrary to the Scriptures which strongly suggest that Jesus had at least four brothers and two sisters, Roman Catholic doctrine teaches that Mary remained a physical virgin throughout her entire life. For my views on this topic, please refer to such articles as "The Family Life Of Jesus Christ". Following are some verses for you to ponder:

"While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him."

Matthew 12:46, KJV

"Is not this the carpenter's son? is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren, James, and Joses, and Simon, and Judas?"

Matthew 13:55, KJV

"Among which was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James and Joses, and the mother of Zebedee's children."

Matthew 27:56, KJV

"Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Joses, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us? And they were offended at him."

Mark 6:3, KJV

"There were also women looking on afar off: among whom was Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James the less and of Joses, and Salome;"

Mark 15:40, KJV

"His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judaea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest. For there is no man that doeth any thing in secret, and he himself seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, shew thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him."

John 7:3-5, KJV

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren."

Acts 1:14, KJV

"But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother."

Galatians 1:19, KJV

"Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called:"

Jude 1:1, KJV

6. The Roman Catholic Church is the only means for obtaining Salvation. While the Bible clearly teaches us that Salvation and Eternal Life is a free Gift of God that anyone can obtain through their faith in the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ alone, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that it is the only entity which can dispense this precious gift; and according to them, receiving it is based in large part on doing so-called "good works" which in reality annuls the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ. But what does the Bible really say? Consider these example verses:

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

John 14:6, KJV

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus;"

1 Timothy 2:5, KJV

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."

Romans 5:8, KJV

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

For a more in-depth look at God's Plan of Salvation, please consider reading such articles as "Message To The World" and "A Fantastic Party! Are You Coming?".

7. The belief that the Roman Catholic Church is superior to all other Christian churches, which it views as so-called "lesser brethren". This is contrary to the Scriptures which teach us that God is no respecter of persons, and that we are all one through Jesus Christ. The Bible also teaches us that Christian leaders are not supposed to be lords -- or abusive -- over the Lord's flocks in any way. The Apostle Peter, who Roman Catholics claim was their first pope, even wrote:

"Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, [meaning for personal material gain] but of a ready mind; Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God, that he may exalt you in due time:"

1 Peter 5:2-6, KJV

"Then Peter opened his mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:"  
Acts 10:34, KJV

"For there is no respect of persons with God."  
Romans 2:11, KJV

"And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him."  
Ephesians 6:9, KJV

Those verses certainly don't seem to be describing the proud pope in Rome who lives in lavish luxury like royalty, and who loves to receive presidents and kings alike, and who loves the praise of men.

8. The doctrine of the Holy Trinity which teaches that the Godhead consists of three separate but equal beings. Please refer to my eight-part series entitled "Roman Catholicism, Water Baptism And The Trinity". The Bible only speaks of Jesus Christ sitting on the Right Hand of God. There is no one sitting on the Left Hand of God as far as we know.

9. The belief that water baptism is necessary in order to obtain Salvation. Again, please refer to my eight-part series entitled "Roman Catholicism, Water Baptism And The Trinity". Either the Blood Sacrifice of Jesus Christ is sufficient for our Salvation, or else it isn't; and if we choose to believe the latter -- which I don't -- then that means that He died in vain. As the Apostle Paul wrote, either we are saved by the Grace of God through the Sacrifice of Jesus Christ, or else we are saved through our own works. It can't be both:

"And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."  
Romans 11:6, KJV

10. The doctrine of so-called "Apostolic Succession". This Roman Catholic lie claims that there has been an unbroken line of Roman popes since the time of the Apostle Peter. It loses all validity once we prove that Peter never went to Rome, and he most certainly was not the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church, as this series seeks to prove.

But let us return to the issue of the top leadership of the First Century Church. Exactly why Jesus chose three men, and not just one man -- the alleged Pope Peter -- to lead the Early Church, becomes evident when we carefully study the Scriptures. Consider the following examples:

"One witness shall not rise up against a man for any iniquity, or for any sin, in any sin that he sinneth: at the mouth of two witnesses, or at the mouth of three witnesses, shall the matter be established."  
Deuteronomy 19:15, KJV

"Where no counsel is, the people fall: but in the multitude of counsellors there is safety."  
Proverbs 11:14, KJV

"Without counsel purposes are disappointed: but in the multitude of counsellors they are established."  
Proverbs 15:22, KJV



"For by wise counsel thou shalt make thy war: and in multitude of counsellors there is safety."

Proverbs 24:6, KJV

"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

Matthew 18:19-20, KJV

"This is the third time I am coming to you. In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established."

2 Corinthians 13:1, KJV

"Against an elder receive not an accusation, but before two or three witnesses. Them that sin rebuke before all, that others also may fear."

1 Timothy 5:19-20, KJV

"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy under two or three witnesses:"

Hebrews 10:28, KJV

It occurs to me that by choosing three of His most trusted followers -- that is, Peter, James and John -- to lead the First Century Church, it may be that Jesus ensured that they would not only keep a check on each other, so that one man would not assume too much power and become a lord over God's heritage -- like the Roman Catholic pope -- but that through united counsel and prayer, they could also better determine what was the best course of action to take for the fledging Christian Church.

It is plain to see from the verses that we examined earlier, that Peter, James and John shared the responsibilities of instructing and guiding the Early Church during the First Century. Furthermore, they accomplished this from the city of Jerusalem, and not from Rome, as the Roman Catholic Church would have us to believe. Just as the Roman Empire had its triumvirate for a time -- Julius Caesar, Pompey and Crassus being the first -- the Early Church likewise had its own triumvirate in the form of Peter, James and John. If we examine his writings, we see that Peter refers to himself as "an elder" in the company of other elders. Nowhere do we see Peter claiming some exalted position or special privilege as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Peter writes:

"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:"

1 Peter 5:1, KJV

In the previous verse, the word "elder" is translated from the Greek word "sumpresbuteros". The Greek lexicon defines it as meaning "a fellow elder". The very nature of that phrase conveys the idea of equality, and not of superiority. Some of you may recognize this Greek word as the root for our English word "Presbyterian", which denotes a Christian denomination that's governed by a group of elders of equal rank, according to the principles of Presbyterianism. Let us also not forget that Jesus said:

". . . If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and servant of all."

Mark 9:35b, KJV

"And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all."

Mark 10:44, KJV

So the idea of the Apostle Peter being exalted as the alleged first pope of the Roman Catholic Church is totally contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ, as well as contrary to the teachings of the men who followed in His footsteps. Now, if we consider the degree of importance that the Roman Catholic Church attributes to this alleged historical event, one would think that surely the Scriptures would offer some evidence to substantiate and support it; and yet, they are silent. Why is this? Is it perhaps because the Apostle Peter's alleged trip to Rome, and his becoming the first pope, is merely a subtle invention of the Roman Catholic Church? In stark contrast, in studying the Scriptures, we can learn a great deal about the missionary journeys of the Apostle Paul -- including the fact that on more than one occasion, he was in Rome. This fact is clarified for us by the following verses:

"To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ . . . So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."

Romans 1:7, 15, KJV

"Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. [To the Galatians written from Rome.]"

Galatians 6:18, KJV

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. [To the Ephesians written from Rome, by Tychicus.]"

Ephesians 6:24, KJV

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. [To the Philippians written from Rome, by Epaphroditus.]"

Philippians 4:23, KJV

"The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen. [Written from Rome to Colossians by Tychicus and Onesimus.]"

Colossians 4:18, KJV

"But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me."

2 Timothy 1:17, KJV

"The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen. [The second epistle unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.]"

2 Timothy 4:22, KJV

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen. [Written from Rome to Philemon, by Onesimus a servant.]"

Philemon 1:25, KJV

As a matter of clarification, allow me to inform you that it is commonly believed that the Apostle Paul did not personally write all of his Epistles. Due to his poor eyesight -- which may have possibly been a result of the incident on the road to Damascus where the Lord struck down Paul, and left him

blind for three days -- Paul was forced to dictate a number of his Epistles to his traveling companions. At any rate, as you can determine by the above verses, we know with absolute certainty that Paul was in Rome, while Peter's presence in Rome is rather doubtful. Doesn't the fact that we have clear Biblical evidence to support the view that Paul was in Rome, while not a single verse even hints at Peter being in Rome, strike you as being odd?

Again, in my view, the obvious answer seems to be that Peter never traveled to Rome, and that his story of traveling to Rome is an evil invention of the Roman Catholic Church; the obvious purpose of which is to try to add some degree of legitimacy to the Roman papacy, and the so-called doctrine of "Apostolic Succession", which falsely claims that there has been an unbroken line of Roman popes since Peter. As I noted earlier, the minute that we disprove the Peter-in-Rome idea, the Apostolic Succession doctrine simply falls apart, just like a deck of cards. The Roman Catholic hierarchy in Rome doesn't have a legitimate leg to stand on, and it is time that everyone woke up to this fact.

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

This file was written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

End Of File

Copyright 1994 - 2010 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : April 1, 2010

Last Updated : April 1, 2010

Was Jesus Actually Saying That Peter Is The Rock Of God's True Church?, Blood Of Christ Is Foundation Of The Christian Church, "Upon This Rock" And "Destroy This Temple" Compared, Peter Confirms That Jesus Is The Rock, The Corner Stone And The Foundation Stone Who Was Rejected By Unbelieving Jews, Jesus Fulfilled Isaiah 53, Apostle Paul Clearly Taught That Jesus Is The Rock & The Foundation Of Our Christian Faith, Prophet Daniel Tells Us That Jesus Is The Rock From Heaven, Psalm Two Is A Millennial Prophecy About Christ's Victory, Keys Of The Kingdom Of Heaven, Reiteration Of Some Points, The Early "Church Fathers", Collation Of Our Modern Bible, Apocryphal And Pseudepigraphical Works, There's No Evidence, Possible Interpretation Of The Keys Of The Kingdom Of Heaven, Jesus Is The Keeper Of The Keys, Jesus Has Power Over Life And Death And Also Over Eternal Life And Eternal Damnation, Jesus Is The Good Shepherd And The Only Door To Salvation, Jesus' Mandate To Peter To Preach The Gospel Of Salvation, Feed My Sheep, Compare Scripture With Scripture, Jesus Gave The Very Same Mandate To The Other Apostles As Well, Their Names Are Written In Heaven, Foundations Of Heavenly City

Let us now turn our attention to another important claim that is made by the Roman Catholic Church which is directly linked to the issue of Peter supposedly being the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church; and that is the claim that he is also the rock of God's Church. As we saw earlier, in Matthew 16:18 in the KJV version of the Holy Bible, Jesus says to Peter: "thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church"

I have long held the view that because of the way that the sentence is worded, particularly the phrase "upon this rock", it just does not seem like the phrase is directed to, or referring to, Peter. If that is really what Jesus meant to say, then I would think that He would have been more clear about it and would have said something like "Thou art Peter. Ye are the rock; and upon thee I will build my church". If the Lord would have said it that way, then there would be no doubt concerning what He was saying. However, the way it is actually translated into English, it sounds to me like Jesus is in fact referring to Himself when He says "upon this rock". I don't say this lightly. I have a lot of Scriptural evidence to amply support my position.

First of all, every Bible-believing Christian knows that the Christian Church is in fact founded upon the Blood of Jesus Christ, who was cruelly sacrificed on a Roman cross, for the remission of our sins. Rather than share a lot of verses here concerning this topic, allow me to refer you to the article "The Blood Atonement: In Jesus' Own Words". That article will demonstrate in very clear Scriptural terms why Jesus had to shed His Blood on a Roman Cross. The fact that the Blood of Christ is the foundation of the Christian Church should be sufficient evidence to convince most Christians reading this that Jesus is the Rock, and not the Apostle Peter. After all, when we refer to a foundation, we are in fact referring to a

foundation of stone, rock or cement upon which most ancient and modern buildings are constructed. So in this particular case, the building is the Christian Church; in other words, the spiritual Body of Believers; and unless the Church is built upon Christ the Rock, it will surely be swept away when the floods come, just as the Lord warned us in His parables.

However, let's examine some Scriptures which will clearly prove that Jesus is the Rock. One verse which at first may not seem to be related to this topic -- but in my view, really is -- is the following:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up."  
John 2:19, KJV

As I explain in other articles, we know that Jesus was not really referring to Herod's temple, in which He stood at that particular moment; He was in fact referring to His own body. Thus, only two verses later we can read "But he spake of the temple of his body". In other words, Jesus was prophesying His own Resurrection from the dead. However, what I want to call to your attention is the way that Jesus referred back to Himself with the phrase "Destroy this temple". In my view, it is the very same verbal mechanism that He uses when He states to Peter "upon this rock". In other words, with both of these terms -- "this temple" and "this rock" -- Jesus is referring to Himself. If you aren't convinced that this is so, and are still of the opinion that Jesus was saying that Peter is the rock of His Church, then allow me to provide you with some even more convincing, direct Scriptural evidence.

To begin with, one would think that if Peter had understood that Jesus was saying that he -- Peter -- is the rock of the Christian Church, then Peter might possibly confirm this fact while preaching, or perhaps while writing his Epistles. But, quite to the contrary, instead of saying that he was the rock, Peter clearly confirmed that Jesus is the Rock and the Corner Stone, or Foundation Stone, of the Christian Church. Consider the following verses. In the first one, Peter is telling the rulers of Jerusalem that Jesus is the long-awaited Messiah:

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."  
Acts 4:11, KJV

"If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious. To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."  
1 Peter 2:3-8, KJV

In the second group of verses, there should be no doubt that Peter is referring to Jesus as the "living stone", the "chief corner stone", the "head of the corner", "the stone which the builders disallowed", a "stone of stumbling" and a "rock of

offence". After all, this is the very same thing that he had been preaching to the Jewish leaders in Jerusalem. However, another reason why we know that Peter is comparing Jesus to all of these things, and explaining to his audience that the Lord was rejected by His own race, is because Jesus said the very same things concerning Himself in the Gospels as well, as we see here:

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"  
Matthew 21:42, KJV

"And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"  
Mark 12:10-11, KJV

"And he beheld them, and said, What is this then that is written, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner? Whosoever shall fall upon that stone shall be broken; but on whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to powder."  
Luke 20:17-18, KJV

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."  
Mark 8:31, KJV

"Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."  
Luke 9:22, KJV

"But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation."  
Luke 17:25, KJV

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."  
John 1:11, KJV

So here we see Jesus describing Himself as the prophesied "Suffering Servant", as the chief Corner Stone which would be rejected by the unbelieving Jews of His day, and as the Firstfruits of the Resurrection. This, of course, was in direct fulfillment of the words of the Prophet Isaiah, who wrote:

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."  
Isaiah 53:3, KJV

With all of these verses, we are building a very strong case which demonstrates beyond a shadow of a doubt, that the one true Rock and Foundation Stone of God's Christian Church is Jesus Christ, and not the Apostle Peter, as certain Roman Catholics erroneously believe. If you are not yet convinced that this is the case, then allow me to share some additional verses with you from the writings of the Apostle Paul:

"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

1 Corinthians 3:11, KJV

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;"

Ephesians 2:20, KJV

"And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ."

1 Corinthians 10:4, KJV

Not only is Jesus Christ the true Spiritual Rock, Corner Stone and Foundation Stone of the Christian Church, but as the Old Testament Prophet Daniel tells us, He is also the Rock from Heaven who will someday utterly smash all of the corrupt governments of man, in order to establish His own righteous Kingdom on Earth during the coming Millennium, as we see here:

"Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshingfloors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them: and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth . . . And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever. Forasmuch as thou sawest that the stone was cut out of the mountain without hands, and that it brake in pieces the iron, the brass, the clay, the silver, and the gold; the great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter: and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Daniel 2:34-35, 44-45, KJV

Psalm Two is likewise a Millennial Prophecy which describes how Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and Rock from Heaven, will someday "break them [ the rebellious rulers of the Earth ] with a rod of iron", and "dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel", as we see here:

"Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together, against the LORD, and against his anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us. He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh: the Lord shall have them in derision. Then shall he speak unto them in his wrath, and vex them in his sore displeasure. Yet have I set my king upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron; thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel. Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be instructed, ye judges of the earth. Serve the LORD with fear, and rejoice with trembling. Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish from the way, when his wrath is kindled but a little. Blessed are all they that put their trust in him."

Psalms 2:1-12, KJV

We began this series with the following verse taken from the Gospel of Matthew:

"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, KJV

As some of you will undoubtedly already know, the verse that immediately follows it is also used by Roman Catholics in an effort to support their claim of Peter being the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. This verse states:

"And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."  
Matthew 16:19, KJV

This verse does indicate that Jesus bestowed a considerable amount of responsibility upon Peter, in spite of Peter's own personal weaknesses; but does this verse in any way confirm that Peter traveled to Rome and became the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church? No it does not. As we've already seen, the Roman Catholic Church did not even come into existence until the Fourth Century, so Peter could not possibly have become its first pope during the First Century. As I explain in other commentaries, it was during the Fourth Century, and thereafter, that some Christian Bishops throughout the Roman Empire compromised with the Roman Government, in order that they might obtain power and influence over the masses; and the whorish woman began to ride the worldly beast in an ungodly marriage.

Furthermore, as we also discovered earlier, while there is an abundance of Scriptural evidence which demonstrates that the Apostle Paul was in Rome on several occasions, there is not a single iota of Biblical evidence that supports the contention that Peter ever went to that evil city. Personally, I find this point particularly strange for another reason. You see, as I point out in some of the aforementioned articles, it is commonly believed that the Bible that we have today, was in large part influenced by, or perhaps better said, manipulated by, the so-called early "Church Fathers". Who were these men? Basically, they were the Bishops -- as well as other persons of importance -- who had a hand in the early formation of the Roman Catholic Church. These individuals lived anywhere from one hundred to three hundred years after the time of Christ and the Original Apostles, so they didn't personally know Christ, or any of The Twelve.

One of the tasks which these men undertook -- in addition to their own ecclesiastical writings -- was to collate copies of the original manuscripts -- also known as the autographs -- into what would eventually become the Bible. In comparison to today, there were many more manuscripts available during that time. They undoubtedly had access to some inspired writings which we have never seen, and which no longer exist. But the problem is that amongst the many religious manuscripts which were available at that time, a lot of them were of doubtful authorship and Divine Inspiration. Today, we refer to those which still exist as apocryphal and pseudepigraphical works. The "Acts Of Peter" is in fact one such work. So simply put, the task of these men was to determine which writings were truly inspired by God, and which were not. Those which they



deemed to be Divinely Inspired, became a part of our Bible, while the rest were cast aside, or destroyed.

At this point, you may be questioning how these historical facts tie into our discussion concerning the Apostle Peter's alleged travels to Rome, and his serving there as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. Allow me to explain. If we consider that these men were in large part responsible for the early formation of the Roman Catholic Church, and if we also consider that it was in their interest to legitimize the new relationship between the Roman Empire and the Bishops who compromised with it, regardless of how wayward they were, it seems to me that if any manuscripts existed during that time which documented the Apostle Peter's travels to Rome during the First Century, and/or which detailed his activities as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church, surely these men would have included any such manuscripts in the Bible. Yet, as we have seen, there is not a single book, or even a single chapter, or a single paragraph, and not even a single verse which clearly supports Roman Catholic claims. All they can point to is Roman Catholic tradition, and a few obscure documents of doubtful reputation such as the "Acts Of Peter".

In my opinion, there is only one reason why such manuscripts were not included in the Bible, and that is simply because they either did not exist, or else if they did exist, they were deemed to be untruthful and uninspired, and it would have been too risky to include them in the Bible. In short, the only alleged "evidence" which the Roman Catholic Church possesses today to prove their claims concerning Peter going to Rome and taking on the mantle of the first bishop and pope of Rome, exists outside of the Bible. Do you really want to trust such information? I don't.

At this point, we are going to swing back to our discussion concerning Jesus' words regarding the "Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven" in Matthew 16:19. There is a belief amongst some Bible teachers and students that the Greek word "kleis", or "keys" in English, is a general reference to authority and power. It is partly from this understanding that the Roman Catholic Church derives its belief that the Lord was making Peter the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church. However, allow me to suggest another possibility which I believe has some merit. In endeavoring to understand what Jesus may have been saying to Peter, let's consider a simple, and obvious, question: What are keys used for?

Obviously, keys are used to unlock something, such as a door or a chest. In the New Testament, keys are symbolically used to signify the opening or closing of doors of opportunity. Consider the following verses from the Book of Revelation, where the Lord is speaking to the Church in Philadelphia:

"And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth; I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name."

Revelation 3:7-8, KJV

As serious students of God's Word, we all should already know that in a spiritual sense, the most important keys are those which open the doors to Heaven and Hell, and Eternal Life and Eternal Damnation. Believe it or not, if we turn to

the Gospel of John, we discover that Jesus said the very same thing while He was still on Earth, albeit in a slightly different manner. Please consider the similarities between the following verses and Revelation 3:7-8 above:

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."  
John 6:37, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."  
John 10:28, KJV

In other words, the Lord is saying that when He opens the Door of Salvation for us, absolutely no one can shut it in our face, or cast us out. This is the same thing that Jesus is saying to the brethren at the Church of Philadelphia by way of the symbolism of a door which no man can shut. If we read only a few verses later, we see that Jesus is indeed offering them the promise of Eternal Life, if they will only endure:

"Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth. Behold, I come quickly: hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown. Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God: and I will write upon him my new name."  
Revelation 3:10-12, KJV

So what we see then is that Jesus is the Keeper of the Keys. This same fact is confirmed for us in yet another verse that is found a little earlier in the Book of Revelation. Please consider this one:

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."  
Revelation 1:18, KJV

So again we see that because of His loving Sacrifice, Jesus has the power over life and death, as well as over Eternal Life and Eternal Damnation. Our fate is determined entirely by our faith in Him. Furthermore, not only is Jesus the real Keeper of the Keys -- and not Peter -- but He is in fact the Door which leads to God's Kingdom; for as He said in John chapter ten:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that entereth not by the door into the sheepfold, but climbeth up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber. But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear his voice: and he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. This parable spake Jesus unto them: but they understood not what things they were which he spake unto them. Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily, I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before me are thieves and robbers: but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he

shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture. The thief cometh not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly. I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep. But he that is an hireling, and not the shepherd, whose own the sheep are not, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep, and fleeth: and the wolf catcheth them, and scattereth the sheep. The hireling fleeth, because he is an hireling, and careth not for the sheep. I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine."

John 10:1-14, KJV

Thus we see that Jesus is the Keeper of the Keys, the only Door to Salvation, as well as the Good Shepherd who leads the sheep into the greener pastures of Salvation. Based on all of the Scriptural evidence that I have shared with you in the previous paragraphs, I believe that we can arrive at a very interesting, and Scripturally-sound, conclusion; and that is this: It would seem that by saying to Peter, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven", Jesus was not saying to Peter "Here you go; I am anointing you as the first pope of the Roman Catholic Church; but rather, He was in effect giving Peter a mandate to share the Kingdom of the Heaven with the world; that is, to announce the Kingdom of Heaven to the world, through preaching the blessed Gospel of Salvation. Jesus was giving Peter the power to open the Door of Salvation for all men everywhere, as I explain in some of my articles concerning the topic of Eternal Salvation.

Allow me to reiterate that Peter did not, and does not, own the Keys of Heaven. Jesus is the only true Owner and Keeper of said Keys, as previous verses indicate, and He merely lent the Keys to Peter, because the Lord knew that His Crucifixion was drawing near, and that He would need someone to carry on the work of preaching the Gospel of Salvation after He had returned to His Father in Heaven. What is interesting here is that this incident in Matthew chapter sixteen would not be the last time that Jesus would remind Peter of the important mandate that He had given him. You may recall that after the Lord's Crucifixion, with both the Jews and the Romans after them, the Disciples became very discouraged; and following Peter's lead, they returned to their old lives of fishing at the Sea of Galilee, which was also known by the names of the Lake of Gennesaret and the Sea of Tiberias.

But then the miraculous happened. Jesus rose from the dead, and He appeared to His Disciples for the third time at the Sea of Galilee. It was during that third time that the Lord reminded Peter of the mandate that He had given him, when He told Peter three times to "Feed my sheep", as we see here:

"So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep."

John 21:15-17, KJV

Now, as I have explained to my readers many times before, in

order to properly understand the Bible, we must diligently compare Scripture with Scripture. It is only in this way that we can form a full, and hopefully accurate, picture of what is being said, and hopefully avoid error in our understanding. Endeavoring to form a doctrine based upon one verse alone is dangerous business. The reason why I am sharing this with you is because if I were to end this series right here, you might possibly be left with an erroneous impression regarding the meaning of Matthew 16:19. You see, just as I demonstrated to you earlier through the Scriptures that Peter did not oversee the Early Church alone, but rather he guided it and taught it in a spiritual triumvirate along with James and John who were the sons of Zebedee, and who were likewise Peter's worldly partners prior to becoming Apostles, in similar fashion, the Scriptures make it clear that Jesus did not give the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven to Peter alone. In other words, Jesus did not give the mandate to preach the Gospel of Salvation to Peter alone; He in fact gave it to all of the Apostles. This is confirmed for us by such verses as the following:

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"

Matthew 28:19, KJV

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature."

Mark 16:15, KJV

"Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain: that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it you."

John 15:16, KJV

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Acts 1:8, KJV

The previous verses were not just spoken to Peter; they were spoken to all of the Apostles; so technically-speaking, they were all given the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven because they were all given the power and the authority to preach the Good News, and thus bring people to the one true Door, Keeper of the Keys and Good Shepherd; that is, Jesus Christ. That this is so, is wonderfully symbolized for us in the final book of the Bible; that is, in the Book of Revelation. You may recall that Jesus had said the following to The Twelve:

"Notwithstanding in this rejoice not, that the spirits are subject unto you; but rather rejoice, because your names are written in heaven."

Luke 10:20, KJV

Not only were their names written in the Book of Life, but consider the following verses where we're told that the twelve foundations of the Heavenly City -- New Jerusalem -- are named after the Twelve Apostles as well:

"And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb . . . And the foundations of the wall of the city were garnished with all manner of precious stones. The first foundation was jasper; the second, sapphire; the third, a chalcedony; the fourth, an

emerald; The fifth, sardonyx; the sixth, sardius; the seventh, chrysolite; the eighth, beryl; the ninth, a topaz; the tenth, a chrysoprasus; the eleventh, a jacinth; the twelfth, an amethyst."

Revelation 21:14, 19-20, KJV

Please go to part four for the conclusion of this series.

This file was written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

End Of File

## Lies And Deceptions Of The Roman Catholic Church : Part 4

Copyright 1994 - 2010 Endtime Prophecy Net

Published On : April 1, 2010

Last Updated : April 1, 2010

We're All Precious Stones And Living Stones In God's Temple, Peter Was Not The Only Rock Or Even THE Rock, Modern Bible Believing Christians Also Possess The Keys Of The Kingdom Of Heaven, Spirit Of Exclusivity Of The Roman Catholic Church Versus Open, Free Gospel Of Jesus Christ, The Free Gift Of Salvation And Eternal Life, Roman Catholic Church Fails To Fulfill Christian Mandate, Peter's Limited Vision, A Sheet From Heaven, Paul - The Apostle To The Gentiles, Mandates Of Peter & Paul, Abiding In Our Calling, My Personal Admiration For The Apostle Peter, This Series Targets Roman Catholic Hierarchy And The Vatican And Not The Roman Catholic Laity, Lies And Deceptions Of The Vatican, A Recap Of Major Points, "I Am Of Cephas" And Dividing The Body Of Christ, Spirit Of Worldliness And Compromise Infects Early Church, Spiritual Decline Of Modern America, Warning To Church of Laodicea, Constantine I And Battle Of Milvian Bridge, Edict Of Milan, Birth Of The Roman Catholic Church, Coming Judgment Of RCC, Christians Should Be Peacemakers & Not Warmongers, Weapons Of Our Spiritual Warfare, Closing Scriptures And Remarks

You will notice that in the previous group of verses, we are specifically told that the Twelve Foundations of the Heavenly City are "garnished with all manner of precious stones". The Apostles were obviously aware of this truth even during their lifetimes. Furthermore, I suspect that these precious stones may possibly represent the souls of all of those people who have been brought to Jesus Christ through the preaching of the Gospel. After all, did the Apostle Peter not tell us that we are all living stones in God's spiritual temple? As we saw in part one of this series, Peter wrote:

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner,"  
1 Peter 2:4-7, KJV

So while Jesus Christ is the one true Rock, as well as the Chief Corner Stone or Foundation Stone of God's Holy Temple, who was rejected by the unbelieving Jews of His day, in a sense, because they were reflections of Christ, and carried on His Sacred Mission after He returned to His Father, the Twelve Apostles are likewise rocks and foundation stones who are cemented together with Christ in God's Holy Temple. So, even if we accept that Jesus was referring to Peter as "this rock" in Matthew chapter sixteen, it is rather obvious from the Scriptures that this descriptive phrase was not applied to Peter alone; it was applied to all of the Apostles, as the previous verses clearly reveal. In short, we can really

say -- based upon this Scriptural evidence -- that Christ has truly built His Church -- or Spirituall Temple -- upon the rocks -- plural -- of all of the holy Apostles, with Himself as the Chief Corner Stone. As we saw in part three, the Apostle Paul taught the exact same thing when he wrote:

"And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;"

Ephesians 2:20, KJV

Considering this preponderance of Scriptural evidence, I personally feel that it is inappropriate to elevate the Apostle Peter beyond his measure, as the Roman Catholics attempt to do, in order to try to legitimize their faith.

Furthermore, by extension, because these Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven are in essence the knowledge of Salvation, we can rightfully say that we Christians today also possess the Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven, because we likewise possess the knowledge and the power to bring people to Christ and to the Kingdom of Heaven, through the power of the Holy Spirit. We all possess the power to open the Door of Salvation for them, simply by sharing the Gospel of Christ with them. Whether or not they choose to enter the Door is up to them. As a result, we too are rocks and precious stones in God's Holy Temple.

Contrary to the spirit of exclusivity that has overtaken the Roman Catholic Church, to the point where they erroneously proclaim that they are the "one truth faith", the superior church, the only entity that's empowered by God to interpret the Bible, and the only church that is authorized to grant the Gift of Salvation to the world, the Scriptures preach a very open and free Gospel, as well as free Salvation, that is liberally offered to all men everywhere, as I fully explain in such articles as "Is Salvation Meant For All Men?" and in "All Are Given A Chance, But . . .". Similar to the Scribes and the Pharisees of old, the Roman Catholic Church purposely makes it difficult for people to enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but this is not the way that God meant for it to be. Please consider the truth of the following verses, which plainly tell us that Salvation is freely available to all who have the faith of a little child, and will simply believe and accept Christ:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16, KJV

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness."

Isaiah 55:1-2, KJV

". . . freely ye have received, freely give."

Matthew 10:8, KJV

"And he said unto them, Is a candle brought to be put under a bushel, or under a bed? and not to be set on a candlestick? For there is nothing hid, which shall not be manifested; neither was any thing kept secret, but that it should come abroad."

Mark 4:21-22, KJV

"He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?"

Romans 8:32, KJV

"And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely."

Revelation 21:6, KJV

"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."

Revelation 22:17, KJV

By making the road to Salvation long and difficult, the RCC is in fact failing in its duty to fulfill Christianity's most important mandate; that is, the Great Commission that's found in verses such as Mark 16:15 and Acts 1:8. Ironically -- and this may come as a shock to some of you -- it is my personal belief that the Apostle Peter did not fully accomplish that mandate either, at least not personally and directly. As I explain in other articles, initially, Peter, like some of the other Jewish Apostles, was of the belief that Salvation and the Kingdom of God was only meant for those who were born Jewish. It wasn't until God gave Peter a special vision one afternoon while in Joppa, that Peter finally realized that the Gospel of Christ was meant for all men, including for the Gentiles. Following is Peter's vision, as it is recorded in the tenth chapter of the Book of Acts:

"On the morrow, as they went on their journey, and drew nigh unto the city, Peter went up upon the housetop to pray about the sixth hour: And he became very hungry, and would have eaten: but while they made ready, he fell into a trance, And saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth: Wherein were all manner of fourfooted beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten any thing that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."

Acts 10:9-16, KJV

While Peter came to understand that the Gospel of Christ, and by extension, Salvation, was meant for both Jews and Gentiles alike, nevertheless, upon reading the Book of Acts, we learn that other than a few journeys outside of Israel, Peter for the most part remained stationed in Jerusalem, from where he and the other primary Apostles directed the Early Church. As I point out in such articles as "Biblical Cafeteria, Or The Whole Course?", while the key was indeed turned, and the Door of the Kingdom was opened to the Gentiles of the world, this feat was not accomplished so much by Peter, as it was by the



Apostle Paul; who in his own words, became the "Apostle of the Gentiles", as we see here:

"For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:"  
Romans 11:13, KJV

In all honesty, if we compare the Gentile population of the world to the actual Jewish population at that time, it is easy to see that the Apostle Paul had a considerably larger mandate than that of the Apostle Peter. As I explain in the aforementioned article, it was a direct result of the labors of love of the Apostle Paul that much of Europe, Western Asia and the Mediterranean area heard the Gospel of Jesus Christ, while the Apostle Peter's influence was in large part limited to Israel and the Jews who either lived there, or else came to visit there. This is both historical and Biblical fact.

This is not to suggest that the Apostle Paul was in any way greater than Peter. That is not the purpose of my comments. It is merely to demonstrate that these two Apostles had very different ministries; and that the scope of Paul's ministry was considerably larger than that of the Apostle Peter's. Furthermore, Paul recognized and respected the fact that he and Peter were given very different ministries by the Lord, but that these two ministries complemented each other, and worked towards the same goal of Salvation for the world. As Paul would write in his Epistles:

"Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand."  
Romans 15:20-21, KJV

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called . . . Brethren, let every man, wherein he is called, therein abide with God."  
1 Corinthians 7:20, 24, KJV

"For we dare not make ourselves of the number, or compare ourselves with some that commend themselves: but they measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise. But we will not boast of things without our measure, but according to the measure of the rule which God hath distributed to us, a measure to reach even unto you. For we stretch not ourselves beyond our measure, as though we reached not unto you: for we are come as far as to you also in preaching the gospel of Christ: Not boasting of things without our measure, that is, of other men's labours; but having hope, when your faith is increased, that we shall be enlarged by you according to our rule abundantly, To preach the gospel in the regions beyond you, and not to boast in another man's line of things made ready to our hand. But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth."  
2 Corinthians 10:12-18, KJV

"But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter; (For he that wrought effectually in Peter to the apostleship of the circumcision, the same was mighty in me toward the Gentiles:) And when

James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision."

Galatians 2:7-9, KJV

While some Roman Catholics will obviously be offended, and possibly even angered by the contents of this series, I want to emphasize here that the purpose of this series has not been to lambast or to dishonor the Apostle Peter. In fact, personally, I have tremendous admiration and respect for the man. As I explain in the article "Peter: Faith Tried In The Fire", in spite of his personal weaknesses and shortcomings, through all of his trials and tribulations, Peter became a great Apostle, and a pillar and leader in the First Century Church, whom God used greatly. Not only that, but as we saw earlier, just like so many other Christians down through the ages, Peter loved not his life unto the death. Following in the footsteps of his Master, Peter was willing to pay the ultimate price for his beliefs. Consider this verse:

"And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death."

Revelation 12:11, KJV

Allow me to also add that the purpose of this series has not been to condemn the Roman Catholic laity. I've known a number of Roman Catholics during my lifetime, and some of them are rather sweet, humble people. The purpose of this series has been to expose the deceptions of the Roman Catholic hierarchy in the Vatican, and to show you through a study of the Bible, why the Roman Catholic Church is a false church, and a false religion, that has been built upon centuries of lies; and not only lies and deception, but untold violence and bloodshed as well. That this same type of deception continues today is quite evident by the scandals which continue to rock the RCC today, such as the many incidents of pedophilia which have purposely been concealed by the Vatican and its underlings.

It is vital that you understand that the entire legitimacy of the Roman Catholic Church rests upon their belief that Peter was their very first pope. As we have now clearly seen, it is through this alleged connection to the Apostle Peter, that the RCC claims that they are the church which was founded by Jesus Christ almost two thousand years ago. As we have also seen, this so-called "papal connection" -- or "Apostolic Succession" -- simply does not exist, because it cannot be demonstrated from God's Word that Peter ever went to Rome, or that he ever accepted the position of pope. In spite of this fact, Roman Catholics continue to shout to the world "I am of Cephas!". As you may recall, earlier, we discussed the fact that "Cephas" was the Aramaic name that Jesus gave to Peter. So by making the false claim "I am of Cephas!", or "I am of Peter!", Roman Catholics are not only dividing the Body of Christ, but they are arrogantly and proudly elevating themselves above other Bible-believing Christians, and that is simple wrong!

It may surprise you to know that the First Century Apostles encountered this very same problem. Different groups were beginning to form around different individuals, including around Peter; thus the Apostle Paul became rather fed up with the situation and wrote the following verses:

"For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by

them which are of the house of Chloe, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? . . ."

1 Corinthians 1:11-13a, KJV

Amazing, isn't it? People simply never change. Sadly, the situation is probably a lot worse today, because not only are we further removed from Christ and the Original Apostles, but also because there are many more Christian denominations and churches, each with their own particular set of beliefs and doctrines. As with the Apostle Paul, all that we can say is the following:

"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."

1 Corinthians 1:10, KJV

As we discussed earlier, the only way in which the Roman Catholic Church can validate some of their doctrines, is by relying upon the questionable and obscure writings of the so-called "Church Fathers"; none of whom were actually alive at the time of Christ and the first Apostles and Disciples; and many of whom lived hundreds of years later. We have also seen that the Roman Catholic Church as we know it today did not even come into existence until the first part of the 4th Century, hundreds of years after the time of Christ. By that time, all of the original Apostles were dead, and a great deal of doctrinal compromise had found its way into our body of beliefs. Furthermore, a dangerous spirit of worldliness had also crept into our faith. The Apostle John -- who many believe was the last surviving original Apostle -- was even concerned about this in his own lifetime. Thus he wrote:

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

1 John 2:15-17, KJV

By several centuries after John, the situation within God's Church must have grown even worse. The spirit of compromise with the world must have surely increased, because that is the nature of things. If you doubt that this is so, consider the tragic history of the United States of America. If one takes the time to read historical documents from two hundred years ago, it becomes evident that many of the founders of the nation were God-fearing men of faith. Today, that faith is hardly recognizable in modern American society. Abortion is freely available and millions of innocent lives have been extinguished. Homosexuality runs rampant, even within some so-called "Christian" churches. Embryonic stem cell research is an acceptable form of murder. The use of illegal drugs is way out of control and is a multi-billion dollar business. Prostitution has become both tolerated and acceptable. On TV shows and in movies, violence and promiscuity have reached unprecedented levels. And on and on the sad list goes. All the while, many Americans go to church every weekend.

So the lesson is clear. Spiritual compromise can happen in a short period of time. The white-hot flames of devotion and

faith can slowly die, and a church -- or society -- that was once like the healthy, biblical Church of Philadelphia, can slowly evolve into a church -- or society -- like the sad, wretched Church of Laodicea, of whom it was said:

"And unto the angel of the church of the Laodiceans write; These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the creation of God; I know thy works, that thou art neither cold nor hot: I would thou wert cold or hot. So then because thou art lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I will spue thee out of my mouth. Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked: I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich; and white raiment, that thou mayest be clothed, and that the shame of thy nakedness do not appear; and anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Revelation 3:14-19, KJV

But let us return to the past for a moment. As I explained earlier in this series, the tragic result of this spirit of compromise overtaking the Early Christian Church -- and this flirtation with worldliness, comfortable living and power, was a serious compromise between several hundred bishops of the 4th Century, and the shrewd, power-hungry Roman emperor Constantine I. It was as a direct result of this compromise, which was embodied in the Edict of Milan of 313 AD, that the Roman Catholic Church came into existence. To reiterate my point, the birth of the Roman Catholic Church did not occur in the First Century as Roman Catholic propagandists like to claim, but rather several hundred years later during the 4th Century.

While some Christian sources -- particularly Roman Catholic sources -- attempt to gloss over the events of the Fourth Century, and try to paint Constantine I as a devout believer who fully embraced the Christian faith as a result of the alleged vision that he experienced near the Milvian Bridge, personally, I have serious reservations regarding the entire affair. As you may know, according to the story that's been passed down through the centuries, prior to approaching the Tiber River and the Milvian Bridge, where they would fight against the forces of Maxentius, Constantine I and his men experienced a vision or sign in the sky. The alleged vision consisted of a cross superimposed on the sun, along with the Latin words "In hoc signo vinces", which is translated into English as "In This Sign, Conquer". Constantine interpreted the vision as a sign that God would assist him in defeating the forces of Maxentius at the Battle of Milvian Bridge, and it is said that they painted the cross on their shields. We are told by several ancient historians -- such as Lactantius and Eusebius of Caesarea -- that Constantine did defeat his enemy -- Maxentius -- at the Battle of Milvian Bridge in 312.

With this victory behind him -- which he attributed to the God of the Christians -- it was during the following year that Constantine I signed the Edict of Milan, which resulted in Christianity becoming a legalized religion throughout the Roman Empire. It has been said that it was at that time that the persecuted Christian Church moved out of the coliseums of Rome, and into the grand stands. Thus, Roman politics was married to Christianity, and the whore symbolically began to ride the beast. Sadly, she has been riding it ever since, to her own shame.

Today, many centuries later, the Roman Catholic Church has become a wealthy, powerful, multi-billion dollar, worldwide empire, filled with corruption, perversion and sin. But, it must be noted that this church is not founded upon the Blood of Jesus Christ as she claims, but rather upon the blood of the poor, the oppressed, the persecuted and the slain, which number literally in the millions. However, it may possibly be that the hour of her judgment is finally upon her. As a result of her sins, such as pedophile priests who abuse the innocent while the church knowingly looks the other way, God may be about to bring her to the ground. As the Apostle Peter wrote so long ago:

"For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? And if the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?"

1 Peter 4:17-18, KJV

The previous story concerning the Battle of Milvian Bridge reminds me a lot of the so-called "Christian" Crusades and the battle to retake Jerusalem. As I explain in a number of my political articles, based on my personal understanding of the Bible, I don't believe for a minute that God encourages Christians anywhere to go to war; neither does He encourage them to kill people; yet just like Muslim extremists, that's exactly what some so-called "Christians" have been doing for centuries. It seems rather hypocritical to me that Western Christians condemn Muslim extremists for their violent acts, when some of those Christians do the exact same thing under the supposed banner of cultivating freedom and democracy, and fighting their war against terrorism. The truth is that we Christians are not ancient Jews, and we are not fighting against the Philistines. We are New Testament Christians who are supposed to be following the peaceful teachings of Jesus Christ and His First Century Apostles. Exactly what do they teach us? Consider the following verses:

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth."  
Matthew 5:5, KJV

"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."  
Matthew 5:9, KJV

"Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."  
John 18:36, KJV

"Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword."  
Matthew 26:52, KJV

We are supposed to be peacemakers between God and men. We are supposed to be evangelists and soul savers and not warmongers or nation builders. The only nation that we are supposed to be interested in building is the Kingdom of God on Earth; and it is built with the Love of God, and not with fear and hate. Furthermore, the only war that we should be engaged in is the war against Satan, sin and unbelief in the hearts and minds of men; and as the Scriptures plainly inform us, this war is

spiritual in nature. Thus, it requires spiritual weapons to fight it, as we see by the following verses:

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"  
2 Corinthians 10:3-5, KJV

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."  
1 Timothy 6:12, KJV

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."  
2 Timothy 2:3-4, KJV

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"  
2 Timothy 4:7, KJV

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places."  
Ephesians 6:10-12, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."  
Hebrews 4:12, KJV

With these sober verses, I will bring this series to a close. If you currently find yourself trapped within the nets of the Roman Catholic Church, it is my hope that this series will provide you with the necessary tools which will enable you to discover the truth regarding the RCC, and hopefully free you from the snares of the same. If you wish to learn more about this issue, please consider reading some of my other articles regarding Roman Catholicism. May God bless you with the truth.

This file was written by the WordWeaver

webmaster@endtimeprophecy.net  
<http://www.endtimeprophecy.net>

End Of File