



## Why The Catholic Church Ought Not Select a New Pope

If you have watched the news in the past week, you've likely seen the media attention that has been given to the death of the "pope"; it's virtually inescapable. (I offer my personal condolences to our Catholic friends on their loss.) During this time, many in the media have been speculating on who the next "pope" will be. However, the Catholic church has, by and large, been only concerned with the funeral and burial arrangements. But now that those matters have been completed, the time has come for them to select a new "pope." Here is why I hope that they don't do that.

First, Jesus is the only head of the church and God only acknowledges Him as mediator between God and man. In Ephesians 5:23 Paul writes, "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body." Colossians 1:18 states, "And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence." 1 Timothy 2:5 states, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." It is nothing more than crass arrogance to appoint a man to a position that only Jesus himself can occupy. It is my prayer that no one would so exalt himself before God as

God will no doubt deal with them severely for so acting.

Second, there is no authority in the Bible to have earthly church organization or structure of leadership personnel beyond what is done at the congregational level. There were elders over the congregation at Jerusalem (Acts 11:30, 15:4). Paul and Barnabas carried out God's pattern for earthly organization of leadership personnel in Acts 14:23 when they appointed elders in the congregations that they planted. We learn in the letters to Timothy and Titus that they also were directed to appoint elders in the congregations with whom they were working (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9). These congregations also had deacons who were special servants appointed over particular matters (Acts 6:1-7, Philippians 1:1, 1 Timothy 3:8-13). Peter (who the Catholic Church claims to be the first "pope") makes it clear that there are no intervening organizations between the local eldership and the Chief Shepherd, Jesus (1 Peter 5:1-4). Never do we find in the New Testament any ongoing organization of leadership personnel in the church beyond the local level. Hence, there is no New Testament authority for such an organized structure of personnel leadership beyond the local church.

Third, even at the local level, there is no one man who has a

right to be the sole leader of the church. What we read in the New Testament regarding God's desire for local leadership is that there should be a plural number of leaders, not a single. Paul told Titus to appoint "elders" in every city in which there was a church. Paul and Barnabas appointed "elders" in all the churches that they planted (Acts 14:23). There were "elders" at the church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:30, 15:4). No where in the New Testament do we ever see a single man in leadership position over a church or group of churches. Some argue that the "bishop" of 1 Timothy 3 is in fact a single man, but Paul makes it clear that the "bishop" is no different than an elder by using the two terms interchangeably in Titus 1:5, 7. Hence, there is no authority for anything less than a plural number of local church leaders, much less for a single leader over all churches worldwide.

If the Catholic Church desires to do what the Bible teaches regarding personnel leadership in the church, then they will make this crucial first step back toward the Bible pattern and not select a new pope. However, I don't believe for a moment that they will do this and we'll discuss why in next week's bulletin article, "Why the Catholic Church Will Select a New Pope."

Kevin Cauley

### Protesting For Christ



The attention of the world is focused on the Vatican. The passing of Pope John Paul II is major news because he was head of a religion with hundreds of millions of adherents. Even non-Catholics have watched with fascination the events surrounding his funeral. The interest will continue for many more days as the conclave chooses his successor.

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It has been interesting to see how others have responded to all of this. The presence of some Muslims and Jews has been reported, and we've seen mourners who regard themselves as Protestant. But there has been no visible protest. It appears that Catholicism for the moment is in favor with unlikely persons.

Before he was Pope John Paul II he was Karol Wojtyla, born in Poland in 1920. He appeared to follow admirable goals like fairness and compassion. As a leader who impacted global politics, his record might be assessed as good. As a human being his death is to be mourned.

But on behalf of Christ, we protest the practices of those who disregard scripture and instead promote human tradition.

It was Jesus Christ who said, "Do not call anyone on earth your father, for one is your father, he who is in heaven" (Matthew 23:9, NKJV). "Pope" is a word that points to a human as supreme father, or "Holy Father" as he is often called. Whom should we heed in this matter?

It was the apostle Paul who warned, "Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith . . . forbidding to marry . . ." (1 Timothy 4:1,3). This, however, is a religion that forbids its priests from marrying. Again we are confronted with a choice: Do we protest or not? To whom should we give greater allegiance?

It was the apostle Peter (claimed to be the first pope) who said to all Christians, "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood . . ." (1 Peter 2:9) Yet this religion regards only a small segment of their church to be priests. Whom do we

believe? Do we accept Peter's view that all Christians are priests, or later tradition that shrinks the group considerably?

It is not our intention to judge nor condemn (though many will likely view our purpose as such). Our devotion is first and foremost to Jesus Christ, to whom all authority has been given (Matthew 28:18). Until Jesus reveals that his authority has been delegated to a human being, we will continue to protest practices and beliefs that are contrary to his will.

Tim Hall  
via Forthright Magazine  
www.forthright.net

(Editor's note: Forthright Magazine is one of the works that the elders of the church at Berryville oversees. Edited by Randal Matheny, the magazine serves up solid biblical studies each day of the week. You can also receive these studies via e-mail. Send mail to "forthright-subscribe@associate.com.")



### Bible Studies for the week of April 10th, 2005

- AM Sermon..... Modesty in an Immodest World
- Scripture Reading..... Genesis 3:6-10
- PM Sermon..... Questions and Answers
- Scripture Reading..... N/A
- Sunday Class ..... The Book of Hebrews
- Wednesday Class..... The Book of Job

## Kevin's Korner—Wedding of the (er, uh) Week (?)

Well it wasn't the wedding of the century by any means, but yesterday prince Charles married his erstwhile girlfriend, Camilla. After the couple got married, they proceeded to a chapel where they confessed "manifold sins and wickedness" and asked for forgiveness. Most, I believe, have interpreted this to be confession for the sin of adultery, however, it wasn't explicitly stated. What should we make of such a "confession?"

Up front we ought to acknowledge that repentance and confession are the ways that God has established for the **Christian** (not the alien) to be forgiven of sin. Regarding repentance, Paul wrote to the church at Corinth, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing" (2 Corinthians 7:9).

Regarding confession, John wrote "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). Both actions are biblical and ought to be practiced by those who have sinned against God.

That, however, is not to say that such actions cannot be abused. Paul spoke in this same passage of a sorrow of the world which leads to death (2 Corinthians 7:10). Many see this "sorrow" and interpret it as repentance, which it is not. One might very well be "sorry" for what he has done without repenting in the slightest.

Confession also may be so abused. The church of England, much like the Catholic church, has a doctrine of confession that is not in harmony with the biblical teaching on the subject. In these religions, confession is more of a ritual than a sincere acknowledge-

ment of wrongdoing. Such "confessions" are often done simply to satisfy the legal requirements of their religion. As such, they really have no meaning and are merely an exercise in hypocrisy.

The statement made by Charles and Camilla came from the Anglican "common book of prayer." Was their confession a strictly legal affair? Or was it sincere and well intended. I'm not sure that we can know the answer to that question.

On the question of repentance, however, God's word teaches us that fruits must follow (Acts 26:20). If such is the case, then we have to wonder why the couple are still together after all of these years seeing that their adultery lead to both of their divorces. A legal marriage doesn't legitimize adultery (Matthew 19:9) regardless if you're the future "head" of a church.



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## Records for the week of April 3rd, 2005

Sunday Bible Class .....	64
Sunday AM Worship.....	75
Sunday PM Worship.....	56
Wednesday Night Study.....	62
Contribution.....	\$1311.81
Budget.....	\$1662.00



# Praises, Prayers, and Proclamations

## Announcements

- We are thankful to God for this new Lord's Day. It is the day we honor His Son and the Love that He has shown us through Him. Let us worship in spirit and in truth!
- Please remember the following in prayer: Jessica Anderson, Evelyn Johnson, Charlene Pinkley, Benjamin Windle.
- Visit one of our shut-ins this week: Curtis and Opal Hull, Edith Mischler.
- This evening is our scheduled question and answer time. Please come with Bible's ready to study.
- Our monthly potluck will be next Sunday afternoon after services. Invite your friends!
- There will be no scheduled nursing home Bible study this week. This past week I was able to fill in for another group that could not make it and we completed our study of Matthew. Next week we will begin studying the book of Mark.
- Family and Friends day is coming up soon! We are less than a month and a half away from that wonderful day of fellowship and fun. Take some flyers and hand them out to your friends to remind them and please make your plans to be with us as well.
- Our pantry item is: Pinto Beans.



## Welcome!

### Family Times for Worship and Study

Sunday Morning Bible Class: .....	9:30 AM
Sunday Morning Worship: .....	10:30 AM
Sunday Evening Worship: .....	6:00 PM
Ladies Bible Class: .....	10:30 AM
Wed. Evening Bible Class: .....	7:00 PM

## Serving Each Other

	April 10th, 2005	April 17th, 2005
<b>Sunday Morning</b>		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Bill Fort
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bob Moore	Clay Bozarth
Scripture Reading:	Perry Foster	Brent Moore
Lord's Table	Clay Bozarth	Leon Duncan
(assist)	Glenn Quigley	Ken Smith
	Bruce Foster	Jerry Roller
	John Gass	Jack Gentry
Closing Prayer	Jerry Roller	George Eddings
<b>Sunday Evening</b>		
Songs:	Bruce Foster	Glenn Williams
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Dan Hand
Scripture Reading:	Brent Moore	Ray Duncan
Lord's Table	George Eddings	Raymond Kimes
	Rusty Windle	Brandon Foster
Closing Prayer	Glenn Quigley	Ervin Hand
<b>Wednesday</b>		
Songs:	Kevin Cauley	Glenn Quigley
Opening Prayer:	Ken Smith	George Eddings
Invitation:	Dan Hand	Bill Fort
Closing Prayer:	Ervin Hand	Kevin Cauley

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