



Is Tradition an Adequate Standard for Religious Practices?

In the past few weeks we have examined, in these bulletin studies, some religious beliefs of Catholicism. Perhaps the most fundamental difference between Catholicism and other religions claiming Christ is our attitudes toward scripture and tradition. During the protestant reformation movement one of the things that was emphasized was the need to base our religious practices upon scripture alone as opposed to the long standing Catholic doctrine of religious tradition. This body of religious tradition in the Catholic Church is known as the magisterium; it is a body of literature that Catholicism holds as authoritative for the practices of the church. They consider this body of literature to be on equal footing with the Old and New Testament scriptures. They also believe that it is a body of information that is living in the sense that it changes and grows through time and circumstance. The Catholic Encyclopedia states regarding "Tradition and the Living Magisterium:"

Catholics, on the other hand, hold that there may be, that there is in fact, and that there must of necessity be certain revealed truths apart from those contained in the Bible; they hold furthermore that Jesus Christ has established in fact, and that to adapt the

means to the end He should have established, a living organ as much to transmit Scripture and written Revelation as to place revealed truth within reach of everyone always and everywhere. (Tradition and Living Magisterium)

Moreover the article states:

Holy Scripture is therefore not the only theological source of the Revelation made by God to His Church. Side by side with Scripture there is tradition, side by side with the written revelation there is the oral revelation. This granted, it is impossible to be satisfied with the Bible alone for the solution of all dogmatic questions. (ibid)

As to the infallibility of this teaching, the article states:

The prerogatives of this teaching authority are made sufficiently clear by the texts and they are to a certain extent implied in the very institution. The Church, according to St. Paul's Epistle to Timothy, is the pillar and ground of truth; the Apostles and consequently their successors have the right to impose their doctrine; whosoever refuses to believe them shall be condemned, whosoever rejects anything is shipwrecked in the

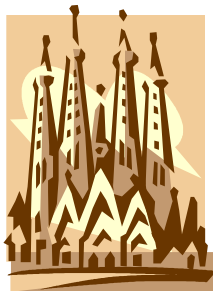
Faith. This authority is therefore infallible. And this infallibility is guaranteed implicitly but directly by the promise of the Saviour: "Behold I am with you all days even to the consummation of the world." (ibid)

In these three statements the Catholic doctrine of the authority of tradition is summarized. The Bible, they say, is not the sole source of God's word. There is also the oral tradition of the church. This oral tradition, they claim, is equally as authoritative as God's word and infallible. From where does this information come? It comes from the successors to the apostles whose teaching, if not believed will condemn a person to hell. Who holds this authority? According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, it is the bishops. "The bishops have, therefore, a general power of order, jurisdiction, and magisterium, but not the personal prerogatives of the Apostles." (The Apostles) What ought we to make of this doctrine that tradition is equal in authority to scripture?

First, Jesus made it clear that tradition was not equal to scripture. In Mark 7:3 the Pharisees asked Jesus why his disciples didn't keep the tradition of the elders. Like the Catholic church, these Rabbinical traditions were originally oral teach-

(Continued on page 2)

Is Tradition An Adequate Standard...? (cont.)



(Continued from page 1)

ings, but over time they became encoded into written documents. These traditional teachings then took on an air of authority superior to the scriptures themselves. The Catholic Encyclopedia states regarding these traditions: "Under this parasitic vegetation of traditional teaching the Law itself came gradually almost to be entirely lost sight of and stifled" (Rabbi and Rabbinism). It states further regarding the same: "What has been said above of its theological basis may suffice to show the two radical errors which lie at the bottom of it: infinity of the Scriptures, and necessity of interpreting them in every detail in accordance with that severe precision which alone is worthy of God." (ibid) It is a shame that what the Catholic Encyclopedia correctly points out as erroneous, Catholicism embraces today, namely, the "infinity of the Scriptures" through their living magistratum, and claiming divine authority for such things through their magistrates, "which alone is worthy of God."

Jesus' response to the Pharisees and their traditions applies with equal force to the traditions of the Catholic Church today. In Mark 7:6-13 we read:

He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart

is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men. For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do. And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.... **Making the word of God of none effect through your tradition, which ye have delivered: and many such like things do ye.**

Jesus was opposed to the traditions of men becoming the strainer through which scripture was understood. To Jesus, scripture was clear and stood on its own without need for additional clarification because of change in times or circumstances. And this is indeed the position of the inspired apostles in the early church as well. Paul wrote in Colossians 2:18, "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ." And the Hebrew writer proclaims regarding Christ's doctrine, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever" (Hebrews 13:8). In fact, Paul was adamant about the fact that he didn't receive his teaching via the medium of men, and not even that of other apostles, when he stated in Galatians 1:11,12 "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which

(Continued on page 3)

"It is a shame that what the Catholic Encyclopedia correctly points out as erroneous, Catholicism embraces..."

Bible Studies for the week of May 1st, 2005



- AM Sermon..... Patience' Perfect Work
- Scripture Reading..... James 1:2-4
- PM Sermon..... Asian Churches — Thyatira
- Scripture Reading..... Revelation 3:18-29
- Sunday Class The Book of Hebrews
- Wednesday Class..... The Book of Job

Mary the Mediatrix

Catholicism teaches, referring to Mary, "To thee we lift our prayers, for thou art the Mediatrix, powerful at once and pitiful, of our salvation" (cf. Catholic Encyclopedia). Such an affirmation exalts Mary to the same plateau as Jesus, for they call her "The Mother of God" (cf. Catholic Encyclopedia). Their attempts to deify Mary contradicts clear Bible teaching. Praying to Mary in the role of mediator between man and Christ contradicts other biblical passages (cf. Heb. 9:15; Heb. 12:24). Jesus taught that we are to pray to the Father through Him (John 14:13-14). Furthermore, our salvation is by the authority of Jesus, not Mary (Matt. 1:21; Matt. 28:18; Acts 4:10-12; Acts 10:43).

If Mary is a "mediatrix" (female mediator) and is to be worshiped as "the Mother of God," Catholics must affirm the "perpetual virginity" of Mary. This position contradicts Matthew 13:55,56, which states that Jesus had both brethren and sisters. No-

tice also Matthew 1:24,25, "Joseph...took unto him his wife; and knew her not till she had brought forth her first-born son." After Jesus was born, Joseph knew (had sexual relationship with) Mary, his wife; hence, the idea of "perpetual virginity" is a fabrication of Catholicism. Claiming Mary as a "mediatrix" also contradicts 1 Timothy 2:5, "For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." Paul here affirms there is "one God" and "one mediator." Logically, if there can be more than one mediator, then there can also be more than one God.

Worship phrases pertaining to Mary such as "Holy Mother of God" (cf. Catholic Encyclopedia), "Most Pure Heart Of Mary" (cf. Catholic Encyclopedia), etc., exalt and deify the created rather than The Creator (see Romans 1:25). Expressions of exaltation belong to God, The Creator, not to the woman who was a part of creation (Gen. 1:17; Gen. 5:2).

There is but one Savior (John 4:42; 1 John 4:14); one Mediator (1 Tim. 2:5); one Lord (Eph. 4:5); and one Advocate (1 John 2:1) – Jesus Christ, "the Son of the living God" (Matt. 16:16; John 6:69). He shares His place with no one. And, to attempt to give his place, in any form, to a human is blasphemy. The real question is, do you accept the inspired Scriptures as authoritative (cf. Gal. 1:11-12; Eph. 3:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:20-21) or the false teachings of the Catholic Church?

Mike Riley

(Continued from page 2)

was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." Paul received his teaching from Jesus' Spirit himself and not through any human tradition.

To be continued....

Kevin Cauley



“Logically, if there can be more than one mediator, then there can also be more than one God.”

Records for the week of April 24th, 2005

Sunday Bible Class	65
Sunday AM Worship.....	80
Sunday PM Worship.....	65
Wednesday Night Study.....	57
Contribution	\$1750.00
Budget.....	\$1662.00



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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: David Childers, Pat Foster, Kala Guess, Raymond Kimes, Jack Sears, Jimmy Warren.
- Our shut-ins: Curtis and Opal Hull and Edith Mischler
- Tonight after services is the monthly elders and deacons meeting. If you have an item for discussion please see one of these men.
- Please pray for Bill and Kevin as they travel to Costa Rica on Tuesday. Also pray for the church in Tres Rios.
- There will be no bulletin next week due to the trip to Costa Rica.
- There is a wedding shower for Megan Williams scheduled for the afternoon of May 15th at Shawna Stevens home. Megan is registered at Walmart, Bed Bath and Beyond, and Linen's and Things.
- May 22nd is our friends and family day! We are only three weeks away for this yearly event. Let's get the word out and invite everyone we know!
- We have our monthly singing at the nursing home scheduled for May 29th. Please make your plans to attend..
- There will be no Bible study at the nursing home this or next Thursday due to the nursing home's schedule.
- Our pantry item is: Hair Gel.

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

	May 1st, 2005	May 8th, 2005
Sunday Morning		
Songs:	Ken Smith	Brent Stevens
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Bob Deffenbaugh
Opening Prayer:	Glenn Williams	Dan Hand
Scripture Reading:	Ray Duncan	George Eddings
Lord's Table	Bruce Foster	Clay Bozarth
	Jerry Roller	Glenn Quigley
(assist)	Matt Morrell	Perry Foster
	Rusty Windle	John Gass
Closing Prayer	Bill Fort	Bob Phillips
Sunday Evening		
Songs:	Glenn Williams	Clay Bozarth
Preaching:	Kevin Cauley	Bob Deffenbaugh
Opening Prayer:	Dale Pinkley	Brent Stevens
Scripture Reading:	Brent Moore	Dale Pinkley
Lord's Table	Leon Duncan	Bruce Foster
	Brandon Foster	Jack Gentry
Closing Prayer	Bruce Foster	Dan Hand
Wednesday		
Songs:	Glenn Quigley	Kevin Cauley
Opening Prayer:	Bob Moore	Dale Pinkley
Invitation:	Bruce Foster	Bill Fort
Closing Prayer:	Clay Bozarth	Michael Morrell

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