

History of the Papacy Chapter I Origin of the Papacy



Rev. J.A. Wylie, LL.D

The Papacy, next to Christianity, is the great FACT of the modern world. Of the two, the former, unhappily, has proved in some respects the more powerful spring in human affairs, and has acted the more public part on the stage of the world. Fully to trace the rise and development of this stupendous system, were to write a history of Western Europe. The decay of empires,—the extinction of religious systems,—the dissolution and renewal of society,—the rise of new States,—the change of manners, customs, and laws,—the policy of courts,—the wars of kings,—the decay and revival of letters, of philosophy and of arts,—all connect themselves with the history of the Papacy, to whose growth they ministered, and whose destiny they helped to unfold. On so wide a field of investigation neither our time nor our limits permit us to enter. Let it suffice that we indicate, in general terms, the main causes that contributed to the rise of this tremendous Power, and the successive stages that marked the course of its portentous development.

The first rise of the Papacy is undoubtedly to be sought for in the corruption of human nature. Christianity, though pure in itself, was committed to the keeping of imperfect beings. The age, too, was imperfect, and abounded with causes tending to corrupt whatever was simple, and materialize whatever was spiritual. Society was pervaded on all sides with sensuous and material influences. These absolutely unfitted the age for relishing, and especially for retaining, truth in its abstract form, and for perceiving the beauty and grandeur of a purely spiritual economy. The symbolic worship of the Jew, heaven-appointed, had taught him to associate religious truth with visible rites, and to attribute considerably more importance to the observance of the outward ceremony than to the cultivation of the inward habit, or the performance of the mental act. Greece, too, with all its generous sensibilities, its strong emotions, and its quick perception and keen relish of the beautiful, was a singularly gross and materialized land. Its voluptuous poetry and sensuous mythology had unfitted the intellect of its people for appreciating the true grandeur of a simple and spiritual system. Italy, again, was the land of gods and of arms. The former was a type of human passions; and the latter, though lightened by occasional gleams of heroic virtue and patriotism, exerted, on the whole, a degrading and brutalizing effect upon the character and genius of the people, withdrawing them from efforts of pure mind, and from the contemplation of the abstract and the spiritual. It was in this complex corruption,—the degeneracy of the individual and the degeneracy of society, owing to the unspiritualizing influences then powerfully at work in the Jewish, the Grecian, and the Roman worlds,—that the main danger of Christianity consisted; and in this element

it encountered an antagonist a thousand times more formidable than the sword of Rome. Amid these impure matters did the Papacy germinate, though not till a subsequent age did it appear above ground. The corruption took a different form, according to the prevailing systems and the predominating tastes of the various countries. The Jew brought with him into the Church the ideas of the synagogue, and attempted to graft the institutions of Moses upon the doctrines of Christ; the Greek, unable all at once to unlearn the lessons and cast off the yoke of the Academy, attempted to form an alliance between the simplicity of the gospel and his own subtle and highly imaginative philosophy; while the Roman, loath to think that the heaven of his gods should be swept away as the creation of an unbridled fancy, recoiled from the change, as we would from the dissolution of the material heavens; and, though he embraced Christianity, he still clung to the forms and shadows of a polytheism in the truth and reality of which he could no longer believe. Thus the Jew, the Greek, the Roman, were alike in that they corrupted the simplicity of the gospel; but they differed in that each corrupted it after his own fashion. Minds there were of a more vigorous cast originally, or more largely endowed with the Spirit's grace, who were able to take a more tenacious grasp of truth, and to appreciate more highly her spirituality and simplicity; but as regards the majority of converts, especially towards the end of the first century and the beginning of the second, it is undeniable that they felt, in all their magnitude, the difficulties now enumerated.

The new ideas had a painful conflict to maintain with the old. The world had taken a mighty step in advance. It had accomplished a transition from the symbolic to the spiritual,—from the fables, allegories, and myths, which a false philosophy and a sensuous poetry had invented to amuse its infancy, to the clear, definite, and spiritual ideas which Christianity had provided for the exercise of its manhood. But it seemed as if the transition was too great. There was a felt inability in the human mind, as yet, to look with open face upon TRUTH; and men were fain to interpose the veil of symbol between themselves and the glory of that Majestic Form. It was seen that the world could not pass by a single step from infancy to manhood,—that the Creator had imposed certain laws upon the growth of the species, as on that of the individual,—upon the development of the social, as on that of the personal mind; and that these laws could not be violated. It was seen, in short, that so vast a reformation could not be made; it must grow. So much had been foreshadowed, we apprehend, by those parables of the Saviour which were intended as illustrative of the nature of the gospel kingdom and the manner of its progress: "The kingdom of heaven cometh not with observation;" "It is like a grain of mustard-seed, the least of all seeds; but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree;" "It is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Not in a single day was the master idea of Christianity to displace the old systems, and inaugurate itself in their room. It was to progress in obedience to the law which regulates the growth of all great changes. First, the seed had to be deposited in the bosom of society; next, a process of germination had to ensue; the early and the latter rains of the Pagan and the Papal persecutions had to water it; and it was not till after ages of silent growth, during which society was to be penetrated and leavened by the quickening spirit of the gospel, that Christianity would begin her

universal and triumphant reign.

But as yet the time was not come for a pure spiritual Christianity to attain dominion upon the earth. The infantile state of society forbade it. As, in the early ages, men had not been able to retain, even when communicated to them, the knowledge of one self-existent, independent, and eternal Being, so now they were unable to retain, even when made known to them, the pure spiritual worship of that Being. From this it might have been inferred, though prophecy had been silent on the point, that the world had yet a cycle of progress to pass through ere it should reach its manhood; that an era was before it, during which it would be misled by grievous errors, and endure, in consequence, grievous sufferings, before it could attain the faculty of broad, independent, clear, spiritual conception, and become able to think without the help of allegory, and to worship without the aid of symbol. This reconciles us to the fact of the great apostacy, so stumbling at first view. Contemplated in this light, it is seen to be a necessary step in the world's progress towards its high destinies, and a necessary preparation for the full unfolding of God's plans towards the human family.

The recovery of the world from the depth into which the Fall has plunged it, is both a slow and a laborious process. The instrumentality which God has ordained for its elevation is knowledge. Great truths are discovered, one after one; they are opinion first,—they become the basis of action next; and thus society is lifted up, by slow degrees, to the platform where the Creator has ordained it shall ultimately stand. A great principle, once discovered, can never be lost; and thus the progress of the world is steadily onward. Truth may not be immediately operative. To recur to the Saviour's figure, it may be the seed sown in the earth. It may be confined to a single bosom, or to a single book, or to a single school; but it is part of the constitution of things; it is agreeable to the nature of God, and in harmony with his government; and so it cannot perish. Proofs begin to gather around it; events fall out which throw light upon it: the martyr dies for it; society suffers by neglecting to shape its course in conformity with it; other minds begin to embrace it; and after reaching a certain stage, its adherents increase in geometrical progression: at last the whole of society is leavened; and thus the world is lifted a stage higher, never again to be let down. The stage, we say, once fully secured, is never altogether lost; for the truth, in fighting its way, has left behind it so many monuments of its power, in the shape of the errors and sufferings, as well as of the emancipation, of mankind, that it becomes a great landmark in the progress of our race. It attains in the social mind all the clearness and certainty of an axiom. The history of the world, when read aright, is not so much a record of the follies and wickedness of mankind, as it is a series of moral demonstrations,—a slow process of experimental and convincing proof,—in reference to great principles, and that on a scale so large, that the whole world may see it, and understand it, and come to act upon it. Society can be saved not otherwise than as the individual is saved: it must be convinced of sin; its mind must be enlightened; its will renewed; it must be brought to embrace and act upon truth; and when in this way it has been sanctified, society shall enter upon its rest.

This we take to be the true theory of the world's progress. There is first an objective revelation of truth; there is second a subjective revelation of it. The objective revelation is the work of God alone; the subjective revelation, that is, the reception of it by society, is the work of God and man combined. The first may be done in a day or an hour; the second is the slow operation of an age. Thus human progression takes the form of a series of grand epochs, in which the world is suddenly thrown forward in its course, and then again suddenly stands still, or appears to retrograde. The first is known, in ordinary speech, as reformation or revolution; the second is termed re-action. There is, however, in point of fact, no retrogression: what we mistake for retrogression is only society settling down, after the sun-light burst of newly-revealed truth is over, to study, to believe, and to apply the principles which have just come into its possession. This is a work of time, often of many ages; and not unfrequently does it go on amid the confusion and conflict occasioned by the opposition offered to the new ideas by the old errors. Among the epochs of the past,—the grand objective revelations,—we may instance, as the more influential ones, the primeval Revelation, the Mosaic Economy, the Christian Era, and the Reformation. Each of these advanced the world a stage, from which it never altogether fell back into its former condition: society always made good its advance. Nevertheless, each of these epochs was followed by a re-action, which was just society struggling to lay hold upon the principles made known to it, thoroughly to incorporate them with its own structure, and so to make ready for a new and higher step. The world progresses much as the tide rises on the beach. Society in progress presents as sublime and fearful a spectacle as the ocean in a storm. As the mountain billow, crested with foam, swells huge and dark against the horizon, and comes rolling along in thunder, it threatens not only to flood the beach, but to submerge the land; but its mighty force is arrested and dissolved on its sandy barrier: the waters retire within the ocean's bed, as if they had received a counter-stroke from the earth. One would think that the ocean had spent its power in that one effort; but it is not so. The resistless energies of the great deep recruit themselves in an instant: another mountain wave is seen advancing; another cataract of foaming waters is poured along the beach; and now the level of the tide stands higher than before. Thus, by a series of alternate flows and ebbs does the ocean fill its shores. This natural phenomenon is but the emblem of the manner in which society advances. After some great epoch, the new ideas seem to lose ground,—the waters are diminished; but gradually the limit between the new ideas and the old prejudices comes to be adjusted, and then it is found that the advantage is on the side of truth, and that the general level of society stands perceptibly higher. Meanwhile, preparation is being made for a new conquest. The regenerative instrumentalities with which the Creator has endowed the world, by the truths which He has communicated, are silently at work at the bottom of society. Another mighty wave appears upon its agitated surface; and, rolling onwards in irresistible power against the dry land of superstition, it adds a new domain to the empire of Truth.

But while it is true that the world has been steadily progressive, and that each successive epoch has placed society on a higher platform than that which went before it, it is at the same time a fact, that the development of superstition has kept equal pace with the development of truth. From the very

beginning the two have been the counterparts of each other, and so will it be, doubtless, while they exist together upon the earth. In the early ages idolatry was unsophisticated in its creed and simple in its forms, just as the truths then known were few and simple. Under the Jewish economy, when truth became embodied in a system of doctrines with an appointed ritual, then, too, idolatry provided its system of metaphysical subtleties to ensnare the mind, and its splendid ceremonial to dazzle the senses. Under the Christian dispensation, when truth has attained its amplest development, in form at least, if not as yet in degree, idolatry is also more fully developed than in any preceding era. Papal idolatry is a more subtle, complicated, malignant, and perfected system than Pagan idolatry was. This equal development is inevitable in the nature of the case. The discovery of any one truth necessitates the invention of the opposite error. In proportion as truth multiplies its points of assault, error must necessarily multiply its points of defence. The extension of the one line infers the extension of the other also. Nevertheless there is an essential difference betwixt the two developments. Every new truth is the addition of another impregnable position to the one side; whereas every new error is but the addition of another untenable point to the other, which only weakens the defence. Truth is immortal, because agreeable to the laws by which the universe is governed; and therefore, the more it is extended, the more numerous are the points on which it can lean for support upon God's government; the more that error is extended, the more numerous the points in which it comes into collision and conflict with that government. Thus the one develops into strength, the other into weakness. And thus, too, the full development of the one is the harbinger of its triumph,—the full development of the other is the precursor of its downfall.

Idolatry at the first was one, and necessarily so, for it drew its existence from the same springs which were seated in the depth of the early ages. But, though one originally, in process of time it took different forms, and was known by different names, in the several countries. The Magian philosophy had long prevailed in the East; in the West had arisen the polytheism of Rome; while in Greece, forming the link between Asia and Europe, and combining the contemplative and subtle character of the Eastern idolatries with the grossness and latitudinarianism of those of the West, there flourished a highly imaginative but sensuous mythology. As these idolatries were one in their essence, so they were one in their tendency; and the tendency of all was, to draw away the heart from God, to hem in the vision of man by objects of sense, and to create a strong disrelish for the contemplation of a spiritual Being, and a strong incapacity for the apprehension and retention of spiritual and abstract truth. These idolatries had long since passed their prime; but the powerful bent they had given to the human mind still existed. It was only by a slow process of counteraction that that evil bias could be overcome. So long had these superstitions brooded over the earth, and so largely had they impregnated the soil with their evil principles, that their eradication could not be looked for but by a long and painful conflict on the part of Christianity. It was to be expected, that after the first flush of the gospel's triumph there would come a recoil; that the ancient idolatries, recovering from their panic, would rally their forces, and appear again, not in any of their old forms,—for neither does superstition nor the gospel ever

revive under exactly its old organization,—but under a new form adapted to the state of the world, and the character of the new antagonist now to be confronted; and that Satan would make a last, and, of course, unexampled struggle, before surrendering to Christ the empire of the world. It was to be expected also, in the coming conflict, that all these idolatries would combine into one phalanx. It was extremely probable that the animosities and rivalships which had hitherto kept them apart would cease; that the schools and sects into which they had been divided would coalesce; that, recognising in Christianity an antagonist that was alike the foe of them all, the common danger would make them feel their common brotherhood; and thus, that all these false systems would come to be united into one comprehensive and enormous system, containing within itself all the principles of hostility, and all the elements of strength, formerly scattered throughout them all; and that in this combined and united form would they do battle with the Truth.

It was not long till symptoms began to appear of such a move on the part of Satan,—of such a resuscitation of the ancient Paganisms. The shadow began to go back on the dial of Time. The spiritual began to lose ground before the symbolic and the mythological. The various idolatries which had formerly covered the wide space which the gospel now occupied,—subjugated, but not utterly exterminated,—began to pay court to Christianity. They professed, as the handmaids, to do homage to the Mistress; but their design in this insidious friendship was not to aid her in her glorious mission, but to borrow her help, and so reign in her room. Well they knew that they had been overtaken by that decrepitude which, sooner or later, overtakes all that is sprung of earth; but they thought to draw fresh vitality from the living side of Christianity, and so rid themselves of the burden of their anility. The Magian religion wooed her in the East; Paganism paid court to her in the West: Judaism, too, esteeming, doubtless, that it had a better right than either, put in its claim to be recognized. Each brought her something of its own, which, it pretended, was necessary to the perfection of Christianity. Judaism brought her dead symbols; the Magian and Greek philosophies brought her refined and subtile, but dead speculations and doctrines; and the Paganism of Rome brought her dead divinities. On all hands was she tempted to part with the substance, and to embrace again the shadow. Thus did the old idolatries muster under the banner of Christianity. They rallied in her support,—so they professed; but, in reality, to unite their arms for her overthrow.

Two things might have been expected to happen. First, that the rising corruption would reach its maturest proportion in that country where external influences most favoured its development; and second, that when developed, it would exhibit the master traits and leading peculiarities of each of the ancient paganisms. Both these anticipations were exactly realised. It was not in Chaldea, nor in Egypt, the seats of the Magian philosophy, nor was it in Greece, that Popery arose, for these countries now retained little besides the traditions of their former power. It was in the soil of the Seven Hills, amid the trophies of unnumbered victories, the symbols of universal empire, and the gorgeous rites of a polluting polytheism, that Romanism, *velut arbor oevo*, grew up. By a law similar to that which guides the seed to the spot best fitted for its germination, did the modern Paganism strike its roots in

the soil which the ancient Paganism had most largely impregnated with its influences and tendencies. The surrounding heresies were speedily overshadowed and dwarfed. The Gnostic, and other errors, declined in the proportion in which Romanism waxed in stature, its mighty trunk drawing to itself all those corrupt influences which would otherwise have afforded nourishment to them. In process of time they disappeared, though rather through a process of absorption than of extinction. The result presents us with a sort of Pantheism,—the only sort of Pantheism that is real,—in which the expiring idolatries returned into the bosom of their parent divinity, and had their existence prolonged in its existence. The Papacy is a new Babel, in which the old redoubtable idolatries are the builders. It is a spiritual Pantheon, in which the local and vagrant superstitions find again a centre and a home. It is a grand mausoleum, in which the corpses of the defunct Paganisms, like the mummied monks of Kreutzberg, are laid out in ghastly pomp, while their disembodied spirits still live in the Papacy, and govern the world from their grave. Analyse Popery, and you will find all these ancient systems existing in it. The Magian philosophy flourishes anew under the monastic system; for in the conventual life of Rome we find the contemplative moods and the ascetic habits which so largely prevailed in Egypt and over all the East; and here, too, we find the fundamental principle of that philosophy, namely, that the flesh is the seat of evil, and, consequently, that it becomes a duty to weaken and mortify the body. In Popery we find the predominating traits of the Grecian philosophy, more especially in the subtle casuistry of the Popish schools, combined with a sensuous ritual, the celebration of which is often accompanied, as in Greece of old, with gross licentiousness. And last of all, there is palpably present in Popery the polytheism of ancient Rome, in the gods and goddesses which, under the title of saints, fill up the calendar and crowd the temples of the Romish Church. Here, then, all the old idolatries live over again. There is nothing new about them but the organization, which is more perfect and complete than ever. To add one other illustration to those already given, the Papacy is a gigantic realization of our Lord's parable. The Roman empire, on the introduction of Christianity, was swept and garnished; the unclean spirit which inhabited it had been driven out of it; but the demon had never wandered far from the region of the Seven Hills; and finding no rest, he returned, bringing with him seven other spirits more wicked than himself, which took possession of their old abode, and made its last state worse than its first. The name of Popery, truly, is Legion! "There are many Antichrists," said the apostle John; for in his days the various systems of error had not been combined into one. But the Roman apostacy acquired ultimately the dominion, and, marshalling the other heresies beneath its banner, gave its own name to the motley host, and became known as the Antichrist of prophecy and of history.

Popery, then, we hold to be an after-growth of Paganism, whose deadly wound, dealt by the spiritual sword of Christianity, was healed. Its oracles had been silenced, its shrines demolished, and its gods consigned to oblivion; but the deep corruption of the human race, not yet cured by the promised effusion of the Spirit upon all flesh, revived it anew, and, under a Christian mask, reared other temples in its honour, built it another Pantheon, and replenished it with other gods, which, in fact, were but the

ancient divinities under new names. All idolatries, in whatever age or country they have existed, are to be viewed but as successive developments of the one grand apostacy. That apostacy was commenced in Eden, and consummated at Rome. It had its rise in the plucking of the forbidden fruit; and it attained its acme in the supremacy of the Bishop of Rome,—Christ's Vicar on earth. The hope that he would "be as God," led man to commit the first sin; and that sin was perfected when the Pope "exalted himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he, as God, sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." Popery is but the natural development of this great original transgression. It is just the early idolatries ripened and perfected. It is manifestly an enormous expansion of the same intensely malignant and fearfully destructive principle which these idolatries contained. The ancient Chaldean worshipping the sun,—the Greek deifying the powers of nature,—and the Roman exalting the race of primeval men into gods, are but varied manifestations of the same evil principle, namely, the utter alienation of the heart from God,—its proneness to hide itself amid the darkness of its own corrupt imaginations, and to become a god unto itself. That principle received the most fearful development which appears possible on earth, in the Mystery of Iniquity which came to be seated on the Seven Hills; for therein man deified himself, became God, nay, arrogated powers which lifted him high above God. Popery is the last, the most matured, the most subtle, the most skilfully contriven, and the most essentially diabolical form of idolatry which the world ever saw, or which, there is reason to believe, it ever will see. It is the *ne plus ultra* of man's wickedness, and the *chef d'oeuvre* of Satan's cunning and malignity. It is the greatest calamity, next to the Fall, which ever befell the human family. Farther away from God the world could not exist at all. The cement that holds society together, already greatly weakened, would be altogether destroyed, and the social fabric would instantly fall in ruins.^[1]

Having thus indicated the origin of Romanism, we shall attempt in the three following chapters to trace its rise and progress.

[1] It follows from the principles taught in this chapter, that the Church (so called) of Rome has no right to rank amongst Christian Churches. She is not a Church, neither is her religion the Christian religion. We are accustomed to speak of Popery as a corrupt form of Christianity. We concede too much. The Church of Rome bears the same relation to the Church of Christ which the hierarchy of Baal bore to the institute of Moses; and Popery stands related to Christianity only in the same way in which Paganism stood related to primeval Revelation. Popery is not a corruption simply, but a transformation. It may be difficult to fix the time when it passed from the one into the other; but the change is incontestible. Popery is the gospel transubstantiated into the flesh and blood of Paganism, under a few of the accidents of Christianity.

To read the rest of this book and more books by Rev. J.A. Wylie, please go to <http://www.biblebelievers.com/wylie/papacy/01-index.html>

Of Matrimony – By Martin Luther



It is not only without any warrant of Scripture that matrimony is considered a sacrament, but it has been turned into a mere mockery by the very same traditions which vaunt it as a sacrament. Let us look a little into this. I have said that in every sacrament there is contained a word of divine promise, which must be believed in by him who receives the sign; and that the sign alone cannot constitute a sacrament. Now we nowhere read that he who marries a wife will receive any grace from God; neither is there in matrimony any sign of divine institution, nor do we anywhere read that it was appointed of God to be a sign of anything; although it is true that all visible transactions may be understood as figures and allegorical representations of invisible things. But figures and allegories are not sacraments, in the sense in which we are speaking of sacraments.

Furthermore, since matrimony has existed from the beginning of the world, and still continues even among unbelievers, there are no reasons why it should be called a sacrament of the new law, and of the Church alone. The marriages of the patriarchs were not less marriages than ours, nor are those of unbelievers less real than those of believers; and yet no one calls them a sacrament. Moreover there are among believers wicked husbands and wives, worse than any Gentiles. Why should we then say there is a sacrament here, and not among the Gentiles? Shall we so trifle with baptism and the Church as to say, like those who rave about the temporal power existing only in the Church, that matrimony is a sacrament only in the Church? Such assertions are childish and ridiculous, and by them we expose our ignorance and rashness to the laughter of unbelievers.

It will be asked however: Does not the Apostle say that "they two shall be one flesh," and that "this is a great sacrament;" and will you contradict the plain words of the Apostle? I reply that this argument is a very dull one, and proceeds from a careless and thoughtless reading of the original.

Throughout the holy Scriptures this word "sacramentum," has not the meaning in which we employ it, but an opposite one. For it everywhere signifies, not the sign of a sacred thing, but a sacred thing which is secret and hidden. Thus Paul says: "Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries (that is, sacraments) of God." (1 Cor. iv. 1.) Where we use the Latin term "sacrament," in Greek the word "mystery" is employed; and thus in Greek the words of the Apostle are: "They two shall be one flesh; this is a great mystery." This ambiguity has led men to consider marriage as a sacrament of the new law, which they would have been far from doing, if they had read the word "mystery," as it is in the Greek.

Thus the Apostle calls Christ himself a "sacrament," saying: "And without controversy great is the sacrament (that is, mystery) of godliness. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." (1 Tim. iii. 16.) Why have they not deduced from this an eighth sacrament of the new law, under such clear authority from Paul? Or, if they restrained themselves in this case, where they might so suitably have been copious in the invention of sacraments, why are they so lavish of them in the other? It is because they have been misled by their ignorance as well of things as of words; they have been caught by the mere sound of the words and by their own fancies. Having once, on human authority, taken a sacrament to be a sign, they have proceeded, without any judgment or scruple, to make the word mean a sign, wherever they have met with it in the sacred writings. Just as they have imported other meanings of words and human habits of speech into the sacred writings, and transformed these into dreams of their own, making anything out of anything. Hence their constant senseless use of the words: good works, bad works, sin, grace, righteousness, virtue, and almost all the most important words and things. They use all these at their own discretion, founded on the writings of men, to the ruin of the truth of God and of our salvation.

Thus sacrament and mystery, in Paul's meaning, are the very wisdom of the Spirit, hidden in a mystery, as he says: "Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." (1 Cor. ii. 8.) There remains to this day this folly, this stone of stumbling and rock of offence, this sign which shall be spoken against. Paul calls preachers the stewards of these mysteries, because they preach Christ, the power and wisdom of God; but so preach him that unless men believe, they cannot understand. Thus a sacrament means a mystery and a hidden thing, which is made known by words, but is received by faith of heart. Such is the passage of which we are speaking at present: "They two shall be one flesh; this is a great mystery." These men think that this was said concerning matrimony; but Paul brings in these words in speaking of Christ and the Church, and explains his meaning clearly by saying: "I speak concerning Christ and the Church." See how well Paul and these men agree! Paul says that he is setting forth a great mystery concerning Christ and the Church; while they set it forth as concerning male and female. If men may thus indulge their own caprices in interpreting the sacred writings, what wonder if anything can be found in them, were it even a hundred sacraments?

Christ then and the Church are a mystery, that is, a great and hidden thing,

which may indeed and ought to be figured by matrimony, as in a sort of real allegory; but it does not follow that matrimony ought to be called a sacrament. The heavens figuratively represent the apostles; the sun Christ; the waters nations; but these things are not therefore sacraments; for in all these cases the institution is wanting and the divine promise; and these it is which make a sacrament complete. Hence Paul is either, of his own spirit, applying to Christ the words used in Genesis concerning matrimony, or else he teaches that, in their general sense, the spiritual marriage of Christ is also there declared, saying: "Even as the Lord cherisheth the Church; for we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the Church." (Eph. v. 29–32.) We see that he means this whole text to be understood as spoken by him about Christ. He purposely warns the reader to understand the "Sacrament" as in Christ and the Church, not in matrimony.

I admit, indeed, that even under the old law, nay, from the beginning of the world, there was a sacrament of penitence; but the new promise of penitence and the gift of the keys are peculiar to the new law. As we have baptism in the place of circumcision, so we now have the keys in the place of sacrifices or other signs of penitence. I have said above that, at different times, the same God has given different promises and different signs for the remission of sins and the salvation of men, while yet it is the same grace that all have received. As it is written: "We, having the same spirit of faith, believe, and therefore speak." (2 Cor. iv. 13.) "Our fathers did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock that followed them, and that rock was Christ." (1 Cor. x. 3, 4.) "These all died in faith, not having received the promises; God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." (Heb. xi. 13, 40.) For Christ himself, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever, is the head of his Church from the beginning even to the end of the world. There are then different signs, but the faith of all believers is the same; since without faith it is impossible to please God, and by it Abel pleased Him.

Let then matrimony be a figure of Christ and the Church, not however a sacrament divinely instituted, but one invented in the Church by men led astray by their ignorance alike of things and of words. So far as this invention is not injurious to the faith, it must be borne with in charity; just as many other devices of human weakness and ignorance are borne with in the Church, so long as they are not injurious to faith and to the sacred writings. But we are now contending for the firmness and purity of faith and of Scripture; lest, if we affirm anything to be contained in the sacred writings and in the articles of our faith, and it is afterwards proved not to be so contained, we should expose our faith to mockery, be found ignorant of our own special business, cause scandal to our adversaries and to the weak, and fail to exalt the authority of holy Scripture. For we must make the widest possible distinction between those things which have been delivered to us from God in the sacred writings, and those which have been invented in the Church by men, of however eminent authority from their holiness and their learning.

Thus far I have spoken of matrimony itself. But what shall we say of those impious human laws by which this divinely appointed manner of life has been entangled and tossed up and down? Good God! it is horrible to look upon the temerity of the tyrants of Rome, who thus, according to their own caprices, at one time annul marriages and at another time enforce them. Is the human race given over to their caprice for nothing but to be mocked and abused in every way, and that these men may do what they please with it for the sake of their own fatal gains?

There is a book in general circulation and held in no slight esteem, which has been confusedly put together out of all the dregs and filth of human traditions, and entitled the Angelic Summary; while it is really a more than diabolical summary. In this book, among an infinite number of monstrous statements, by which confessors are supposed to be instructed, while they are in truth most ruinously confused, eighteen impediments to matrimony are enumerated. If we look at these with the just and free eye of faith, we shall see that the writer is of the number of those of whom the Apostle foretold that they should "give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; forbidding to marry." (1 Tim. iv. 1-3.) What is forbidding to marry, if this is not forbidding it—to invent so many impediments, and to set so many snares, that marriages cannot be contracted, or, if they are contracted, must be dissolved? Who has given this power to men? Granted that such men have been holy and led by a pious zeal; why does the holiness of another encroach upon my liberty? Why does the zeal of another bring me into bondage? Let whosoever will be as holy and as zealous as he will, but let him not injure others, or rob me of my liberty.

I rejoice, however, that these disgraceful laws have at length attained the glory they deserve, in that by their aid the men of Rome have nowadays become common traders. And what do they sell? The shame of men and women; a merchandise worthy of these traffickers, who surpass all that is most sordid and disgusting in their avarice and impiety. There is not one of those impediments, which cannot be removed at the intercession of Mammon; so that these laws seem to have been made for no other purpose than to be nets for money and snares for souls in the hands of those greedy and rapacious Nimrods; and in order that we might see in the holy place, in the Church of God, the abomination of the public sale of the shame and ignominy of both sexes. A business worthy of our pontiffs, and fit to be carried on by men who, with the utmost disgrace and baseness, are given over to a reprobate mind, instead of that ministry of the gospel which, in their avarice and ambition, they despise.

But what am I to say or do? If I were to enter upon every particular, this treatise would extend beyond all bounds; for the subject is in the utmost confusion, so that no one can tell where he is to begin, how far he is to go, or where he is to stop. This I know, that no commonwealth can be prosperously administered by mere laws. If the magistrate is a wise man, he will govern more happily under the guidance of nature than by any laws; if he is not a wise man, he will effect nothing but mischief by laws, since he will not know how to use them, or to adapt them to the wants of the time. In public matters, therefore, it is of more importance that good and wise men should be

at the head of affairs, than that any laws should be passed; for such men will themselves be the best of laws, since they will judge cases of all kinds with energy and justice. If, together with natural wisdom, there be learning in divine things, then it is clearly superfluous and mischievous to have any written laws; and charity above all things has absolutely no need of laws. I say, however, and do all that in me lies, admonishing and entreating all priests and friars, if they see any impediment with which the Pope can dispense, but which is not mentioned in Scripture, to consider all those marriages valid which have been contracted, in whatever way, contrary to ecclesiastical or pontifical laws. Let them arm themselves with the Divine law which says: What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder. The union of husband and wife is one of divine right, and holds good, however much against the laws of men it may have taken place, and the laws of men ought to give place to it, without any scruple. For if a man is to leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, how much more ought he to tread under foot the frivolous and unjust laws of men, that he may cleave to his wife? If the Pope, or any bishop or official, dissolves any marriage, because it has been contracted contrary to the papal laws, he is an antichrist, does violence to nature, and is guilty of treason against God; because this sentence stands: Whom God hath joined together, let not man put asunder.

Besides this, man has no right to make such laws, and the liberty bestowed on Christians through Christ is above all the laws of men, especially when the divine law comes in, as Christ says: "The Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath; therefore the Son of man is Lord also of the Sabbath." (Mark ii. 27-28.) Again, such laws were condemned beforehand by Paul, when he foretold that those should arise who would forbid to marry. Hence in this matter all those rigorous impediments derived from spiritual affinity, or legal relationship and consanguinity, must give way, as far as is permitted by the sacred writings, in which only the second grade of consanguinity is prohibited, as it is written in the book of Leviticus, where twelve persons are prohibited, namely:—mother, step-mother, full sister, half sister by either parent, grand-daughter, father's sister, mother's sister, daughter-in-law, brother's wife, wife's sister, step-daughter, uncle's wife. In these only the first grade of affinity and the second of consanguinity are prohibited, and not even these universally, as is clear when we look carefully at the subject; for the daughter and grand-daughter of a brother and sister are not mentioned as prohibited, though they are in the second grade. Hence, if at any time a marriage has been contracted outside these grades, than which no others have ever been prohibited by God's appointment, it ought by no means to be dissolved on account of any laws of men. Matrimony, being a divine institution, is incomparably above all laws, and therefore it cannot rightfully be broken through for the sake of laws, but rather laws for its sake.

Thus all those fanciful spiritual affinities of father, mother, brother, sister, or child, ought to be utterly done away with in the contracting of matrimony. What but the superstition of man has invented that spiritual relationship? If he who baptizes is not permitted to marry her whom he has baptized, or a godfather his god-daughter, why is a Christian man permitted to marry a Christian woman? Is the relationship established by a ceremony or

by the sign of the sacrament stronger than that established by the substance itself of the sacrament? Is not a Christian man the brother of a Christian sister? Is not a baptized man the spiritual brother of a baptized woman? How can we be so senseless? If a man instructs his wife in the gospel and in the faith of Christ, and thus becomes truly her father in Christ, shall it not be lawful for her to continue his wife? Would not Paul have been at liberty to marry a maiden from among those Corinthians, all of whom he declares that he had begotten in Christ? See, then, how Christian liberty has been crushed by the blindness of human superstition!

Much more idle still is the doctrine of legal relationship; and yet they have raised even this above the divine right of matrimony. Nor can I agree to that impediment which they call disparity of religion, and which forbids a man to marry an unbaptized woman, neither simply, nor on condition of converting her to the faith. Who has prohibited this, God or man? Who has given men authority to prohibit marriages of this kind? Verily the spirits that speak lies in hypocrisy, as Paul says; of whom it may be truly said: The wicked have spoken lies to me, but not according to thy law. Patricius, a heathen, married Monica, the mother of St. Augustine, who was a Christian; why should not the same thing be lawful now? A like instance of foolish, nay wicked rigour is the impediment of crime; as when a man marries a woman previously polluted by adultery, or has plotted the death of a woman's husband, that he may be able to marry her. Whence, I ask, a severity on the part of men against men, such as even God has never exacted? Do these men pretend not to know that David, a most holy man, married Bathsheba the wife of Uriah, though both these crimes had been committed; that is, though she had been polluted by adultery and her husband had been murdered? If the divine law did this, why do tyrannical men act thus against their fellow servants?

It is also reckoned as an impediment when there exists what they call a bond; that is, when one person is bound to another by betrothal. In this case they conclude that if either party have subsequently had intercourse with a third, the former betrothal comes to an end. I cannot at all receive this doctrine. In my judgment, a man who has bound himself to one person is no longer at his own disposal, and therefore, under the prohibitions of the divine right, owes himself to the former, though he has not had intercourse with her, even if he have afterwards had intercourse with another. It was not in his power to give what he did not possess; he has deceived her with whom he has had intercourse, and has really committed adultery. That which has led some to think otherwise is that they have looked more to the fleshly union than to the divine command, under which he who has promised fidelity to one person is bound to observe it. He who desires to give, ought to give of that which is his own. God forbid that any man should go beyond or defraud his brother in any matter; for good faith ought to be preserved beyond and above all traditions of all men. Thus I believe that such a man cannot with a safe conscience cohabit with a second woman, and that this impediment ought to be entirely reversed. If a vow of religion deprives a man of his power over himself, why not also a pledge of fidelity given and received; especially since the latter rests on the teaching and fruits of the Spirit (Gal. v.), while the former rests on human choice? And if a wife may return to her husband, notwithstanding any vow of religion she may have made, why should

not a betrothed man return to his betrothed, even if connexion with another have followed? We have said, however, above that a man who has pledged his faith to a maiden is not at liberty to make a vow of religion, but is bound to marry her, because he is bound to keep his faith, and is not at liberty to abandon it for the sake of any human tradition, since God commands that it should be kept. Much more will it be his duty to observe his pledge to the first to whom he has given it, because it was only with a deceitful heart that he could give it to a second; and therefore he has not really given it, but has deceived his neighbour, against the law of God. Hence the impediment called that of error takes effect here, and annuls the marriage with the second woman.

The impediment of holy orders is also a mere contrivance of men, especially when they idly assert that even a marriage already contracted is annulled by this cause, always exalting their own traditions above the commands of God. I give no judgment respecting the order of the priesthood, such as it is at the present day; but I see that Paul commands that a bishop should be the husband of one wife, and therefore the marriage of a deacon, of a priest, of a bishop, or of a man in any kind of orders, cannot be annulled; although Paul knew nothing of that kind of priests and those orders which we have at the present day. Perish then these accursed traditions of men, which have come in for no other end than to multiply perils, sins, and evils in the Church! Between a priest and his wife, then, there is a true and inseparable marriage, approved by the divine command. What if wicked men forbid or annul it of their own mere tyranny? Be it that it is unlawful in the sight of men; yet it is lawful in the sight of God, whose commandment, if it be contrary to the commandments of men, is to be preferred.

Just as much a human contrivance is the so-called impediment of public propriety, by which contracted marriages are annulled. I am indignant at the audacious impiety which is so ready to separate what God has joined together. You may recognise Antichrist in this opposition to everything which Christ did or taught. What reason is there, I ask, why, on the death of a betrothed husband before actual marriage, no relative by blood, even to the fourth degree, can marry her who was betrothed to him? This is no vindication of public propriety, but mere ignorance of it. Why among the people of Israel, which possessed the best laws, given by God himself, was there no such vindication of public propriety? On the contrary, by the very command of God, the nearest relative was compelled to marry her who had been left a widow. Ought the people who are in Christian liberty to be burdened with more rigid laws than the people who were in legal bondage? And to make an end of these figments rather than impediments, I will say that at present it is evident to me that there is no impediment which can rightfully annul a marriage already contracted, except physical unfitness for cohabiting with a wife, ignorance of a marriage previously contracted, or a vow of chastity. Concerning such a vow, however, I am so uncertain even to the present moment, that I do not know at what time it ought to be reckoned valid; as I have said above in speaking of baptism. Learn then, in this one matter of matrimony, into what an unhappy and hopeless state of confusion, hindrance, entanglement, and peril all things that are done in the Church have been brought by the pestilent, unlearned, and impious traditions of men! There is no hope of a

remedy, unless we can do away once for all with all the laws of all men, call back the gospel of liberty, and judge and rule all things according to it alone. Amen.

It is necessary also to deal with the question of physical incapacity. But be it premised that I desire what I have said about impediments to be understood of marriages already contracted, which ought not to be annulled for any such causes. But with regard to the contracting of matrimony I may briefly repeat what I have said before, that if there be any urgency of youthful love, or any other necessity, on account of which the Pope grants a dispensation, then any brother can also grant a dispensation to his brother, or himself to himself, and thus snatch his wife, in whatever way he can, out of the hands of tyrannical laws. Why is my liberty to be done away with by another man's superstition and ignorance? Or if the Pope gives dispensation for money, why may not I give a dispensation to my brother or to myself for the advantage of my own salvation? Does the Pope establish laws? Let him establish them for himself, but let my liberty be untouched.

The question of divorce is also discussed, whether it be lawful. I, for my part, detest divorce, and even prefer bigamy to it; but whether it be lawful I dare not define. Christ himself, the chief of shepherds, says: "Whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery; and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery." (Matt. v. 32.) Christ therefore permits divorce only in the case of fornication. Hence the Pope must necessarily be wrong, as often as he permits divorce for other reasons, nor ought any man forthwith to consider himself safe, because he has obtained a dispensation by pontifical audacity rather than power. I am more surprised, however, that they compel a man who has been separated from his wife by divorce to remain single, and do not allow him to marry another. For if Christ permits divorce for the cause of fornication, and does not compel any man to remain single, and if Paul bids us rather to marry than to burn, this seems plainly to allow of a man's marrying another in the place of her whom he has put away. I wish that this subject were fully discussed and made clear, that provision might be made for the numberless perils of those who at the present day are compelled to remain single without any fault of their own; that is, whose wives or husbands have fled and deserted their partner, not to return for ten years, or perhaps never. I am distressed and grieved by these cases, which are of daily occurrence, whether this happens by the special malice of Satan, or from our neglect of the word of God.

I cannot by myself establish any rule contrary to the opinion of all; but for my own part, I should exceedingly wish at least to see applied to this subject the words: "But if the unbelieving depart, let him depart. A brother or a sister is not under bondage in such cases" (1 Cor. vii. 15). Here the Apostle permits that the unbelieving one who departs should be let go, and leaves it free to the believer to take another. Why should not the same rule hold good, if a believer, that is, a nominal believer, but in reality just as much an unbeliever, deserts husband or wife, especially if with the intention of never returning? I cannot discover any distinction between the two cases. In my belief, however, if in the Apostle's time the unbeliever who had

departed had returned, or had become a believer, or had promised to live with the believing wife, he would not have been received, but would himself have been authorised to marry another woman. Still, I give no definite opinion on these questions, though I greatly wish that a definite rule were laid down, for there is nothing which more harasses me and many others. I would not have any rule on this point laid down by the sole authority of the Pope or the bishops; but if any two learned and good men agreed together in the name of Christ, and pronounced a decision in the spirit of Christ, I should prefer their judgment even to that of councils, such as are assembled nowadays, which are celebrated simply for their number and authority, independently of learning and holiness. I therefore suspend my utterances on this subject, until I can confer with some better judge.

[Next: [Of the Priesthood known as Holy Orders](#)]

[Concerning the Sacrament of Penance – By Martin Luther](#)



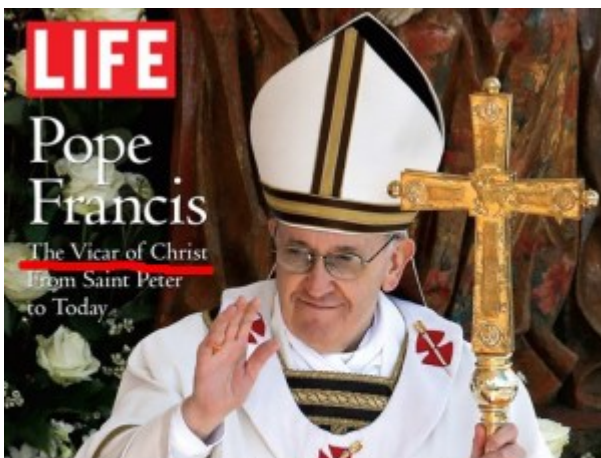
What Martin Luther taught about the sacrament of penance.

[Concerning the Sacrament of Baptism – By Martin Luther](#)



What Martin Luther taught about the sacrament of baptism.

[Pope Francis: The Vicar of Christ](#)



Vicar: (From Latin) vicarius, a **substitute**,
Anti: (From Greek) against, opposite, *instead of*,
Vicar of Christ = Anti Christ

Greek vs. Latin

Vicar: (From Latin) vicarius, a *substitute*,
Anti: (From Greek) "against, opposite, *instead of*,
Vicar of Christ = Anti Christ

1John 2:18 Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.

All the Protestants recognized the Antichrist not as one who will come later, but one who was always present with them: The Pope!

Technology Used to Deceive the World: Project Blue Beam



Watch even half of this 10 minute clip and you may avoid being deceived by the fantastic light show soon to appear in the sky over YOU!

Opinion of Benjamin Fulford



Benjamin Fulford with David Rockefeller

I just listened to a 4 part YouTube video clip of Benjamin Fulford's interview with David Rockefeller.

Canadian born Benjamin Fulford first came to Japan in the early 1980s to study at Sophia (**Jesuit**) University in Yotsuya Tokyo.

From http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Benjamin_Fulford

"After receiving a B.A. from the University of British Columbia he returned to Japan in the mid-1980s to pursue a career in journalism. He worked in Japan as a correspondent for Knight Ridder, the International Financing Review, the Nihon Keizai Shimbun English edition, and the South China Morning Post before moving to Forbes magazine, where he was the Asian Bureau chief from 1998 to 2005.[2] After leaving Forbes he wrote a series of books in

Japanese. He conducted an interview with the reclusive David Rockefeller in November 2007.”

My hat is off to Benjamin Fulford for learning Japanese so well and becoming a naturalized Japanese citizen. That is quite an accomplishment because it involves Japanese officials interviewing one’s personal relatives. But after listening to Benjamin Fulford for just a few minutes, I’ve come to the conclusion he is a **disinformation agent**.

He puts all the blame of the world’s troubles and woes on the USA. True conspiracy researchers know that America is just another pawn in the overall scheme of things. Benjamin Fulford talks about an Asian secret society called the “White Dragon Society” of which he is now the spokesperson for. Benjamin Fulford says the White Dragon Society is against the “Military Industrial Complex” for causing all the trouble and wars in the world. He says that the same are running out of money, and that March 11, 2011 East Japan earthquake and tsunami was an attack against Japan in retaliation for Japan’s banks not lending them money! Any true researcher of the NWO (AKA Illuminati) knows this is **absolute rubbish** because the NWO **own** the world’s central banks, print up as much money as they want to, and lend it to governments charging interest. This is what the American Federal Reserve bank is all about and what Thomas Jefferson warned of:

“If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issue of their currency, first by inflation, then by deflation, the banks and the corporations which grow up around them will deprive the people of all property until their children wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.”

– Thomas Jefferson

Benjamin Fulford is not giving the overall big picture of Satan’s final attempt of control of every single person on the planet through economic pressure. He may be what is called a “gatekeeper”, a person who seems to be exposing the Enemy but who doesn’t go quite far enough to lead people into all truth about them.

And he (the Beast, AKA Antichrist) causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads:

And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. – The Holy Bible Revelation 13:16,17

My opinion is Benjamin Fulford gives false hope to people who heed him. The answer is not with us. Only [the return of Jesus Christ](#) Himself will save planet earth and its inhabitants.

Finally, here’s a couple quotes from

http://helpfreetheearth.com/news282_fulford.html that not only agrees with my view about Benjamin Fulford, but also exposes who Alex Jones really is and confirms what I've thought about why Jones would be willing to risk his neck when infiltrating the Bohemian Grove during a summer bash by the elite: He had permission to do so!

In 2007, Fulford became famous on the Internet and in conspiracy theory circles when he "miraculously" scored an in depth interview with David Rockefeller and delivered a threatening ultimatum to the elite that they step down peacefully or face the consequences. After the interview, Benjamin Fulford issued a letter of apology to Rockefeller.

Think about it. How could Fulford who publicly seeks to "take down the Illuminati" score an interview with Illuminati crime boss David Rockefeller? The same way Alex Jones managed to infiltrate Bohemian Grove. They got clearance because they're both **Zionist shills**. If Fulford and Jones were a serious threat to the ruling crime families, they would have been snuffed out long ago. Alex Jones and Benjamin Fulford are delivering a message that serves the ruling cabal. That message is that disaster is imminent. Expect it, focus on it. Be afraid...and by doing so, you attract it.

Another guy I have doubts about is somebody who calls himself Jim Stone independent journalist. Nobody knows who this guy really is! At least we do know who Benjamin Fulford is. How can any researcher or "truth teller" have any credibility at all if he or she is not willing to tell the world who they are? You can [find out who I am](#) if you want to.

[About the webmaster](#)



James Arendt

My name is James Arendt but some people also know me as "James Japan." I'm also the webmaster of [Deep Truths](#). I lived a total of 40 years in Japan,

more than half my life. I loved to hitchhike throughout Japan because it was the main way I got to meet people, make new Japanese friends, and share with them my faith in Jesus Christ.

I'm a Christian who reads the King James Version of the Bible and holds to the values of the *early* Protestant reformers. Before I came to know Jesus Christ, I lived the first 20 years of my life in the darkness of Romanism. I believe all the major Protestant denominations today have been infiltrated by witches and Jesuit agents who have undermined the Protestant Reformation to bring the Protestants back under the wing of the Pope. I think they did a bang-up job of deceiving the world, don't you? So far only about half of my close friends have been open to receiving this truth.

I was born in 1950 in Hammond, Indiana, USA, and raised in the Chicago southeast side neighborhood of [Hegewisch](#). When a teenager, I didn't much like Hegewisch, but now think it was probably one of the best and safest of all of Chicago's neighborhoods. It has a small-town atmosphere. My mother, now deceased, was a very devoted churchgoer and took me to church regularly. Though I believed in God, I didn't especially enjoy or look forward to the church experience.

When I became a teenager I got into smoking at age 13, alcohol abuse when 15, and smoking cannabis weed from 16 years of age. Though I did fairly well in grammar school, my grades in high school were very low. My friends would warn me that if I continued in my ways, I was headed for "skid row" at the most or a very bleak future at the least. I began to realize I was wasting my life.

After graduating high school I got a nighttime job at a steel factory in the neighboring town, Hammond Indiana. Working nights kept me out of trouble for a while.

In 1969 during the Vietnam War, those selected to be drafted were chosen by the lottery system. Birthdays were picked out of a box at random. My birthday, June 21, was number 60 out of a possible 365. Only those with a number of more than 250 would be exempt from the draft, so I knew the Army would soon send me a draft notification. I opted to legally avoid the Army by enlisting in the U.S. Air Force. I was accepted and went to Texas for basic training on Feb. 10, 1970.

After two months I was transferred to Kessler AFB in Biloxi Mississippi to be trained to be a "telecommunications control center specialist." I like any field related to physics and science, especially electricity and electronics, so I studied hard and had top grades. Military life did me some good as I learned to discipline myself to do the things I needed to do. However, in my free moments, those 9 months in Mississippi were the loneliest of my life. The pain was extreme. All my friends knew it and tried to help me. I felt like the character "Neo" in the recent popular film "The Matrix", and that there was something wrong somewhere.

In December 1970 I was transferred by the Air Force to McClellan AFB in Sacramento California. It was there that I found the answer to my chronic loneliness!

I met a group of young men, my peers at the time, who called themselves Christians. One of them, a boy by the name of David Weeks, invited me to go mountain climbing with them. It wasn't too difficult for him to persuade me to come along. There are no mountains to climb anywhere near my hometown.

Another boy, one of David's friends, talked to me about having a personal relationship with God through Jesus Christ. No one I considered a peer ever talked to me of this before. I knew that though I believed in God, He seemed far from me. The thought of having a daily personal friendship with Him was a totally new concept!

That night they invited me to a meeting where a famous entertainer, [Tony Fontane](#), gave a testimony of his near-death experience, deliverance from alcoholism and conversion to Christ. I felt God speaking to me. I knew that this could be my opportunity to start my life on the right course depending on the decision I made. I decided that night to receive Jesus Christ as my Lord and Savior.

The next morning when I woke, I felt something inside me had changed. There was a new spiritual nature born inside me; something I didn't have before! I turned on the radio and surprisingly it was a Christian broadcast. I listened with unusual interest. For the first time, I could understand what the preacher on the radio was saying!

Through the months that followed, I met my new Christian friends often. They taught me many things from the Bible. I developed a Bible-reading habit myself. I felt I could hear the very Voice of God speaking to me through the pages of His Book!

I learned through the following months that God is not merely the angry judge I had perceived Him to be, but He is more the loving Father. The Bible in Jeremiah chapter 31 verse 3 says. "The LORD hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee."

I learned that not only does God love me and sent His own Son Jesus to save me, but that He wants me to love Him too by spending time talking to Him, and by listening to His Voice speak to me in my heart. When I do so, He gives me the power to face and overcome any and all obstacles in life.

I learned what real faith is: Simply believing and accepting the Word of God. Romans chapter 10 verse 17 says. "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." In other words, through an act of my own will in choosing to read and believe the Word of God in the Bible and His prophets and prophetesses, I can increase my faith in God and His power in my life.

I learned to accept myself as God made me – a man with both weaknesses and strengths. I had the bad habit of comparing myself negatively with others, feeling inferior in physical abilities (especially sports), my appearance, and lacking eloquence in public speaking. I learned the Lord has endowed me with specific gifts that can be of service to others, i.e. teaching and writing, computer skills, faith to live frugally with little income, faith to

travel, meeting new people, and talking to strangers. Some of these I had previously considered areas I was weak in, but they turned into strengths! It may surprise you to know that I was extremely shy and introverted before receiving the Lord.

God even helped me overcome my fear of public speaking! It's still something I don't especially relish, but I'm not scared to death doing so anymore.

For the first time in my life, I felt I could now contribute something to society. I could share with others the happiness and inner peace I had found in Christ!

You can have an exciting and fulfilling life too! Just invite Jesus Christ into your life and talk to Him as your buddy and constant Companion! If he can save me He can save you too from all your problems, especially chronic ones!

Here are Scriptures from John chapter 1 of the New Testament that show what a person needs to do to become a child of God. Some people say that all humans are God's creation and therefore God's children. The Bible indicates that we need to **become** His children by receiving the Son of God first.

10 He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew him *not*.

11 He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

12 But **as many as received Him**, to them gave he **power** to become the **sons of God**, even to them that believe on his name:

13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

Here's a good prayer to pray if you don't know Christ yet. You need to pray this particular prayer only once.

Dear Jesus, please come into my heart and life as my Savior. I acknowledge you to be the Son of God. Please forgive my sins, cleanse my heart from bitterness, grudges, hatred, everything I know is bad, and give me a new spirit of love. Amen!

After you receive God's gift of salvation in Jesus, you should continue to get to know Him better by reading His Word in the Bible. If you are a native English speaker, the old King James version is the best.

My beliefs in a nutshell:

- The Bible is the written Word of God and the KJV is the most accurate English translation of it.
- Evolution and Big Bang are pseudoscience and Dark Matter and Dark Energy

are fudge factors to support the pseudoscience.

- Jesus Christ is the Creator, the Word that became flesh, and Who died on a cross made of wood and resurrected 3 days later to become the Savior of all who believe on Him.
- The Papacy is the Antichrist.
- The Beast of Revelation 13 is the world's political, military and commercial system.
- The Great Whore of Revelation 17 who rides on the Beast is the Roman Catholic Church.

The reason you may not have known or may not agree with the last three points is because the Jesuit Order of the Roman Catholic Church and its counter-reformation derailed the Protestant Reformation in the 19th century with a false interpretation of Daniel 9:27. It was *Jesus* who confirmed the covenant (God's covenant of grace with Abraham) with many (Jews) for one week (7 years, 3.5 years of His preaching and 3.5 years of the Apostles preaching up to the stoning of Stephen the Martyr), *not* a future Antichrist. All the early Protestant leaders and Bible teachers held that view. I do not stand alone. For more information, please check out the [articles on this website](#).