

The Catholic Religion Proved by The Protestant Bible

By
The Catholic Truth Society

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This booklet recalls how Christ's Church existed 350 years before the New Testament was under one cover and over 1400 years before it could be printed; which completely refutes the "Bible Only" theory of today's 400 sects. Meanwhile the Protestant Bible itself proves the marks, attributes and basic doctrines of the ancient one-faith-fold-shepherd Church of Christ-as shown herein.

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Answers to 25 Questions on the History of the New Testament which Completely Refute the "Bible Only" Theory

1) Did Our Lord write any part of the New Testament or command His Apostles to do so?

Our Lord Himself never wrote a line, nor is there any record that He ordered his Apostles to write; He did command them to teach and to preach. Also He to Whom all power was given in Heaven and on earth (Matt. 28-18) promised to give them the Holy Spirit (John 14-26) and to be with them Himself till the end of the world (Mat. 28-20).

COMMENT: If reading the Bible were a necessary means of salvation, Our Lord would have made that statement and also provided the necessary means for his followers.

2) How many of the Apostles or others actually wrote what is now in the New Testament?

A Few of the Apostles wrote part of Our Lord's teachings, as they themselves expressly stated; i.e., Peter, Paul, James, John, Jude, Matthew, also Sts. Mark and Luke. None of the others wrote anything, so far as is recorded.

COMMENT: If the Bible privately interpreted was to be a Divine rule of Faith, the apostles would have been derelict in their duty when instead, some of them adopted preaching only.

3) Was it a teaching or a Bible-reading Church that Christ founded?

The Protestant Bible expressly states that Christ founded a teaching Church, which existed before any of the New Testament books were written.

Rom. 10-17: *So then faith cometh by HEARING, and hearing by the word of God.*

Matt. 28-19: *Go ye therefore and TEACH all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Mark. 16-20: *And they went forth, and PREACHED everywhere the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.*

Mark 16-15: *And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and PREACH the gospel to every creature.*

COMMENT: Thus falls the entire basis of the "Bible-only" theory

4) Was there any drastic difference between what Our Lord commanded the Apostles to teach and what the New Testament contains?

Our Lord commanded his Apostles to teach all things whatsoever He had commanded; (Matt. 28-20); his Church must necessarily teach everything; (John 14-26); however, the Protestant Bible itself teaches that the Bible does not contain all of Our Lord's doctrines:

John 20-30: *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, etc.*

John 21-25: *And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written. Amen.*

COMMENT: How would it have been possible for second century Christians to practice Our Lord's religion, if private interpretation of an unavailable and only partial account of Christ's teaching were indispensable?

5) Does the New Testament expressly refer to Christ's "unwritten word"?

The New Testament itself teaches that it does not contain all that Our Lord did or, consequently, all that He taught.

John 20-30: *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book, etc.*

John 21-25: *And there are also many other things which Jesus did, the which, if they should be written everyone, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written Amen.*

COMMENT: Since the Bible is incomplete, it needs something else to supplement it; i. e., the spoken or historically recorded word which we call Tradition.

6) What became of the unwritten truths which Our Lord and the Apostles taught?

The Church has carefully conserved this "word of mouth" teaching by historical records called Tradition. Even the Protestant Bible teaches that many Christian truths were to be handed down by word of mouth.

2 Thes. 2-15: *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.*

2 Tim. 2-2: *And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.*

COMMENT: Hence not only Scripture but other sources of information must be consulted to get the whole of Christ's teaching. Religions founded on "the Bible only" are therefore necessarily incomplete.

7) Between what years were the first and last books of the New Testament written?

This first book, St. Matthew's Gospel, was not written until about ten years after Our Lord's Ascension. St. John's fourth gospel and Apocalypse or Book of Revelations were not written until about 100 A. D.

COMMENT: Imagine how the present-day privately interpreted "Bible-only" theory would have appeared at a time when the books of the New Testament were not only unavailable, but most of them had not yet been written.

8) When was the New Testament placed under one cover?

In 397 A. D. by the Council of Constantinople, from which it follows that non-Catholics have derived their New Testament from the Catholic Church; no other source was available.

COMMENT: Up to 397 A. D., some of the Christians had access to part of the New Testament; into this situation, how would the "Bible-only privately interpreted" theory have fitted?

9) Why so much delay in compiling the New Testament?

Prior to 397 A. D., the various books of the New Testament were not under one cover, but were in the custody of different groups or congregations. The persecutions against the Church, which had gained new intensity, prevented these New Testament books from being properly authenticated and placed under one cover. However, this important work was begun after Constantine gave peace to Christianity in 313 A.D., allowing it to be practiced in the Roman Empire.

COMMENT: This again shows how utterly impossible was the "Bible-only" theory, at least up to 400 A. D.

10) What other problem confronted those who wished to determine the contents of the New Testament?

Before the inspired books were recognized as such, many other books had been written and by many were thought to be inspired; hence the Catholic Church made a thorough examination of the whole question; biblical scholars spent years in the Holy Land studying the original languages of New Testament writings.

COMMENT: According to the present-day "Bible-only" theory, in the above circumstances, it would also have been necessary for early Christians to read all the doubtful books and, by interior illumination, judge which were and which were not divinely inspired.

11) Who finally did decide which books were inspired and therefore belonged to the New Testament?

Shortly before 400 A. D. a General Council of the Catholic Church, using the infallible authority which Christ had given to his own divine institution, finally decided which books really belonged to the New Testament and which did not.

Either the Church at this General Council was infallible, or it was not. If the Church was infallible then, why is it not infallible now? If the Church was not infallible then, in that case the New Testament is not worth the paper it is written on, because internal evidences of authenticity and inspiration are inconclusive and because the work of this Council cannot now be rechecked; this is obvious from reply to next question.

COMMENT: In view of these historical facts, it is difficult to see how non-Catholics can deny that it was from the (Roman) Catholic Church that they received the New Testament.

12) Why is it impossible for modern non-Catholics to check over the work done by the Church previous to A.D. 400?

The original writings were on frail material called papyrus, which had but temporary enduring qualities. While the books judged to be inspired by the Catholic Church were carefully copied by her monks, those rejected at that time were allowed to disintegrate, for lack of further interest in them.

COMMENT. What then is left for non-Catholics, except to trust the Catholic Church to have acted under divine inspiration; if at that time, why not now?

13) Would the theory of private interpretation of the New Testament have been possible for the year 400 A. D.?

No, because, as already stated, no New Testament as such was in existence.

COMMENT: If Protestants today had no Bibles, how could they even imagine following the "Bible-only privately interpreted" theory; but before 400 A. D., New Testaments were altogether unavailable.

14) Would the private interpretation theory have been possible between 400 A. D. and 1440 A. D., when printing was invented?

No, the cost of individual Bibles written by hand was prohibitive; moreover, due to the scarcity of books, and other reasons, the ability to read was limited to a small minority. The Church used art, drama and other means to convey Biblical messages.

COMMENT: To have proposed the "Bible-only" theory during the above period would obviously have been impracticable and irrational

15) Who copied and conserved the Bible during the interval between 400 A. D. and 1440 A. D.?

The Catholic monks; in many cases these spent their entire lives to give the world personally-penned copies of the Scriptures, before printing was invented.

COMMENT: In spite of this, the Catholic Church is accused of having tried to destroy the Bible; had she desired to do this, she had 1500 years within which to do so.

SIXTEEN

Who gave the Reformers the authority to change over from the one Faith, one Fold and one Shepherd program, to that of the "Bible-only theory"? St. Paul seems to answer the above when he said: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Galations 1:8 - Protestant version).

COMMENT: If in 300 years, one-third of Christianity was split into at least 300 sects, how many sects would three-thirds of Christianity have produced in 1900 years? (Answer is 5700).

17) Since Luther, what consequences have followed from the use of the "Bible-only" theory and its personal interpretation?

Just what St. Paul foretold when he said: "For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." 2 Timothy 4:3 (Protestant edition). According to the World Almanac for 1953 there are in the United States 20 different organizations of Methodists, 22 kinds of Baptists, 10 branches of Presbyterians, 13 organizations of Mennonites, 18 of Lutherans and hundreds of other denominations.

COMMENT: The "Bible-only" theory may indeed cater to the self-exaltation of the individual, but it certainly does not conduce to the acquisition of Divine truth.

18) In Christ's system, what important part has the Bible?

The Bible is one precious source of religious truth; other sources are historical records (Tradition) and the abiding presence of the Holy Spirit.

COMMENT: Elimination of any one of the three elements in the equation of Christ's true Church would be fatal to its claims to be such.

19) Now that the New Testament is complete and available, what insolvable problem remains?

The impossibility of the Bible to explain itself and the consequent multiplicity of errors which individuals make by their theory of private interpretation. Hence it is indisputable that the Bible must have an authorized interpreter.

2 Peter 1-20: *Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.*

2 Peter 3-16: *As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.*

Acts 8-30: *And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, understandest thou what thou readest? 31. And he said, How can I except some men should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him.*

COMMENT: Only by going on the supposition that falsehood is as acceptable to God as is truth, can the "Bible-only" theory be defended.

20) Who is the official expounder of the Scriptures?

The Holy Spirit, acting through and within the Church which Christ founded nineteen centuries ago; the Bible teaches through whom in the Church come the official interpretations of; God's law and God's word.

Luke 10-16: *He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.*

Matt. 16-18: *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Mal. 2-7: *For the priest's lips should keep knowledge, and they should seek the law at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts.*

COMMENT: Formerly at least, it was commonly held that when individuals read their Bibles carefully and prayerfully, the Holy Spirit would guide each individual to a knowledge of the truth.

This is much more than the Catholic Church claims for even the Pope himself. Only after extended consultation and study, with much fervent prayer, does he rarely and solemnly make such a decision.

21) What are the effects of the Catholic use of the Bible?

Regardless of what persons may think about the Catholic Church, they must admit that her system gets results in the way of unity of rule and unity of faith; otherwise stated, one Faith, one Fold and one Shepherd.

COMMENT: If many millions of non-Catholics in all nations, by reading their Bible carefully and prayerfully, had exactly the same faith, reached the same conclusions, then this theory might deserve the serious consideration of intelligent, well-disposed persons-but not otherwise.

22) Why are there so many non-Catholic Churches?

Because there is so much different interpretation of the Bible; there is so much different interpretation of the Bible because there is so much wrong interpretation; there is so much wrong interpretation because the system of interpreting is radically wrong. You cannot have one Fold and one Shepherd, one Faith and one Baptism, by allowing every man and every woman to distort and pervert the Scriptures to suit his or her own pet theories.

COMMENT: To say that Bible reading is an intensely Christian practice, is to enunciate a beautiful truth; to say that Bible reading is the sole source of religious faith, is to make a sadly erroneous statement.

23) Without Divine aid, could the Catholic Church have maintained her one Faith, one Fold, and one Shepherd?

Not any more than the non-Catholic sects have done; they are a proof of what happens when, without Divine aid, groups strive to do the humanly impossible.

COMMENT: Catholics love, venerate, use the Bible; but they also know that the Bible alone is not Christ's system but only a precious book, a means, an aid by which the Church carries on her mission to "preach the Gospel to every living creature" and to keep on preaching it "to the end of time."

24) Were there any printed Bibles before Luther?

When printing was invented about 1440, one of the first, if not the earliest printed book, was an edition of the Catholic Bible printed by John Gutenberg. It is reliably maintained that 626 editions of the Catholic Bible, or portions thereof, had come from the press through the agency of the Church, in countries where her influence prevailed, before Luther's German version appeared in 1534. Of these, many were in various European languages. Hence Luther's "discovery" of the

supposedly unknown Bible at Erfurt in 1503 is one of those strange, wild calumnies with which anti-Catholic literature abounds.

COMMENT: Today parts of the Bible are read in the vernacular from every Catholic altar every Sunday. The Church grants a spiritual premium or indulgence to those who read the Bible; every Catholic family has, or is supposed to have, a Bible in the home. Millions of Catholic Bibles are sold annually.

25) During the Middle Ages, did the Catholic Church manifest hostility to the Bible as her adversaries claim?

Under stress of special circumstances, various regulations were made by the Church to protect the people from being spiritually poisoned by the corrupted and distorted translations of the Bible; hence opposition to the Waldensians, Albigensians, Wycliff and Tyndale.

COMMENT: Individual churchmen may at times have gone too far in their zeal, not to belittle the Bible, but to protect it. There is no human agency in which authority is always exercised blamelessly.

Origin of Christ's Church

The Bible teaches that the true Church began with Christ over 1900 years ago, not with men or women 15 to 19 centuries later. It was founded when Our Lord spoke the following and other similar words:

Matt. 28, 18-20: *And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*

COMMENT: History proves that the First Protestant Church was the Lutheran, founded in 1517 by the ex-priest Martin Luther; all other of 300 to 500 sects have been created since then.

Authority of Christ's Church

The Bible teaches that the rulers of Christ's Church have authority which must be obeyed in matters of religion.

Heb. 13, 17: *Obey them that have the rule over you and submit yourselves: for they watch for your souls as they that must give account, that they may do it with joy, and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you.*

Matt 18-17: And if he shall neglect to hear them tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.

Luke 10-16: He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.

Matt. 16-19: And I will give unto thee (Peter) the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou (Peter) shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou (Peter) shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

COMMENT: The apostles repeatedly claimed this authority: Gal. 1-8; John 1-10; Acts 15, 23 and 28. Hence the laws or precepts of the true Church are founded upon the same authority as the commandments of God. For the Church of Christ has authority to act in his Name.

Infallibility of Christ's Church

THAT IT CANNOT ERR IN TEACHING CHRIST'S RELIGION.

ONE

The Bible teaches that not the Bible itself, but the Holy Ghost was the teacher of the Apostles.

John 14-26: But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things. and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you. John 16-13: How be it when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth . . .

Acts 1-8: But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

COMMENT: In consequence, the true Church was necessarily infallible, being as St. Paul said (1 Timothy 5-15) "the pillar and ground of the truth."

TWO

The Bible teaches that the Church has Christ always WITH IT and the Holy Ghost always to guide it-not only during the first century but during all future ages.

Matt. 28-20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you ALWAYS, EVEN UNTO THE END of the world. Amen.

John 14-16: And I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you FOREVER.

COMMENT: Hence it is an insult to Christ and the Holy Spirit to say that God's Church fell into error and had to be reformed by Luther, Calvin and other men or women.

Perpetuity of the Original Church

The Bible teaches that the visible Church of Christ has had and will ever have uninterrupted existence.

Matt. 28, 19-20: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost . . . lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.*

Matt. 16-18: . . . *and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

COMMENT: Hence the theory that Christ's Church, which began with Christ-failed-became non-existent for 1000 or more years- and then was revived by either Luther, Calvin, Knox or some other man or woman, is ridiculous and untrue.

Visible Unity of the Church

The Bible teaches that Christ ascribed to his Church qualities and gave to it the names that proved it to be a VISIBLE organization with VISIBLE UNITY among its followers.

Romans 12-5: *So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.*

Eph. 4-3 to 5-3: *Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4. There is ONE BODY, AND ONE SPIRIT even as ye are called in one hope of your calling. 5. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, etc.*

John 10-16: *And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.*

Rom. 12, 4-5: *For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office, etc.*

John 17-21: *That they may be one, as thou Father, art in me and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that (as a consequence) the world may believe that Thou hast sent me.*

In many places of scripture, Christ's Church is compared to a house, a body, a city built on a mountain, a sheepfold, etc.; but these are all visible things. Hence Christ's Church besides being one spirit is also "One Body." The Catholic Church alone has this two-fold unity. The "invisible" theory is therefore false on the face of it.

COMMENT: Contrast the unity of Faith, Fold and Shepherd in the Catholic Church with the dissenting, contradictory tenets of 400 Protestant organizations and the divinity of the former becomes obvious and certain.

Sinners and Christ's Church

ONE

The Bible teaches that Christ died for all men, both saints and sinners; and not merely for the "saved or predestined."

II Cor. 5-15: And that he died for ALL, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

Rom. 5, 6-21: For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly, etc.

I John 2-2: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

I Tim. 2-4: Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.

COMMENT: Hence to the Catholic Church the soul of the condemned criminal on the scaffold is an object of tender solicitude even as, to Our Lord, was the thief on the cross.

TWO

The Bible teaches that not only the just but sinners will always claim external membership in the true Church.

Matt. 22-2: The parable of the king who made a marriage for his son.

Matt. 13-24: The parable of the field in which grew both grain and cockle.

II Tim. 2-20: But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth: and some to honour, and some to dishonour.

Matt. 18-15: Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee. go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother.

Matt. 13-47: Parable of the net that was cast into the sea, and gathered every kind of fish, savory and unsavory.

COMMENT: Hence that ungodly persons call themselves Catholic, but are so in name only, is no reflection upon the Church itself. It is rather a verification of Christ's prophecies.

Catholicity of the Church

The Bible teaches that from the beginning and in every age the true Church of Christ is all over the world or universal; the Greek word used is "Katholikos," from which the English word "Catholic" is derived.

Matt. 28, 19: *Go ye therefore, and teach ALL NATIONS, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

Mark 16-15: *And he said unto them, Go ye into ALL THE WORLD, and preach the gospel to every creature.*

Acts 1-8: *But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me, both in Jerusalem and in all Judaea; and in Samaria, and unto the UTTERMOST PART OF THE EARTH.*

Rom. 10-18: *But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.*

COMMENT: Except the Catholic Church, what Christian organization has even a remote claim to universality, in point of place and in point of time? But this is what the essential nature of Christ's Church demands.

Apostolicity

The Bible teaches that the Apostles appointed lawful successors to carry on their work.

Titus, 1-5: For this cause left I thee in Crete that thou shouldest set in order the things that was wanting, and ordain elders (i. e. priests) in every city, as I had appointed thee.

Acts, 13, 2 and 3: *As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have recalled them. 3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

COMMENT: Saul or St. Paul had been selected by Christ Himself; yet he was later ordained by Apostolic authority. By what right then does a Dowie, Eddy, Russel, Calvin, Knox, Campbell, or their agents assume the role of ruler, teacher, founder of a "Christian" Church?

The First Pope

The Bible teaches the one (and only one) Church which Christ founded had Simon Bar-Jona or Peter for its head. (Our Lord had changed his name from Simon Bar Jona to Peter.)

Matt. 16, 18-19: And I say also unto Thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, etc.

Later Our Lord made Simon-Peter pastor of both the lambs and the sheep, that is His whole flock.

John 21, 15 to 17: So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord, thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. 16 He saith to him again the second time. Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou Me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him. Feed my sheep. 17. He saith unto him the third time, Simon son of Jonas, lovest thou me? Peter was grieved because he said unto him the third time, Lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep.

Our Lord promised that Peter would confirm the faith of the other Apostles:

Luke 22-32: But I have prayed for thee (Peter) that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

COMMENT: Hence only the Church having Peter and his lawful successors for its head can logically claim to be the Church of Christ.

Baptism

ONE

The Bible teaches that in apostolic times whole families were baptized.

Acts 16-33: And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

I Cor. 1-16: And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides I know not whether I baptized any other.

Acts 16-15: And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us.

COMMENT: Unquestionably there were children in these families. Moreover, the earliest records of the Church prove that children were baptized a few days after birth.

TWO

The Bible teaches that (for grown persons to whom the Gospel can be preached) faith is a necessary condition for baptism.

Mark 16-16: *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.*

Matt. 28-19: *Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

COMMENT: In this text there is no question of children, to whom the Gospel could not be preached and who therefore could not believe. For them not faith but only baptism is required, that original sin may be washed away and supernatural grace imparted to them.

THREE

The Bible teaches that no one at all (hence not even an infant) can enter the Kingdom of God without baptism.

John 3-5: *Jesus answered. Verily, verily, I say unto thee. Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.*

COMMENT: The expression "a man" or "tis" in Greek means any one at all. Hence this text applies to both babes and adults.

Confirmation

The Bible teaches that there is such a Christian ordinance or Sacrament as confirmation or "the laying on of hands" by which we receive the Holy Ghost.

Acts 8. 14-15 and 17: *Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: 15. Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: 17. Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.*

Acts 19-6: *And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.*

Heb. 6-2: *Of the doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

COMMENT: In the early Church, the Sacrament of "the laying on of hands" was often attended with visible miraculous effects, which is not now usually the case. But the Sacrament itself remains the same when conferred by a lawfully consecrated Bishop as a successor of the Apostles.

The Holy Eucharist:

CHRIST ACTUALLY PRESENT THEREIN

ONE

The Bible teaches that when making his last will and testament Christ gave to us his own Body and Blood.

Mark 14, 22-24: *And as they did eat, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and brake it, and gave to them, and said, Take, eat: This is my body. 23. And he took the cup, and when he had given thanks. he gave it to them: and they all drank of it. 24. And he said unto them, This is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many.*

COMMENT: Christ having said "this is my body," who shall deny it and say "this is not your body." Christ having said "this is my blood," who shall deny and say, "this is not your blood."

TWO

The Bible teaches that Our Lord solemnly claimed that his Eucharist was superior to the miraculous food (John 6-11 to 13) and to the manna (Exodus 16-15).

John 6, 26: *Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you; ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled. 27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you. etc. 31, Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat. 32. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.*

COMMENT: But if the Holy Eucharist were only bread and wine and not the Body and Blood of Christ, these statements would constitute gross deception.

THREE

The Bible teaches that Christ's Holy Eucharist actually came down from Heaven; in other words that it was really his own very self.

John 6, 33: *For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. 35. . . I am the bread of life ... 38.... For I came down from heaven, etc. 41. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said I am the bread which came down from heaven, etc. 48. I am that bread of life. 49. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. 50. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. 51. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

COMMENT: Here Our Lord sums up and confirms what He had said in Parts One and Two above; reflect also that mere bread and wine does not come down from Heaven. Nor is it Christ's flesh as He expressly states of his Holy Eucharist.

FOUR

The Bible teaches that upon hearing Our Lord's claim about the Holy Eucharist, many Jews became Protestors or Protestants.

John 6, 52: The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, how can this man give us his flesh to eat?

COMMENT: If they had said, how can this God do this, there would have been no difficulty, for God can do all things.

FIVE

The Bible teaches that in spite of the Jews' most strenuous objections-Christ did not correct or modify his statement (which he would have done had there been a misunderstanding); but insisted the more upon the reality of his presence in the Eucharist.

John 6, 53: Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. 54. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day. 55. For my flesh is meat indeed, and by blood is drink indeed. 56. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood dwelleth in me, and I in him. 57. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, even he shall live by me. 58. This is that bread which came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever.

COMMENT: Even taken as an isolated proof, this is unassailable, but taken as a part of a chain of proofs, it becomes as impregnable as a wall of solid granite.

SIX

The Bible teaches that Jesus allowed many of his disciples to abandon Him, rather than to substitute the Protestant version of his Holy Eucharist, for what He had given.

John 6-60: Many therefore of his disciples, when they had heard this, said, this is an hard saying; who can hear it? 66. From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

COMMENT: What a strange concept one must have of Christ to imagine that He would have acted in this manner if the disciples had really misunderstood Him. (See also John 3, 3 to 7 and John 8, 56-9).

SEVEN

The Bible teaches that Jesus would have allowed his twelve Apostles also to abandon Him rather than to give them the Protestant version of his Holy Eucharist.

John 6, 67: Then said Jesus unto the twelve. Will ye also go away? 68. Then Simon Peter answered him. Lord, to whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life. 69. And we believe and are sure that thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God.

COMMENT: Peter as usual had the correct view. He believed and knew that Christ was God, therefore he accepted his divine word, difficult to understand, though it may have been. Catholics lovingly do the same.

EIGHT

Saint Paul teaches that the unworthy reception of Holy Communion constitutes a desecration of the Body and Blood of Christ and is the cause of damnation.

I Cor. 11, 27: Wherefore whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

I Cor. 11, 29. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

COMMENT: Let unbelievers in the truth of our Lord's real presence endeavor to show how the taking of a mere piece of bread or a sip of wine could be a desecration of Christ himself and a crime worthy of damnation.

Public Worship in the True Church

The Bible teaches that there is a sacrifice and a priesthood in the new law.

Mal. 1, 11: For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles and in every place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering:

Heb. 13, 10: We have an altar, whereof they have no right to eat which serve the tabernacle (of the Jewish temple).

COMMENT: The usual Protestant communion service is not intended to be a sacrificial act which the prophet's word "altar" connotes. Where today except in the Catholic Church do we find among Christians an altar of sacrifice and a pure offering, i. e., the sacrifice of the Body and Blood of Christ under the appearance of bread and wine?

Confession

ONE

The Bible teaches that the confessing of sins is a usual requisite for obtaining forgiveness.

Numbers 5, 6-7: *Speak unto the children of Israel. When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit . . . Then they shall confess their sin which they have done, etc.*

Proverbs 28, 13: *He that covereth his sins shall not prosper; but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.*

II Samuel 12, 13: After David confessed his sins to the prophet Nathan he was given assurance of pardon.

Luke 23, 43: When the thief on the cross confessed, our Lord promised him paradise.

I John 1, 9: *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness, etc.*

Matt. 3, 5-6: *Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan. And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.*

Acts 19, 18: *And many that believed came (to the Apostles), and confessed, and shewed their deeds.*

COMMENT: Private confession is necessarily contained in the double power which Christ gave to the Church-the power to forgive or retain sins as the circumstances require. To do so prudently-the "minister of reconciliation" must have the required information, which the penitent supplies by confession.

TWO

The Bible teaches that Christ gave to the validly ordained ministers of his own Church the power to forgive sins.

2 Cor. 5, 20: *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

John 20-21: *Then said Jesus to them again. Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so I send you. 23, Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them: And whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained.*

Matt. 18, 18: *Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven.*

2 Cor. 5, 18, 20: *And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given to us the Ministry of reconciliation.*

COMMENT: All purely spiritual powers which Christ conferred upon his Church were given to it perpetually except where no need of such a power remained. But who will say there is no longer any need of the power to forgive sin, that sin is no longer a live problem upon earth?

Extreme Unction

The Bible teaches that the anointing of the sick with oil and prayer by the priests of the Church (called Extreme Unction) may obtain forgiveness of sins and even refreshment Of body.

James 5, 14-16: *Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders (i. e., priests) of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. 15. And the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up, and if he have committed sins, they shall be forgiven him.*

COMMENT: As all such spiritual ordinances derived from Christ and the Apostles were of their very nature perpetual, there is absolutely no reason for saying that Extreme Unction as here described was but a temporary institution.

Holy Orders

ONE

The Bible teaches that Christ has ambassadors or agents (his bishops and priests) who represent Him in this world.

2 Cor. 5-20: *Now then we are ambassadors for Christ as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God.*

I Cor. 4, 1: *Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.*

John 20, 21: *Then said Jesus to them again. Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you .*

COMMENT: No wonder that the Catholic Church imposes such serious obligations upon her priests. The fact that an occasional individual may be faithless to his obligations proves nothing against Christ or his Church. The fact that many slander and vilify the priests, only makes them so much the more like their Divine Master.

TWO

The Bible teaches that the office of the bishop, priests, etc., in the true Church comes by divine appointment; i. e., God gives individuals a special vocation to this calling.

Heb. 5, 4: *And no man taketh this honor unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron.*

Heb. 5, 1: *For every high priest taken from among men is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins.*

John 15, 16: *Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit; and that your fruit should remain- that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my name, he may give it to you.*

John 20-21: *Then said Jesus to them again. Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you.*

COMMENT: Most unscriptural, therefore, is the practice of congregations ordaining, commissioning their ministers to preach the gospel to them. This authority comes from Christ, through the Apostles and their lawful successors.

THREE

The Bible teaches that the Apostles actually appointed lawful assistants and successors to carry on their work.

Titus 1-5: *For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain elders (i. e., priests) in every city, as I had appointed thee.*

Acts 13, 2 and 3: *As they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. 3. And when they had fasted and prayed, and laid their hands on them, they sent them away.*

COMMENT: Holy Orders is a special sacrament which transmits the Apostolic power and authority down through the centuries.

Women As Ministers

The Bible teaches that it is unlawful to have women ministers who speak or preach in the Churches.

I Cor. 14, 34: *Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak, etc.*

COMMENT: In view of this, it is difficult to see how any one can take it upon himself to nullify the word of God, by having women preachers, ministers or evangelists.

Matrimony and Divorce

ONE

The Bible teaches that lawful marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power.

Matt. 19, 6: Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

COMMENT: This doctrine is maintained at a great price by the Catholic Church. Of old it cost her nearly the whole of England. Today she loses thousands every year because of her uncompromising stand upon this subject. But did she do otherwise, she would cease to be the true Church of Christ.

TWO

The Bible teaches that remarriage (during the lifetime of the former consort) is adultery.

I Cor. 7, 10-11: And unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord, let not the wife depart from her husband; but and if she depart let her remain unmarried, or be reconciled to her husband: and let not the husband put away his wife.

Mark 10, 11-12: And he saith unto them, whosoever shall put away his wife, and marry another, committeth adultery against her. And if a woman shall put away her husband, and be married to another she committeth adultery.

Luke 16-18: Whosoever putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery.

COMMENT: If one party commits adultery the other party may, under certain circumstances, live separate from guilty party; but may not remarry during the former consort's lifetime. This is the real meaning of Matt. 19, 9.

Purgatory

The Bible teaches (a) that some sins are forgiven in the next world; (b) that some souls are saved in the next world "by fire"; (c) that it is useful and beneficial to pray for the dead.

Matt. 12-32: And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of Man it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, NEITHER IN THE WORLD TO COME. (Some sins can therefore be forgiven after death.)

I Cor. 3, 13 and 15: Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. 15. If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss; but he himself shall be saved, YET SO AS BY FIRE.

2 Machabees, 12-46: (This is one of the Old Testament books omitted from the Protestant Bible). *It is therefore a holy and wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from their sins.*

COMMENT: As nothing defiled can enter Heaven (Rev. 21-27), there must necessarily exist a state of cleansing or purgation usually called "purgatory."

Pictures and Statues

The Bible teaches that God approves the use and veneration of sacred pictures and images to stimulate religious fervor.

Exod. 25-18: And thou shalt make two cherubims of gold, of beaten work shalt thou make them, in the two ends of the mercy seat.

Numbers 21, 8-9: And the Lord said unto Moses. Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a pole, and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live.

John 3, 14: And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up.

I Kings 6-29: And he carved all the walls of the house round about with carved figures of cherubims and palm trees and open flowers, within and without. (Also see verses 32 and 35).

COMMENT: Hence men are not forbidden "to make to thyself a graven image," except when this is to be set up and adored as a god.

Ashes on Ash Wednesday

The Bible teaches the utility of ashes as a sign of penance.

Job. 42, 6: Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

Jonah 3, 6: For word came unto the king of Nineveh and he arose from his throne, and he laid his robe from him, and covered him with sackcloth and sat in ashes.

COMMENT: Hence criticism of blessed ashes and similar Catholic sacramentals is irreverent and irreligious.

Vestments at Mass

The Bible teaches that special vestments are worn by those exercising sacred functions.

Exod. 28-4: And these are the garments which they shall make; a breast plate, and an ephod, and a robe, and a broidered coat, a mitre and a girdle, and they shall make holy garments for Aaron thy brother, and his sons, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office.

COMMENT: Hence Catholic vestments are by no means "superstitious," but conformable to Bible precedent.

Holy Water

The Bible teaches that already in ancient times, God not only permitted but commanded the use of Holy Water.

Numbers 5-17: And the priest shall take holy water in an earthen vessel, and of the dust that is in the floor of the tabernacle the priest shall take, and put it into the water.

COMMENT: Hence the Catholic Church should be commended, not blamed, for following Sacred Scripture.

Relics of Saints

The Bible teaches that it is proper and beneficial to venerate the relics of sacred personages or things.

2 King, 2, 8-14: The mantle of Elijah.

Exodus 7, 10: The rod of Aaron.

Matt 9, 20-21: Also Matt. 14-36: The hem of our Lord's garment.

Acts 19, 12: So that from his body were brought unto the sick, handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirit went out of them.

Acts 5, 15-16: Insomuch that they brought forth the sick into the streets, and laid them on beds and couches, that at the least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them

COMMENT: Hence while the Catholic Church forbids her children to pray TO relics of Christ and the Saints, or to act towards them as if they had any power IN THEMSELVES; she rightly teaches us to honor the relics for what they represent. Similarly, Americans honor the flag because of its symbolism.

Use of Incense

The Bible teaches that incense symbolizing prayer can be used in churches when offering praise and worship to God.

Rev. 8, 3: And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne.

Psalm 141-2: Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice.

COMMENT: Hence Catholic ceremonies, the use of incense, etc., all have Scriptural basis.

Heresies

The Bible teaches that those who reject willingly the true faith are to be classified with heretics and lost souls.

Titus 3-10: A man that is an heretic after the first and second admonition reject.

Gal. 1-8: But though we or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.

Gal. 1-9: As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that which ye have received let him be accursed.

Rom. 16-17: Now I beseech you brethren mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

2 John 10: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed.

COMMENT: Therefore according to the Bible, one religion is not as good as the other. It is the true religion that God demands of men and which men are bound to practice in order to save their souls.

Necessity of Good Works

The Bible teaches that both faith and good works are necessary for salvation.

James 2, 22-26: Seest thou how faith wrought with his works and by works was faith made perfect? etc.... so faith without works is dead also.

I Cor. 13, 1-3: Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels . . and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains . . and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

Matt. 7-21: Not every one that saith unto me, Lord Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

Mark 16-16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be damned.

COMMENT: Hence the futility of saying, "I am a Christian, I am a Catholic," unless one earnestly strives to serve God. Hence the egregious error of maintaining that the mere acceptance of Christ as one's Personal Savior is all that is required. Christ is, will be our personal Savior only if we exercise that necessary faith and good works. Hence also the folly of saying: "It makes no difference what you believe."

Honoring Mary

The Bible teaches that God made Mary the earthly mother of the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity; that true Christians of every age MUST honor her: Read Luke 1, 26-35,

Luke 1-48: . . . , for, behold from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.

COMMENT: Since God honored Mary more than other angelic or human beings, are we not allowed, EVEN OBLIGED, to do the same? But where outside the Catholic Church is this precept, this prophecy fulfilled?

Honoring Angels and Saints

The Bible teaches that the citizens of heaven take an active interest and (within limitations) intervene in the affairs of men.

Eph. 2-19: *Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners but FELLOW-CITIZENS WITH THE SAINTS and of the household of God.*

Acts 12-7: *And behold the angel of the Lord came upon him and a light shined in the prison; and he smote Peter on the side, and raised him up, saying: Arise up quickly. And his chains fell from his hands.*

Heb. 1-14: *Are they not all ministering spirits, set forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?*

Luke 15-10: *Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repented.*

COMMENT: Hence the Catholic Church is most consistent in enumerating angels among men's protectors, patrons, well-wishers. The same may be said of God's saints in Heaven.

* * * * *

Catholic Doctrine Is Derived from These Four Sources:

1. What the Bible explicitly or implicitly teaches.
2. Available Bible material is clarified or complemented or confirmed by truths derived from historical records (tradition) such as the writings of the Fathers, inscriptions in the Catacombs, early rules and regulations of the Church.
3. The guidance of the Holy Spirit, Whom Christ promised to His Church (John 14-16 and 26).
4. Our Lord's own presence in the Church, according to His specific promise. (Matt. 28-20).

Bible Vandalism

In our day, there is no whim, fad or fancy that some one does not claim to prove from the Bible. Almost any man or woman is conceited enough to set himself up as a competent interpreter of the word of God. "I think the Bible means this, therefore it does mean this," is their modest position. These men and women want it thoroughly understood that our forefathers in the faith were all fools that for the last nineteen hundred years, the Christian world was in inky darkness. With

them, however, light has come into the world. The truth is that no book in the world today is falsified, distorted, misapplied one tenth so much as the Holy Scriptures.

Some, like the early heretics, will prove from the Bible that Christ is only God and not man. Others, like modern Unitarians, will prove from the Bible that Christ is only man and not God.

Some denominations will prove from the Bible that in the New Law, Christ shared his priesthood with NO ONE. Others will prove from the Bible that in the New Law, even the women are priests; hence the name Presbyters or priests, from which "Presbyterian" is derived.

One sect will prove from the Bible that baptism is unnecessary for children, but is necessary for adults. Others will prove from the Bible that baptism is necessary for no one; that it is only a ceremony, an initiation such as is required when one joins a lodge.

Campbellites or "First Christians" will prove from the Bible that to be really baptized, one must be totally immersed in water. Others prove from the Bible that the whole thing is unnecessary and ought to be abandoned.

Russellites prove from the Bible that there is going to be a millennium, a thousand years when every one will get a second trial. Calvinists prove from the Bible that a large part of mankind do not even get a first trial, but are predestined to damnation irrespective of their merits.

Some sects prove from the Bible that eternal punishment is going to be meted out to nearly every one, but the little handful of their particular false sect is going to escape. But others prove from the Bible that everyone is going to be saved. To even murderers, adulterers, and those who rob widows and orphans-and never repent-will Christ hold out His arms and say: "Come, Blessed of My Father, and possess the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Reduced to practice their theory means this: Read the Bible and believe as you like; if you like Martin Luther's theory, follow it; if you prefer John Calvin's Christianity, embrace it. If you think that Campbell, or Dowie, or Mrs. Eddy, or the Adventists have "discovered" the truth, have succeeded in doing what Christ must have failed to do, then take them as your guide. If the theory of none of these persons suits you, make up one yourself.

Mrs. Eddy will prove from the Bible that man is all soul, the body is practically a delusion, and does not really exist, "Bible Students" will prove from the Bible that the soul is all delusion you really have none When you die, your soul knows not anything: the soul which God gave Adam was only air and nothing more

In the Bible, we are told to serve the Lord in fear and trembling and so we have the shakers, the mourners and the weepers. Again in the Bible, we are told to rejoice in the Lord always, again I say rejoice. And so we have the singers and the jumpers and the rollers. Surely you would think that there is a sufficient variety to suit every one, but it seems not, for new sects are springing up constantly.

All these claim to prove their version of Christianity from the Bible; all these are willing to swear that their little handful are the only ones who are right and that every one else is wrong. Christ's Church for nineteen hundred years was a complete failure, but fortunately they have finally come to set it aright. Meanwhile the Bible itself warns us:

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but . . . shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears." - (2 Tim. 4-3).

Again, referring to the epistle of St. Paul, the Prince of the Apostles tells us:

"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter. 3-16).

Here are ten children. Give them all the same simple problem in arithmetic. Imagine that each gives you a different answer. Of these ten answers, you know that at least nine are wrong. Perhaps also the tenth. Here are four hundred sects. Ask them all to solve the problem, "What does the Bible teach?" Each gives you a different answer. But you know that only one can really be correct. All the rest are wrong. Two and two are always four. There are a thousand wrong answers to every problem, but only one correct reply.

Parable of the Forest

PARABLE: Picture to yourself a marvelously beautiful and gigantic forest, a thousand miles in width and length.

APPLICATION: In the parable, the New Testament is this dramatically impressive forest composed of numberless giant trees. Each one of these trees represents; let us say, a verse or set of verses of the Bible; there are as many trees in that forest as groups of verses in the Old and New Testaments.

PARABLE: In preparation for this forest, men reclaimed a desert which was watered, irrigated, so that on it the giant trees could be grown. After the period of preparation, a first installment of giant trees was planted; then, after another interval, a second, a third, and others until the great forest was completed.

APPLICATION: The beginnings of the New Testament fit into this picture. The first ten years of the Church's history was the time of preparation during which not a line of the New Testament had been written. Then ten years after our Lord's Ascension, St. Matthew wrote the first Gospel; following it were the Gospels according to St. Mark, St. Luke and St. John, together with other inspired books; the last of these was written about 100 A. D.

PARABLE: Thereafter, for a time, adversities and setbacks hampered the project; other trees, imitations of the kind desired, took root alongside those originally planted; after another interval,

with the return of more favorable circumstances, the new-giant thousand-mile-square forest was carefully cleansed, pruned and extraneous growths removed.

APPLICATION: After the New Testament books were written came the greatest of the persecutions, during which other books, thought by many to be inspired, were written, and to a greater or lesser extent, were so regarded by the early Christians. With Constantine in 313, compilation of the New Testament began. Finally in 397 A. D., it was put under one cover by a general council of the Catholic Church

PARABLE Meanwhile, even before the forest had grown, in order that humans might find their way in safety through the desert, and later through the forest, a carefully constructed and guarded path was provided which travelers could follow through the otherwise impenetrable woods. The travelers, moreover, were given directions, supplementary information, to guarantee safety on their journey.

APPLICATION: In the parable, the path through the great forest is the divine authority of Christ's visible Church, which enables men properly to understand the Word of God, instead of being prey to man-made theories. The supplementary information which the travelers received are reliable historical records, such as the writings of the Fathers, the inscriptions in the catacombs, the rules and regulations of the early Church-all of which are called Tradition.

PARABLE: Later in our parable, come other men, who scorn to follow the safe path cut out through the otherwise trackless forest; these enter the forest, admire its gigantic proportions and other thrilling beauties, but with nothing to guide them, are quickly lost in the forest; some soon die of want; others eke out a miserable existence, subsisting on herbs, plants and other insufficient foods which the forest supplies. Others, however, wander long through the trackless areas, until they discover the guiding path, which they follow in safety.

Millions Lose Their Way

APPLICATION: In this part of the parable, those who scorn to follow the path which leads to safety, are the so-called reformers, who reject the accepted Christian faith of nineteen centuries and, each one for himself, sets out to explore the beautiful but trackless, limitless forest of Holy Scripture. Inevitably they lose their way; some of these perish, in the sense that they lose their faith entirely; others as members of innumerable sects, subsist meagerly on the imperfect, defective diet of a little truth and much error. All of these are on the path to hell. Others, however, after wandering aimlessly about, are fortunate enough to find the correct path which Christ and Christ's Church had mapped out for them; these are the converts to the original or Catholic Church. Joyfully these pursue their journey, until, in the words of the well-known hymn. they are: Safe, safe at last the dangers past, Safe in their Father's home.

THERE IS NO SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

