

Our Priceless Heritage – Summary



This is chapter XV and the final chapter of [“Our Priceless Heritage Christian Doctrine In Contrast With Romanism”](#) by Henry M. Woods, D.D, LL.D.

In the preceding chapters we have endeavored to set forth something of our priceless heritage as the children of God; “the riches of grace” that there are for every believer in His glorious Gospel; the all-sufficiency of our Lord Jesus Christ as Redeemer, in whom every need of the individual soul and of the human race is abundantly supplied; His perfect atoning work and the full provision He has made through the Holy Spirit and the Word for the salvation of men and for the establishment of His Church.

It has been the aim to show constructively from Holy Scripture that the Protestant faith is the original Christian faith taught by our Lord and His apostles; and that the Protestant or Reformed Church, since it holds the original Christian faith, is therefore the true Church of God. Though we acknowledge with deep sorrow our many sins and how far short we come of the divine standard, yet we rejoice that at last Christ will present our beloved Church “faultless before the Father’s presence with exceeding joy,” “a glorious Church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing.” Eph. 5:27, Jude 24.

We have seen from Scripture that Christ is the only Head and Foundation of the Church; and that for any man to claim to be the head and foundation of God’s Church is to usurp the place of the Creator, and is a mark of apostasy.

We have seen that there is no Scriptural warrant whatever for a pope; that Peter was not the rock on which Christ built the Church, but that Christ Himself was the Rock; that the papacy was not invented till centuries after Christ; that the whole papal power was founded upon fraud, as leading Romanists acknowledge; that while the papacy has continued to exist in spite of its total lack of Scriptural warrant and the great harm it has caused, its continued existence can be explained on perfectly natural grounds, because it offers immense prizes of wealth, power and prominence, which ambitious, worldly men have always coveted and will continue to covet to the end of time.

We have seen also that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, being the very Word of God, are through the guidance of the Holy Spirit an all-sufficient rule of faith and life, making men “wise unto salvation,” and “thoroughly furnished unto all good works.” To teach, as the Church of Rome does, that the traditions of men are also the rule of faith, and that the Holy Scriptures are “not all-sufficient,” are “not the judge of controversy,”

and are "not for the people to read," is a deadly error, which grossly dishonors the Author of the Scriptures, and robs men of that divine light which alone can guide them to the haven of eternal rest.

We have seen the Word of God teaches that the Holy Trinity alone is the Object of Worship in the true Church; that no mere human being, however good, may share in any degree in that worship, nor may any image or visible representation be used in worship. Also that the Church of Rome, by worshiping human beings and images, has directly disobeyed two of God's commandments and has apostatized far from the true faith.

The Scriptures also plainly declare that only God can forgive sins. Any human being who claims to forgive sins or grant absolution is guilty of falsehood, and usurps the honor which belongs to God alone. The papal church by asserting that its priests have power to forgive sins, "not only as ambassadors of Christ, but as judges and by way of jurisdiction," is guilty of this great impiety.

The Scriptures also declare that there is only one Mediator between God and men, the incarnate Son of God, through whom alone sinners may approach the holy God, and through whom alone they may receive blessings from Him. The Roman Church falsely asserts that there are other mediators, thus contradicting Scripture, and making sinful human beings usurp the place of the divine Saviour.

We have seen the Word of God declares that Christ offered Himself on the cross as the one perfect sacrifice for the sins of the world, which forever avails for all who put their trust in Him. This saving truth the Church of Rome denies, by asserting that her priests in the so-called Mass offer a real atoning sacrifice for sin. She is thus guilty of an unspeakable sin, for she deceives men by the gross error of a counterfeit atonement and makes sinful priests usurp the place of the only divine Redeemer.

The Lord's Supper, which our Saviour appointed as a simple memorial of His atoning death and everlasting love, the Church of Rome has grievously perverted, as if her priests had magical power to change bread and wine into human flesh and blood. The laity are made the victims of a fatal delusion; for under threat of eternal condemnation they are forced to worship a wafer as God. When the priest "elevates the host," as is said, they are required to believe that they are adoring God, whereas they know they are only adoring a piece of bread!

Again, the Scriptures show that God alone is Lord of the conscience, and no human being may claim that high position or dare to come between the soul and its Maker. This grievous sin the pope commits, usurping the place of Almighty God, and keeping souls in bondage by claiming the right to dictate to men's consciences.

So also, papal Indulgences and Masses for the dead; according to Holy Scripture, these are a travesty of God's salvation, a traffic in men's souls, a bartering of the precious blood of Christ.

In all of these things, which concern the very heart of the Gospel, the Church of Rome has apostatized far from the faith, and has forfeited all right to be considered a part of the true Church of God.

In contrast to these soul-destroying errors, the Protestant or Reformed Church proclaims, as the Word of God proclaims:

No Head of the Church, but the one divine Lord, No Foundation of the Church, but Christ the Rock, No rule of faith, but the Word of God,
No object of worship, but the Holy Trinity; No Mediator but the Lord Jesus Christ,
No priest but the one divine Saviour,
No sacrifice but Christ's one atoning death,
No Confessional but the Throne of God;
Absolution, not by man, but by God alone,
Not penances, but Repentance unto life,
Not Indulgences, but separation from all sin,
Not Purgatory, but eternal life in heaven;
Christian liberty and freedom of conscience,

Unity in diversity, the "unity of the Spirit,"—this is our priceless heritage as the children of God; here is "the Word of Truth, the Gospel of your salvation!"

True to Holy Scripture, the one aim of the Protestant and apostolic faith is to exalt God, not man; to ascribe all glory to the Holy Trinity alone, to whom it rightly belongs; as John Calvin's favorite text declares:

"For of Him, and through Him, and to Him are all things; to whom be glory for ever, Amen."

"That God in all things may be glorified through Jesus Christ: to whom be praise and dominion for ever and ever, Amen."

These things being true, what is our duty as Protestants?

We should believe the Truth with all our heart, and live the Gospel by a consistent life. Let it be said of Protestants now, as was said in France at the Reformation, "as honest and true as a Huguenot!"

We should teach the children in the home to love the Word of God; have family worship with them; teach them the catechism, to honor the Sabbath Day, to love the Church of God and be loyal to it.

We should shun Modernist infidelity on the one hand, and Romanism on the other,—whose "word will eat as doth a canker." Shun false teachers who mutilate the holy Scriptures; and shun Romanisers in the Church, who, regardless of common honesty, betray the sacred truth entrusted to them, and undermine the foundation of the Church to which they owe allegiance and whose benefits they enjoy.

Christian parents under no circumstances should send their children to Roman Catholic schools. Mixed marriage of Protestants and Catholics should also be

avoided, for on account of the pope's *Ne Temere* decree such unions too often result in bitter sorrow and broken homes.

Protestants should pray and work more earnestly to win Romanists to the true faith. We should distribute and broadcast sound Protestant literature, and strive with all patience and kindness to show our Romanist friends from God's Word the deadly errors of the papal system, and lead them into the light and liberty of the children of God. 2 Tim. 2:24-26, James 5:20.

Oh, for the mighty power of the Spirit of God to arouse the Church from indifference and compromise, from prayerlessness and paralyzing doubt of His Holy Word, to realize its danger, and EARNESTLY CONTEND FOR THE FAITH ONCE FOR ALL DELIVERED TO THE SAINTS!

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