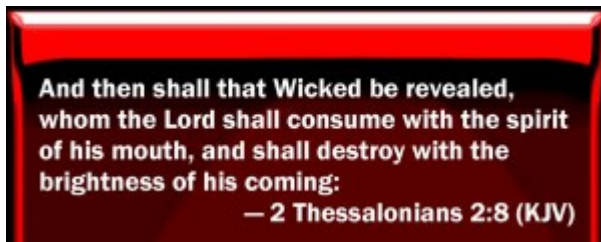


# The Only Sure Way to Overthrow Popery



This article is from Journal of History and Prophecy compiled by Ron Bullock of [Old Working BOOKS & BINDERY](#). The original title is: **"From The Introduction Of Foxe's Book Of Martyrs"** I'm not sure who wrote this because it's not in the PDF files of Foxe's Book of Martyrs. I think Ron Bullock probably wrote it. Emphasis in **bold** are the webmaster's.

If without entering into the details of the superstitions and errors of popery, we have now a correct idea of its essence, we are prepared to ask, not how we ought to regard it—that is unnecessary—but how we are to counteract and destroy it. We do not go to prophecy for an answer. Of whatever service the study of prophecy may be in unfolding the destinies of Antichrist, we can derive no authority from it to adopt other rules of action than those which the Saviour enjoined and his Apostles practised.

The world was covered with thick darkness; error and pollution abounded; and evil had all the advantages of alliance with civil power; but Christ's commission was simply, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature." Every murmur was hushed, and every doubt of success was removed by the promise, "I am with you always."

How the Apostles understood their commission, and what were the fruits of their labours, we gather from these memorable words, "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strongholds." We have received no other commission than was given to the Apostles, and it will only be a return to the wisdom of the world, which is foolishness with God, to employ other means than they employed.

Moreover, the plainest and most intelligible intimations of Scripture regarding the "man of sin" agree with these general principles. He is that "wicked" whom the Lord "shall consume with the Spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming." **The "Spirit or breath of his mouth," is His Word—the preaching of the Gospel.** (See Is.11,3,4) The figure of "brightness of his coming" seems to be founded on a natural phenomenon with which we are familiar. Before the sun is seen above the horizon, the darkness of night is dispelled by the brightness of its approach. So Christ's second coming shall be preceded by a brightness of Gospel light, which shall destroy every system that is based on ignorance and upheld by it. **The preaching of the Gospel, then, it is obvious, is the power of God to the destruction of Antichrist.** It is when one angel shall "fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting Gospel to preach to them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation and tongue and people," that another angel shall follow, saying, "Babylon is fallen, is fallen!"—(Rev.14.6,8)

The Church of Christ can employ no other than spiritual weapons in any department of her warfare with the corruptions of the world, consistently with her own character and office. She is dependent on the Divine Spirit for all her success—now His only sword is the Word of God, and any other in her hands will be disowned and unblessed by him. She belies her own nature and the nature of her work when she seizes the weapons of worldly policy and power, and amidst all her successes will utterly fail to accomplish her proper work.

If popery were merely the name of a certain form or system of professed religion, worldly means might accomplish its overthrow. We might obtain the aid of civil government and raze every nominally popish place of worship to the ground; we might institute a system of espionage, and prevent even the private performance of popish rites. But when we have done so, what have we accomplished? We have enlightened no understanding; we have converted no heart. We leave the Romanist weeping over a superstition which he loves, more attached to it in its adversity than its prosperity, and awakened to oppose all our advances to instruct him in the knowledge of God and his Son. We adopt ourselves the very popery whose extirpation we profess to desire; we imbibe its spirit; we wield its weapons; and the serpent which we sought to remove from beneath the fanciful vestments of Romanism, finds shelter beneath the plain robes of our Protestantism.

The overthrow of popery does not consist in the destruction of its outward form, or in the dismemberment of its present dominions. Should the Roman Pontiff be dethroned, and all of his system and dependents that human force can reach be destroyed, popery will still live—**live not merely in the scattered fragments of Romanism, but in the very power which has scattered them.** And if we would consume the “wicked one,” the wickedness, the essence of the system, we must begin afresh and bring the spirit of Christ’s mouth to bear not less on the Protestantism which will then rear its head in proud ascendancy, than on the popery which lies prostrate before us. When human force has done its utmost, the seat of evil will remain untouched: that can be consumed only by the light and truth of the oracles of God.