

Why Protestants? Why Catholics?

Should Christians Unite?

ANGLICAN LEADER CALLS FOR UNITY UNDER POPE.

Associated Press

ROME - Anglican leader Archbishop Robert Runcie called Saturday for all Christians to accept the Roman Catholic pope as a common leader "presiding in love."

"For the universal church, I renew the plea," he said. Could not all Christians come to reconsider the kind of primacy the bishop of Rome (the pope) exercised within the early church?

-The Dallas Morning News, October 1, 1989

BAPTIST, CATHOLIC THEOLOGIANS FIND COMMON GROUND.

Associated Press

NEW York---Southern Baptists and Roman Catholics, the nation's two largest denominations, generally have been regarded as doctrinally far apart, but their scholars find they basically agree....

The 163-page report is seen as the most full-scale, mutual examination of respective positions of the two traditions. Achieving it was an unprecedented experience for Southern Baptists, commonly averse to ecumenical affairs....

The talks, sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Committee on Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs and the Southern Baptist Department of Interfaith Witness, involved 18 meetings between 1978 and 1988.

-The Bakersfield Californian, August 27, 1989

A WORD TO THE READER

More wars have been fought and more blood has been shed in the name of religion than any other cause, perhaps all other causes. Countless millions have been slaughtered in the name of God, Allah, Buddha, Mohammed, and Christ. For thousands of years, Christian killing Jew, Jew hating Muslim, the Muslim against Hindu, Christian fighting Christian, Shiite versus Sunni, Sikh against Hindu, endless rivers of blood, supposedly shed to rid the world of evil men and make way for peace.

Is it possible for people of varied faiths and cultures to live at peace in this world? When one considers the fragmentation and division even among Christians or the never ending conflict between Palestinian and Jew, prospects for peace seem dim indeed. Some, aware of the dark record of history, would abolish all religion—some would combine all religion!

Today something unmatched in history is taking place. Leading statesmen and religious leaders are proposing a New World Order; a plan that many sincerely believe can bring peace on earth. A unity is envisioned that will transcend instinctive barriers that have long separated cultures and religions.

Significant progress toward a New World Order is seen in the spirit of ecumenism or togetherness now being urged by prominent religious leaders. In the ecumenical plan, basic

theological or ideological differences are set aside while emphasis is instead placed upon those elements common to most religions.

Could the long-desired universal peace be just around the corner? Is it actually possible for men to forge a lasting peace on the anvil of compromise? Or, could it be that we are naively forging, not a New World Order, but rather the One World Order of apocalyptic prophecy?

While controversial, it is not the purpose of this publication to disparage or attack the honest convictions of sincere persons whatever their politics or faith. Its purpose, rather, is to bring out facts and principles which have a bearing upon coming events. It reveals the hidden agenda behind the New World Order and the Ecumenical Movement that almost no one dares to discuss. But these issues must be freely discussed, for those who know history, know "history repeats." As Winston Churchill once observed, "The farther backward you can look, the farther forward you can see."

—THE PUBLISHERS

This publication contains excerpts from the best-selling classic *America in Prophecy* by E. G. White, originally published 100 years ago under the title *The Great Controversy*.

THE FIRES OF PERSECUTION

When Jesus revealed to His disciples the fate of Jerusalem and the scenes of the second advent, He foretold also the experience of His people from the time when He would be taken from them, until His return in power and glory for their deliverance. In a few brief utterances of awful significance, Jesus foretold the portion which the rulers of this world would mete out to the church of God. Matthew 24:9, 21, 22.

The history of the early church testified to the fulfillment of His words. As the fires of persecution were kindled, Christians were stripped of their possessions, and driven from their homes. Great numbers sealed their testimony with their blood. Noble and slave, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, were all slain without mercy.

These persecutions, beginning under Nero (Emperor of Rome, A.D. 55-68) about the time of the martyrdom of Paul, continued with greater or less fury for centuries. Christians were falsely accused of the most dreadful crimes, and declared to be the cause of great calamities—famine, pestilence, and earthquake. They were condemned as rebels against the empire, as enemies of religion, and pests to society. Great numbers were thrown to wild beasts or burned alive in the amphitheaters. Some were crucified; others were covered with the skins of wild animals, and thrust into the arena to be torn by dogs. Vast multitudes assembled to enjoy these sights, and greeted their dying agonies with laughter and applause. As the fires of persecution were kindled, great numbers of Christians sealed their testimony with their blood.

Because they were hunted like beasts of prey, early Christians were forced to seek concealment in desolate and solitary places. Beneath the hills outside the city of Rome, lone galleries were tunneled through earth and rock; a dark and intricate network of passages extended for miles beyond the city walls. In these underground retreats, the followers of Christ buried their dead. When the Life-giver shall return to awaken those who fought the good fight, many a martyr for Christ's sake will come forth from those gloomy catacombs.

In vain were Satan's efforts to destroy the church of Christ by violence. God's workmen were slain, but His work went steadily forward. Said a Christian, "You may torment, afflict, and vex us. ... The more we are mowed down, the more we spring up again. The blood of the Christians is

seed." -Tertullian, Apology, paragraph 50. Thousands were imprisoned and slain; but others sprang up to fill their places.

Now the great adversary endeavored to gain by artifice what he had failed to secure by force. Persecution ceased, and in its place were substituted the dangerous allurements of temporal prosperity and worldly honor. Idolaters were led to receive a part of the Christian faith, while they rejected other essential truths. They professed to accept Jesus as the Son of God, and to believe in His death and resurrection; but they had no conviction of sin, and felt no need of repentance or of a change of heart. With some concessions on their part, they proposed that Christians should make concessions, that all might unite on the platform of belief in Christ.

Now the church was in fearful peril. Prison, torture, fire, and sword were blessings in comparison with this. Some of the Christians stood firm, declaring that they could make no compromise. Others were in favor of yielding or modifying some features of their faith, and uniting with those who accepted a part of Christianity, urging that this might be the means of their full conversion. That was a time of deep anguish for the faithful followers of Christ.

"You may torment, afflict, and vex us....
The more we are mowed down,
the more we spring up again.
The blood of the Christians is seed."

A PROPHECY

This compromise between paganism and Christianity resulted in the development of the "man of sin" foretold in prophecy as opposing and exalting himself above God. The apostle Paul, in his second letter to the Thessalonians, foretold the great apostasy:

"that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshiped, so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, showing himself that he is God." 2 Thessalonians 2:3,4.

And furthermore, the apostle warned his brethren that "the mystery of iniquity doth already work." 2 Thessalonians 2:7. Even at that early date he saw, creeping into the church, errors that would prepare the way for the development of that gigantic system of false religion—a masterpiece of Satan's power—a monument of his efforts to seat himself upon the throne and rule the earth according to his will.

The nominal conversion of the Roman Emperor Constantine, in the early part of the fourth century, caused great rejoicing; and the world, cloaked with a form of righteousness, walked into the church. Paganism, while appearing to be vanquished, became the conqueror. Pagan doctrines, ceremonies, and superstitions were incorporated into the faith and worship of the professed followers of Christ.

As Christians consented to lower their standards, a union was formed between Christianity and paganism. Though the worshipers of idols professed to be converted, they united with the church, still clinging to their idolatry, only changing the objects of their worship to images of Jesus, and even of Mary and the saints.

To gain converts from heathenism, unsound doctrines, superstitious rites and the adoration of images and relics were gradually introduced into Christian worship. The decree of a general

council (Second Council of Nice, A.D. 787) finally established this system of Christian idolatry. To complete the sacrilegious work, Rome presumed to erase the second commandment, forbidding image worship, from the law of God, and to divide the tenth commandment to preserve the number.

Satan tampered with the fourth commandment also, and purposed to set aside the ancient Sabbath, the day which God had blessed and sanctified (Genesis 2:2, 3), and in its stead to exalt the festival observed by the heathen as "the venerable day of the sun." This change was not at first attempted openly. In the first centuries the true Sabbath had been kept by all Christians. They were jealous for the honor of God, and they zealously guarded the sacredness of its precepts. But with great subtlety, Satan worked through his agents to bring about his object.

Early in the fourth century, the emperor Constantine issued a decree making Sunday a public festival throughout the Roman Empire. The day of the sun was revered by his pagan subjects, and was honored by Christians; it was the emperor's policy to unite the conflicting interests of heathenism and Christianity. He was urged to do this by the bishops of the church, who perceived that if the same day was observed by both Christians and the heathen, it would promote the nominal acceptance of Christianity by pagans, and thus advance the power and glory of the church. But while most Christians were gradually led to regard Sunday as possessing a degree of sacredness, some still held the true Sabbath holy, and they continued to observe it in obedience to the fourth commandment.

Satan had led the Jews, before the advent of Christ, to load down the Sabbath with the most rigorous exactions, making its observance a burden. He cast contempt upon it as a Jewish institution until finally the pagan Sunday came to be honored as a divine institution, while the Bible Sabbath was pronounced a relic of Judaism, and its observers were at last declared to be accursed.

UNHOLY CLAIMS

The spirit of concession to paganism opened the way for a still further disregard of Heavens authority. The visible head of the church (the pope), came to be almost universally acknowledged as the vicegerent of God on earth, and he was endowed with authority over church and state. More than this, the pope appropriated the very titles of Deity. He styled himself "Lord God the Pope," assumed infallibility, and demanded that all men pay him homage.

Faith was transferred from Christ, the true foundation of the Christian church, to the pope of Rome. Instead of trusting in Christ for forgiveness of sins and for eternal salvation, people looked to the pope, and to the priests and prelates to whom he delegated authority. They were taught that the pope was their earthly mediator, and that none could approach God except through him, and, further, that he stood in the place of God to them, and was therefore to be implicitly obeyed. A deviation from his requirements was cause for the severest punishment to be visited upon the bodies and souls of the offenders. Through this error the people were turned from God to fallible, erring men.

Blasphemous titles claimed for the pope have been embellished and enlarged over the centuries. But a few of these boastful claims appear in an ecclesiastical (Roman Catholic) dictionary, by Lucius Ferraris, entitled *Prompta Bibliotheca Canonica*, Vol. VI, pgs. 438, 442, article "Pope." The Catholic Encyclopedia, 1913 edition, Vol. VI, p. 48, speaks of this book as "a veritable encyclopedia of religious knowledge," and "a precious mine of information."

"The pope is of so great dignity and so exalted that he is not a mere man, but as it were God, and the vicar of God."

"Hence the pope is crowned with a triple crown, as king of heaven and of earth and of the lower regions."

"So that if it were possible that the angels might err in the faith, or might think contrary to the faith, they could be judged and excommunicated by the pope."

"The pope is as it were God on earth, sole sovereign of the faithful of Christ, chief king of kings, having plenitude of power, to whom has been entrusted by the omnipotent God direction not only of the earthly but also of the heavenly kingdom."

"The pope can modify divine law, since his power is not of man but of God."

But the doctrine of papal supremacy is directly opposed to the teachings of Scripture. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and Him only shalt thou serve." Luke 4:8. God has never given a hint in His word that He appointed any man but Christ to be the head of the church. The Bible exalts God, and places finite men in their true position. The pope has no power over Christ's church except by usurpation.

PAGAN ROME BECOMES PAPAL ROME

By the sixth century the papacy was firmly established. Its seat of power was fixed in the imperial city, and the bishop of Rome was declared to be the head over the entire church. Pagan Rome had given place to Papal Rome.

The accession of the Roman Church to power marked the beginning of the Dark Ages. As her power increased, the darkness of superstition and error deepened. Those were days of peril for the church of Christ. Faithful standard-bearers were few. At times it seemed that error and superstition would wholly prevail, and true religion would be banished from the earth. The gospel was lost sight of, and the forms of religion were multiplied. People were taught not only to look to the pope as their mediator, but to trust to works of their own to atone for sin. Long pilgrimages, acts of penance, the worship of relics, the erection of churches, shrines, and altars, the payment of large sums to the church— these and many similar acts were enjoined to appease the wrath of God or to secure His favor; as if God were like men, to be angered at trifles, or pacified by gifts or acts of penance!

About the close of the eighth century, papists put forth the claim that in the first ages of the church the bishops of Rome had possessed the same spiritual power which they now assumed. To establish this claim, ancient writings were forged by monks. Decrees of councils before unheard of were discovered, establishing the universal supremacy of the pope from the earliest times. And a church that had rejected the truth, greedily accepted these deceptions.

Another step in papal assumption was taken, when, in the eleventh century, Pope Gregory VII proclaimed the perfection of the Roman Church. Among the propositions which he put forth, was one declaring that the church had never erred, nor would it ever err, according to the Scriptures. But the Scripture proofs did not accompany the assertion. Next the proud pontiff claimed the power to depose emperors, and declared that no sentence which he pronounced could be reversed by any one, but that it was his prerogative to reverse the decisions of all others.

INVOCATION OF SAINTS / WORSHIP OF MARY

The advancing centuries witnessed a constant increase of error in the doctrines put forth from Rome. Even before the establishment of the papacy, the teachings of heathen philosophers had received attention and exerted an influence in the church. Prominent among these was the belief in man's natural immortality and his consciousness in death. This doctrine laid the foundation upon which Rome established the invocation of saints and the adoration of the virgin Mary. From this sprang also the heresy of eternal torment for the finally impenitent, which was early incorporated into the papal faith.

PURGATORY

Then the way was prepared for the introduction of still another invention of paganism, which Rome named purgatory, and employed to terrify the superstitious multitudes. By this heresy is affirmed the existence of a place of torment, in which the souls of such as have not merited eternal damnation are to suffer punishment for their sins, and from which, when freed from impurity, they are admitted to heaven.

THE MASS

The Scriptural ordinance of the Lord's Supper was supplanted by the idolatrous sacrifice of the mass. Papist priests pretended, by their senseless mummery, to convert the simple bread and wine into the actual "body and blood of Christ." -Cardinal Wiseman, *The Real Presence of the Body and Blood of Our Lord Jesus Christ in the Blessed Eucharist, Proved From Scripture*, lecture 8, sec. 3, par. 26. With blasphemous presumption, they openly claimed the power of "creating God, the Creator of all things." All Christians were required, on pain of death, to avow their faith in this horrible, Heaven-insulting heresy. Multitudes who refused were given to the flames.

INDULGENCES

Still another fabrication was needed to enable Rome to profit by the fears and vices of her adherents. This was supplied by the doctrine of indulgences. Full remission of sins, past, present, and future, and release from all the pains and penalties incurred, were promised to those who would enlist in the pontiff's wars to extend his temporal dominion, to punish his enemies, or to exterminate those who dared deny his spiritual supremacy. The people were taught that by the payment of money to the church they might free themselves from sin, and release the souls of their deceased friends who were confined in the tormenting flames. By such means Rome filled her coffers, and sustained the magnificence, luxury, and vice of the pretended representatives of Him who had not where to lay His head.

THE INQUISITION

In the thirteenth century was established that most terrible of all the engines of the papacy—the Inquisition. The prince of darkness worked through the leaders of the papal hierarchy in their secret councils, Satan and his angels controlled the minds of evil men, who invented tortures too horrible to appear to human eyes. "Babylon the great" was "drunken with the blood of the saints." The mangled forms of millions of martyrs cried to God for vengeance upon that apostate power.

Popery became the world's despot. Kings and emperors bowed to the decrees of the Roman pontiff. The destinies of men, both for time and for eternity, seemed under his control. For hundreds of years the doctrines of Rome had been extensively and implicitly received, its rites

reverently performed, and its festivals observed. Its clergy were honored and liberally sustained. But "the noon of the papacy was the midnight of the world." -J. A. Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, b. 1, ch.4. The Holy Scriptures were almost unknown not only to the people, but to the priests. God's law, the standard of righteousness, having been removed, papist leaders exercised power without limit, and practiced vice without restraint. Fraud, avarice, and profligacy prevailed. Men shrank from no crime by which they could gain wealth or position. The palaces of popes and prelates were scenes of the vilest debauchery. Some of the reigning pontiffs were guilty of crimes so revolting that secular rulers endeavored to depose these dignitaries of the church as monsters too vile to be tolerated. For centuries Europe made no progress in learning, arts, or civilization. A moral and intellectual paralysis had fallen upon Christendom.

"the noon of the papacy --was the midnight of the world."

LIGHT IN DARKNESS

Foremost among those who were called to lead the church from the darkness of popery into the light of a purer faith, stood Martin Luther. Zealous, ardent, and devoted, knowing no fear but the fear of God, and acknowledging no foundation for religious faith but the Holy Scriptures, Luther was the man for his time; through him, God accomplished a great work for the reformation of the church and the enlightenment of the world.

At the age of eighteen, Luther entered the University of Erfurt. A retentive memory, strong reasoning powers, and untiring application, soon placed him in the foremost rank among his associates. One day while examining the books in the library of the university, Luther discovered a Latin Bible. Such a book he had never before seen. He was ignorant even of its existence. He had heard portions of the Gospels and Epistles, read at public worship, and he supposed that these were the entire Bible. Now, for the first time, he looked upon the whole of God's word. With awe he turned the sacred pages and read for himself the words of life, pausing now and then to exclaim, "O that God would give me such a book for myself!" -J.H. Merle D'Aubigne, *History of the Reformation of the Sixteenth Century*, b. 2, ch. 2.

An earnest desire to be free from sin and to find peace with God, led him to enter a cloister, and devote himself to a monastic life. Here he was required to perform the lowest drudgery, and to beg from house to house. These menial offices were deeply mortifying to his natural feelings; but Luther patiently endured this humiliation, believing that it was necessary because of his sins.

He delighted in the study of the Bible. Every moment that could be spared from his daily duties he employed in study. He found a Bible chained to the convent wall, and to this he often withdrew. As his conviction of sin deepened, he sought by his own works to obtain pardon and peace. With fasting, vigils, and scourgings, he endeavored to subdue the evils of his nature, from which the monastic life had brought no release. Said Luther,

"I was indeed a pious monk, and followed the rules of my order more strictly than I can express. If ever monk could attain heaven by his monkish works, I should certainly have been entitled to it... If I had continued much longer, I should have carried my mortifications even to death" - D'Aubigne, b. 2, ch.3.

With all his efforts, his burdened soul found no relief and he was driven to the verge of despair.

LOOKING TO CHRIST

When it appeared to Luther that all was lost, God raised up a friend and helper for him. The pious Staupitz opened the word of God to Luther's mind, and urged him to look away from

himself, cease the contemplation of infinite punishment for the violation of God's law, and look to Jesus as his sin-pardoning Saviour. "Instead of torturing yourself on account of your sins, cast yourself into the arms of your Redeemer. Trust in Him, in the righteousness of His life, in the atonement of His death ... Listen to the Son of God. He became a man to give you the assurance of divine favor." "Love Him who has first loved you." -D'Aubigne, b. 2, ch. 4. His words made a deep impression upon Luther's mind. After many a struggle with long-cherished errors, he was enabled to grasp this truth, and peace came to his troubled soul.

In time Luther was ordained a priest, and soon called from the cloister to a professorship in the University of Wittenberg. Here he applied himself to the study of the Scriptures in the original tongues. Staupitz, his friend and superior, urged him to ascend the pulpit, and preach the word of God. At first Luther hesitated, feeling himself unworthy to speak to the people in Christ's stead. But after a long struggle, he began to lecture upon the Bible. He opened the book of Psalms, the Gospels, and the Epistles to the understanding of crowds of delighted listeners.

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LUTHER'S VISIT TO ROME

Luther was a true son of the papal church, and had no thought that he would ever be anything else. But in the providence of God he was led to visit Rome. He pursued his journey on foot, lodging at monasteries on the way. At a convent in Italy he was filled with wonder at the wealth, magnificence, and luxury that he witnessed. Endowed with a princely revenue, the monks lived in splendid apartments, attired themselves in the richest and most costly robes, and feasted at sumptuous tables. With painful misgivings, Luther contrasted this scene with the self-denial and hardship of his own life; his mind was becoming perplexed.

When at last Luther beheld in the distance the seven-hilled city, he prostrated himself upon the earth, exclaiming, "Holy Rome, I salute thee!" -D' Aubigne, b. 2, ch. 6. He entered the city, visited the churches, listened to the marvelous tales repeated by priests and monks, and performed all the ceremonies required. Everywhere he looked upon scenes that filled him with astonishment and revulsion. He saw that iniquity existed among all classes of the clergy. He heard indecent jokes from prelates, and was filled with horror at their awful profanity, even during mass. "No one can imagine," he wrote, "what sins and infamous actions are committed in Rome; they must be seen and heard to be believed. Thus they are in the habit of saying, 'If there is a hell, Rome is built over it: it is an abyss whence issues every kind of sin.'" -Ibid., b. 2, ch. 6.

"PILATE'S STAIRCASE"

By a recent decree, an indulgence had been promised by the pope to all who should ascend upon their knees "Pilate's staircase," said to have been descended by Christ on leaving the Roman judgment hall, and to have been miraculously conveyed from Jerusalem to Rome. One day Luther was devoutly climbing these steps, when suddenly a voice like thunder seemed to say to him, "The just shall live by faith." Romans 1:17. He sprang to his feet, and hastened from the place, in shame and dismay. That text never lost its power upon his soul. From that time he saw more clearly than ever before the fallacy of trusting to human works for salvation, and the necessity of constant faith in the merits of Christ. His eyes had been opened, and were never again to be closed, to the delusions of the papacy. When Luther turned his face from Rome, he turned away also in heart, and from that time the separation grew wider, until he severed all connection with the papal church.

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE

After his return from Rome, Luther received the degree of doctor of divinity at the University of Wittenberg. He took a solemn vow to study carefully and to preach with fidelity the word of God, not the sayings and doctrines of the popes, all the days of his life. He was no longer the mere monk or professor, but the authorized herald of the Bible. He firmly declared that Christians should receive no other doctrines than those which rest on the authority of Scripture. These words struck at the very foundation of papal supremacy. They contained the vital principle of the Reformation.

At Wittenberg a light was kindled whose rays would extend to the uttermost parts of the earth, and which was to increase in brightness to the close of time. But light and darkness cannot harmonize. Between truth and error there is an irrepressible conflict. To uphold and defend the one is to attack and overthrow the other. Said Luther, a few years after the opening of the Reformation, "God does not guide me, He pushes me forward. He carries me away. I am not master of myself. I desire to live in repose; but I am thrown into the midst of tumults and revolutions." -D'Aubigne, b. 5, ch. 2. The battle of the Reformation was about to be joined.

BUILDING ST. PETER'S CATHEDRAL

The Roman Church made merchandise of the grace of God. Under the plea of raising funds for the erection of St. Peter's Church at Rome, indulgences for sin were publicly offered for sale by authority of the pope. By the price of crime a temple was to be built for God's worship—the cornerstone laid with the wages of iniquity. It was this heresy that aroused Luther and led to the battle which shook the papal throne, and jostled the triple crown upon the pontiff's head.

The official appointed to conduct the sale of indulgences in Germany—Tetzel by name—had been convicted of the basest offenses against society and against the law of God; but having escaped the punishment due his crimes, he was employed to further the mercenary and unscrupulous projects of the pope. Tetzel repeated the most glaring falsehoods, and related marvelous tales to deceive an ignorant, credulous, and superstitious people. Had they possessed the word of God, they would not have been so easily deceived. But for hundreds of years the circulation of the Bible was prohibited. People were forbidden to read it or to have it in their houses. To swell the power and wealth of her ambitious leaders, the Bible had been withheld from them. (See John C.L.Gieseler, A Compendium of Ecclesiastical History, per. 4, sec. 1, par. 5).

INDULGENCES / SIN FOR SALE

As Tetzal would enter a town, a messenger went before him, announcing, "The grace of God and of the holy father is at your gates." -D'Aubigne, b. 3, ch. 1. His unholy traffic was set up in the church, where Tetzal, ascending the pulpit, extolled indulgences as the most precious gift of God. He declared that by virtue of his certificates of pardon, all the sins which the purchaser should afterward desire to commit would be forgiven him, and that "not even repentance is necessary." -Ibid., b. 3, ch. 1. More than this, he assured his hearers that the indulgences had power to save not only the living but the dead; that the very moment the money should clink against the bottom of his chest, the soul in whose behalf it had been paid would escape from purgatory and make its way to heaven. (See K. R. Hagenbach, History of the Reformation, vol. 1, p. 96).

No prelate dared lift his voice against this iniquitous traffic, but the minds of some were becoming disturbed and uneasy, and many eagerly inquired if God would not work through some instrumentality for the purification of the church.

Luther was angered by the blasphemous assumptions of the indulgence mongers. Many of his own congregation purchased certificates of pardon, and they soon came to their pastor, confessing their various sins, and expecting absolution, not because they were penitent and wished to reform, but on the ground of the indulgence. Luther refused them absolution, and warned them that unless they should repent and reform their lives, they would perish in their sins. Perplexed, they returned to Tetzal complaining that their confessor refused his certificates. Some boldly demanded that their money be returned. Filled with rage, Tetzal uttered the most terrible curses, caused fires to be lighted in the public squares, and declared that he "had received an order from the pope to burn all heretics who presumed to oppose his most holy indulgences." -D'Aubigne, b. 3, ch. 4.

Luther's voice was heard from the pulpit in earnest, solemn warning. He set before the people the offensive character of sin, and taught them that it is impossible for man, by his own works, to lessen its guilt or evade its punishment. Nothing but repentance toward God and faith in Christ can save the sinner. The grace of Christ cannot be purchased; it is a free gift. He counseled the people not to buy the indulgences, but to look in faith to a crucified Redeemer. He related his own painful experience in vainly seeking by humiliation and penance to secure salvation, and assured his hearers that it was by looking away from himself and believing in Christ that he found peace with God.

By the price of crime a temple was to be built for God's worship—the cornerstone laid with the wages of iniquity.

NINETY-FIVE TIMES NO!

Luther decided a more effectual protest was necessary against these abuses. The castle church of Wittenberg possessed many relics, which on certain holy days were exhibited to the people, and full remission of sins was granted to all who then visited the church and made confession. One of the most important of these occasions, the festival of "All-Saints," was approaching. On the preceding day, Luther, joining the crowds that were already making their way to the church, posted on its door a paper containing ninety-five propositions against the doctrine of indulgences. He declared his willingness to defend these theses the next day at the university, against all who should see fit to attack them.

These propositions attracted universal attention. They were read and re-read and repeated in every direction. Great excitement was created in the university and in the whole city. By these theses it was shown that the power to grant the pardon of sin, and to remit its penalty, had

never been committed to the pope or to any other man. The whole scheme was a farce—an artifice to extort money by playing upon the superstitions of the people. It was also clearly shown that the gospel of Christ is the most valuable treasure of the church, and that the grace of God is freely bestowed upon all who seek it by repentance and faith.

The questions Luther proposed had in a few days spread through all Germany, and in a few weeks they had sounded throughout Christendom. Many devoted Romanists, who had seen and lamented the terrible iniquity prevailing in the church, read the propositions with great joy. They felt that the Lord had graciously set His hand to arrest the rapidly swelling tide of corruption issuing from the seat of Rome. Princes and magistrates secretly rejoiced that a check was to be put upon the arrogant power which denied the right of appeal from its decisions.

Though Luther had been moved by the Spirit of God to begin his work, he was not to carry it forward without severe conflicts. The reproaches of his enemies, their misrepresentation of his purposes, and their unjust and malicious reflections upon his character and motives, came upon him like an overwhelming flood; and they were not without effect. The Reformer had bitter accusers to meet. Some charged him with acting hastily and from impulse. Others accused him of presumption, declaring that he was not directed of God, but was acting from pride and forwardness. "Who does not know," he responded, "that one can seldom advance a new idea without having some appearance of pride, and without being accused of exciting quarrels? Why were Christ and all the martyrs put to death? Because they appeared proud despisers of the wisdom of the times in which they lived, and because they brought forward new truths without having first consulted the oracles of the old opinions." -D'Aubigne, b. 3, ch. 6.

Many dignitaries, both of church and state, were convicted of the truthfulness of his theses; but they soon saw that the acceptance of these truths would involve great changes. To enlighten and reform the people would virtually undermine the authority of Rome, and stop thousands of streams flowing into her treasury. Furthermore, to teach the people to think and act as responsible beings, looking to Christ alone for salvation, would overthrow the pontiff's throne, and eventually destroy their own authority. For this reason they arrayed themselves against Christ and the truth by opposing the man God sent to enlighten them.

Luther trembled inwardly—one man opposed to the mightiest powers of earth. He sometimes doubted whether he had indeed been led of God to set himself against the authority of the church. He wrote, "Who was I to oppose the majesty of the pope, before whom ... the kings of the earth and the whole world trembled? ... No one can know what my heart suffered during these first two years, and into what despondency, I may say into what despair, I was sunk." -Ibid., b. 3, ch. 6.

The whole scheme was a farce— an artifice to extort money by playing upon the superstitions of the people.

THE BIBLE AND THE BIBLE ONLY

When his enemies appealed to custom and tradition, or to the assertions and authority of the pope, Luther met them with the Bible, and the Bible only. He presented arguments which they could not answer; and the slaves of formalism and superstition clamored for his blood, as the Jews had clamored for the blood of Christ. "He is a heretic," cried the Roman zealots. "It is high treason against the church to allow so horrible a heretic to live one hour longer. Let the scaffold be instantly erected for him!" -Ibid., b. 3, ch. 9.

Soon he received a summons to appear at Rome to answer to the charge of heresy. The command filled his friends with terror. They knew full well the danger that threatened him in that

corrupt city, already drunk with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus. They protested against his going to Rome, and requested that he receive his examination in Germany.

This arrangement was finally effected, and the pope's legate was appointed to hear the case. In the instructions communicated by the pontiff to this official, it was stated that Luther had already been declared a heretic. The legate was therefore charged to "prosecute and reduce him to submission without delay." If he should remain steadfast, and the legate should fail to gain possession of his person, he was empowered to "proscribe him in every part of Germany; to banish, curse, and excommunicate all those who are attached to him." -D'Aubigne', b. 4, ch. 2. And further, the pope directed his legate, in order entirely to root out the pestilent heresy, to excommunicate all, of whatever dignity in church or state, except the emperor, who should neglect to seize Luther and his adherents, and deliver them up to the vengeance of Rome.

Here was displayed the true spirit of popery. Not a trace of Christian principle, or even of common justice, was to be seen in the whole document. Before his case had even been investigated, he was summarily pronounced a heretic, and, in the same day, exhorted, accused, judged, and condemned; and all this by the self-styled holy father, the only supreme, infallible authority in church and state!

Augsburg had been fixed upon as the place of trial, and the Reformer set out on foot to perform the journey. Serious fears were entertained in his behalf. Threats had been made openly that he would be seized and murdered on the way, and his friends begged him not to venture. They entreated him to leave Wittenberg for a time, and find safety with friends who would gladly protect him. But Luther would not be dissuaded and continued his journey.

The news of his arrival at Augsburg gave great satisfaction to the papal legate. The troublesome heretic who was exciting the attention of the whole world now seemed in the power of Rome, and the legate determined that he would not escape. Luther's friends urged him not to appear before the legate without a safe-conduct, and they themselves undertook to procure it from the emperor. The legate intended to force Luther, if possible, to be conveyed to Rome, to share the fate of Huss and Jerome. Therefore through his agents he endeavored to induce Luther to appear without a safe-conduct, trusting himself to his mercy. But this the Reformer firmly declined to do. Not until he had received the document pledging him the emperor's protection, did he appear in the presence of the papal ambassador.

LUTHER ON TRIAL

The Romanists had decided to attempt to win Luther by an appearance of gentleness. The legate, in his interviews with him, professed great friendliness; but he demanded that Luther submit implicitly to the authority of the church, and yield every point, without argument or question. He had not rightly estimated the character of the man with whom he had to deal. Luther, in reply, expressed his regard for the church, his desire for the truth, his readiness to answer all objections to what he had taught, and to submit his doctrines to the decision of certain leading universities. But at the same time he protested against the cardinal's course in requiring him to retract without having proved him in error.

The only response was, "Recant, recant." But the Reformer showed that his position was sustained by the Scriptures, and firmly declared that he could not renounce the truth. The legate, unable to reply to Luther's arguments, overwhelmed him with a storm of reproaches, jeers, and flattery, interspersed with quotations from tradition and the sayings of the Fathers, granting the Reformer no opportunity to speak. Seeing that the conference would be utterly futile, Luther finally obtained a reluctant permission to present his answer in writing.

At the next interview, he presented a clear, concise, and forcible exposition of his views, fully supported by many quotations from Scripture. After reading his paper aloud, he handed it to the cardinal, who cast it contemptuously aside, declaring it to be a mass of idle words and irrelevant quotations. Luther, fully roused, now met the haughty prelate on his own ground—the traditions and teachings of the church—and utterly overthrew his assumptions.

"I WILL EXCOMMUNICATE YOU"

When the legate saw that Luther's reasoning was unanswerable, he lost all self-control, and in a rage cried out: "Retract, or I will send you to Rome, there to appear before the judges commissioned to take cognizance of your cause. I will excommunicate you and all your partisans, and all who shall at any time countenance you, and will cast them out of the church." - D'Aubigne, London ed., b. 4, ch.

Luther promptly withdrew with his friends, declaring that no retraction was to be expected from him. This was not what the cardinal had purposed. He flattered himself that he could awe Luther to submission. Now, left alone with his supporters, he looked from one to another, in utter chagrin at the unexpected failure of his schemes.

Luther's efforts were not without good results. The large assembly present had opportunity to compare the two men, and to judge for themselves the spirit manifested by them, as well as the strength and truthfulness of their positions. How marked the contrast! The Reformer stood in the strength of God, having Scripture on his side; the pope's representative, self-important, overbearing, haughty, and unreasonable, was without a single argument from the Scriptures, vehemently crying, "Retract, or be sent to Rome for punishment."

Even though Luther had secured a safe-conduct, the Romanists plotted to seize and imprison him. His friends urged that he return to Wittenberg without delay, and that the utmost caution be observed to conceal his intentions. He left Augsburg before daybreak, on horseback, accompanied by a guide furnished by the magistrate. Reaching a small gate in the wall of the city, it was opened to him and his guide, and they passed through without hindrance. Before the legate learned of Luther's departure, he was beyond the reach of his persecutors.

The legate was overwhelmed with surprise and anger at the news of Luther's escape. He had expected to receive great honor for his wisdom and firmness in dealing with this disturber of the church. He gave expression to his wrath in a letter to Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, bitterly denouncing Luther, and demanding that Frederick send the Reformer to Rome or banish him from Saxony.

In defense, Luther urged that the legate or the pope show him his errors from the Scriptures, and pledged himself in the most solemn manner to renounce his doctrines if they could be shown to contradict the word of God. Luther's appeal to Scripture was consistent and steadfast. When later he should appear before the German emperor, Charles V, and the German Diet to answer for his faith, he boldly declared,

"Since your most serene majesty and your high mightinesses require from me a clear, simple, and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to the councils, because it is clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless therefore I am convinced by the testimony of scripture or by the clearest reasoning, unless I am persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and unless they thus render my conscience bound by the word of God, I cannot and I will not retract, for it is unsafe for a Christian to speak against his conscience. Here I stand, I can do no other; may God help me. Amen." -D'Aubigne, b. 7, ch. 8

Frederick, the Elector of Saxony, had little knowledge of the reformed doctrines, but he was deeply impressed by the candor and clearness of Luther's words; and, until the Reformer should be proved to be in error, Frederick resolved to stand as his protector. In reply to the legate's demand he wrote: "Since Dr. Martin has appeared before you at Augsburg, you should be satisfied. We did not expect that you would endeavor to make him retract without having convinced him of his errors. None of the learned men in our principality have informed me that Martin's doctrine is impious, antichristian, or heretical." The prince refused, moreover, to send Luther to Rome, or to expel him from his states." -D'Aubigne, b. 4, ch. 10.

ANTICHRIST HIMSELF?

In time Luther continued his comparison of Scripture with the papal decrees and constitutions. He wrote, "I am reading the decrees of the pontiffs, and ... I do not know whether the pope is antichrist himself, or his apostle, so greatly is Christ misrepresented and crucified in them." - D'Aubigne, b. 5, ch. 1.

In an appeal for the Reformation of Christianity, Luther wrote to the emperor and nobility of Germany concerning the pope:

"It is a horrible thing to behold the man who styles himself Christ's vicegerent, displaying a magnificence that no emperor can equal. Is this being like the poor Jesus, or the humble Peter? He is, say they, the lord of the world! But Christ, whose vicar he boasts of being, said, 'My kingdom is not of this world.' Can the dominions of a vicar extend beyond those of his superior?"-Ibid., b. 6, ch. 3.

This appeal was rapidly circulated throughout Germany, and exerted a powerful influence upon the people. His opponents, burning with a desire for revenge, urged the pope to take decisive measures against him. It was decreed that his doctrines should be immediately condemned. Sixty days were granted the Reformer and his adherents, after which, if they did not recant, they were all to be excommunicated.

That was a terrible crisis for the Reformation. For centuries Rome's sentence of excommunication struck terror to powerful monarchs; it filled mighty empires with woe and desolation. Those upon whom its condemnation fell, were universally regarded with dread and horror; they were cut off from communion and treated as outlaws, to be hunted to extermination. Luther was not blind to the tempest about to burst upon him. He wrote: "What is about to happen I know not, nor do I care to know ... Let the blow light where it may, I am without fear. Not so much as a leaf falls, without the will of our Father. How much rather will He care for us! It is a light thing to die for the Word, since the Word which was made flesh hath Himself died. If we die with Him, we shall live with Him; and passing through that which He has passed through before us, we shall be where He is and dwell with Him forever." -D'Aubigne, 3d London ed., Walther, 1840, b. 6, ch. 9.

When the papal bull reached Luther, he declared: "I despise and attack it, as impious, false ... It is Christ Himself who is condemned therein ... I rejoice in having to bear such ills for the best of causes. Already I feel greater liberty in my heart; for at last I know that the pope is antichrist, and that his throne is that of Satan himself." -D'Aubigne, b. 6, ch. 9.

Then in a crowd of students, doctors, and citizens of all ranks, Luther burned the pope's bull, the canon laws, the decretals, and certain writings sustaining the papal power. "My enemies have been able, by burning my books," he said, "to injure the cause of truth in the minds of the common people, and destroy their souls; for this reason I consumed their books in return. A serious struggle has just begun. Hitherto I have been only playing with the pope. I began this work in God's name; it will be ended without me, and by His might." -Ibid., b. 6, ch. 10.

A FINAL SEPARATION

It was not without a terrible struggle that Luther decided upon a final separation from the church. It was about this time that he wrote: "I feel more and more every day how difficult it is to lay aside the scruples which one has imbibed in childhood. Oh how much pain it has caused me, though I had the Scriptures on my side, to justify it to myself that I should dare to make a stand alone against the pope, and hold him forth as antichrist! What have the tribulations of my heart not been! How many times have I not asked myself with bitterness that question which was so frequent on the lips of the papists: 'Art thou alone wise? Can every one else be mistaken? How will it be, if, after all, it is thyself who art wrong, and who art involving in thy error so many souls, who will then be eternally damned?' Twas so I fought with myself and with Satan, till Christ, by His own infallible word, fortified my heart against these doubts." -Martyn, *The Life and Times of Luther*, pages 372, 373.

The pope threatened Luther with excommunication if he did not recant; now the threat was fulfilled. A new bull appeared, declaring the Reformer's final separation from the Roman church, denouncing him accursed of Heaven, and including in the same condemnation all who received his doctrines. So began the contest between Scripture and the traditions of men; between Protestantism and Roman Catholicism.

A LESSON FROM THE PAST

Opposition is the lot of all whom God employs to present truths specially applicable to their time. There was a present truth in the days of Luther—a truth at that time of special importance; there is a present truth for the church today. But truth is no more desired by the majority today than it was by the papists who opposed Luther. There exists today the same disposition to accept the theories and traditions of men instead of the word of God. The spirit of the world is no more in harmony with the Spirit of Christ today than in earlier times; and those who preach the word of God in its purity will be received with no greater favor now than then. The forms of opposition to the truth may change, the enmity may be less open because it is more subtle; but the same antagonism still exists, and will be manifested to the end of time.

LIBERTY OF CONSCIENCE THREATENED

Romanism is now regarded by Protestants with far greater favor than in former years. There is an increasing indifference concerning the doctrines that separate the Protestant churches from the papal system; the opinion is gaining ground, that, after all, we do not differ so widely upon vital points as has been supposed, and that a little concession on our part will bring us into a better understanding with Rome. The time was when Protestants placed a high value upon the liberty of conscience which has been so dearly purchased. They taught their children to abhor popery, and understood that to be in harmony with Rome and her doctrines would be disloyalty to God. But how different are the sentiments being expressed today.

Defenders of the papacy declare that the Roman church has been maligned; and the Protestant world are inclined to accept the statement. Many urge that it is unjust to judge the church of today by the abominations and absurdities that marked her reign during the centuries of ignorance and darkness. They excuse her horrible cruelty as the result of the barbarism of the times, and plead that the influence of modern civilization has changed her sentiments.

Have these persons forgotten the claim of infallibility put forth for eight hundred years by this power? Far from being relinquished, this claim has been affirmed with greater positiveness than ever before. As Rome asserts that the "church never erred, nor will it, according to the Scriptures, ever err" (John L. von Mosheim, *Institutes of Ecclesiastical History*, book 3, century

II, part 2, chapter 2, section 9, note 17), how can she renounce the principles which governed her course in past ages?

The papal church will never relinquish her claim to infallibility. All that she has done in her persecution of those who reject her dogmas, she holds to be right; and would she not repeat the same acts, should the opportunity be presented? Let the restraints now imposed by secular governments be removed—let Rome be reinstated in her former power, and there will speedily be a revival of tyranny and persecution. She has clothed herself in Christ-like garments; but she is unchanged. Every principle of the papacy that existed in past ages exists today.

A well-known writer speaks of the attitude of the papal hierarchy regarding freedom of conscience, and of the perils which especially threaten the United States from the success of her policy: 'The Constitution of the United States guarantees liberty of conscience. Nothing is dearer or more fundamental. Pope Pius IX, in his Encyclical Letter of August 15, 1854, said: 'The absurd and erroneous doctrines or ravings in defense of liberty of conscience, are a most pestilential error—a pest, of all others, most to be dreaded in a state.' The same pope, in his Encyclical Letter of December 8, 1864, anathematized 'those who assert the liberty of conscience and of religious worship,' also 'all such as maintain that the church may not employ force.'

"The pacific tone of Rome in the United States does not imply a change of heart. She is tolerant where she is helpless. Says [Catholic] Bishop O'Connor: 'Religious liberty is merely endured until the opposite can be carried into effect without peril to the Catholic world'....The archbishop of St. Louis once said: 'Heresy and unbelief are crimes; and in Christian countries, as in Italy and Spain, for instance, where all the people are Catholics, and where the Catholic religion is an essential part of the law of the land, they are punished as other crimes.' . . .

"Every cardinal, archbishop, and bishop in the Catholic Church takes an oath of allegiance to the pope, in which occur the following words: 'Heretics, schismatics, and rebels to our said lord (the pope), or his aforesaid successors, I will to my utmost persecute and oppose.'" -Josiah Strong, Our Country, ch. 5, pars. 2-4

It is true that there are real Christians in the Roman Catholic communion. Thousands are serving God according to the best light they have. They do not discern the truth of the system they serve. They have never seen the contrast between a living heart service and a round of mere forms and ceremonies. If they are honest in heart, God will cause rays of light to penetrate the dense darkness that surrounds them. He will reveal to them the truth, as it is in Jesus.

PROTESTANTS ARE CLOSING THEIR EYES

Protestants are patronizing popery; they are making compromises and concessions which papists themselves are surprised to see. Men are closing their eyes to the real character of Romanism, and the dangers that result from her supremacy. People need to be aroused to resist this danger to civil and religious liberty.

Romanism as a system is no more in harmony with the gospel of Christ now than at any former period in her history. The Protestant churches are in great darkness, or they would discern the signs of the times. Catholicism is gaining ground upon every side. The Roman Church is far-reaching in her plans and modes of operation. She is employing every device to extend her influence and increase her power.

The Roman Church now presents a fair front to the world, covering with apologies her record of unspeakable cruelties. She has clothed herself in Christ-like garments; but she is unchanged. Every principle of the papacy that existed in past ages exists today. The doctrines devised in the

darkest ages are still held. Let none deceive themselves. The popery that Protestants are now so ready to honor is the same that ruled the world in the days of the Reformation, when men of God stood up, at the peril of their lives, to expose her iniquity. She possesses the same pride and arrogant assumption that lorded it over kings and princes, and claimed the prerogatives of God.

THE APOSTASY OF THE LATTER TIMES

The papacy is just what prophecy declared that she would be, the apostasy of the latter times. 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4. It is a part of her policy to assume the character which will best accomplish her purpose; but beneath the variable appearance of the chameleon, she conceals the invariable venom of the serpent. She declares: "Faith ought not to be kept with heretics, nor persons suspected of heresy" (Lenfant, History of the Council of Constance, volume 1, page 516). Shall this power, whose record for a thousand years is written in the blood of the saints, be now acknowledged as a part of the church of Christ?

It is not without reason that the claim has been put forth in Protestant countries, that Catholicism differs less widely from Protestantism than in former times. There has been a change; but the change is not with the papacy. Catholicism indeed resembles much of the Protestantism that now exists. Why? Because Protestantism has so greatly degenerated since the days of the Reformers.

As the Protestant churches have been seeking the favor of the world, false charity has blinded their eyes. They do not see but that it is right to believe good of all evil; and as the inevitable result, they will finally believe evil of all good. Instead of standing in defense of the faith once delivered to the saints, they are now apologizing to Rome for their uncharitable opinion of her, begging pardon for their bigotry.

"It's time for Protestants to go to the shepherd (the pope) and say 'what do we have to do to come home?' "

-Dr. Robert Schuller, Los Angeles Herald Examiner, September 19, 1987.

Heads of American Protestant and Eastern Orthodox churches who were meeting with Pope John Paul II on Friday hailed their first, broadly representative discussion as a landmark on the road to greater unity The Rev. Donald Jones, a United Methodist and chairman of the University of South Carolina religious studies department, termed it "the most important ecumenical meeting of the century" The Rev. Paul A. Crow Jr., of Indianapolis, ecumenical officer of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), called it a "new day in ecumenism" opening a future in which God "is drawing us together."

—The Montgomery Advertiser, September 12, 1987

A large class, even of those who look upon Romanism with no favor, apprehend little danger from her power and influence. Many urge that the intellectual and moral darkness prevailing during the Middle Ages favored the spread, of her dogmas, superstitions, and oppression, and that the greater intelligence of modern times, the general diffusion of knowledge, and the increasing liberality in matters of religion, forbid a revival of intolerance and tyranny. The very thought that such a state of things will exist in this enlightened age is ridiculed.

It is true that great light, intellectual, moral, and religious, is shining upon this generation. In the open pages of God's Holy Word, light from heaven has been shed upon the world. But it should be remembered that the greater the light bestowed, the greater the darkness of those who

pervert or reject it. A day of great intellectual darkness has been shown to be favorable to the success of the papacy. it will yet be demonstrated that a day of great intellectual light is equally favorable for its success. In past ages, when men were without God's word, and without the knowledge of the truth, their eyes were blindfolded, and thousands were ensnared, not seeing the net spread for their feet. In this generation as well, there are many who are dazzled by human inventions; they do not perceive the snare and walk into it as readily as if blindfolded.

A prayerful study of the Bible would show Protestants the real character of the papacy, and would cause them to abhor and to shun it; but many are so wise in their own conceit that they feel no need of humbly seeking God that they may be led into the truth. While priding themselves on their enlightenment, they are ignorant both of the Scriptures and of the power of God. They must have some means of quieting their consciences. What they desire is a method of forgetting God which shall pass as a method of remembering Him. The papacy is well adapted to meet the wants of all these. It is prepared for two classes of mankind, embracing nearly the whole world—those who would be saved by their merits (their own works), and those who would be saved in their sins (practicing willful sin). Here is the secret of its power.

AN ATTEMPT TO CHANGE GOD'S LAW

The law of God in the sanctuary in heaven is the great original, of which the precepts inscribed upon the tables of stone, and recorded by Moses in the Pentateuch, were an unerring transcript. The papacy has attempted to change the law of God. The second commandment, forbidding image worship, has been dropped from the law, and the fourth commandment has been so changed as to authorize the observance of the first instead of the seventh day as the Sabbath. But papists urge, as a reason for omitting the second commandment, that it is unnecessary, being included in the first, and that they are giving the law exactly as God designed it to be understood. In the sure word of prophecy, an intentional, deliberate change is presented: "He shall think to change the times and the law." Daniel 7:25, RV. The change in the fourth commandment, exactly fulfills the prophecy. For this the only authority claimed is that of the church. Here the papal power openly sets itself above God.

THE "DAY OF THE SUN"

Royal edicts, general councils, and church ordinances sustained by secular power, were the steps by which the pagan festival attained its position of honor in the Christian world. The first public measure enforcing Sunday observance was the law enacted by Constantine, (A.D. 321). This edict required townspeople to rest on "the venerable day of the sun," but permitted countrymen to continue their agricultural pursuits. Though virtually a heathen statute, it was enforced by the emperor after his nominal acceptance of Christianity.

THE LAW OF GOD

I

"Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."

II

"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. Thou shalt not bow

down thyself to them, nor serve them, for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments."

III

"Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

IV

"Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labor, and do all thy work; but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God. In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: Wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it."

V

"Honor thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

VI

"Thou shalt not kill."

VII

"Thou shalt not commit adultery."

VIII

"Thou shalt not steal"

IX

"Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor."

X

"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's."

-Exodus 20.3-17

THE LAW OF GOD AS CHANGED BY MAN

I

I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

(The Second Commandment has been omitted)

II (actually III)

Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III (IV)

Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

(The Sabbath Commandment has been radically altered!)

IV (V)

Honor thy father and thy mother.

V (VI)

Thou shalt not kill.

VI (VII)

Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VII (VIII)

Thou shalt not steal.

VIII (IX)

Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

IX (actually X, first part!)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors wife.

X (actually X, second part!)

Thou shalt not covet thy neighbors goods.

-The General Catholic Catechism.

"Q.-Have you any other way of proving that the (Catholic) Church has power to Institute festivals of precept?

"A.-Had she not such power .. she could not have substituted the observance of Sunday, the first day of the week for Saturday, the seventh day, a change for which there is no scriptural authority."-Doctrinal Catechism, p. 174 (Roman Catholic).

"Prove to me from the Bible alone that I am bound to keep Sunday holy. There is no such law in the Bible. It is a law of the holy Catholic Church alone. The Bible says "Remember the Sabbath day to keep It holy." The Catholic Church says, No. By my divine power I abolish the Sabbath day and command you to keep holy the first day of the week. And lo! The entire civilized world bows down in reverent obedience to the command of the Holy Catholic Church." - Thomas Enright, CSSR, President, Redemptorist College (Roman Catholic), Kansas City, Mo., Feb. 18, 1884.

The royal mandate not proving a sufficient substitute for divine authority, Eusebius, a bishop who sought the favor of princes, and who was the special friend and flatterer of Constantine, advanced the claim that Christ had transferred the Sabbath to Sunday. Not a single testimony of the Scriptures was produced in proof of the new doctrine. Eusebius himself unwittingly acknowledges its falsity, and points to the real authors of the change. "All things," he says, "whatever that it was duty to do on the Sabbath, these we have transferred to the Lord's day." - Robert Cox, Sabbath Laws and Sabbath Duties, page 538.

THE FIRST "BLUE LAWS"

For a time the seventh day was still regarded as the Sabbath. But steadily a change was effected. As the papacy became firmly established, the work of Sunday exaltation continued. Those in holy office were forbidden to pass judgment in any civil controversy on the Sunday. Soon after, all persons, of whatever rank, were commanded to refrain from common labor, on pain of a fine for freemen, and stripes in the case of servants. Later it was decreed, that rich men should be punished with the loss of half of their estates; and finally, that if still obstinate they should be made slaves. The lower classes were to suffer perpetual banishment.

Miracles also were called into requisition. Among other wonders it was reported that as a husbandman who was about to plow his field on Sunday, cleaned his plow with an iron, the iron stuck fast in his hand, and for two years he carried it about with him, "to his exceeding great pain and shame." -Francis West, Historical and Practical Discourse on the Lord's Day, page 174.

Later, the pope gave directions that the parish priest should admonish the violators of Sunday, and urge them to go to church and say their prayers, lest they bring some great calamity on themselves and neighbors. But the decrees of councils proved insufficient, and the secular authorities were besought to issue an edict that would strike terror to the hearts of the people and force them to refrain from labor on Sunday. At a synod held in Rome, all previous decisions were reaffirmed with greater force and solemnity. They were also incorporated into the ecclesiastical law and enforced by the civil authorities throughout nearly all Christendom. (See Heylyn, History of the Sabbath, pt. 2, ch. 5, sec. 7.)

The absence of Scriptural authority for Sunday-keeping often caused church leaders embarrassment. The people questioned the right of their teachers to set aside the positive declaration of Scripture, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," in order to honor the day of the sun. To supply the lack of Bible testimony, other arguments were fabricated. One zealous advocate of Sunday, who about the close of the twelfth century visited the churches of England, was resisted by faithful witnesses for the truth; so fruitless were his efforts that he left the country for a season, and cast about for some means to enforce his teachings. When he returned, the lack had been supplied. He brought with him a roll purporting to be from God Himself, which contained the needed command for Sunday observance, with awful threats to terrify the disobedient. This precious document—as base a counterfeit as the institution it supported—was said to have fallen from heaven, and to have been found in Jerusalem, upon the altar of St. Simeon, in Golgotha. But in fact, the pontifical palace at Rome was the source whence it proceeded. Frauds and forgeries to advance the power and prosperity of the church have in all ages been esteemed lawful by the papal hierarchy.

Notwithstanding all their efforts to establish Sunday sacredness, papists themselves publicly confess the divine authority of the Sabbath, and the human origin of the institution by which it had been supplanted. In the sixteenth century a papal council plainly declared: "Let all Christians remember that the seventh day was consecrated by God, and hath been received and observed, not only by the Jews, but by all others who pretend to worship God; though we Christians have changed their Sabbath into the Lord's day." - Thomas Morer, Discourse in Six Dialogues on the Name, Notion, and Observation of the Lord's Day, pages 281, 282.

Those who were tampering with the divine law were not ignorant of the character of their work. They were deliberately setting themselves above God. The Bible teaches that these scenes are to be repeated as Papists and Protestants unite for the exaltation of Sunday.

TRUE WORSHIP

The duty to worship God is based upon the fact that He is the Creator, and that to Him all other beings owe their existence. And wherever, in the Bible, His claim to reverence and worship, above the gods of the heathen, is presented, there is cited the evidence of His creative power.

"All the gods of the nations are idols; but the Lord made the heavens." Psalms 96:5.

"To whom then will ye liken Me, or shall I be equal? Saith the Holy One. Lift up your eyes on high, and behold who hath created these things." Isaiah 40:25, 26.

"Thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God Himself that formed the earth and made it; ... I am the Lord; and there is none else." Isaiah 45:18.

"Know ye that the Lord, He is God; it is He that hath made us, and not we ourselves." Psalms 100:3.

"O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Psalms 95:6.

And the holy beings who worship God in heaven state, as the reason why their homage is due to Him, "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things." Revelation 4:1 1.

A CALL TO JUDGMENT

The last book of Scripture (Revelation), by virtue of its own claim, is a prophecy of the end times. In chapter 14 of this book, men are called upon to worship the Creator. This prophecy brings to view a class that, as the result of the threefold message it contains, are keeping the commandments of God. These messages are to prepare the inhabitants of the earth for the Lord's second coming. The announcement, "The hour of His judgment is come," points to the closing work of Christ's ministration for the salvation of men. It heralds a truth which must be proclaimed until the Saviour's intercession shall cease, and He shall return to the earth to take His people to heaven.

That men may be prepared to stand in the judgment, the message of Revelation 14 commands them to "fear God, and give glory to Him," "and worship Him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." The result of an acceptance of these messages is given in the words, "Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus." God's law will be the standard of character in the judgment. The apostle Paul declares, "As many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; - - in the day when God shall judge the

secrets of men by Jesus Christ." And he says that "the doers of the law shall be justified." Romans 2:12-16. Faith is essential in order to keep the law of God; for "without faith it is impossible to please Him." And "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Hebrews 11:6; Romans 14:23.

One of these commandments points directly to God as the Creator. The fourth precept declares: "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day; wherefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day, and hallowed it." Exodus 20:10, 11. "The importance of the Sabbath as the memorial of creation is that it keeps ever present the true reason why worship is due to God,"—because He is the Creator, and we are His creatures. "The Sabbath therefore lies at the very foundation of divine worship, for it teaches this great truth in the most impressive manner, and no other institution does this. The true ground of divine worship, not of that on the seventh day merely, but of all worship, is found in the distinction between the Creator and His creatures. This great fact can never become obsolete, and must never be forgotten." -J. N. Andrews, History of the Sabbath, chapter 27. It was to keep this truth before the minds of men, that God instituted the Sabbath in Eden.

Had the Sabbath been universally kept, man's thoughts and affections would have been led to the Creator as the object of reverence and worship, and there would never have been an idolater, an atheist, or an infidel. The keeping of the Sabbath is a sign of loyalty to the true God, "Him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." It follows that the message which commands men to worship God and keep His commandments, will especially call upon them to keep the fourth commandment.

THE BEAST, THE IMAGE, THE MARK

In contrast to those who keep the commandments of God and have the faith of Jesus, the third angel points to another class, against whose errors a solemn and fearful warning is uttered: "If any man worship the beast and his image, and receive his mark in his forehead, or in his hand, the same shall drink of the wine of the wrath of God." Revelation 14:9, 10. A correct interpretation of the symbols employed is necessary to an understanding of this message. What is represented by the beast, the image, the mark?

The line of prophecy in which these symbols are found, begins with Revelation 12, with the dragon that sought to destroy Christ at His birth. The dragon is said to be Satan (Revelation 12:9); he it was that moved upon Herod to put the Saviour to death. But the chief agent of Satan in making war upon Christ and His people during the first centuries of the Christian era, was the Roman Empire, in which paganism was the prevailing religion. Thus while the dragon, primarily, represents Satan, it is, in a secondary sense, a symbol of pagan Rome.

In Chapter 13 (Verses 1-10) is described another beast, "like unto a leopard," to which the dragon gave "his power, and his seat, and great authority." This symbol, as most Protestants have believed, represents the papacy, which succeeded to the power and seat and authority once possessed by the ancient Roman Empire. Of the leopard-like beast it is declared: "There was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies.... And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name, and His tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. And it was given unto him to make war with the saints, and to overcome them; and power was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations." This prophecy, which is nearly identical with the description of the little horn of Daniel 7, unquestionably points to the papacy.

Says the prophet, "I saw one of his heads as it were wounded to death." And again: "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword." In 1798, the pope was taken captive by the French army, acting under orders of

Napoleon Bonaparte. The papal power received a deadly wound, and the prediction was fulfilled, "He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity."

At this point another symbol is introduced. Says the prophet, "I beheld another beast coming up out of the earth; and he had two horns like a lamb." Revelation 13:11. Both the appearance of this beast and the manner of its rise indicate that the nation which it represents is unlike those presented under the preceding symbols. The great kingdoms that have ruled the world were presented to the prophet Daniel as beasts of prey, rising when the "four winds of the heaven strove upon the great sea." Daniel 7:2. In Revelation 17, an angel explained to John, that waters represent "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." Revelation 17:15. Winds are a symbol of strife. The four winds of heaven striving upon the great sea, represent the terrible scenes of conquest and revolution by which kingdoms have attained to power.

But the beast with lamblike horns was seen "coming up out of the earth." Instead of overthrowing other powers to establish itself, the nation thus represented must arise in territory previously unoccupied. It could not, then, arise among the crowded and struggling nationalities of the Old World—that turbulent sea of "peoples, and multitudes, and nations, and tongues." It must be found in the New World.

AMERICA IN PROPHECY

What nation of the New World was in 1798 rising into power, giving promise of strength and greatness, and attracting the attention of the world? The application of the symbol admits of no question. One nation, and only one, meets the specifications of this prophecy; it points unmistakably to the United States of America. Again and again the thought, almost the exact words, of the sacred writer have been unconsciously employed by the orator and the historian in describing the rise and growth of this nation. The beast was seen "coming up out of the earth;" and, according to the translators, the word here rendered "coming up" literally signifies to "grow or spring up as a plant." And, as we have seen, the nation must arise in territory previously unoccupied. A prominent writer, describing the rise of the United States, speaks of "the mystery of her coming forth from vacancy," and says, "Like a silent seed we grew into an empire." -G. A. Townsend, *The New World Compared With the Old*, page 462. A European journal in 1850 spoke of the United States as a wonderful empire, which was "emerging," and "amid the silence of the earth daily adding to its power and pride." -*The Dublin Nation*.

"And he had two horns like a lamb." The lamb-like horns, when presented to the prophet, fitly represent the youth, innocence, and gentle character of the United States. The Christian exiles who first fled to America, sought asylum from royal oppression and religious intolerance, and they determined to establish a government upon the broad foundation of civil and religious liberty. The Declaration of Independence sets forth the great truth that "all men are created equal," and endowed with the inalienable right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." And the Constitution guarantees to the people the right of self-government, providing that representatives elected by the popular vote shall enact and administer the laws. Freedom of religious faith was also granted, every man being permitted to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. Republicanism and Protestantism became the fundamental principles of the nation. These principles are the secret of its power and prosperity. The oppressed and down-trodden throughout Christendom have turned to this land with interest and hope. Millions have sought its shores, and the United States has risen to a place among the most powerful nations of the earth.

A STRIKING CONTRADICTION...

But the beast with lamb-like horns "spake as a dragon. And he exerciseth all the power of the first beast before him, and causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast, whose deadly wound was healed,... saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live." Revelation 13:11-14.

The lamb-like horns and dragon voice of the symbol point to a striking contradiction between the professions and the practice of the nation thus represented. The "speaking" of the nation is the action of its legislative and judicial authorities. By such action it will give the lie to those liberal and peaceful principles which it has put forth as the foundation of its policy. The prediction that it will speak "as a dragon," and exercise "all the power of the first beast," plainly foretells a development of the spirit of intolerance and persecution that was manifested by the nations represented by the dragon and the leopardlike beast. And the statement that the beast with two horns "causeth the earth and them which dwell therein to worship the first beast," indicates that the authority of this nation is to be exercised in enforcing some observance which shall be an act of homage to the papacy.

Such action would be directly contrary to the principles of this government, to the genius of its free institutions, to the direct and solemn avowals of the Declaration of Independence, and to the Constitution. The founders of the nation wisely sought to guard against the employment of secular power on the part of the church, with its inevitable result—intolerance and persecution. The Constitution provides that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof," and that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification to any off public trust under the United States." Only in flagrant violation of these safeguards to the nation's liberty, can any religious observance be enforced by civil authority. But the inconsistency of such action is represented in the symbol. It is the beast with the lamb-like horns—in profession pure, gentle, and harmless—that speaks as a dragon.

"Saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast." Here is clearly presented a form of government in which the legislative power rests with the people; a most striking evidence that the United States is the nation denoted in the prophecy.

But what is the "image to the beast"? and how is it to be formed? The image is made by the two-horned beast, and is an image to the first beast. Then to learn what the image is like, and how it is to be formed, we must study the characteristics of the beast itself—the papacy.

Here is clearly presented a form of government in which the legislative power rests with the people; a most striking evidence that the United States is the nation denoted in the prophecy.

CHURCH AND STATE UNITED

When the early church became corrupted by departing from the simplicity of the gospel, and accepted heathen rites and customs, she lost the Spirit and power of God; and in order to control the consciences of the people she sought the support of the secular power. The result was the papacy, a church that controlled the power of the state, and employed it to further her own ends, especially for the punishment of "heresy." In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.

Whenever the church has obtained secular power, she has employed it to punish dissent from her doctrines. Protestant churches that have followed in the steps of Rome by forming alliance

with worldly powers, have manifested a similar desire to restrict liberty of conscience. An example of this is given in the long-continued persecution of dissenters by the Church of England. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, thousands of non-conformist ministers were forced to leave their churches, and many, both of pastors and people, were subjected to fine, imprisonment, torture, and martyrdom.

It was apostasy that led the early church to seek the aid of the civil government, and this prepared the way for the development of the papacy—the beast. Said Paul, There shall "come a falling away,... and that man of sin be revealed." 2 Thessalonians 2:3. So apostasy in the church will prepare the way for the image to the beast.

The Bible declares that before the coming of the Lord there will exist a state of religious declension similar to that in the first centuries.

"In the last days perilous times shall come. For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good, traitors, heady, highminded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God; having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof." 2 Timothy 3:1-5.

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." 1 Timothy 4:1.

Satan will work "with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness." And all that "received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved," will be left to accept "strong delusion, that they should believe a lie." 2 Thessalonians 2:9-11. When this state of ungodliness shall be reached, the same results will follow as in the first centuries.

In order for the United States to form an image of the beast, the religious power must so control the civil government that the authority of the state will also be employed by the church to accomplish her own ends.