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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled. (*2 Corinthians* 10:3-6)

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Romanism and the Reformation: Lecture 3, Part 2

Paul's Foreview of Romanism

by Henry Grattan Guinness

But we must pass on from this point, the position assumed by the man of sin in the Church of God and ask whether Romanism has fulfilled the other predictions of Paul as to "lying wonders" and "signs," or false miracles, and the deceits of unrighteousness. Has she employed these as a means of gaining "power," deluding her votaries that she might the more effectually enslave them? To exalt the priesthood, and especially its head, the Papal high priest, Rome has spared nothing. She has trampled alike on the intellect and conscience of mankind and despised the eternal well-being of souls by inducing them to believe lies.

The man of sin was to come with all power and signs and lying wonders, in all deceivableness of unrighteousness. Just as the apostles wrought miracles to confirm the Gospel they preached, or rather, as the Lord wrought with them and confirmed the word with signs following, so Satan would work with antichrist, endorsing his pretensions with false miracles designed to overthrow the Gospel. Bishop John Jewell, of Salisbury, wrote in the sixteenth century:

> Of the first sort of false miracles, we have seen an infinite number in the days of our fathers in the kingdom of antichrist. Then was there an appearance of spirits and visions of angels: our lady came swimming down from Heaven; poor souls came creeping and crying out of purgatory, and jetted abroad; and kept stations, casting flakes of fire, and beset highways, and bemoaned their cases, the pains and torments were so bitter.
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> They sought for help and cried for good prayers; they cried for dirges, they cried for masses of requiem, for masses of *scala coeli*, for *trentals* of masses. Hereof grew portsale of pardons, and hereof grew the province of purgatory, the most gainful country that ever was under the city of Rome.
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> But these miracles were no miracles at all; they were devised by subtle varlets and lazy lordanes for a purpose, to get money. Oftentimes the spirit has been taken and laid in the stocks; the angel has been stripped; the good lady has been caught; the conveyance of the miracle has appeared; the engines and sleights and the cause and the manner of the working have been confessed.
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> In those days idols could go on foot; roods could speak; bells could ring alone; images could come down, and light their own candles; dead stocks could sweat and bestir themselves; they could turn their eyes; they could move their hands; they could open their mouths; they could set bones and knit sinews; they could heal the sick and raise up the dead.
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> These miracles were conveyances and subtleties, and indeed no miracles; the trunks by which they spoke, the strings and wires with which they moved their faces and hands, all the rest of their treachery, have been disclosed. These are the miracles of which Paul speaks – miracles in sight, in appearance, but indeed no miracles.
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> It was also arranged that the saints should not have power to work in all places. Some wrought at Canterbury, some at Walsingham, some at York, some at Buxton, some in one place, some in another, some in the towns, some in the fields. Even as Jeremiah said among the Jews, chapter 11, "According to the number of thy cities were thy

> gods." Hereof grew pilgrimages and worshipping of images and kissing of relics; hereof grew oblations and enriching of abbeys; every man had his peculiar saint on whom he called; every country was full of chapels, every chapel full of miracles, and every miracle full of lies.
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> These miracles are wrought by antichrist; they are his tools, wherewith he works; they are his weapons, wherewith he prevails; they are full of lying, full of deceitfulness, and full of wickedness: so shall antichrist prevail, and rule over the world. By these miracles he shall possess the ears, the eyes, and the hearts of many, and shall draw them after him.[1]

It was alleged that miracles were not only wrought by the saints, but even by the relics of the saints. In Calvin's tractate on the subject of relics, he proves that the great majority of the relics in use among Romanists are spurious, having been brought forward by imposters, so that every apostle is made to have three or four bodies, and every saint two or three, and that the garments of Christ are almost infinite in number! As His body ascended to heaven, relics of it were not of course available; but spurious relics of everything He ever used or handled have been multiplied *ad nauseam*. Even the body of Christ has not escaped; the teeth, the hair, and the blood are exhibited in hundreds of places; the manger, in which He was laid at His birth, the linen in which He was swaddled, His cradle, the first shirt His mother put on Him, the pillar against which He leant in the temple, the water-pots that were at the marriage in Cana of Galilee, and even the wine that was made in them, the shoes that He used when He was a boy, the table on which He observed the Last Supper, and hundreds of similar things are shown many of them in a number of places to this day. And as to the relics connected with our Lord's sufferings and death, they are just innumerable. The fragments of the true cross scattered over the globe would, if catalogued, fill a volume. "There is no town, however small, which has not some morsel of it; and this not only in the principal cathedral church of the district, but also in parish churches. There is scarcely an abbey so poor as not to have a specimen. In some places larger fragments exist, as at Paris, Poitiers, and Rome. If all the pieces which could be found were collected into a heap, they would form a good ship load; though the gospel testifies that a single individual was able to carry the real cross. What effrontery then thus to fill the whole world with fragments which it would take more than three hundred men to carry! In regard to the crown of thorns, it would seem that its twigs had been planted that they might grow again; otherwise I know not how it could have attained such a size. I would never come to an end were I to go one by one over all the absurd articles they have drawn into this service. At Rome is shown the reed which was put into our Savior's hands as a scepter; the sponge which was offered to Him containing vinegar mixed with gall. How, I ask, were those things recovered? They were in the hands of the wicked. Did they give them to the apostles that they might preserve them for relics, or did they themselves lock them up that they might preserve them for some future period? What blasphemy to abuse the name of Christ by employing it as a cloak for such driveling fables!"[2]

Among the images that Rome worships, a certain class are miraculous. The figure on the crucifix of Burgos in Spain is said to have a beard which grows perpetually, and there are similar ones in three or four other places. The stupid people believe the fable to be true. Other crucifixes are said to have spoken – a whole number. Others shed tears, as for instance, one at Treves; and another at Orleans. From others the warm blood flows periodically. Miraculous images of the virgin are even more numerous. As they hold that the body of the virgin ascended to Heaven like that of her Son, they cannot pretend to have her bones like those of the saints. Had it been otherwise, they would have given her a body of such size as would fill a thousand coffins. But they have made up for this lack by her hair and her milk. There is no town however small, no monastery or nunnery however insignificant, which does not possess some of this – some in small, others in large quantities. As Calvin says: "Had the breasts of the most holy virgin yielded a more copious supply than is given by a cow, and had she continued to nurse during her whole lifetime, she could scarcely have furnished the quantity which is exhibited. I would fain know," he asks, "how it was collected so as to be preserved until our time. Luke relates the prophecy which Simeon made to the virgin, but he does not say that Simeon asked her to give him some milk." The fabrication of these relics was a lucrative trade throughout the Middle Ages; especially were dead bodies invested with sacredness by attaching to them the names of saints and martyrs. Toulouse, for instance, thinks it possesses six bodies of the apostles: James, Andrew, James the Less,

[1] Jewell on *2 Thessalonians*, 245.

[2] "Admonition Showing the Advantages which Christendom might Derive from an Inventory of Relics," Calvin, *Tracts*, volume 1, 289.

Philip, Simeon, and Jude; but duplicates of these bodies are also in St. Peter's and other churches in Rome. Matthias has also another at Treves; and there are heads and arms of him existing at different places sufficient to make up another body. What shall we say of the spirit that encourages the belief in lies and deceives men in this style? The degradation inflicted on the ignorant and unlearned by these fables is terrible, as anyone who watches their effect in Ireland or on the Continent is aware. Whether the miracles of the man of sin be real or pretended, true or false, it matters little. The main point is they are directed to establish falsehood. "He relies for his success on the effects to be wrought in human minds by wonders and deceits accomplished in the energy of Satan." He employs wonders and deceits, a pretense to miraculous powers. Romanism has availed herself of such fraudulent practices to an enormous extent and has profited by them both financially and otherwise.

But lying wonders to impose on the ignorant and superstitious masses were not the only means by which the Papacy attained its power in the Middle Ages; spurious documents, impostures of another kind, were used to influence the royal, noble, and educated classes. Principal among these were the celebrated decretal epistles, a forgery which produced the most important consequences for the Papacy, though its spurious nature was ultimately detected. Gibbon writes:

> Before the end of the eighth century, some apostolical scribe, perhaps the notorious Isidore, composed the "decretals" and the "Donation of Constantine" – the two magic pillars of the spiritual and temporal monarchy of the popes. This memorable donation was introduced to the world by an epistle of Pope Adrian I, who exhorts Charlemagne to imitate the liberality and revive the name of the great Constantine" (Gibbon, *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, chapter 49).

Their effect was enormous in advancing both the temporal power and the ecclesiastical supremacy of the popes. The "Donation of Constantine" founded the one and the false decretals the other. The latter pretended to be decrees of the early bishops of Rome limiting the independence of all archbishops and bishops by establishing a supreme jurisdiction of the Roman see in all cases, and by forbidding national councils to be held without its consent. "Upon these spurious decretals," says Mr. Hallam in his *History of the Middle Ages*, "was built the great fabric of Papal supremacy over the different national Churches – a fabric which has stood after its foundation crumbled beneath it, for no one has pretended to deny for the last two centuries that the imposture is too palpable for any but the most ignorant ages to credit."

It is evident then that Romanism has fulfilled this part of the prophecy of the "man of sin," even him whose coming was to be after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders and all deceivableness of unrighteousness. The power of the popes was built up on frauds and deceits of this character and has been maintained over all the nations subject to it ever since by pretended miracles, spurious relics, lying wonders, and unrighteous deceits. And all these have been employed to oppose the Gospel and establish falsehood.

In considering the ecclesiastical aspect of Romanism, we must never forget that it is the outcome and climax of the predicted apostasy, whose features Paul describes in *Timothy*. We must close this lecture with a few remarks on the departure from the faith which occupies so prominent a place in that description. Some should "depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of devils, speaking lies in hypocrisy, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats." The faith must of course here be taken in a broad sense, as including all the doctrines and commandments of the Christian religion. The apostasy was to be marked by a departure from this faith, by the teaching of false doctrines, and the inculcation of anti-scriptural practices. That Popery is completely at variance with the Bible on all the important points of the faith of Christ may be safely asserted and can be abundantly proved. We can select but a few of the principal points.

1. The Apostle Paul teaches that the Holy Scriptures are able to make us "wise unto salvation," that they are capable of rendering the man of God "thoroughly furnished"; and James speaks of the engrafted word of God as "able to save the soul." The true doctrine therefore is that Scripture contains all that is necessary to salvation. What is the doctrine of Romanism on this point? One of the articles of the Council of Trent asserts that, not only should the Old and New Testaments be received with reverence as the Word of God, but also "the unwritten traditions which have come down to us, pertaining both to faith and manners, and preserved in the Catholic Church by continual succession." In considering this decree, and its fatal effects in exalting mere human traditions to the level of Divine revelation, one is reminded of the solemn words which close the *Apocalypse*: "If any man shall add unto these things,

God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book." Christ taught, on the contrary, that tradition was to be rejected whenever it was opposed to Scripture. "Why do you also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?" "In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men." "Laying aside the commandment of God, you hold the tradition of men." "Making the Word of God of none effect through your tradition."

2. Again. The Bible teaches us the duty of reading and searching the Scriptures. The Lord Jesus Himself said, "Search the Scriptures"; but Romanism forbids the general reading of Scripture, asserting that such a use of the Word of God in the vulgar tongue causes more harm than good, and that it must never be practiced except by special permission in writing obtained from a priest. If any presume to read it without that, they are not to receive absolution. Booksellers who sell the Bible to any desiring to obtain it are to have penalties inflicted upon them, and no one is to purchase a Bible without special license from their superior. This is extended to receiving a gift of the Bible.

3. The true faith teaches us that every man is bound to judge for himself as to the meaning of Scripture. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good." "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." But the Council of Trent decrees, that "no one confiding in his own judgment shall dare to wrest the sacred Scriptures to his own sense of them contrary to that which is held by holy mother Church, whose right it is to judge of the meaning." If anyone disobeys this decree, he is to be punished according to law.

4. Scripture teaches us most abundantly that Christ is the only head of the Church. God gave Him to be the head over all things to the Church, which is His body; but Romanism teaches that the pope is the head of the Church on Earth. "The pope is the head of all heads, and the prince, moderator, and pastor of the whole Church of Christ, which is under him," says Benedict XIV; and the *Douay Catechism*, taught in all Papal schools, says, "He who is not in due connection and subordination to the Pope must needs be dead, and cannot be counted a member of the Church."

5. Scripture teaches us that the wages of sin is death, and "that whoever shall keep the law, and yet offend in one point, is guilty of all." "Cursed is every one that continues not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." But Popery teaches that there are some sins which do not deserve the wrath and curse of God, and that venial sins do not bring spiritual death to the soul.

6. The Bible teaches us that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law, and that we are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. But Popery denounces this doctrine. The Council of Trent asserted that whosoever should affirm that we are justified by the grace and favor of God was to be accursed, and so all those who hold that salvation is not by works, but by grace.

7. Scripture teaches us to confess sin to God only. "Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." "Every one of us shall give account of himself to God." "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." But Romanism denies this and says that sacramental confession to a priest is necessary to salvation, and that anyone who should denounce the practice of secret confessions as contrary to the institution and command of Christ, and a mere human invention, is to be accursed.

8. Scripture teaches us, again, that God only can forgive sins, and that the minister's duty is simply to announce His forgiveness. "Repentance and remission of sins" was to be preached in His name among all nations. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." He commanded us to preach to the people, that "through his name whosoever believes in him shall receive remission of sins." The Council of Trent asserts, on the contrary, whosoever shall affirm that the priest's absolution is not a judicial act, but only a ministry to declare that the sins of the penitent are forgiven, or that the confession of the penitent is not necessary in order to obtain absolution from the priest, let him be accursed.

9. Scripture teaches us that no man is perfectly righteous, and certainly that none can do more than his duty to God. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves." "In your sight shall no man living be justified." "When you shall have done all those things which are commanded you, say, We are unprofitable servants: we have done that which was our duty to do." The Council of Trent, on the contrary, asserts that the good works of the justified man, his fasts, alms, and penances, really deserve increase of grace and eternal life, and that God is willing, on account of His most pious servants, to forgive others. It teaches that a man may do more than is requisite and may give the overplus of his good works to another.

10. Scripture teaches us that faith in Christ removes sin and its guilt, "that the Lamb of God takes away the

sin of the world," that by His death Christ put away our sins, that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin." But Romanism teaches that the venial sins of believers have to be expiated by a purgatory after death, and that the prayers of the faithful can help them. The Creed of Pope Pius IV contains the clause: "I constantly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful."

11. Scripture teaches us that "by one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified," that He was once offered to bear the sins of many. But Romanism asserts, on the contrary, that in each of the endlessly repeated masses in its innumerable churches all over the world there is offered to God "a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead."

12. Scripture, as we have already shown, teaches us that the marriage of the ministers of Christ is a lawful and honorable thing. Peter was a married man; Paul asserts his liberty to marry and says that a bishop must be the husband of one wife, having his children in subjection with all gravity, and that the deacons also must be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. Romanism, on the other hand, teaches "that the clergy may not marry, and that marriage is to them a pollution."

13. Scripture says, "You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve." Barnabas and Paul with horror forbade the crowds to worship them, and the angel similarly forbade John, saying, "See you do it not." Romanism enjoins the worship both of angels and saints and their relics. "The saints reigning together with Christ are for us, and their relics are to be venerated."

14. The Bible again teaches that images are not to be worshipped. "You shall not bow down to them, nor serve them." "I am the LORD: My glory will I not give to another, neither My praise to graven images." But Romanism teaches her rotaries to say, "I most firmly assert, that the images of Christ, and of the mother of God ever virgin, and also of the other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honor and veneration are to be given to them."

15. And above all, Scripture teaches us that there is one God, and one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, neither is there salvation in any other. But Romanism teaches that there are other mediators in abundance besides Jesus Christ, that the Virgin Mary and the saints are such. "The saints reigning together with Christ offer prayers to God for us."

I must not go further, and contrast Bible and Romish teachings on the subject of the Lord's supper, extreme unction, and a multitude of other points, but may say, in one word, that there is not a doctrine of the Gospel which has not been contradicted or distorted by this system, and that it stands branded before the world beyond all question as fulfilling Paul's prophecy of the apostasy – that it should be characterized by departure from the faith.

Perhaps I cannot give you a better idea of the distinctive teachings of Romanism as to controverted points of doctrine, than by reading to you the Creed of Pope Pius IV. This creed was adopted at the famous Council of Trent, held in the sixteenth century, when the doctrines of the Reformation were already widely diffused through Europe, and joyfully accepted and held by the young Protestant Churches of many lands. The Council of Trent was indeed Rome's reply to the Reformation. The newly recovered truths of the Gospel were in its canons and decrees stigmatized as pestilent heresies, and all who held them accursed; and in opposition to them this creed was prepared and adopted. It commences with the Nicene Creed, which is common to Romanists and Protestants; but to this simple and ancient "form of sound words" it adds twelve new articles which are peculiar to Rome and contain her definite rejection of the doctrines of Scripture recovered at the Reformation.

1. I most firmly admit and embrace apostolical and ecclesiastical traditions, and all other constitutions and observances of the same Church.

2. I also admit the sacred Scriptures according to the sense which the holy mother Church has held, and does hold, to whom it belongs to judge of the true sense and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures; nor will I ever take or interpret them otherwise than according to the unanimous consent of the Fathers.

3. I profess also, that there are truly and properly seven sacraments of the new law, instituted by Jesus Christ our Lord, and for the salvation of mankind, though all are not necessary for every one; namely, baptism, confirmation, eucharist, penance, extreme unction, orders, and matrimony; and that they confer grace; and of these, baptism, confirmation, and orders cannot be reiterated without sacrilege.

4. I also receive and admit the ceremonies of the Catholic Church received and approved in the solemn administration of all the above said sacraments.

5. I receive and embrace all and every one of the things which have been defined and declared in the

holy Council of Trent concerning original sin and justification.

6. I profess likewise that in the mass is offered to God a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead; and that in the most holy sacrifice of the eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ; and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation.

7. I confess also, that under either kind alone, whole and entire Christ and a true sacrament are received.

8. I constantly hold that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detained therein are helped by the suffrages of the faithful.

9. Likewise, that the saints reigning together with Christ are to be honored and invocated; that they offer prayers to God for us; and that their relics are to be venerated.

10. I most firmly assert that the images of Christ, and of the mother of God ever virgin, and also of the other saints, are to be had and retained, and that due honor and veneration are to be given them.

11. I also affirm that the power of indulgences was left by Christ in the Church, and that the use of them is most wholesome to Christian people.

12. I acknowledge the holy catholic and apostolic Roman Church, the mother and mistress of all Churches; and I promise and swear true obedience to the Roman bishop, the successor of St. Peter, the prince of the apostles and vicar of Jesus Christ.

13. I also profess and undoubtedly receive all other things delivered, defined, and declared by the sacred canons and general councils, and particularly by the holy Council of Trent; and likewise, I also condemn, reject, and anathematize all things contrary thereto, and all heresies whatsoever, condemned, rejected, and anathematized by the Church. This true catholic faith, out of which none can be saved, which I now freely profess, and truly hold, I, N., promise, vow, and swear most constantly to hold and profess the same whole and entire, with God's assistance, to the end of my life; and to procure, as far as lies in my power, that the same shall be held, taught, and preached by all who are under me, or are entrusted to my care, by virtue of my office. So help me God, and these holy gospels of God.

This creed of Pope Plus IV is the authoritative Papal epitome of the canons and decrees of the Council of Trent. The importance of this council "depends upon the considerations, that its records embody the solemn, formal, and official decision of the Church of Rome, which claims to be the one, holy, catholic Church of Christ, upon all the leading doctrines taught by the reformers; that its decrees upon all doctrinal points are received by all Romanists as possessed of infallible authority; and that every Popish priest is sworn to receive, profess, and maintain everything defined and declared by it."[3]

As an illustration of its reception and maintenance in the present day by the infallible head of the Romish Church, and by the whole conclave of Roman Catholic bishops, I refer you to their action in the comparatively recent Council of the Vatican.

See the almost incredible spectacle of 1870! See those seven hundred bishops of the Church throughout the world gathered in Rome at the high altar of St. Peter's. See them and hear them! In this Romish book, titled *The Chair of Peter*, page 497, is a description of the scene. "The pope recited in a loud voice the profession of faith, namely the Creed of Nicaea and Constantinople, together with the definitions of the Council of Trent, called the Creed of Pope Pius IV; after which it was read aloud from the ambo by the Bishop of Fabriano; 'then for two whole hours,' to use the words of one of the prelates present, 'the cardinals, patriarchs, primates, archbishops, bishops, and other fathers of the council, made their adhesion to the same by tossing the Gospel at the throne of the head of the Church.' A truly sublime spectacle, those seven hundred bishops from all parts of the earth, the representatives of more than thirty nations, and of two hundred millions of Christians, thus openly making profession of one common faith, in communion with the one and supreme pastor and teacher of all!"

Yes; the Creed of Trent, the canons and decrees of Trent, the Creed of Pius IV, those twelve articles which Rome has added to the ancient Nicene Creed, the sacrifice of the mass, transubstantiation, communion in one kind, the seven sacraments, traditions, Romish interpretation, Popish ceremonies, justification by works, purgatory, invocation of saints, indulgences, the worship of images, the absolute supremacy of the pope as the vicar of Christ, and no salvation out of union and communion with him, and submission to him: they confessed and professed them all, and swore adhesion

[3] William Cunningham, *Historical Theology*, volume 1, 483.

to them, and kissed the holy Gospels in solemn token thereof before Heaven and Earth.

O Creed of Pius (or Impious as he deserves to be called); O doctrines of Trent, "solemn, formal, official" decision of the Church of Rome upon all the great doctrines taught by the Reformers, Rome's reply to the Reformation, her deliberate final rejection and anathema of its blessed teachings and confessions drawn from the holy Word of God; O Creed of Trent and of the impious priest whose word supplants the Word of God with fables and blasphemies and lies: thou art the awful decision of apostate Latin Christendom on the controversy of the ages, *A decision to which Rome must now unchangeably adhere*, sealed as infallible, confessed to be irreformable! O momentous fact! O fatal Creed of Trent! you art a millstone round the neck of the Roman pontiff, the cardinals, the archbishops, the bishops, the priests, the people of the whole Papal Church, a mighty millstone that must sink them in destruction and perdition! There is no shaking you off. Alas! they have doomed themselves to wear you; they have wedded and bound themselves to your deadly lies; they have sealed, have sworn to you as infallible and irreformable, and condemned themselves to abide by you forever! It is done. Rome's last word is spoken. Her fate is fixed, fixed by her own action, her own utterance, her own oath. Individuals may escape, may flee the system; but as a Church it is past recovery, and utterly beyond the reach of reformation. Oh, that thousands might escape from it while yet there is time! Oh, that they would hear the earnest, the urgent call, "Come out of her, My people"! Oh, that they would wake from their blind and abject submission to the tyranny of hypocrites while there is room for repentance!

And now, in conclusion. We have shown briefly but clearly that Romanism is the offspring of a mystery of iniquity which began to work in apostolic times; that it is characterized by hypocrisy, by asceticism, by the prohibition of meats and marriage, by superstition and idolatry, by the worship of relics and images, of saints and angels, by the multiplication of mediators by false miracles, by lying signs and wonders, and by doctrines and decrees antagonistic to the teachings and command of Christ. We have shown that the Papal pontiffs have exalted themselves above all bishops, and above all kings, that they have fabricated new articles of faith and new rules of discipline; that they have altered the terms of salvation; that they have sold the pardon of sins for money, and bartered the priceless gifts of grace for selfish gain; that they have bound their deadly doctrines on the souls of countless millions by monstrous tyrannical threats and denunciations; that they have pertinaciously rejected the light of truth; that they have resolutely and wrathfully resisted those who have rebuked their impiety; that they have thundered against them their bulls and interdicts, their excommunications and anathemas; that they have made war with them, and with the faithful saints of many ages, and prevailed against them, and worn them out with long and cruel persecutions, with infamous and inhuman massacres; that they have waged against them no less than a war of extermination, wielding in this the whole strength and machinery of the resistless Roman empire, as well as the spiritual forces of the apostate Christian Church; that with the mighty working of Satan, with all power, signs, and miracles of falsehood they have *opposed Christ*, have opposed His doctrines, His precepts, His people, and His cause, and in opposing Christ have *opposed God Himself*, and made war with Him who is the Lord of Heaven and Earth, and have uttered against Him their daring prohibitions and anathemas; that they have enthroned themselves in His holy temple, and trampled on His sacred laws, and trodden down His saints and servants, and arrogated to themselves His place, and power, and prerogatives; and while perpetrating acts of enormous and indescribable wickedness, have blasphemously claimed to be His sole representatives both in the church and in the world, to be inspired by His spirit, to be *infallible* in their teachings and decrees, to be Vice-Christs, to be Vice-Gods – in other words, to be *as Christ, and as God Himself visibly revealed upon the Earth*.

We have further shown that prophets and apostles foresaw and foretold the rise, reign, and doom of such a great apostate power, describing it as a "little horn" of the fourth or Roman empire, possessed of intelligence and oversight, having a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; a power both political and ecclesiastical; a Roman ruler, yet an overseer in the Christian Church; a power arising on the break-up of the old Roman Empire, and coexisting with the kings of its divided Gothic state; a power inspired by Satan, and prevailing by means of false miracles and lying wonders; a power springing from a "mystery of iniquity" and characterized by all deceivableness of unrighteousness; a lawless, self-exalting power, claiming Divine prerogatives, and receiving from deluded millions the submission and homage which should be rendered to God alone; a power characterized by exceeding personal sinfulness, and by the widespread promotion of sin in others; above all, a persecuting power, a power making war with the saints, and wearing them out, and prevailing against them

throughout its long career of proud usurpation and triumphant tyranny.

These inspired words of prophecy and those indisputable facts of history agree. The Roman Papacy is revealed by the far-reaching light of the divinely written Word. Its portrait is painted; its mystery is penetrated; its character, its deeds are drawn; its thousand veils and subterfuges are torn away. The unsparing hand of inspiration has stripped it and left it standing upon the stage of history deformed and naked, a dark emanation from the pit, bloodstained and blasphemous, blindly struggling in the concentrated rays of celestial recognition, amid the premonitory thunders and lightnings of its fast-approaching doom.

In Memoriam

BRECKBILL BIBLE COLLEGE

It is with sadness and rejoicing that we announce the homegoing of Dr. Ronald Cooke (1933-2026), President of our college and a faithful servant of Christ.

His passing, though he had been ill, came sooner than many of us expected. Yet even in announcing his death, there is something we must remember about the man himself: Dr. Cooke did not want attention drawn to himself. He was very intentional about this.

When teaching his students, Dr. Cooke would tell of the Scottish missionary who had gone to the New Hebrides to preach the Gospel. When people gathered around him, they wanted to hear his stories—his adventures, his dangers, his experiences, and all that he had seen and accomplished on the mission field.

But the missionary did not tell them about himself.

He preached Jesus Christ and Him crucified.

When they pressed him again to tell them about his personal adventures, he responded with amazement that they would want to hear about a man who had come from the New Hebrides when the only name that truly mattered was Jesus.

That illustration was more than a lesson Dr. Cooke taught. It was a principle by which he lived.

He was a man from Ulster who was given the privilege of serving Christ, teaching students, preparing men and women for ministry, writing books, and proclaiming the Gospel. But he never wanted the story to end with Ronald Cooke.

He wanted it to end with Jesus.

So today, even as we mourn the loss of a beloved president, professor, mentor, and servant of God, we will honor his wishes.

We will not make much of the servant.

We will make much of the Savior.

And if we could say what we believe he would want us to say today, it would simply be this:

Remember the Gospel.

Remember Christ.

Remember that Jesus is the only name that matters. “Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” Acts 4:12

“For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.”— 1 Corinthians 2:2

Lasserre Bradley, Jr.

I recently learned that Lasserre Bradley, Jr. (1935-2026) of the Baptist Bible Hour and pastor of Cincinnati Primitive Baptist Church went to his heavenly rest May 9, 2026, at the age of 91. Steve Matthews of Trinity Foundation Radio interviewed him in 2022 for TF Radio Episode 14. The Lord is calling His precious jewels home to Himself.