

"Bless me, Father...."?

Greg Durel

As a Roman Catholic for over a quarter of a century, I said those words often. For the unlearned, they are said at the beginning of every trip to the confessional where a Catholic goes to seek absolution for their sins. For the unlearned again, Roman Catholicism teaches that a Catholic priest has the power to forgive sins. For those that doubted this, Pope John Paul II reaffirmed this teaching in the first years of his papacy. Hence the petition "bless me, Father."

The Catholic is seeking favor from the priest himself. Now the Bible prohibits the addressing of any person as "Father" in the spiritual sense. Yes, you may address your biological father as such but NOT someone in a religious context. For the Lord Jesus is very clear on the subject: "And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven" (Matt 23:9 (KJV)). In the context of the chapter He is clearly referring to men assuming the role that only God the Father has a right to.

So the very thought of a person being addressed as your spiritual "father" is unbiblical to say the least Referring to a person as THE HOLY FATHER is blasphemous at best. It does not take a rocket scientist to see the path that Rome puts its sheep on. From the get-go they are taught that the priest is something special, holier than thou and certainly closer to God than a mere lay person. The Baltimore catechism teaches that when a priest puts on his vestments he becomes an "alter christus," i.e., another Christ. When you see the priest you are seeing Jesus Christ as well. In the minds of many Roman Catholics the parish priest is sacrosanct and above reproach. Remember that it is a priest and only a priest that can change the bread and wine of the Lord's table into the literal body, blood, soul and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ.

What if there were no priests or priesthood?

To put the answer very simply, there would be no Roman Catholic Church. If the Bible were ever to become authoritative In the Catholic Church, there would certainly be no priests. An example of the complete disregard for the sacred Scripture held by the Roman Catholic Church is seen in the mandatory requisite of celibacy for every priest. One simply must read Paul's epistle to Timothy, where God gives the requirements for a Pastor: "A bishop, then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behavior, given to hospitality, apt to teach" (1 Tim. 3:2).

Now the phrase "must be" is very interesting. Maybe you have seen it before in the Bible. Perhaps in the third chapter of the Gospel of John? Do you remember what Jesus said to Nicodemus? He said, "you must be born again." Now I am sure that no respectable Roman Catholic theologian would deny the fact that this command is obligatory. The new birth is NOT optional! The language in 1 Timothy 3:2 is the same as in John 3. Therefore the pastor must be a MARRIED MAN. How clear is that? There is nothing like the word of God to clear up a religious education. Do you realize the impact of this truth? There is only one "church" where NONE of its pastors are married. Not only are

they not married, but also the Roman Catholic Church forbids them being married.

Now the Bible has something to say about anyone that would forbid a pastor from being married: "Now the Spirit speaks expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; **forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats**, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth (1 Tim. 4:1-3).

If you believe the Word of God you must then reject the Roman Catholic Church. For their Doctrines are of devils and completely contrary to the Bible. At best you must reject this absurd notion of a celibate priesthood, which in turn makes the teaching magisterium of the church no longer infallible, but in fact heretical and therefore should be rejected.

The Bible and a Sacrificing, Mediating Priesthood

The Council of Trent declared, "If anyone saith that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood; or, that there is not any power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of the Lord, and forgiving and retaining sins, but only an office and bare ministry of preaching THE GOSPEL; OR, THAT THOSE WHO DO NOT PREACH ARE NOT priests at all: let him be anathema." It seems clear that Rome knows that if she has no priesthood that she must close up shop.

Let us prove that there is no sacrificing priesthood in the New Testament from their scholars.

The Catholic Encyclopedia says: "THE DIVINE INSTITUTION OF THE THREEFOLD HIERARCHY CANNOT OF COURSE BE DERIVED FROM OUR TEXT: IN FACT IT CANNOT IN ANY WAY BE PROVED DIRECTLY FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT: IT IS A CATHOLIC DOGMA BY VIRTUE OF THE DOGMATIC TRADITION. I.E., IN A LATER PERIOD OF ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY ...BUT DOGMATIC TRUTH CANNOT BE TRACED BACK TO CHRIST HIMSELF BY ANALYSIS OF STRICT HISTORICAL TESTIMONY."

What an admission! The Roman Catholic Priesthood was made up hundreds of years after Jesus Christ! It is nowhere to be found in the Word of God. The only priesthood found in the New Testament that applies to Christians is the Royal Priesthood of ALL BELIEVERS. No more offering a sacrifice for sins because the Lord Jesus offered a perfect sacrifice once for all and said it was finished. Nothing for you and yours to do except what the apostle Paul said in Acts 16:31: "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved."