

## Signs of a Cult

By Greg Durel

There are about seven principle signs that identify a cult. Now when one hears the word "cult," the first connotation is that of some strange obscure religious group. But for our discussion the word cult is simply a word that describes organized heresy. In other words, any religious group that systematically teaches false doctrine. Knowing some of these signs is key to preventing people from following these cults.

The sign we will focus on here is the teaching of exclusivity. Cults will declare that they are the only way to heaven. Apart from them there is no salvation. They alone are the repositories of truth and all must join them to be saved. Here one might say, "yea, like the Jehovah's Witnesses or the Mormons." But to infer, let alone say, that Catholicism is in this class, is to be condemned as a hate monger or Catholic basher.

To demonstrate that Roman Catholicism bears the mark of a cult is quite easy indeed. If we were left to our opinions and personal interpretations, it might be difficult, but Rome has supplied a mass (no pun intended) of evidence to use.

For example:

- 1) **"WE BELIEVE THE CHURCH IS NECESSARY FOR SALVATION BECAUSE CHRIST, WHO IS THE SOLE MEDIATOR AND EXCLUSIVE WAY OF SALVATION, RENDERS HIMSELF PRESENT FOR US IN HIS BODY WHICH IS THE CHURCH. WE MUST ALWAYS REMEMBER THE UNITY OF THE MYSTICAL BODY, WITHOUT WHICH THERE CAN BE NO SALVATION, IS OPEN TO NO ONE OUTSIDE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH."** Pope Paul VI
- 2) **"THE HOLY UNIVERSAL CHURCH PROCLAIMS THAT GOD CANNOT TRULY BE WORSHIPPED SAVE WITHIN HERSELF, AND ASSERTS THAT ALL THEY WHO ARE WITHOUT HER PALE SHALL NEVER BE SAVED."** Pope Gregory the Great (Now how is that for ecumenism!)
- 3) **"THE CHURCH IS LIKE THE ARK OF NOAH, OUTSIDE OF WHICH NOBODY CAN BE SAVED."** Thomas Aquinas.
- 4) **"THAT THERE IS ONE HOLY CATHOLIC AND APOSTOLIC CHURCH WE ARE COMPELLED TO BELIEVE AND TO HOLD, PROMPTED BY DIVINE FAITH, AND WE DO BELIEVE THIS FIRMLY AND CONFESS IT SIMPLY, OUTSIDE OF WHICH THERE CAN BE NO SALVATION, **OR REMISSION OF SINS....**"** Pope Boniface VIII
- 5) **"IT IS A SIN TO BELIEVE THAT THERE IS SALVATION OUTSIDE THE CATHOLIC CHURCH."** Pope Pius IX

- 6) "FOR IT IS THROUGH CHRIST'S CATHOLIC CHURCH ALONE, WHICH IS THE UNIVERSAL HELP TOWARDS SALVATION, THAT THE FULNESS OF THE MEANS OF SALVATION CAN BE OBTAINED." Vatican II

Now we have just cited six infallible sources of the Catholic Church to prove without reservations that they believe that they are the only way to heaven. Understand that they are saying that **only** Roman Catholics have a chance at going to heaven. This is classic cult mentality. The organization becomes the focus and the savior. Allow us to clearly illustrate this fact. In a recent debate with a Jesuit theologian, we were able to ask a very simple yet extremely important question. The question was "what do we have to do to go to heaven?" The answer that followed was very revealing. It clearly proved that Roman Catholicism teaches that every Baptist is going to hell, in addition to every Presbyterian, Methodist, etc. The Jesuit theologian said to go to heaven we must "do" several things. Firstly, believe the entire Bible. (Sounds like a fundamentalist.) Secondly, we must be baptized in water. Thirdly, we must keep the commandments. Fourthly, we must eat His flesh and drink His blood literally (in the sacrament of the mass). He mentioned a couple of others, but these four should suffice.

The Scripture clearly reveals to one and all that salvation comes from believing in the Lord Jesus Christ alone. (Cf. Acts 16:30-31; Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5) The entire book of Galatians was written to demonstrate the futility of believing that the Law justifies or saves anyone. But the "eating" and "drinking" the literal flesh and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ says it all. For according to Roman Catholic theology, this can only be done after a "priest"—and only a priest—says the words of consecration over the bread and wine. Hence, no Catholic Church, no priest. No priest, no Mass or transubstantiation. No transubstantiation, no eating His flesh or drinking His blood. No eating and drinking of Jesus literally, NO SALVATION!

We commend to your reading Hebrews 7, 8, 9 and 10. The mysticism is clearly not biblical and certainly not necessary for anyone to be saved. Their insistence on such heresies places them at the top of the list of religious cults. That statement may seem a bit harsh, but it is nonetheless true. Catholicism does not differ from any of the cults where our first sign is concerned. A closer look at the other signs of a cult further confirm the fact that Catholicism, while large in number, humanitarian in practice, is still unbiblical and perhaps the mother of all "Christian" cults.