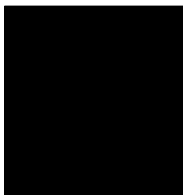


# CHRISTIAN ANSWERS

OF AUSTIN, TEXAS  
CHRISTIAN DEBATER GUIDE VOLUME 3, NUMBER 4

## FROM TRADITION TO TRUTH: A PRIEST'S STORY



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Former Dominican priest for 22 years, author, speaker, editor of the book, *Far From Rome, Near to God*, director of *The Berean Beacon*.

Born Irish, in a family of eight, my early childhood was fulfilled and happy. My father was a colonel in the Irish Army until he retired when I was about nine. As a family, we loved to play, sing, and act, all within a military camp in Dublin.

We were a typical Irish Roman Catholic family. My father sometimes knelt down to pray at his bedside in a solemn manner. My mother would talk to Jesus while sewing, washing dishes, or even smoking a cigarette. Most evenings we would kneel in the living room to say the Rosary together. No one ever missed mass on Sundays unless he was seriously ill. I can identify easily with others in traditional Catholic nations in Europe and with Hispanics and Filipinos who put Jesus, Mary, Joseph and other saints all in one boiling pot of faith.

The catechism was drilled into me at the Jesuit School of Belvedere, where I had all my elementary and secondary education. Like every boy who studies under the Jesuits, I could recite before the age ten, five reasons why God existed and why the Pope was head of the only true Church. Getting souls out of Purgatory was a serious matter. The often quoted words, "It is a holy and a wholesome thought to pray for the dead that they may be loosed from sins," were memorized even though we did not know what these words meant

We were told that the Pope as head of the church was the most important man on earth. What he said was law, and the Jesuits were his right-hand men. Even though the Mass was in Latin, I tried to attend daily because I was intrigued by the deep sense of mystery which surrounded it. We were told it was the most important way to please God. Praying to saints was encouraged, and we had patron saints for most aspects of life. I did not make a practice of that, with one exception: St. Anthony, the patron of lost objects, since I seemed to lose so many things.

### TRYING TO EARN SALVATION

I left my family and friends in 1956 to join the Dominican Order. I spent eight years studying what it is to be a monk, the traditions of the Church, philosophy, the theology of Thomas Aquinas, and some of the Bible from a Catholic standpoint. Whatever personal faith I had was institutionalized and ritualized in the Dominican religious system. Obedience to the law, both Church and Dominican, was put before me as the means of sanctification. I often spoke to Ambrose Duffy, our Master of Students, about the law being the means of becoming holy. In addition to becoming "holy," I wanted also to be sure of external salvation. I memorized part of the teaching of Pope Pius XXII in which he said, "...the salvation of many depends on the prayers and sacrifices of the mystical body of Christ offered for this intention." This idea of gaining salvation through suffering and prayers is also the basic message of Fatima and Lourdes, and I sought to win my own salvation as well as the salvation of others by such suffering and prayer. In the Dominican monastery in Tallaght, Dublin, I performed many dif

difficult feats to win souls, such as taking cold showers in the middle of winter and beating my back with a small steel chain. The Master of Students knew what I was doing, his own austere life being part of the inspiration that I had received from the Pope's words. With rigor and determination, I studied, prayed, did penance, tried to keep the Ten Commandments and the multitude of Dominican rules and traditions.

### OUTWARD POMP- INNER EMPTINESS

Then in 1963 at the age of twenty-five I was ordained a Roman Catholic priest and went on to finish my course of studies of Thomas Aquinas at the Angelicum University in Rome. But there I had difficulty with both the outward pomp and the inner emptiness. Over the years I had formed, from pictures and books, pictures in my mind of the Holy See and the Holy City. Could this be the same city? At the Angelicum University I was also shocked that hundreds of others who poured into our morning classes seemed quite disinterested in theology. I noticed *Time* and *Newsweek* magazines being read during classes. Those who were interested in what was being taught seemed only to be looking for either degrees or positions within the Catholic Church in their homelands.

One night soon after that, I prayed for two hours in front of the main altar in the church of San Clemente. Remembering my earlier call to be a missionary and the hundredfold promise of Mark 10:29-30, I decided not to take the theological

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*"exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9)*

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CHRISTIAN DEBATER GUIDE

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THE GOSPEL IN BRIEF

There is one, and only one, eternal, true, holy God (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Matt 28:19). He created everything by His word. God has told us the truth about Himself in the word He has given us, the Bible, which He commands us to obey. God is compassionate and just to all. God is pure and Holy; sin is destroyed in His presence (Numbers 14:18). However, we have all sinned, falling short in the evil we do, and the good we fail to do. Yet our problem is not just what we do, but also who we are; we are selfish, corrupt, and estranged from God. Because God is just, He will punish sin impartially, yet God still bestows his love to all men. So our Savior, Jesus, the only begotten Son of God (the God-man, John 1:1,14), was graciously sent to suffer and die on the cross for our sins and to purify us from all unrighteousness by the sacrifice of His body and blood. He was born of the virgin Mary, lived a sinless life, and was physically raised from the dead and ascended into heaven. Jesus will physically return to judge the world. God commands everyone to repent and to believe in Him. God's Spirit lives in each of us who believe in Him to guide us into truth, convict us of our sins, and to work in us to sanctify us to live a more holy life, pleasing our Lord. God's children will dwell forever with God, and those who reject Jesus will suffer eternal torment. There is no other way for anyone to come to God except through Jesus (Jn. 14:6). Please do not depend on anyone else, your own efforts, your religion, but simply put your faith in Christ our Master. So as Rom. 10:9 says, "That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart the God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." You are urged not to despise God's mercy but call out to the Lord and trust ONLY in Him. (See also Acts 10:36-43)

THOUGHTS FROM THE DIRECTOR



Larry Wessels Popes come and popes go but the Roman Catholic Church rolls on through the ages taking its myriads of faithful and not so faithful followers with it. Just like the almost one billion Islamic followers of Mohammed or the multitudes who follow Buddha or the Hindu Rigveda and Upanishads, the Roman Catholic Church has found a way to endure. The key to endurance is not necessarily found in a religious belief system that is predicated on viable facts and evidences that correspond to reality or even that the belief system remains true to its original so-called oracles of its God or gods. Roman Catholicism endures much like Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, or any number of other religions and cults endure, namely, by offering its followers a way to earn something (whether heaven for the Roman Catholic, Paradise with 70 virgins for the Muslim, Nirvana for the Buddhist, better cycles of reincarnation for the Hindu, being a god of your own planet for the Mormon, etc.).

Roman Catholicism is successful like so many other religions with lots of followers for the simple reason that it conforms to the worldly standard of "you get what you earn." To the common man on the street it makes perfectly good sense to "get what you earn," after all, isn't this just plain good business sense? Roman Catholicism excels in this "just plain good business sense" at all levels.

Roman Catholicism, like so many other man-made religions, specializes through its nomenclature of traditions and rituals, a sweepstakes reward system whereby the Roman Catholic practitioner can earn himself (and others) out of purgatory and then on to the pearly gates where the saints and the Blessed Virgin await. If you don't believe me, see my two hour debate with Catholic scholar Dr. Robert Fastiggi (see page 6), or our other debates and videos, or of course, Richard Bennett's lead article in this newsletter. Biblical Christianity is not man-made but God-breathed (II Tim. 3:15-17). Go Bible, not Rome! Eph.2:8-9!

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN ANSWERS ?

Our ministry name is derived in part from Peter 3:15 which states, "But in your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have." (NIV). This is the goal of Christian Answers in an increasingly anti-Christian society here in America and throughout the world; giving answers and reasons why the Christian faith can be trusted and believed.

The Biblical commands to "fight the good fight of faith" (I Tim. 6:12), to be "set for the defense of the gospel" (Phil. 1:17), to "earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints" (Jude 3), to "be able both to exhort in sound doctrine and to refute those who contradict" (Titus 1:9), to "put to the test those who call themselves apostles, and they are not" (Rev. 2:2), to "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravenous wolves." (Matt. 7:15), to "examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good" (I Thess. 5:21), "with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth" (? Tim. 2:25), to follow the example of Paul and Apollos who "vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was Christ." (Acts 18:28). These are but a few of the marching orders for the call to ministry, discernment and evangelism.

The inerrant Word of God (? Tim. 3:16-17) whereby the gospel is preached, which is "the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth" (Rom. 1:16), is the weapon of our evangelism. As Hebrews 4:12 states, "For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow: it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart." This is the evangelical missionary methodology of Christian Answers— to bring the Biblical perspective to a culture that is almost completely ignorant of it; to bring Christian truth, Christian answers to those who, as the prophet Isaiah said, have made "lies...and falsehood" their refuge (Isa. 28:15); to smash lies and falsehoods with the "hammer" of God's word (Jer. 23:29); see also Proverbs 30:5-6, Psalm 138:2b, Isaiah 40:8, John 5:39-47, I Cor. 14:37, and Acts 17:11.

Christian Answers utilizes all outreach that God allows us including television, radio, audio cassettes, video tapes, speaking engagements, and the printed page. The materials we have been able to produce have been used by churches, Bible teachers, Christian apologists, laymen and others as well as those seeking life in Christ.

We are not afraid to stand up for Jesus Christ in public forums or wherever the Lord leads. Of course this type of ministry is not for the faint of heart and very often leads to the same type of suffering and persecution that we find in the book of Acts. But as the old saying goes, "one life will soon be past, only what's done for Christ will last," and as Paul said, "I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. 3:14), knowing this mortal life is short and God's eternity is only a moment away for all.

Our ministry is "exempt from federal income tax under section 501 (a) of the Internal Revenue Code as an organization described in section 501 (c) ( 3 ) by the Internal Revenue Service". Donations to our ministry are tax deductible, therefore those who contribute will receive a donation receipt good on your US income tax. This applies to donations only, not sales. We are legally registered in the state of Texas.

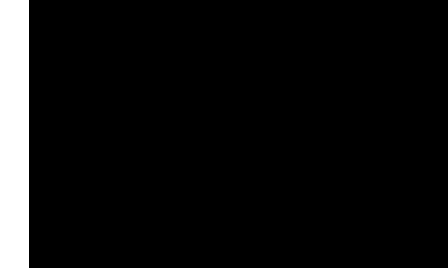
degree that had been my ambition since beginning study of the theology of Thomas Aquinas. This was a major decision, but after long prayer I was sure I had decided correctly.

The priest who was to direct my thesis did not want to accept my decision. In order to make the degree easier, he offered me a thesis written several years earlier. He said I could use it as my own if only I would do the oral defense. This turned my stomach. It was similar to what I had seen a few weeks earlier in a city park; elegant prostitutes parading themselves in their black leather boots. What he was offering was equally sinful. I held to my decision, finishing University at the ordinary academic level, without the degree.

On returning from Rome, I received official word that I had been assigned to do a three year course at Cork University. I prayed earnestly about my missionary call. However, I received orders in late August 1964 to go to Trinidad, West Indies, as a missionary.

### PRIDE, FALL, AND

A FREAK ACCIDENT



On October 1, 1964, I arrived in Trinidad, and for seven years I was a successful priest, in Roman Catholic terms, doing all my duties and getting many people to come to Mass. By 1972 I had become quite involved in the Catholic Charismatic Movement. Then, at a prayer meeting on March 16th of that year, I thanked the Lord that I was such a good priest and requested that if it were His will, He humble me that I might be even better. Later that same evening I had a freak accident, splitting the back of my head and hurting my spine in many places. Without coming this close to death, I doubt that I would ever have gotten out of my self-satisfied state. Prescribed, prefabricated prayer showed its emptiness as I cried out to God in my pain.

In the suffering that I went through in the weeks after the accident, I began to find some comfort in direct personal prayer. I stopped saying the Breviary (the Roman Catholic Church's official prayer for clergy) and the Rosary and began to pray using part of the Bible itself. This was a very slow process. I did not know my way through the Bible and the little I had learned over the years had taught me more to distrust it rather than to trust it. **My training in philosophy and in the theology of Thomas Aquinas left me helpless, so that coming into the Bible now to find the Lord was like going into a huge dark woods without a map.**

When assigned to a new parish later that year, I found that I was to work side-by-side with a Dominican priest who had been a brother to me over the years. For more than two years we were to work together, fully seeking God as best we knew in the parish of Pointe-a-Pierre. We read, studied, prayed, and put into practice what we had been taught in Church teachings. We built up communities in Gasparillo, Claxton Bay, and Marabella, just to mention the main villages. In a Catholic religious sense we were successful. Many people attended Mass. My personal search into the Bible continued, but it did not affect much; rather it showed me how little I really knew about the Lord and His Word. It was at this time that Philipians 3:10 became the cry of my heart, ***"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection..."***

The Catholic Charismatic movement was growing, and we introduced it into most of our villages. Because of this movement, some Canadian Christians came to Trinidad to share with us. I learned much from their messages, especially about praying for healing. The whole impact of what they said was very experience-oriented but was truly a blessing, insofar, as it got me deeply into the Bible as an authority source. I began to compare scripture with scripture and even to quote chapter and verse! One of the texts the Canadians used was Isaiah 53:5, ***"...and with his stripes we are healed."*** Yet in studying Isaiah 53, I discovered that the Bible deals with the problem of sin by means of substitution. Christ died in my place. It was wrong for me to try to expedite or try to cooperate in paying the price

for my sin. ***"If by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace..."*** Romans 11:6. ***"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all"*** (Isaiah 53:6).

One particular sin of mine was getting annoyed with people, sometimes even angry. Although I asked forgiveness for my sins, I still did not realize that I was a sinner by the nature which we all inherit from Adam. The scriptural truth is, ***"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one"*** (Romans 3:10), and ***"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"*** (Romans 3:23). The Catholic Church, however, had taught me that the depravity of man, which is called "original sin," had been washed away by my infant baptism. I still held this belief in my head, but in my heart I knew that my depraved nature had not yet been conquered by Christ. ***"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection..."*** (Philippians 3:10) continued to be the cry of my heart. I knew that it could be only through His power that I could live the Christian life. I posted this text on the dashboard of my car and in other places. It became the plea that motivated me, and the Lord who is Faithful began to answer.

### THE ULTIMATE QUESTION

First, I discovered that God's Word in the Bible is absolute and without error. I had been taught that the Word is relative and that its truthfulness in many areas was to be questioned. Now I began to understand that the Bible could, in fact, be trusted. With the aid of *Strong's Concordance*, I began to study the Bible to see what it says about itself. I discovered that the Bible teaches clearly that it is from God and is absolute in what it says. It is true in history, in the promises God has made, in its prophecies, in the moral commands it gives, and in how to live the Christian life. ***"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works"*** (II Timothy 3:16-17).

This discovery was made while visiting in Vancouver, B.C., and in Seattle. When I was asked to talk to the prayer

group in St. Stephen's Catholic Church, I talked of the absolute authority of God's Word. It was the first time that I had understood such a truth or talked about it. I returned to Vancouver, B.C. and in a large parish Church, before about 400 people, I preached the same message. Bible in hand, I proclaimed that "the absolute and final authority in all matters of faith and morals is the Bible, God's own Word."

Three days later, the archbishop of Vancouver, James Carney, called me to his office. I was then officially silenced and forbidden to preach in his archdiocese. I was told that my punishment would have been more severe were it not for my letter of recommendation I had received from my own archbishop, Anthony Pantin. Soon afterwards I returned to Trinidad.

### CHURCH-BIBLE DILEMMA

While I was still parish priest of Point-a-Pierre, Ambrose Duffy, the man who had so strictly taught me while he was Student Master, was asked to assist me. After some initial difficulties, we became close friends. I shared with him what I was discovering. He listened and commented with great interest and wanted to find out what was motivating me. I saw in him a channel to my Dominican brothers and even to those in the Archbishop's house. When he died suddenly of a heart attack, I was stricken with grief.

I now realized I was playing as a priestly mediator—exactly what the Catholic Church teaches but exactly opposite to what the Bible teaches, **"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus..."** (I Timothy 2:5). I really enjoyed being looked up to by the people and, in a certain sense, being idolized by them. I rationalized my sin by saying that after all, if this is what the biggest Church in the world teaches, who am I to question it? Still, I struggled with the conflict within. I began to see the worship of Mary, the saints, and the priests for the sin that it is. But while I was willing to renounce Mary and the saints as mediators, I could not renounce the priesthood, for in that I had invested my whole life.

### TUG-OF-WAR YEARS

Mary, the saints, and the priesthood were just a small part of the huge struggle with which I was working. Who was Lord of my life, Jesus Christ and His Word or the Roman Church? This ultimate question raged inside me especially during my last six years as parish priest of Sangre Grande (1979-1985). That the Catholic Church was supreme in all matters of faith and morals had been drilled into my brain since I was a child. It seemed impossible to change. Rome was supreme and called "Holy Mother." How could I go against "Holy Mother,?" After all, I had an official part in dispensing her sacraments and keeping people faithful to her?

In 1981, I actually rededicated myself to serving the Roman Catholic Church while attending a parish renewal seminar in New Orleans. Yet when I returned to Trinidad and again became involved in real life problems, I began to return to the authority of God's Word. Finally the tension became like a tug-of-war inside me. Sometimes I looked to the Roman Church as being absolute, sometimes to the authority of the Bible as being final. My stomach suffered much during those years; my emotions were being torn. I ought to have known the simple truth that one cannot serve two masters. My solution was to place the absolute authority of the Word of God under the supreme authority of the Roman Church.

This contradiction was symbolized in what I did with the four statues in the Sangre Grande Church. I removed and broke the statues of St. Francis and St. Martin because the second commandment of God's Law declares in Exodus 20:4, **"Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image..."** But when some people objected to my removal of the statues of the Sacred Heart and of Mary, I left them standing because of the higher authority, i.e., the Roman Catholic Church, said in its law Canon 1188: **"The practice of displaying sacred images in the churches for the veneration of the faithful is to remain in force."** I did not see that what I was trying to do was to make God's Word subject to man's word.

### MY OWN FAULT

While I had learned earlier that God's Word is absolute, I still went through this agony of trying to maintain the Roman Catholic Church as holding more authority than God's Word, even in issues where the Church of Rome was saying the exact opposite to what was in the Bible. How could this be? First of all, it was my own fault. If I had accepted the authority of the Bible as supreme, I would have been convicted by God's Word to give up my priestly role as mediator. Second, no one ever questioned what I did as a priest. Christians from overseas came to Mass, saw our sacred oil, holy water, medals, statues, vestments, rituals, and never said a word! The marvelous style, symbolism, music, and artistic taste of the Roman Church was all very captivating. Incense not only smells pungent, but to the mind it spells mystery.

### THE TURNING POINT

One day, a woman challenged me (the only Christian to challenge me in all my 22 years as a priest), **"You Roman Catholics have a form of godliness, but you deny its power."** Those words bothered me for some time because the lights, banners, folk music, guitars, and drums were dear to me. Probably no priest on the whole island of Trinidad had as colorful robes, banners, and vestments as I had. Clearly I did not apply what was before my eyes.

In October 1985, God's grace was greater than the lie that I was trying to live. I went to Barbados to pray over the compromise that I was forcing myself to live. I felt truly trapped. The Word of God is absolute indeed. I ought to obey it alone; yet to the very same God I had vowed obedience to the supreme authority of the Catholic Church. In Barbados I read a book in which was explained the Biblical meaning of Church as "the fellowship of believers." In the New Testament there is no hint of a hierarchy; "clergy" lording it over the "laity" is unknown. Rather, it is as the Lord Himself declared "...one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren" (Matthew 23:8). Now to see and to understand the meaning of

fellowship” left me free to let go of the Roman Catholic Church as supreme authority and depend on Jesus Christ as Lord. It began to dawn on me that in biblical terms, the Bishops I knew in the Catholic Church were not Biblical believers. They were for the most part pious men taken up with devotion to Mary and the Rosary and loyal to Rome, but not one had any idea of the finished work of salvation, that Christ’s work is done, that salvation is personal and complete. They all preached penance for sin, human suffering, religious deeds, “the way of man” rather than the Gospel of grace. But by God’s grace I saw that it was not through the Roman Church nor by any kind of works that one is saved, *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast”* (Ephesians 2:8-9).

#### NEW BIRTH AT AGE 48

I left the Roman Catholic Church when I saw that life in Jesus Christ was not possible while remaining true to Roman Catholic doctrine. In leaving Trinidad in November 1985, I only reached neighboring Barbados. Staying with an elderly couple, I prayed to the Lord for a suit and necessary money to reach Canada, for I had only tropical clothing and a few hundred dollars to my name. Both prayers were answered without making my needs known to anyone except the Lord.

From a tropical temperature of 90 degrees, I landed in snow and ice in Canada. After one month in Vancouver, I came to the United States of America. I now trusted that He would take care of my many needs, since I was beginning life anew at 48 years of age, practically penniless, without an alien resident card, without a driver’s license, without a recommendation of any kind, having only the Lord and His Word.

I spent six months with a Christian couple on a farm in Washington state. I explained to my hosts that I had left the Roman Catholic Church and that I had accepted Jesus Christ and His Word in the Bible as all-sufficient. I had done this, I said, “absolutely, finally, definitively, and resolutely.” Yet far from being impressed by these four adverbs, they wanted to know if there

was any bitterness or hurt inside of me. In prayer and in great compassion, they ministered to me, for they themselves had made the transition and knew how easily one can become embittered. Four days after I arrived in their home, by God’s grace I began to see in repentance the fruit of salvation. This meant being able not only to ask the Lord’s pardon for my many years of compromising but also to accept His healing where I had been so deeply hurt. Finally, at age 48, on authority of God’s Word alone, by grace alone, I accepted Christ’s substitutionary death on the Cross alone. To Him alone be the glory. (Born Again!)

Having been refurbished both physically and spiritually by this Christian couple together with their family, I was provided a wife by the Lord, Lynn, born-again in faith, lovely in manner, intelligent in mind. We set out for Atlanta, Georgia, where we both got jobs.

#### A REAL MISSIONARY WITH A REAL MESSAGE

In September 1988, we left Atlanta to go as missionaries to Asia. It was a year of deep fruitfulness in the Lord that once I had never thought possible. Men and women came to know the authority of the Bible and the power of Christ’s death and resurrection. I was amazed at how easy it is for the Lord’s grace to be effective when only the Bible is used to present Jesus Christ. This contrasted with the cobwebs of church tradition that had so clouded my 21 years in missionary garments in Trinidad, 21 years without the real message.

To explain the abundant life of which Jesus spoke and which I now enjoy, no better words could be used than those of Romans 8:1-2: *“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”* It is not just that I have been freed from the Roman Catholic system but that I have become a new creature in Christ. It is by the grace of God, and nothing but His

**“For to be carnally minded is death: but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Because the carnal mind is enmity against God...” (Romans 8:6-19).**

grace, that I have gone from dead works into new life.

#### TESTIMONY TO THE GOSPEL OF GRACE

Biblically all people have inherited a sin nature from Adam, and therefore, all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. How can we stand before a Holy God— except in Christ—and acknowledge that He died where we ought to have died? God gives us the faith to be born again, making it possible for us to acknowledge Christ as our substitute. It was Christ who paid the price for our sins: sinless, yet He was crucified. This is the true Gospel message. Is faith enough? Yes, born again faith is enough. That faith, born of God, will result in good works including repentance: *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them”* (Ephesians 2:10).

In repenting, we put aside, through God’s strength, our former way of life and our former sins. It does not mean that we cannot sin again, but it does mean that our position before God has changed. We are called children of God, for so indeed we are. If we do sin, it is a relationship problem with the Father that can be resolved, not a problem of losing our position as a child of God in Christ, for this position is irrevocable. In Hebrews 10:10, the Bible says it so wonderfully: *“we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.”* The finished work of Christ Jesus on the Cross is sufficient and complete. As you trust solely in this finished work, a new life which is born of the Spirit will be yours— you will be born again.

#### THE PRESENT DAY

My testimony shows how difficult it was for me as a Catholic to give up Church tradition, but when the Lord demands it in His Word, we must do it. The **“form of godliness”** that the Roman Catholic Church has makes it most difficult for a Catholic to see where the real problem lies. Everyone must determine by what authority we know truth. Rome claims that it is only by her own authority that truth is known. In her

own words, Canon 212, Section 1, "The Christian faithful, conscious of their own responsibility, are bound by Christian obedience to follow what the sacred pastors, as representatives of Christ, declare as teachers of the faith or determine as leaders of the Church." (Vatican Council II based, Code of Canon Law promulgated by Pope John Paul II, 1983). Yet according to the Bible it is the Bible that is the authority. It was man-made traditions which caused the Reformers to demand "The Bible only, faith only, grace only, in Christ only, and to God only be the glory."

### THE REASON WHY I SHARE

The simple Biblical message is that "the gift of righteousness" in Christ Jesus is a gift, resting on His all-sufficient sacrifice on the cross, "For if by one man's offense death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:17).

Paul's preaching is summarized at the end of II Corinthians 5:21, "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him..." (II Cor 5:21). This fact, dear reader, is presented clearly to you in the Bible. Acceptance of it is now commanded by God, "...Repent ye, and believe the gospel" (Mark 1:15).

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*Webpage: [www.bereanbeacon.org](http://www.bereanbeacon.org).*

### **From Tradition to Truth, A Priest's Story**

Richard Bennett exposes the Roman Catholic system of salvation and tells of his own conversion from man-made religion to the saving grace of God. This video is 90 minutes.  
VT or DVD-107, \$6.00 + S&H

### **Far From Rome, Near to God**

This book, compiled by Richard Bennett, contains the testimonies of 50 converted Catholic priests.  
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### **The Mystique and Immorality of the Roman Catholic Church**

Richard Bennett reveals the glory of Christ's priesthood versus Rome's parody in program #1. Richard is interviewed along with former priest Bart Brewer and former nun Rocío Zwirner in program #2. 2 Hours.  
VT or DVD-104, \$6.00 + S&H

### **Salvation and the Sacramental System/ Mary: Biblical Truth and Official Roman Catholic Teaching**

Richard Bennett exposes Roman Catholic sacramentalism and common heresies concerning Mary.  
VT or DVD-105, \$6.00 + S&H, 2 hrs.

### **Is Roman Catholicism Biblical?**

Host Ken Baugh interviews former Dominican Priest Richard Bennett.  
Host Dale Delony interviews Richard in program #2.  
VT or DVD-106, \$6.00 + S&H, 2 hrs.

### **The Eucharist / The Mass as a Sacrifice**

Richard Bennett, with his expert knowledge of Roman Catholic theology and doctrine, contrasts the Roman Catholic Eucharist and Mass with Biblical truth. 2 hrs.  
VT or DVD-131, \$6.00 + S&H

### **Beauty for Ashes/ With Love for Catholics**

Richard Bennett interviews former nun Mary Ann Pakiz about her life in the convent in program #1.  
Richard interviews Brian McLaughlin and Richard Wozniak in program #2. 2 Hours.

### **Reformation Debate**

Does Romanism preach another gospel? Larry Wessels debates Catholic scholar Dr. Robert Fastigi.  
VT or DVD-5, \$6.00 + S&H, 2hrs.

### **MINISTRY UPDATE ATHEIST DEBATE**

Christian Answers director Larry Wessels was challenged to a televised debate by an atheist out of the Dallas area early this year. The debaters had six months to prepare. The atheist, however, backed out of the debate ten minutes before it was to be held. Undaunted, Larry along with Steve Morrison, held a 2 hour mock televised debate with four vocal atheists including Madalyn Murray O'Hair (pre-recorded of course). Atheist arguments are dealt with in detail while at the same time the atheist belief system is found to be severely wanting. This debate is available on VHS or DVD. VT or DVD -130 is the catalogue number. Those interested in receiving a **free copy** can simply write the Christian Answers mail box and request it. **You must snail mail for it; no calls, faxes, or e-mails accepted.**

### **Debate with a Monsignor**

Rob Zins, Th. M. Dallas Theological Seminary, debates Monsignor Ed Jordan of St. Teresa's Catholic Church (Jordan was recommended as a spokesman by the diocese of Austin, TX). The debate centers on the question of how a person is saved. Dale Delony, moderator of the debate, and Larry Wessels review the Zins-Jordan dialogue in program #2. 2hrs.  
VT or DVD-6, \$6.00 + S&H

### **Boston College Debate on the Papacy**

Dr. James White, author of Answers To Catholic Claims, and Rob Zins, author of Romanism, debate 2 Roman Catholic apologists at Boston College on the issue of the Roman Catholic pope and his necessity.

### **Soundtracks of Videos Available**

Cassette or CD at \$3.00 per hour.

## TOPICAL VIDEOS

Hear experts and apologists analyze these topics (perfect for study groups or as a witnessing tool to share with others). You may choose any four of the 30 minute videos below for the single price of \$6.00. Catalog identification is CATV. For example, if you wish to order Bahaism, "Church of Christ", Mormonism, and Islam; list on order form as CATV- 1, 13, 8, and 2. Four videos on one VHS tape for one low price of \$6.00. DVD copies of these topics are only available in increments of 4: #1-#4, #5-#8, #9-#12, #13-#16, #17-#20, #21-#24 only, with no variation, \$6.00 each.

1. Bahaism (Dr. Frank Beckwith)
2. Islam (Dr. Samuel Shahid)
3. Buddhism (Steve Morrison)
4. Hinduism/Reincarnation (Mark Cass)
5. Roman Catholicism (Richard Bennett)
6. Jehovah's Witnesses #1 (Larry Wessels)
7. Jehovah's Witnesses #2 (Larry Wessels)
8. Mormonism (Robert McKay)
9. Word-Faith Heresy #1 (Dr. Michael Horton)
10. Word-Faith Heresy #2 (Dr. Michael Horton)
11. Seventh-day Adventism #1 (Wallace Slattery)
12. Seventh-day Adventism #2 (Wallace Slattery)
13. The "Church of Christ" (Bob L. Ross)
14. Liberal Christianity #1 (Morrison & Wessels)
15. Liberal Christianity #2 (Morrison & Wessels)
16. Atheism (Larry Wessels)
17. Nation of Islam (Wilford Darden)
18. United Pentecostals (Steve Morrison)
19. Unification (Moonies) (Morrison & Wessels)
20. Demon Possession (Dr. Thomas Ice)
21. Roman Catholicism #1 (Rob Zins)
22. Roman Catholicism #2 (Rob Zins)
23. The Da Vinci Code (Morrison & Wessels)
24. Darwin's Evolution Religion (Dr. M. Girouard)

## ROMAN CATHOLICISM

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#### VT or DVD-11

What is Your Authority? / Roman Catholic Inventions

#### VT or DVD-12

Vatican II and Evangelism / The Roman Mary

#### VT or DVD-13

The Doctrine of Purgatory/ The Doctrine of the Pope

#### VT or DVD-14

Roman Catholic Apologists #1 / R.C. Apologists #2

#### VT or DVD-15

Scripture Twisting/ Justification Through Faith

#### VT or DVD-16

The Roman Priesthood/ Roman Potpourri

#### VT or DVD-17

Roman-Style Universalism/ Who Speaks for Rome?

Each VT or DVD is \$6.00. To order the entire series: \$48.00, catalogue# VT or DVD-18. Audio soundtracks (cassette or CD), catalogue# AC or CD-61 through AC or CD-76, \$3 per hour, \$48 for entire series. *Richard Bennett's book, Far From Rome, Near to God, free with entire series.*

These two audio tapes (or CDs) are free with \$25 order or donation :

- Indulgences Debate— White vs. Fastiggi (AC-143)  The Roman Catholic Mary— Richard Bennett (AC-382)

Rob Zins, Th. M and Larry Wessels in studio for the 16-part series on Roman Catholicism.

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**Topic: Roman Catholicism**

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*“exhort in sound doctrine and refute those who contradict” (Titus1:9)*

*Christian Debater Guide*

## LETTERS FROM THE FRONTLINE



Dear Biblequery.org,

I am nearly at a total loss for words, so let me just squeak this out: I just stumbled across your site for the first time—how I missed it before, I do not know. I am utterly blown away by the volume of material and the succinctness of your doctrine. Bravo! God bless you for all this work! It's evident that He already has by the clarity of thought you display. I'll try to write back when my language skills return!

D.M. (from the web)

Dear Brother Larry,

I have enjoyed reading your newsletters. I can see that you must study the Bible or have a tremendous amount of reference resources to write with such authority. I have enclosed an order form. Whatever money is extra, please accept it as a donation.

I hope you and your ministry continue for many years to come. God Bless.

K.L. (Gonzales, TX)

To whom it may concern,

Could you please send me a free subscription of your newsletter. Thank you. Also, could you please mail one subscription to my mom, she's a Jehovah's Witness. Thank you and Jesus bless you.

S.W. (Nampa, ID)

Dear Sir,

Please send me a tape and book catalogue, and also a copy if possible of the Thomas Ice article on Spiritual Warfare. Thank you.

M.F. (Los Angeles, CA)

Dear Friends,

Having come from a long line of Seventh-Day Adventists, I was truly pleased to receive your paper on this subject. Thank you so much for sending it. I've met many Seventh-Day Adventists who appear to be born-again. But, my, what appalling teachings are promoted. I

them and pray for them and have even been invited to speak both to Adventists and break away groups.

S.H. (Grand Junction, CO)

Dear Larry Wessels,

I watch your program every Tuesday night at 8:00 PM on access channel 11. I want to thank you very much for these programs. The programs really help me and I can't get enough of them. They are cleansing my mind with the Word, the Scripture, it is really helping me and I thank you very much.

N.B. (Cedar Park, TX)

Thanks Larry,

Islam is not a big deal with the women's unit like it was at the male unit. Out of 2,000 we might have 24 or 25 women who are Muslim. But at Hughes Unit, there are probably 300 males who are Muslim.

You might be interested to know that ALL of the Muslim chaplains in the Texas prison system were Nation of Islam, and later embraced normal Islam.

Could you please send me the 2 hour video entitled, *"History and Teachings of The Nation of Islam"* (VT-4) with Wilford Darden and yourself. At any rate, thanks for the material. It is of great interest to me in helping those here in prison.

Chaplain G.B. (Gatesville, TX)

Hi Larry,

Thanks for sending the newsletter about Seventh-Day Adventism. I am still a Lutheran but I really try to be a Christian first. This check is to help your ministry however you need it. I don't need a receipt just remember that this comes free!

When does your live call-in television show, *"In Defense of the Faith"* with Dale Delony, David Krill, and you come on next? Thanks, keep up the good work. J.P. (Austin, TX)

Christian Answers,

I watch your program all the time and I really enjoy it. I was wondering if you have information about Jehovah's Witnesses in Spanish. I've been running across Spanish Jehovah's Witnesses. If you have anything in Spanish I would appreciate a copy. Thank you and God bless.

J.T. (Austin, TX)

Christian Answers,

We received your latest newsletter and we would like you to update your mailing list database. You have us down as the "Utah Institute for Biblical Studies" in Salt Lake City, Utah, however we changed our name to "Salt Lake Theological Seminary." Future mailings should be directed to our new name. Thank you very much.

S.L.T.S. (Salt Lake City, UT)

cdebater@aol.com,

Good morning from the state of Maine. I just "stumbled" across your website and found it helpful. I am wondering about using some of your information in my sermons. What permission do I need for that? I would not want to quote the entire question and the entire answer, but use some of the explanations. Kindly advise. Yours in Christ.

S.Y. (From the web)

Dear Christian Debater,

I came across your website and have been blessed reading a number of your articles. I have been, especially, blessed reading your Common Christian Confession document, which is very enlightening and convicting. I am also interested in purchasing a number of your videotapes. The videos I am interested in purchasing are as follows: VT-8, VT-27, VT-28, VT-36, and VT-44. Could you advise what the cost would be to have the tapes sent via airmail to Bermuda? Thank you for your attention to the above request. I await your reply. Yours in Christ's service.

L.S. (Devonshire, Bermuda)