

Pope Francis – A Childish Pope

On January 15, in the wake of the Islamist attacks on the French *Charlie Hebdo* satirical magazine, the Pope came out and had the following to say about the violent attacks ((I should note here that the Vatican website notes that the interview took place, but somehow doesn't have the text. **Emphasis in bold is mine.**))

“You cannot provoke,” Pope Francis said on Thursday. “You cannot insult the faith of others. You cannot make fun of the faith of others.”

Though he defended the principle of free expression and paid lip service to the notion that violence is always wrong, he warned “you can't make a toy out of the religions of others.”

“To kill in the name of God is an aberration,” Francis said. However, he added that it was natural for those who have been insulted to lash out violently.

“In freedom of expression, there are limits, like in regard to my mom,” Francis continued. “If he says a swear word against my mother, he's going to get a punch in the nose. That's normal.”

((<http://hotair.com/archives/2015/01/15/the-latest-to-justify-religious-violence-pope-francis/>))

I wonder if the Pope really understands the difference between children and adults? Children get offended at many things and never allow an offense to pass. Adults, on the other hand, can be insulted and overlook the offensive statement, understanding that words spoken or written reflect far more on the one speaking or writing, than on what is spoken of, or written about. Apparently Pope Francis does not understand

that distinction at all.

Perhaps that is because the Pope shares far more with the immature persons in the Muslim world than he does with any sort of maturity level sought for in rational western culture. At least at one time in western culture, striving to be as mature and understanding as possible was a goal.

It certainly is a desired for goal from a Scriptural point of view. In the Scripture we are admonished continually to grow and be mature and let nothing offend us. We are continually encouraged and exhorted to not be children.

But, there again, being a Catholic, the chances of the Pope actually reading the Scripture to receive that exhortation are slim to none. To defend childish behavior as normal, certainly indicates he didn't.

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them. (*Psalms 119:165*)

Mindless Drivel

So the new Pope wrote a letter. And what did he write? Well, it sounds sort of nice. Indeed, it probably will play well in some progressive circles, but for the hardened atheist, the following by Pope Francis is, well... drivel:

*In comments likely to enhance his progressive reputation, Pope Francis has written a long, open letter to the founder of La Repubblica newspaper, Eugenio Scalfari, stating that **non-believers would be forgiven by God if they followed their consciences.***

Responding to a list of questions published in the paper by

*Mr Scalfari, who is not a Roman Catholic, Francis wrote: "You ask me if the God of the Christians forgives those who don't believe and who don't seek the faith. I start by saying – and this is the fundamental thing – that God's mercy has no limits if you go to him with a sincere and contrite heart. **The issue for those who do not believe in God is to obey their conscience.***

"Sin, even for those who have no faith, exists when people disobey their conscience." ([Pope Francis assures sceptics: You don't have to believe in God to go to heaven, The Independent, 9/11/2013](#))

Uh-huh. However, last time I checked, the Catechism said no such thing, and, as far as I can tell, the Pope is NOT greater than the Catechism. In fact, the Pope can be fired, but if you did away with the Catechism there would be NO Catholic Church.

It seems to me, that the Catechism trumps the Pope whenever there is any conflict – and there certainly is conflict here.

II. HANDING ON THE FAITH: CATECHESIS

*4 Quite early on, the name catechesis was given to the totality of the Church's efforts to make disciples, to help men believe that Jesus is the Son of God **so that believing they might have life in his name**, and to educate and instruct them in this life, thus building up the body of Christ. ((CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH))*

PART TWO – THE CELEBRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

SECTION TWO – THE SEVEN SACRAMENTS OF THE CHURCH

CHAPTER ONE – THE SACRAMENTS OF CHRISTIAN INITIATION

ARTICLE 1 – THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

*1213 **Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit** (*vitae spiritualis ianua*),⁴ and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of*

*God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: "Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word."*⁵

I. WHAT IS THIS SACRAMENT CALLED?

*1214 This sacrament is called Baptism, after the central rite by which it is carried out: to baptize (Greek baptizein) means to "plunge" or "immerse"; the "plunge" into the water symbolizes the catechumen's burial into Christ's death, from which he rises up by resurrection with him, as "a new creature."*⁶

*1215 This sacrament is also called "the washing of regeneration and renewal by the Holy Spirit," for it signifies and actually brings about the birth of water and the Spirit **without which no one "can enter the kingdom of God."** ((CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH))*

Perhaps if the "vicar of Christ" had bothered to read his own church's documentation, he might not have engaged in mindless drivel...

Stupidity – Writ Large

Of late, my time is consumed by many things which have prevented me from posting and writing the way I would like. However, the time is spent preparing lessons, conducting those lessons, and preaching. Between those things and working full-time, and trying to fix my house, my time to write is non-existent. Nonetheless, in researching and attempting to write, one of the subjects I am studying is the issue of righteousness: what constitutes it, what destroys it, et cetera, et cetera. In my apologetics research on righteousness

I came across the following:

Fundamentally, there are two opposite errors regarding original sin. One is an error of deficiency, in which original sin is treated as less damaging to human nature than it actually is. That is the error of Pelagius. The other is the error of exaggeration, in which original sin is treated as more damaging to human nature than it actually is. (([Protestant Objections to the Catholic Doctrines of Original Justice and Original Sin, Bryan Cross, Oct. 16, 2011; NOTE: It is unclear here whether Mr. Cross is quoting Professor Lawrence Feingold or simply building off his material.](#)))

So the Catholics mean to say that the effect of Adam's fall was/is a nuanced thing in which we have to understand precisely the effect it had, else we will either:

- A.) Not go far enough in assigning the effects of the fall.*
- or*
- B.) Go too far in assigning the effects of the fall.*

I am sorry, but this sounds like something I would shovel out of my neighbor's barn.

Why?

Because the Scripture could not be more plain:

Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, **and death by sin**; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come. (*Romans 5:12-14*))

And again:

For since by man *came* death, by man *came* also the resurrection of the dead. **For as in Adam all die**, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (*I Corinthians 15:21-22*)

And yet again:

Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. (*Hebrews 2:14-15*)

I really do not know how you can “go too far in assigning the effects of the fall” as it were. After all, this death includes the following:

And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works. And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them: and they were judged every man according to their works. And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And **whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire.** (*Rev 20:12-15*)

I suppose there is something out there worse than eternity in the Lake of Fire, but nothing ever describes it or even alludes to it.

So then, how is it that one can “go too far” in holding that the effect of the fall upon man was utterly devastating, warping man’s perception and distorting man’s ability to understand?

I suppose it could be that most Baptists and Protestants hold that man is utterly depraved and incapable of righteousness at

all.

Well, not quite:

Here we find the opposite error with respect to original sin, namely, an exaggeration of original sin.

Martin Luther

Luther's two principal errors with respect to original sin are as follows:

(1) Treating original sin as the complete corruption of human nature, rather than as the loss of the preternatural and supernatural gifts.

(2) Treating concupiscence (i.e. the involuntary disorder in the lower appetites) as original sin. ([Protestant Objections to the Catholic Doctrines of Original Justice and Original Sin, Bryan Cross, Oct. 16, 2011](#))

Without going into all the convoluted arguments, let us examine what the Scripture declares about man's fallen state:

And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; **and were by nature the children of wrath,** even as others. (*Ephesians 2:1-3*)

The fool hath said in his heart, *There is* no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, *there is* none that doeth good. The LORD looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, *and* seek God. They are *all* gone aside, they are all together become filthy: **there is none that doeth good, no, not one.** (*Psalms 14:1-3*)

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. (*Psalms 51:5*)

Well now, if we are all the children of wrath by nature, dead in trespasses and sins, and exist in iniquity prior to coming to Christ, and there is nothing we can do about it outside of coming to Christ for salvation... How do you exaggerate that?

I find it hard to believe that anyone could think, especially after the evidence of Scripture, that the depravity of man could be worse.

No, if you are borne with a nature to do wickedness, and the LORD God accounts you as dead in trespasses and sins, bound to do every evil work, it is kind of hard to top that. No, there is no exaggeration when it is stated that man is utterly depraved and incapable of any righteousness. That is, if you evaluate what the LORD God evaluates – the soul.

If, on the other hand, you ignore the soul and concentrate on the flesh, and concentrate on sin, rather than iniquity, then you could claim that declaring the soul utterly corrupt is in error and excessive. However, since it is the LORD God who is the sole determiner of who is righteous and who is not, it really matters little what the Catholic Church believes and teaches.

The sad part is, the Catholic Church has had over 1500 years to get this teaching right – and they have not. Instead, they cling to a doctrine that is provably wrong.

That is the very definition of Stupidity – writ large.

Playing a Game – Part 3

So then, Not only do we find that the Calvinists/Reformed adherents believe that God intended for evil and sin to exist, but that He intentionally created a person who is highly intelligent, beautiful, powerful, very capable in music, with an unparalleled ability to persuade: **for the express purpose of rebelling against God**. Moreover, this was done so that the glory of God, His holiness, righteousness, mercy, longsuffering, lovingkindness and grace would be glorious in its contrast to the wickedness and evil of the creature(s) who rebelled.

So are we here to understand that God cannot be glorious without some wicked, evil thing to contrast His Righteousness and Holiness against?

Are we also to understand, as Jonathan Edwards tells us:

So evil is necessary, in order to the highest happiness of the creature, and the completeness of that communication of God, for which he made the world; because the creature's happiness consists in the knowledge of God, and the sense of his love. And if the knowledge of him be imperfect, the happiness of the creature must be proportionably imperfect.

And as Joseph Smith confirmed, concerning man:

2 Nephi, Chapter 2 (Book of Mormon)

22 And now, behold, if Adam had not transgressed he would not have fallen, but he would have remained in the garden of Eden. And all things which were created must have remained in the same state in which they were after they were created; and they must have remained forever, and had no end.

23 And they would have had no children; wherefore they would have remained in a state of innocence, having no joy, for

they knew no misery; doing no good, for they knew no sin.

24 But behold, all things have been done in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.

25 Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.

If we compare the thought pattern of Jonathan Edwards (and John Piper, for he agrees fully with Edwards) to that of Joseph Smith, the author of the Book of Mormon, we can plainly see that both men believe that it is not possible for knowledge of righteousness and holiness to exist and be understood, (and even going so far as stating righteousness and holiness cannot exist) without the existence of evil and wickedness. Both men plainly state that *“evil is necessary”* either by direct statement or by reasoning, like Smith’s *“Adam fell that men might be; and men are, that they might have joy.”* in which it is plain that we could never know, nor appreciate the righteousness and holiness of God, and the joy such knowledge imparts – except we become evil wicked creatures, upon which *“God”* could bestow *“his”* mercy. Indeed, both men also acknowledge that man was innocent, but without comprehension of the happiness and joy of the knowledge of *“God’s mercy.”*

However, the most egregious part comes from the statements of both men, in which they say all this was accomplished:

“in the wisdom of him who knoweth all things.”

And:

“Thus it is necessary, that God’s awful majesty, his authority and dreadful greatness, justice, and holiness, should be manifested. But this could not be, unless sin and punishment had been decreed;”.

This John Piper agrees to totally by stating:

“Rather he “wills that evil come to pass . . . that good may come of it.””

Which is also no different that Baal Shem Tov's:

“Nevertheless, evil that exists has an inner power giving it life. And this [inner power] is total goodness. So if you look at the inner aspect of evil, you will only see the good in it.”

This is really no more than the philosophy of [“Unity of Opposites”](#) and is expressed in various different ways, with artificial distinction, depending upon the perspective of the person. Under one philosophy it is called Taoism and is expressed thus:

Taoism

The Yin Yang symbol:

This is a well known Taoist symbol. “It represents the balance of opposites in the universe. When they are equally present, all is calm. When one is outweighed by the other, there is confusion and disarray.” (([Taoism](#)))

And if the person's point of view is materialistic, then it is expressed this way:

Dialectical Materialism (the root of Communism)

Fredrick Engels – Dialectics of Nature (([Dialectical Materialism](#)))

“Motion is the mode of existence of matter. Never anywhere has there been matter without motion, or motion without matter, nor can there be.”

Though the words may vary, and the focus different, all that has been done with Augustinian/Calvinist/Reformed/Sovereign

Grace/Primitive Baptist doctrine is take the idea and thought processes of the ancient philosophy of “*unity of opposites*” and try to make the Scripture conform to it.

Should we be so surprised? After all, Augustine, though raised to be a “*Christian*” chose a heathen system of belief as his own (underlining and **emphasis** mine):

Unfortunately, his faith, as well as his morals, was to pass through a terrible crisis. In this same year, 373, Augustine and his friend Honoratus fell into the snares of the Manichæans. It seems strange that so great a mind should have been victimized by Oriental vapourings, synthesized by the Persian Mani (215-276) into coarse, material dualism, and introduced into Africa scarcely fifty years previously. Augustine himself tells us that he was enticed by the promises of a free philosophy unbridled by faith; by the boasts of the Manichæans, who claimed to have discovered contradictions in Holy Writ; and, above all, by the hope of finding in their doctrine a scientific explanation of nature and its most mysterious phenomena. Augustine’s inquiring mind was enthusiastic for the natural sciences, and the Manichæans declared that nature withheld no secrets from Faustus, their doctor. Moreover, being tortured by the problem of the origin of evil, Augustine, in default of solving it, acknowledged a conflict of two principles. And then, again, there was a very powerful charm in the moral irresponsibility resulting from a doctrine which denied liberty and attributed the commission of crime to a foreign principle.

Once won over to this sect, Augustine devoted himself to it with all the ardour of his character; he read all its books, adopted and defended all its opinions. His furious proselytism drew into error his friend Alypius and Romanianus, his Mæcenas of Tagaste, the friend of his father who was defraying the expenses of Augustine’s studies. It was during this Manichæan period that Augustine’s literary faculties reached their full development, and he was still a

student at Carthage when he embraced error.

His studies ended, he should in due course have entered the forum litigiosum, but he preferred the career of letters, and Possidius tells us that he returned to Tagaste to “teach grammar.” The young professor captivated his pupils, one of whom, Alypius, hardly younger than his master, loath to leave him after following him into error, was afterwards baptized with him at Milan, eventually becoming Bishop of Tagaste, his native city. But Monica deeply deplored Augustine’s heresy and would not have received him into her home or at her table but for the advice of a saintly bishop, who declared that “the son of so many tears could not perish.” Soon afterwards Augustine went to Carthage, where he continued to teach rhetoric. His talents shone to even better advantage on this wider stage, and by an indefatigable pursuit of the liberal arts his intellect attained its full maturity. Having taken part in a poetic tournament, he carried off the prize, and the Proconsul Vindicianus publicly conferred upon him the corona agonistica. (([St. Augustine of Hippo](#), From his birth to his conversion (354-386)))

And of course, when converted, his “conversion” was to utterly corrupt Catholicism. But even the Catholics admit:

Augustine gradually became acquainted with Christian doctrine, and in his mind the fusion of Platonic philosophy with revealed dogmas was taking place. (([St. Augustine of Hippo](#), From his conversion to his episcopate (386-395)))

To be continued . . .

Ignoring the Obvious

Well, if it can be ignored, it cannot be that obvious.

Really?

Yes, it can. And how.

In Great Britain (soon to be Lesser Britain – if the current pace continues) guns have been severely restricted for quite some time now. This was ostensibly done to “stop crime,” particularly “gun crime.” However, as any cursory internet search will yield, the ban has been, and continues to be a total failure. However, that does not satisfy the over-educated and lacking common sense individuals that seem to rule the land of my ancestors. No, apparently the fact that crime has increased since guns were severely restricted, and the fact that the vast majority of British tourists in America feel safer in America than they do back home, ([America's 'safety catch'](#)) does not seem to impact the judges, sociologists and lawmakers in Great Britain at all. No, not in the slightest.

I must say the temptation to poke lots (and I mean LOTS) of fun at “not so” merry ole England is very hard to resist. Why? Because there stands an elephant in the collective living room of Great Britain – and it's quite large.

The problems of man's nature are apparently becoming somewhat of a nuisance to Sir Igor Judge, the President of the High Court Queen's Bench Division. Apparently, he doesn't think that anyone ought to carry a knife in their pocket. After all . . . well . . . hold your breath and you can read for yourself the “enlightened” judge's comments from the bench (please do not throw things at your computer monitor when you read this):

“Carrying a knife or offensive weapon without reasonable

excuse is a crime which is being committed far too often by far too many people," he said.

"Every weapon carried about the streets, even if concealed from sight, even if not likely to be used or intended to be used, represents a threat to public safety and public order."

"That is because, even if carried only for bravado or carried for some misguided sense that it would be used in possible self-defense, it takes only a moment of irritation, drunkenness, anger, perceived insult, or something utterly trivial like a 'look', for the weapon to be produced."

"Then you have mayhem, and offences of the greatest possible seriousness follow, including murder, manslaughter, GBH, wounding and assault."

"Offences of this kind have recently escalated. They are reaching epidemic proportions. Every knife or weapon carried in the street represents a public danger and, therefore, in the public interest, this crime must be confronted and stopped."

"The courts will do what they can to reduce and, so far as it is practicable, eradicate it. In our view, it is important for public confidence in the criminal justice system that the man or woman caught in possession of a knife or offensive weapon without reasonable excuse should normally be brought before the courts and prosecuted."

"Even if the offender does no more than carry the weapon, even when the weapon is not used to threaten or cause fear, when considering the seriousness of the offence, courts should bear in mind the harm which the weapon might foreseeably have caused." ([Knife crime is epidemic, top judge claims](#))

Well, so we should all be disarmed, right? Not hardly. The

problem with crime goes all the way back to The Fall. You are not going to solve crime by removing so-called “weapons” from the street. No, all you will do is make more victims of crime, and you will drive people to find other items to use as a weapon.

The real problem here is the problem of our nature. (([Why They Hate the Second Amendment](#))) We are all, including the uppity, nonsensical Judge Igor – **evil**. Since we are all evil, removing supposed weapons out of the hands of individuals does not change anything at all about the heart of the individual. All the weapon is, is an external manifestation of some thing in the heart of that person. It is impossible to determine what the thing that drives them to carry something as a weapon, actually is. Sorry, we have no ability to regulate the heart and thoughts of a person. Funny how the Founding Fathers of America knew that, and this idiotic judge does not. After all, that is precisely why the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution exists. After all, it was Madison and Hamilton that penned the Federalist 51, which states:

It may be a reflection on human nature, that such devices should be necessary to control the abuses of government. But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself. (([Federalist 51](#)))

Hopefully, the quote makes sense (perhaps to some over-educated folk it won't) and there is an understanding that, since we are all evil, there must be checks and balances (“such devices”), in and out of government. The greatest check

on crime is to arm everyone – period. It will surely make a very polite and orderly society. Why? Because nobody wants to end up **DEAD**.

Now, obviously the powers that be in Great Britain (and here) would like for one to believe that guns and knives are the most dangerous weapons out there. Sure, most would agree with that too. However, that is not the case. In fact, guns and knives fall far behind the single, most dangerous weapon of all – words.

Yes, WORDS.

Just how did Adolph Hitler rise to power? Ever hear of Mein Kampf? What about all of Hitler's speeches? You know, old Adolph never pulled the trigger on a single Jew. Yet, somehow he managed to be personally responsible for the deaths of six million of them. Moreover, he plunged the world into a massive war. How did he do it?

WORDS

What about Karl Marx? You know, The Communist Manifesto and Das Kapital? He gave a cohesiveness to the religion of Materialism and collectivism and launched a war against private enterprise and Capitalism. He also is ultimately responsible for the death of millions in the communist purges of various regimes. Why? Because they believed the words of Marx and his buddy Engels.

In fact, words have been and are, responsible for the deaths of more individuals than all the guns and knives put together. After all, words commanded that the gas be turned on in the chambers at the camps. Words brought about the mass starvation of Ukrainians by the Soviets in the 1920's. Words inflamed the Hutus to murder their fellow countrymen, the Tutsis in Ruanda in 1994. Pol Pot used words to great effectiveness in Cambodia, commanding the murder of 1½ million of his own countrymen. And I could go on, and on, and on . . .

Yes, words are extremely dangerous. So dangerous perhaps they ought to be banned altogether.

What?

That won't work?

Why not? After all, Sir Igor thinks that banning knives will change the behavior of his countrymen. Somehow he thinks that getting knives "off the street" will "stop crime" when crime is a result of the heart of an individual, and has **NOTHING TO DO** with the instrument the individual carries.

Oh, as for banning words – that's been tried already. It netted the world the lovely experience of the Dark Ages. Thank the Catholic Church for that one. Oh, and while you at it, a Papal Bull calling for the death of "heretics," is "just a bunch of words."

No worries about Sir Ig(n)or(ant)'s words, right?

Cowardice

Not that I agree with John Hagee or his doctrine (because I don't), but when he described the Catholic Church as the "great whore" of Revelation, he made a statement that, in accordance with the Roman Catholic's bloody history of persecution, fits the Catholic Church rather well. The problem is that Roman Catholic persecution was not confined to Jews. No, they decided to viciously persecute anyone they labeled a "heretic." This persecution was not limited to individuals, but was applied to any group that would not submit to the "authority" of the Roman Catholic Church.

The problem with this persecution was that it was not the mild persecution that some folks in modern America have endured. Rather, it was along the scale and scope of what the U.S. Government did to the Branch Davidians at Waco, Texas. Actually, in reading the various historical accounts, it was much worse with whole villages and towns slaughtered simply because the Pope decided they needed to be wiped away for their supposed "heresy." However, since the Pope had no armies of his own, he engaged and coerced the secular rulers under his influence to do the dirty work for the Catholic Church.

Now, Catholics can deny this and cry foul all they want, but their history is plain. So plain that even one of their own admitted to it.

"Were it not that the baptists have been grievously tormented and cut off with the knife during the past twelve hundred years, they would swarm in greater number than all the Reformers." (Cardinal Hosius, President of the Council of Trent: Hosius, Letters, Apud Opera, pp. 112, 113.)

Make no mistake, when the Cardinal states they persecuted with the "knife" he is not being flippant. Moreover, he also makes it clear that the Catholic Church "grievously tormented" and "cut off" all those the Catholic Church labeled "Baptist," which tells us little to nothing about the poor folk they didn't label Baptist – and slaughtered.

Oh, I know, the Catholic Church supposedly apologized for its "misdeeds." However, one can hardly call it "misdeeds" as if it incidentally and infrequently occurred. No, the truth is that the Catholic Church engaged in wholesale murder of all who said they followed Christ, but would not submit to the supposed authority of the Catholic Church. Moreover, the Catholic Church did this as part of their doctrine. Yes, the Catholic Church believed that it was called of God to rid the world of "heretics," never mind that a commandment to do so

cannot be found anywhere in the New Testament. However, that should not surprise anyone as the Catholic Church disdains the Bible and doesn't follow it anyway. No, they have their "Catechism" which is a mishmash of all sorts of writings, ranging from the supposed "early church fathers" to Popes, various Catholic saints and even the Missal (now there's self-justification and circular reasoning).

Thus, for John Hagee to describe the Catholic Church as the "great whore of Revelation" was not far, if any, off the mark. However, since Hagee is the "pastor" of a mega-church in Texas, and involved politically to the point of endorsing John McCain for President, he obviously values political and social favor over the truth. Why? Because he has since retracted the statements he made about the Catholic Church and claimed:

In his letter, Hagee said he now better understood that the Book of Revelation's reference to the Catholic Church as "the apostate church" and the "great whore" are "a rhetorical device long employed in anti-Catholic literature and commentary." (([Pastor Hagee apologizes for anti-Catholic remarks](#)))

I wonder if all those the Catholic Church murdered for over 1200 years would consider their complaint against the Catholic Church a mere "rhetorical device?" Moreover, Hagee has decided that his stance against Catholic doctrine and its encouragement of persecution is apparently no longer warranted either:

He stressed that in his use, "neither of these phrases can be synonymous with the Catholic Church." ((Ibid))

So then, what should we call a "church" that adopts every pagan ritual and incorporates it into its own worship practices and doctrines, as the Catholic Church has? What should we say about a church that cut deals with the Nazis and

with various Communist dictators so that it could operate freely in those countries? What should we say about a “church” that refuses to remove priests and bishops who openly espouse communist doctrine and imply that it has the approval of the Vatican? No, all the Vatican has ever done is write papers that slap the wrists of the “offending” priests, bishops, nuns, and friars and say in effect “Oh, don’t do that, its not proper!” and let it go. Crying out loud, they won’t even remove the pedophiles and homosexuals among their ranks, instead preferring to shuttle them hither and yon into different parishes where people don’t know of their crimes and allow them to remain as “clergy.” If that’s not apostasy and whoredom, I don’t know what is. It certainly is corruption all the way to the highest levels of the Catholic Church – including the Pope, the supposed “vicar of Christ.”

No, Hagee’s problem is now actually compounded in that he has catered to a corrupt institution and a corrupt society to please them, and denied the truth of the Scripture – that is, if he ever had it in the first place.

Why?

Because he has also retracted statements he made concerning the judgement of God upon this nation. As one offended liberal opined concerning the Hagee – McCain relationship, Hagee has a history of (in his words) making “embarrassing” statements:

Since then, Mr. McCain has been shocked to learn that his clerical ally has made many other outrageous statements. Mr. Hagee, it’s true, did not blame the American government for concocting AIDS. But he did say that God created Hurricane Katrina to punish New Orleans for its sins, particularly a scheduled “homosexual parade there on the Monday that Katrina came.”

Mr. Hagee didn’t make that claim in obscure circumstances, either. He broadcast it on one of America’s most widely heard

radio programs, "Fresh Air" on NPR, back in September 2006. He reaffirmed it in a radio interview less than two weeks ago. Only after a reporter asked Mr. McCain about this Katrina homily on April 24 did the candidate brand it as "nonsense" and the preacher retract it. ([The All-White Elephant in the Room](#))

Never mind that the Old Testament teaches us plainly that certain transgressions will bring the judgement of God upon a nation – whether they have a covenant with God (as Israel did) or not. Even though a number of Hagee's doctrines are not right, he still could not have gone wrong in speaking about Hurricane Katrina and the devastation it wrought upon the entire Gulf Coast, and particularly New Orleans. Whether the statement is popular or not, is not the issue, the issue is the truth – and it is true that the extremely bad weather America has experienced for a number of years now is the express judgement of God.

This is no different that Hagee's backing away from the truth about Catholicism and the sordid history of the Catholic Church. What it tells anyone is that Hagee's convictions are bought and sold for political and social favor. In short, Hagee fears John McCain and the American public more than he fears the LORD God of heaven and earth.

Now, I'm certain that there are many out there who fall for the media's traps and false statements, and I'm certain that Hagee is one of them. However, he could have differentiated between the Catholic Church and its egregious doctrine and individual Catholics. After all, most Catholics are woefully ignorant of the true history of the Catholic Church. In fact, the vast majority of Catholics are woefully ignorant of the Bible, having only read the Missal, and perhaps the Catechism. Thus, they do not know and understand why some of us roundly condemn the Catholic Church as an institution.

You know, Hagee could have used his statements as a platform to address those issues. Instead he chose to sweep it under the rug and hide the truth and deny history. Of course, Hagee could have used his statements concerning Katrina to show that, historically and Biblically, certain behaviors are inherently destructive to any nation. However, he chose to curry favor with John McCain rather than tell the truth.

John Hagee, you stinking coward.

Anti-Christ

Throughout most of the last 20 centuries, separate, independent, groups of Christians, generally labeled “anabaptist” and specifically called Paulicans, Novatians, Donatists, Henricans, Waldenses, Albigenses, Bogomils, Lollards, and many other less complimentary names, have been persecuted for holding fast the specific teachings of the New Testament. They consistently held the New Testament church to be a local, visible, autonomous body of believers covenanted together to serve their Lord and Savior. For this, they were horribly persecuted by their opponents. The fiercest of these opponents was not the pagans that they invariably lived among. Rather, it was a church that called itself “Christian” – the Catholic Church. Its head, the Pope, was declared to be the vicar of Christ by their own councils. In so doing, he became Anti-Christ. They shut up the Bible to the “common” man declaring that it would “only cause confusion,” and then proceeded to warp and twist the doctrines to insure that their followers have no chance for salvation. The list of the sins of this horrid institution are so numerous as to almost defy

cataloging. Yet, the Pope is honored by the governments of today.

My how we have forgotten history!

So we will remember, the following is from J.M. Carroll's Trail of Blood. This excerpt briefly details the falling away that led to the formation of the Catholic Church and its ungodly head. Many more works, such as The Martyrs Mirror, and A History of the Baptists detail it more completely.

From [The Trail of Blood](#) . . .

"During the first three centuries, congregations all over the East subsisted in separate independent bodies, unsupported by government and consequently without any secular power over one another. All this time they were baptized churches, and though all the fathers of the first four ages, down to Jerome (A.D. 370), were of Greece, Syria and Africa, and though they give great numbers of histories of the baptism of adults, **yet there is not one of the baptism of a child till the year 370.**" (Compendium of Baptist History, Shackelford, p. 43; Vedder, p. 50; Christian, p, 31; Orchard, p. 50, etc.)

7. Let it be remembered that changes like these here mentioned were not made in a day, nor even within a year. They came about slowly and never within all the churches. Some of the churches vigorously repudiated them. So much so that in A.D. 251, the loyal churches declared non-fellowship for those churches which accepted and practiced these errors. And thus came about the first real official separation among the churches.

8. Thus it will be noted that during the first three centuries three important and vital changes from the teachings of Christ and His Apostles had their beginnings. And one significant event took place, Note this summary and recapitulation:

(1) The change from the New Testament idea of bishop and

church government. This change grew rapidly, more pronounced, and complete and hurtful.

(2) The change from the New Testament teachings as to Regeneration to "baptismal regeneration."

(3) The change from "believers' baptism" to "infant baptism." (This last, however, did not become general nor even very frequent for more than another century.)

9. "Baptismal regeneration" and "infant baptism." These two errors have, according to the testimony of well-established history, caused the shedding of more Christian blood, as the centuries have gone by, than all other errors combined, or than possibly have all wars, not connected with persecution, if you will leave out the recent "World War." Over 50,000,000 Christians died martyr deaths, mainly because of their rejection of these two errors during the period of the "dark ages" alone—about twelve or thirteen centuries.

10. Three significant facts, for a large majority of the many churches, are clearly shown by history during these first three centuries.

(1) The separateness and independence of the Churches.

(2) The subordinate character of bishops or pastors.

(3) The baptism of believers only.

I quote now from Mosheim—the greatest of all Lutheran church historians. Vol., 1, pages 71 and 72: "But whoever supposes that the bishops of this golden age of the church correspond with the bishops of the following centuries must blend and confound characters that are very different, for in this century and the next, a bishop had charge of a single church, which might ordinarily be contained in a private house; nor was he its Lord, but was in reality its minister or servant. . . All the churches in those primitive times were independent

bodies, or none of them subject to the jurisdiction of any other. For though the churches which were founded by the Apostles themselves frequently had the honor shown them to be consulted in doubtful cases, yet they had no judicial authority, no control, no power of giving laws. On the contrary, it is as clear as the noonday that all Christian churches had equal rights, and were in all respects on a footing of equality."

11. Up to this period, notwithstanding much and serious persecutions, Christianity has had a marvelous growth. It has covered and even gone beyond the great Roman Empire. Almost, if not all the inhabited world has heard the gospel. And, according to some of the church historians, many of the original churches organized by the Apostles are yet intact, and yet loyal to Apostolic teachings. However, as already shown, a number of very marked and hurtful errors have crept in and gotten a permanent hold among many of the churches. Some have become very irregular.

12. Persecutions have become increasingly bitter. Near the beginning of the fourth century comes possibly the first definite government edict of persecution. The wonderful growth of Christianity has alarmed the pagan leaders of the Roman Empire. Hence Galerius, the emperor, sent out a direct edict of more savage persecution. This occurred Feb. 24, 303 A.D. Up to this time Paganism seems to have persecuted without any definite laws to that effect.

13. But this edict failed so utterly in its purpose of stopping the growth of Christianity, that this same emperor, Galerius, just eight years thereafter (A.D. 311) passed another edict recalling the first and actually granting toleration—permission to live the religion of Jesus Christ. This was probably its first favorable law.

14. By the beginning of the year A.D. 313, Christianity has won a mighty victory over paganism. A new emperor has come to

the throne of the Roman Empire. He evidently recognized something of the mysterious power of this religion that continued to grow in spite of persecution. History says that this new emperor who was none other than Constantine had a wonderful realistic vision. He saw in the skies a fiery red cross and on that cross written in fiery letters these words—"By this thou shalt conquer." He interpreted it to mean that he should become a Christian. And that by giving up paganism and that by attaching the spiritual power of the Christian religion onto the temporal power of the Roman Empire the world could be easily conquered. Thus the Christian religion would in fact become a whole world religion, and the Roman Empire a whole world empire.

15. So under the leadership of Emperor Constantine there comes a truce, a courtship and a proposal of marriage. The Roman Empire through its emperor seeks a marriage with Christianity. Give us your spiritual power and we will give you of our temporal power.

16. To effectually bring about and consummate this unholy union, a council was called. In A. D. 313, a call was made for a coming together of the Christian churches or their representatives . Many but not all came. The alliance was consummated. A Hierarchy was formed. In the organization of the Hierarchy, **Christ was dethroned as head of the churches and Emperor Constantine enthroned (only temporarily, however) as head of the church.**

17. The Hierarchy was the definite beginning of a development which finally resulted into what is now known as the Catholic, or "universal" church. It might be said that its indefinite beginnings were near the close of the second and beginning of the third century, when the new ideas concerning bishops and preacher-church government began to take shape.

18. Let it be definitely remembered that when Constantine made his call for the council, there were very many of the

Christians (Baptists) and of the churches, which declined to respond. They wanted no marriage with the state, and no centralized religious government, and no higher ecclesiastical government of any kind, than the individual church. These Christians (Baptists) nor the churches ever at that time or later, entered the hierarchy of the Catholic denomination.

And the head of the Catholic Church is honored by the rulers and governments of today. How very shameful.

Who Do You Worship?

In the Scripture it is made very clear that worship is to be directed to the LORD God and Him alone. Nowhere in scripture are we given to understand that worshiping anything, or anyone else is acceptable in the sight of God. The passages that state this are succinct and to the point, and are as follows:

And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me. Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love me, and keep my commandments. (*Exodus 20:1-5*)

Jesus saith unto her, Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what

we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth. (*John 4:21-23*)

And he (the angel) saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God. And I fell at his feet to worship him. And he said unto me, See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy. (*Revelation 19:9-10*)

To be certain, it cannot get much, if any, plainer than the above. This being the case, what are we to make of the following:

1. Queen of Peace, pray for us!

*On the feast of your Immaculate Conception,
I come to venerate you, O Mary,
at the foot of this effigy, which from Piazza di Spagna
allows your maternal gaze to extend over this ancient, and
for me very dear, city of Rome.*

I have come here, this evening, to render you the homage of my sincere devotion.

*It is a gesture in which I am joined in this Piazza by
innumerable Romans,
whose affection has always accompanied me
in all the years of my service to the See of Peter.
I am here with them to start on the path
toward the one hundred fiftieth anniversary
of the dogma that we celebrate today with filial joy.*

2. Queen of Peace, pray for us!

We turn our gaze to you with intense trepidation,

we take recourse to you with insistent trust
in these times marked by not a few uncertainties and fears
over the present and future fate of our planet.
To you, the first of humanity redeemed by Christ,
finally liberated from the slavery of evil and sin,
we raise a heartfelt and confident supplication:
Listen to the cry of pain of the victims of war
and of so many forms of violence
that bloody the earth.
Dispel the darkness of sadness and solitude,
of hatred and vengeance,
Open the minds and hearts of all to trust and forgiveness!

3. Queen of Peace, pray for us!

Mother of mercy and of hope,
obtain for the men and women of the third millennium
the precious gift of peace:
peace in hearts and in families,
in communities and among peoples;
peace especially for those nations
where every day combating and dying continue.

Help every human being, and all races and cultures,
to encounter and accept Jesus,
who came on earth in the mystery of Christmas
to give us "his" peace.

Mary, Queen of Peace,
give us Christ, true peace of the world!

Delivered by Pope John Paul on 8 December, 2003

Do the words **venerate**, **homage** and **devotion** mean anything? Yes, they certainly do, and they are all synonyms for worship. I don't care what one chooses to call it, worship is worship, regardless of the label applied to it.

This puts the Pope in direct violation of the clear and express command of the LORD God, Who the Pope claims to serve. Moreover, this is not an isolated incident, but is well known despite the denials of some Catholic apologists. In fact the following excerpts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church show plainly the worship of Mary as a equal with Christ:

969 "This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix."

970 "Mary's function as mother of men in no way obscures or diminishes this unique mediation of Christ, but rather shows its power. But the Blessed Virgin's salutary influence on men . . . flows forth from the superabundance of the merits of Christ, rests on his mediation, depends entirely on it, and draws all its power from it." "No creature could ever be counted along with the Incarnate Word and Redeemer; but just as the priesthood of Christ is shared in various ways both by his ministers and the faithful, and as the one goodness of God is radiated in different ways among his creatures, so also the unique mediation of the Redeemer does not exclude but rather gives rise to a manifold cooperation which is but a sharing in this one source."

** II. DEVOTION TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN*

971 "All generations will call me blessed": "The Church's devotion to the Blessed Virgin is intrinsic to Christian worship." The Church rightly honors "the Blessed Virgin with special devotion. From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of 'Mother of God,' to

whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs. . . . This very special devotion . . . differs essentially from the adoration which is given to the incarnate Word and equally to the Father and the Holy Spirit, and greatly fosters this adoration." The liturgical feasts dedicated to the Mother of God and Marian prayer, such as the rosary, an "epitome of the whole Gospel," express this devotion to the Virgin Mary.

I have to ask, if Mary was so special, why then did the Lord Jesus Himself make the following statement when His mother and brethren came to get Him one day?

While he yet talked to the people, behold, his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speak with him. Then one said unto him, Behold, thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to speak with thee. But he answered and said unto him that told him, Who is my mother? and who are my brethren? And he stretched forth his hand toward his disciples, and said, Behold my mother and my brethren! For whosoever shall do the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother. (Matthew 12:46-50)

Or, answer her in the way he did at the wedding feast of Cana?

And the third day there was a marriage in Cana of Galilee; and the mother of Jesus was there: And both Jesus was called, and his disciples, to the marriage. And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus saith unto him, They have no wine. Jesus saith unto her, Woman, what have I to do with thee? mine hour is not yet come. (John 2:1-3)

Or even at age 12, where the Lord Jesus Christ had to remind Mary and Joseph that He was to be about His Father's business?

And it came to pass, that after three days they found him in the temple, sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing

them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers. And when they saw him, they were amazed: and his mother said unto him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? behold, thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And he said unto them, How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? And they understood not the saying which he spake unto them. And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them: but his mother kept all these sayings in her heart. (Luke 2:46-51)

No, plainly, to the Lord Jesus Christ, other than the fact that Mary physically bore Him, as far as He was concerned, she was no different than anyone else on the earth – a sinner who needed the salvation He provided on the cross. Mary was not to be worshiped, and the Lord Jesus Christ did not accord her that honor, nor did He direct anything to be done through Mary. Instead, His instruction to the Samaritan woman at the well stands pre-eminent, and in perfect accord with the rest of Scripture – worship God, and God alone.

Anything else is blasphemy and idolatry.