Mariology

A Study of the Doctrines about Mary

by

Reuben S. Emperado

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Phone: 662-283-1192; Fax: 419-791-0505
E-Mail: choate@worldevangelism.org

Publisher's Statement

The Spanish colonized the Philippines and were there for many years. During that time the Roman Catholic Church had the opportunity to get a real foot-hold in the country, so that today it is known primarily as a Catholic nation.

One of the dominant teachings of the Catholic Church concerns Mary, exalting her literally to equality with God, making her a Savior with authority and power, labeling her both as "Mother of God" and "Mediatrix" between God and man. Of course these doctrines are foreign to the teaching of the Bible. It is true that Mary was a virgin, the mother of Jesus Christ who was and is the Son of God, and for this she deserves our respect and love, but not our worship. Regardless of the importance of her role in bringing the Savior — and, through Him, salvation — into the world, she herself was but a human being in need of forgiveness for her own sins.

Reuben Emperado was born into this Catholic setting, grew up in it, and became familiar with its teachings. But Reuben was blessed to hear the gospel, to obey it, and to become a member of the church of Christ, the church that Christ promised to establish, the church He died for, and the church for which He will return one day.

Knowing of the teaching of the Catholic Church concerning Mary, Reuben has made an in-depth study of these doctrines over a number of years. The result has been the writing of this book on the general topic of "Mariology".

Certainly, Reuben's purpose is not to be accusing and ugly toward the Catholic Church, or to attempt to hurt the feelings of Catholic people. His desire is to discuss the doctrines concern-

ing Mary and to show from the Bible what God teaches in regard to these matters. You are asked, as the reader of this book, to keep an open mind and to have the desire to know the truth on this subject as much so as you would want to know the truth on any other subject. The truth is the truth, and error is error — no human has the power to change that. We can accept the truth or the error of man-made doctrines — God does not force us to choose His way — but who would want to continue in error when he can know the truth? The Bible says that it is only the truth that makes one free.

We commend brother Emperado for this study, and we pray that it may be the means of leading many souls to the truth.

J. C. Choate
Winona, MS
May 21, 2003

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Introduction

THE PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY is threefold: (1) to set forth the Biblical doctrine about Mary, the mother of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wife of Joseph, (2) to trace five of the major doctrines that were introduced by the Roman Catholic Church about her, centuries after the death of the apostles, and (3) to expose the errors taught by the Roman Catholic Church about Mary.

In past centuries uninspired men have introduced unscriptural doctrines about Mary, which are now part of the system of the Roman Catholic religion. The five major dogmas promulgated about Mary are as follows:

1. **The Dogma that Mary Is the Mother of God,** (Greek, *Theotokos*), declared in the *Council of Ephesus in the year 431*, under the leadership of Cyril of Alexandria. Two hundred bishops attended this council.
2. **The Dogma of Perpetual Virginity of Mary** defined as dogma at the *Council of Constance (553)* and at the *Synod of Lateran in A.D. 649.*
3. **The Dogma that Mary Was Free from Personal Sins,** which was defined by the *Council of Trent on its 6th session, Canon 23.*
4. **The Dogma of the Immaculate Conception**, defined by *Pope Pius IX on December 8, 1854*, in his Papal Bull, *Inefabillis Deus.*
5. **The Dogma that Mary Was Assumed to Heaven, Body and Soul**, defined by *Pope Pius XII on November 1, 1950*, through his Papal Bull, *Munificentissimus Deus.*

These five dogmas, which were introduced by men, rest not on divine revelation but on false and pretended apostolic traditions and papal declarations. As a result of these so-called *Marian privileges*, the Roman Catholic Church has introduced a special devotion designated for Mary alone, which they call *hyperdulia* or *super veneration.*

The object of this study is to examine these major Roman Catholic doctrines about Mary in the light of Biblical and true historical perspective, and to show that these new doctrines are not divine revelations but are purely human innovations introduced by uninspired men, never authorized by God. (Deuteronomy 18:22,23)

One of the canonized "saints" of the Catholic church, Alfonsus de Liguori, has falsely attributed to Mary many fantastic titles and honors which are unscriptural; honors, titles and dignities that rightly belong to God alone. Liguori has become the champion and most ardent promoter of the Marian devotion in the Roman Catholic Church. His most publicized book on the subject is entitled **The Glories of Mary**. This book is full of fantastic and absurd stories about Mary, stories that are false, perverse, outrageously ridiculous and blasphemous. Even **Dollinger**, a well-respected Catholic theologian, said that the writings of Liguori were the *"grossest fables, perverse and forgeries, and a storehouse of lies."*

There are many things about the life of Mary that are **not** mentioned in the Bible.

First of all, the Bible is silent about Mary's parentage and the details of her birth and conception. However, after the death of the apostles, some men circulated stories about Mary. An example of this is the *Protevangelium of James*, an apocryphal writing

composed around the second century. All church authorities consider this writing a forgery. It made many *fanciful* and *unbiblical assertions* about Mary's parentage. This false gospel states that Mary's parents were Anne and Joachim.

The authors of the book **Mary in the New Testament** said that:

"The Protevangelium shows itself unhistorical on most other details about Mary's youth..." (**Mary in the New Testament**, p.67).

The Apostle Paul said:

"I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a ***different*** *gospel; which is* ***not another gospel*** *only there are some that trouble you, and would* ***pervert the gospel of Christ****. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you,* ***let him be anathema****. As we have said before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that which ye received, let him be anathema"* (Galatians 1:6-9).

The Apostle Paul charged Timothy:

"Preach the word! Be ready in season and out of season. Convince and rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine. For the time will come when men will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers; and ***they will turn their ears away from the truth and turn away to fables****"* (2 Timothy 4:2-4).

Second, the Bible is also silent about Mary's later life and her

death. The two Catholic authors, **Addis and Arnold**, have admitted this fact. They said:

"Scripture is silent about her (Mary's) later life and its close" (**Catholic Dictionary**, page 538).

God has chosen to keep some of the details of Mary's life hidden from us. Let us respect the silence of God concerning these matters. The Bible says:

"The secret things belong unto the LORD our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law" (Deuteronomy 29:29).

We can rest assured that if it was God's will for us to know more of the details of Mary's life, He would not have failed to reveal them to us. But God has chosen not to disclose some of Mary's private life, and we should be content with it and respect God's silence. Our attitude should be like that of Samuel the prophet when he said: *"Lord, speak and your servant listens"* (1 Samuel 3:10). Now, let us take a look at what God has to say in the New Testament about Mary, the wife of Joseph and the mother of Jesus, the Messiah.

Mary in the New Testament

The first mention of Mary in the Bible is found in Matthew 1:18-25 and in Luke 1:1-38, as a woman betrothed to Joseph of Nazareth, who was from the house of David.

Matthew's account reads as follows:

"Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, ***before they came together****, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then*

Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee ***Mary thy wife****: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.*

"Now all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us.

"Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and ***took unto him his wife: And knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son****: and he called his name JESUS"* (Matthew 1:18-25).

In Matthew's account, we are told that after Joseph knew that Mary was pregnant, before they came together, he decided to divorce her secretly. But an angel told him to take Mary as his wife, for the child conceived by her was of the Holy Spirit as a fulfillment of the prophecy of the prophet Isaiah. Joseph *"took Mary as his wife, but did not know her until she had brought forth her firstborn son."* This phrase clearly implies that Joseph and Mary lived a normal married life after she gave birth to Jesus, her first-born son.

Luke's account is in the following words:

"In the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God to a city of Galilee named Nazareth, to a virgin betrothed to a

man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin's name was Mary. And he came to her and said, 'Hail, O favored one, the Lord is with you!' But she was greatly troubled at the saying, and considered in her mind what sort of greeting this might be. And the angel said to her, 'Do not be afraid, Mary, for you have found favor with God. And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great, and will be called the Son of the Most High; and the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there will be no end.' And Mary said to the angel, 'How shall this be, since I have no husband?' And the angel said to her, 'The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.' ... Mary said: 'Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.' And the angel departed from her" (Luke 1:26-38).

The next account of Mary's life is found in Luke 2:1-7, when she and Joseph went to Bethlehem to be enrolled, because he was from the house of David. According to Luke,

"And while they were there, the time came for her to be delivered. And she gave birth to her ***first-born son*** *and wrapped him in swaddling cloths, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn"* (Verses 6,7).

After Jesus started his personal ministry, there are few instances where Mary's presence is mentioned in the New Testament. Sometimes she is named, but there are times that her presence is only implied in the context.

1. In John 2:1-11, Mary is with Jesus and the disciples at the marriage in Cana of Galilee and witnessed the first recorded miracle of Jesus. At this instance Mary was over-anxious that the host had already consumed all the wine. John said:

"When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, 'They have no wine.' And Jesus said to her, ***'O woman what have you to do with me?*** *My hour has not yet come.' His mother said to the servants,* ***'Do whatever he tells you.'"***

Addis and Arnold, authors of the **Catholic Dictionary**, admitted that this text is difficult to reconcile with the Roman Catholic theology on Mary. They said:

"The passage is confessedly a hard one. Christ may have meant that there was nothing in common between His divine and her human nature. She could not fathom the counsels of his omniscience" (Addis and Arnold, p. 537).

The difficulty is not in the text itself but on how to harmonize the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church about Mary with the plain and simple declaration of the word of God. Many ancient teachers of the church believe that this is a sharp rebuke to Mary's haste.

According to Henry Sheldon, a church historian:

"Several of the fathers use language which is so far from predicating entire sinlessness of Mary that it might be understood as not excusing her from such actual sins as over anxiety, ambition, or lack of faith" (**History of the Christians Church**, Vol. V., page 47).

2. Her next recorded appearance was at *Capernaum*, where she and the *brothers of the Lord* wanted to speak to Him.

"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).

In this account, Matthew introduced for the first time the **brothers of Jesus**, who were with his mother, Mary. The exact relationship of these *"brothers of Jesus"* to Mary and Joseph has been the subject of great interest and controversy among Catholics and non-Catholics. The Roman Catholic theologians would allege that they were not the children of Mary and Joseph, but are only relatives. Some would even speculate that they were the children of Joseph in his alleged, unrecorded *"first marriage"*, but this allegation about Joseph's *"former marriage"* is based only on fiction, not fact. The New Testament is silent about this matter. Some Catholics would also say that they are the *disciples of Jesus*.

It is the conviction of many Bible scholars, based on a careful study of the Bible, that these *"brothers of Jesus"* are the fruit of Mary and Joseph's union. This is made apparent by a closer look at the Gospel accounts and by studying some of the prophetic writings about the Messiah (Psalm 69:8,9). If we notice closely the Gospel accounts, the *brothers of Jesus* were differentiated from his *disciples*. Later in the next chapter, *the brothers of Jesus* were mentioned by name. At this time Jesus was in his hometown, Nazareth.

"And when Jesus had finished these parables, he went away from there, and coming to his own country he taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said 'Where did this man get this wisdom and these mighty works? Is not this the ***carpenter's son****? Is not* ***his mother called Mary?*** *And are not his brothers* ***James and Joseph and Simon and Judas****? Are not all his sisters with us? Where did this man get all this?' And they took offense at him. But Jesus said to them, 'A prophet is not without honor except* ***in his own country and in his own house'"*** (Matthew 13:53-58).

3. The other time Mary is mentioned in the Gospel is at the *crucifixion*, where she viewed the crucified Lord with the other women: with *her sister (Salome); Mary the wife of Cleophas, and Mary Magdalene* (John 19:25-27). During this time Jesus entrusted the care of his mother, Mary, to John, his beloved disciple (Matthew 27:55-57; Mark 15:40).

4. The final mention of Mary in the New Testament is recorded in the book of Acts, where she is found together with the disciples praying. *"All these with one accord devoted themselves to prayer, together with the women and* ***Mary the mother of Jesus****, and* ***with his brethren"*** (Acts 1:14). Please note at least two important things: *The disciples were* ***not praying to Mary****, but they were praying* ***together with her.*** Then notice also, that *the brothers of Jesus* were also mentioned by Luke but differentiated from *his disciples* in verse 13 of the same chapter.

There is no doubt that Mary has occupied a special place in the over-all plan of God. However, man has no authority to exalt her to a place or position that God has not ordained her. Nor does

man have any right to give her honor, titles or positions that God has not conferred on her. To do this would be the height of human presumption. The Bible said:

> *"But the prophet, which shall presume to speak a word in my name, which I have not commanded him to speak, or that shall speak in the name of other gods, even that prophet shall die"* (Deuteronomy 18:20).

The Roman Catholic Church has *invented many fables and legends* about Mary. These fables were in turn *transformed into false apostolic traditions*, and these false apostolic traditions were declared as *dogmas* of the Roman Catholic Church.

Even Catholic authorities are forced to admit that the devotion to Mary was not practiced in the early days of the church. The authors of the **Catholic Dictionary** said:

> "Devotion to Mary was kept in the background even until the last part of the fourth century, the reason was that there was the danger of scandal to the heathen, who with their own inadequate motives of worship, might construe the honor paid to Mary" (**Catholic Dictionary**, Addis and Arnold, pages 538-39).

It is very clear from this quotation that the early Christians were more cautious and wiser than the Roman Catholic Church today. It is apparent that the danger of idolatry is still present, and this is proven by the excessive devotions that the Mariolaters are giving to Mary today.

We would like to encourage you to study this very important subject. The Bible has commanded us to test and examine ourselves to see if we are in the truth (2 Corinthians 13:5). Truth has nothing to fear. In fact, truth welcomes all honest investigations.

Like the Bereans of old times, let us examine the Scripture to see if these doctrines are true (Acts 17:11).

Paul said: *"For we cannot do anything against the truth but only for the truth"* (2 Corinthians 13:8). We are also commanded to *love the truth* (Zechariah 8:16).

Jesus said:

John 8:32 - *"And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free."*

John 17:17 - *"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."*

Those who refuse to listen to the truth will have only errors and falsehoods. In 2 Timothy 4:1-4, the apostle Paul told Timothy:

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction."

And he continued:

"For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths (fables)" (NIV).

We have no intention of diminishing Mary's exalted and singular honor, which she received from the Lord when God chose her as the human vessel and instrument of bringing forth the

Messiah to the world. That singular privilege is something that other women can never have. Our main purpose in this study, however, is to put forth in proper perspective the Biblical truths and to expose the errors taught by men concerning Mary. We want to separate the truth from fables and what the Bible has said concerning Mary from what man has concocted centuries later. We, therefore, invite you to study with us this very important and sensitive issue concerning Mary.

"*Come therefore, and let us reason together*" (Isaiah 1:18).

Chapter One
The Perpetual Virginity

THE MIRACULOUS BIRTH OF JESUS is affirmed in the scripture. We are told that Mary, his mother, was still a virgin when she conceived Him (Matthew 1:21-23; Luke 1:26-37), and she remained a virgin **until** Jesus' birth. Matthew informed us that Joseph *"took her as his wife and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son"* (Matthew 1:25). There is no indication in the New Testament that Mary's virginity was extended beyond the birth of Jesus. Matthew was very clear in his narrative when he said that Joseph *took Mary as his wife and knew her not **till** she gave birth to Jesus.* The implication of the phrase *"knew her not till she gave birth"* is clear. After the birth of Jesus, Joseph and Mary lived together as normal husband and wife. The fact that Scripture mentions the *brothers* and *sisters* of Jesus proves that Mary and Joseph consummated their marriage, contrary to the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church.

The Roman Catholic Church holds to the idea that Mary remained a virgin even after the birth of Jesus. They have extended Mary's virginity far beyond what the Scriptures have revealed. They teach something which the apostles and inspired writer have not taught. They teach emphatically that Joseph never knew her even after the birth of Jesus. This dogma has no support in the Scripture.

After the birth of Jesus, the New Testament writers were silent as to the married life of Mary and Joseph. Not one presumed to intrude into the private life of Mary and Joseph as husband and wife. There is no Biblical detail as to their private relationship. Since God's word is silent about this, and we should respect this divine silence.

The doctrine of *Mary's Perpetual Virginity* was formally defined at the *Fifth General Council at Constantinople in 553 A.D.*, and subsequently taught by the *Lateran Synod in 649 A.D.* Concerning this dogma, James Cardinal Gibbons said:

> "The Church teaches that she was always a virgin — a Virgin before her espousal, during her married life, and after her spouse's death" (**The Faith of Our Fathers**, New York, page 138).

Recent joint-research conducted by Catholic and Protestant scholars has proven that the concept of the Roman Catholic Church concerning the perpetual virginity of Mary is not based on true apostolic tradition but based on the "ascetic and encratitic tendencies" of the early church writers (**Mary in the New Testament**, page 273).

> "One of the earliest 'proofs' advanced to prove the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary is found in the "*pseudo-Justin*" fragment, attributed today by almost all scholars to a much later date" (Ibid. page 274).

Even Origin, who believed that the brothers of Jesus were the children of Joseph by a previous marriage had to admit that:

> "the assertion of an unconsummated marriage did not have a clear warrant in the canonical writings of the New Testament, and so he did not argue for it exegetically" (Ibid. page 275).

> "*Tertullian*, despite his personal ascetic leanings, uncompromisingly affirmed the contrary: Jesus was virginally conceived, but Joseph and Mary did consummate their marriage, and the 'brothers' of Jesus were the fruit of this union. Tertullian probably thought this to be the meaning of the Biblical texts. In his anti-docetic and anti-Gnostic argument

he seems convinced that he is defending the true apostolic tradition against innovation" (**Mary in the New Testament**, page 275).

"For this reason Tertullian opposed any extension of Mary's virginity beyond the conception of Jesus" (Ibid. p. 272).

"Mary's virginity during the birth of Jesus was contested in the early church by Tertullian (De Carne Christi 23) and especially by Jovinian, an opponent of the Church ideal of virginal purity; and in modern times Rationalists (Harnack calls it 'a Gnostic invention')" (**Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, Ludwig Ott, p. 205).

The assertion, therefore, of the Roman Church that this doctrine is an apostolic tradition has no basis in history or in fact. The New Testament teaches only the virginal conception of Jesus, not the perpetual virginity of Mary. As we have already seen, the New Testament writers say nothing to indicate the extension of Mary's virginity beyond the birth of Jesus. The purpose of the virginal conception of Jesus was to show that Jesus Christ is the Messiah — *the incarnate Son of God.*

According to some early church writers, the Gnostic and the ascetic tendencies of some of the early church fathers influenced the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity.

Cardinal Gibbons, in a desperate effort to prove the impossible, and to try to strengthen the weak position of the Catholic Church, quoted an Episcopalian Bishop, Bishop Bull, who said:

"It cannot with decency be imagined that the most holy vessel which was once consecrated to be a receptacle of the Deity should be afterwards desecrated and profaned by human use" (**The Faith of Our Fathers**, James Cardinal Gibbons, pages 139).

What Bishop Bull believed on this matter has no weight whatsoever in deciding the scripturality of the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity. Bishop Bull of the Episcopalian Church is just expressing his biased personal opinion, and he is not inspired. And like Cardinal Gibbons, he too believes in the doctrine of the perpetual virginity of Mary. The only difference between them is that he is an Episcopalian and Cardinal Gibbons is a Catholic; but both men are wrong. His statement did not make the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity Biblical.

Bishop Bull said that if Joseph and Mary had a marital relationship after the birth of Jesus, it would *"desecrate and profane"* her. But why? According to the gospel of Matthew, Joseph took Mary "as his wife". He was not just a guardian to preserve Mary's virginity, but he took her to be his wife. Bishop Bull's statement is a direct assault and contradiction of the Biblical doctrine of marriage. It is mearly a reaffirmation of the Gnostic-docetic doctrine that sexual union in marriage is sinful and evil. But what does the Bible say about marriage?

The Biblical Teaching about Marriage

1. Marriage is a *divine institution.* God authorized and sanctioned it. Its privileges are honorable, noble, pure and good (Genesis 2:24).

2. Marriage is *honorable* and its bed is *holy* and should not be defiled by adulterous relationships.

"Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled but whoremongers and adulterers God will judge" (Hebrews 13:4).

3. Married people have a divine obligation to fulfill to each other; failure to do so would mean violation of God's command.

The Apostle Paul, speaking to the married Christian couples in Corinth, said:

> *"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband. Let the husband render unto the wife due benevolence: and likewise also the wife unto the husband. The wife hath not power of her own body, but the husband: and likewise also the husband hath not power of his own body, but the wife. Defraud ye not one the other, except it be with consent for a time, that ye may give yourselves to fasting and prayer; and come together again, that Satan tempt you not for your incontinency"* (1 Corinthians 7:2-5).

> *"But he had no union with her until she gave birth to a son. And he gave him the name Jesus"* (Matthew 1:25).

The idea of the Roman Catholic Church and the Episcopalian bishop, concerning Mary's perpetual virginity, has made Mary an unfaithful and a disobedient wife. This concept degrades Mary and has made her a violator of God's principle concerning marriage. On this ground alone this doctrine has to be rejected.

Jesus Is the Firstborn Son of Mary

1. Luke 2:7 says: *"And she brought forth her firstborn son..."*

The **Theological Dictionary of the New Testament**, Volume VI, page 876 said:

> "On the other hand *prototokos* does very generally include the possibility and even the expectation that other children will follow. Hence *prototokos* in Luke 2:7 cannot have the sense of *monogenes* or rule out the possibility that Mary had other children."

The Brothers of Jesus

The question then is, did Joseph and Mary ever have other children? The New Testament seems to imply that they had at least six children, and many church fathers, including Tertullian, believed this to be the case.

Please note the following facts:

Children are blessings from the Lord. The Psalmists express this idea beautifully:

> *"Lo, children are a heritage of Jehovah; and the fruit of the womb is his reward. As arrows in the hand of a mighty man, so are the children of youth. Happy is the man that hath his quiver full of them: They shall not be put to shame, when they speak with their enemies in the gate"* (Psalm 127:3-5).

To a Jewish couple, having children is God's sign of blessings and good favor. It is, therefore, not surprising if Mary and Joseph had a lot of children in their later lives.

In the New Testament we read that Jesus had *brothers and sisters.*

1. Matthew 12:46,47 - *"While Jesus was still talking to the crowd, his mother and **brothers** stood outside, wanting to talk to him. Someone told him, 'Your mother and brothers are standing outside, wanting to speak to you."* (See also Mark 3:31,32; Luke 8:19-21).

2. Matthew 13:55,56 - *"Isn't this the carpenter's son? Isn't his mother's name Mary, and aren't **his brothers James, Joseph, Simon and Judas**? Aren't all his **sisters** with us? Where then did this man get all these things?"* (Read also Mark 6:1-6).

3. 1 Corinthians 9:5 - *"Don't we have the right to take a believing wife along with us, as do the other apostles and the* ***Lord's brothers*** *and Cephas?"*

4. Galatians 1:19 - *"I saw none of the other apostles — only* ***James, the Lord's brother.***"

It is the firm conviction of many well-respected Bible scholars, based on a careful study of the Bible, that the brothers of Jesus were the children of Joseph and Mary. There is nothing in the Scripture that will prevent this conclusion. In fact, this is the only view that is most consistent with *logic, history* and *divine revelation*. The word "brother" is from the Greek word *adelphos*. According to **Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, "'*adelphos*', means, from the same womb. A brother (whether born of the same parents, or only of the same father or the same mother), Matthew 1:2; 4:14" (p. 10).

Concerning the brothers of the Lord, Thayer said:

> "The brethren of Jesus, Matthew 12:46,47; 13:55; Mark 6:3 (in the last two passages also sisters); Luke 8:19; John 2:12; 7:3, Acts 1:14; Galatians 1:19; I Corinthians 9:5, are neither sons of Joseph by a wife married before Mary (which is the account in the Apocryphal Gospels)...nor cousins, the children of Alphaeus or Cleophas and Mary a sister of the mother of Jesus (the current opinion among doctors of the church since Jerome and Augustine) ... but own brothers, born after Jesus, is clear principally from Matthew 1:25; Luke 2:7 — where, had Mary borne no other children after Jesus, instead of *huion prototokon*, and the *huion monogene* would have been used, as well as from Acts 1:14, cf. John 7:5, where the brethren of the Lord are distinguished from the apostles" (**Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament**, p. 10).

The Roman Catholic defenders would argue that the word "*brother*" was also extended to other relatives as in the case of Abraham and Lot. We do not deny this. But in their case, we have clear Biblical details to tell us that Lot was the nephew of Abraham, the son of Haran, Abraham's brother (Genesis 11:31). In contrast with the brethren of Jesus there is no Biblical information to support the idea that these brothers and sisters are not His real brothers from Mary and Joseph. In the absence of any Biblical information, the natural meaning has to take precedence over any other interpretations. If these brothers of the Lord were not really the children of Mary, then why is the New Testament silent about it?

In the New Testament, there are other words that are used to describe *cousins* and *relatives*. Let us consider two of these words.

a) *Sungeneia* - primarily denotes kinship (Luke 1:61; Acts7: 3,14) (**Vine's Dictionary of the New Testament**, p. 622).

b) *Anepsios* - in Colossians denotes a cousin rather than a nephew (A.V. sister's son). We are to understand, therefore, that Mark was the cousin of Barnabas (Colossians 4:10) (**Vine's Dictionary of the New Testament**, p. 242).

If it is true that these brothers and sisters of Jesus were his *cousins* instead of being *real brothers* and *sisters,* then why were these two Greek words (*sungeneia* and *anepsios*) never used in any single instance in the New Testament to describe their relationship? Instead, the word "*adelphous*" was consistently used. If it is really God's will for us to believe this doctrine, why did He not make it clear for us? And why are even Catholics today not sure as to the exact relationship of these brethren of Jesus to Joseph and Mary?

In Psalm 69:7-9 we read of a prophecy concerning our Lord Jesus Christ. Please take note of these charts.

That this prophecy has reference to Jesus Christ is made clear to us in the New Testament.

Based on Psalm 69:7-9 we know for sure that the brethren of Jesus were the sons of his mother, Mary. This is not a human opinion but a Biblical truth!

Prophecy	Fulfillment
PSALM 69:9 - "For the zeal of thine house hath eaten me up; and the reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me."	JOHN 2:17 - "And his disciples remembered that it was written: 'The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up.'"
PSALM 69:8 - "I am become a stranger unto my brethren, and an alien unto my mother's children."	JOHN 7:3,5 - "His brethren therefore said unto him, Depart hence, and go into Judea, that *thy disciples* may see the works that thou doest ... For *neither* did his *brethren* believe in him."

Three Theories Advanced by the Catholic Church

In their desperate effort to escape the conclusion that the brothers and sisters of Jesus were the real children of Joseph and Mary, the Roman Catholic Church has employed at least three explanations or theories regarding the brothers of Jesus. These theories are known as The Epiphanian View, The Hieronymian View and The Disciples View. Now let us examine these three theories.

1. **The Epiphanian View** — This theory states that these broth-

ers of the Lord are the children of Joseph by a former marriage. This theory says that Mary was the second wife of Joseph. Some influential early church fathers, such as Ephipanius, Origin, Eusebius, Gregory of Nyssa and Ambrose, held to this view.

Objection to this view:

a. This theory has no support in Scriptures. The Bible is silent about any previous marriage of Joseph.

b. The story of Joseph being married for the second time as an old man is based on the *Apocryphal Gospels*, which are purely mythical; therefore, they cannot be used as evidence. Lightfoot said: "They are pure fabrications" (**International Standard Bible Encyclopedia**, Vol. I, p. 519).

c. This view was influenced by a docetic conception that celibacy is far more exalted than marriage itself. Paul said that this concept is the doctrine of demons (1 Timothy 4:1-3).

2. **The Hieronymian View** — Jerome was the chief exponent of this view. This theory states that the brothers of the Lord were his cousins, the sons of Mary, the wife of Cleophas, which according to the Catholic theory was the sister of Mary the mother of Jesus.

Objection to this view:

a. It assumes that *Mary of Cleophas* was the sister of *Mary the mother of Jesus*. It would be a case where two sisters are named Mary, which is a very remote possibility. It is true that the New Testament speaks of Mary's sister, but

there is no proof that Mary of Cleophas was the sister of Mary.

It is believed by many Bible scholars, based on the information supplied by the gospel accounts, that the sister of Mary was *Salome*, the mother of James and John the apostles (Mark 15:40; Matthew 27:56; John 19:25). In John's account, four women are mentioned at the foot of the cross, which included Mary the mother of Jesus, her sister — Salome (the wife of Zebedee); Mary of Cleophas (mother of James and Joses) and Mary Magdalene. The accounts of Matthew and Mark listed only *three* women, in which accounts Mary, the mother of Jesus, was not mentioned. If we compare these three gospel accounts of the women who were present during the crucifixion, we have the following facts:

The Women at the Cross

John 19:25	Mark 15:40	Matthew 27:56
1. Jesus' mother	1. Not mentioned	1. Not mentioned
2. Mary Magdalene	2. Mary Magdalene	2. Mary Magdalene
3. Mary of Cleopas	3. Mary, mother of James the Less and Joses	3. Mary, mother of James and Joses
4. Mary's sister	4. Salome	4. Mother of Zebedee's son (James & John)

"SALOME (1) One of the women who saw the Crucifixion (Mark 15:40; 16:1). Matthew 27:56 mentions the mother of the sons of Zebedee was present; she is probably to be identified with Salome. John 19:25 lists the sister of Jesus'

mother among those near the cross; some scholars identify her with Salome" (**The Bible Almanac**, p. 665).

Based on all the Bible accounts, it is safe to conclude that the *sister of Mary,* the mother of Jesus, was Salome, the mother of James and John. In this case James and John were cousins of Jesus (**The Bible Almanac**, p. 527).

b. The hieronymian view further assumes that Alphaeus and Cleophas is the same person. The **International Standard Bible Encyclopedia** states the difficulties of this view:

"The identity of Cleophas and Alphaeus cannot be established, resting, as it does, upon obscure philological resemblance of Aramaic form of the two names. The most that such argument affords is a mere possibility. Nor is the identity of 'Mary the wife of Cleophas' with the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus, established beyond a doubt" (**International Standard Bible Encyclopedia**, Vol. I, p. 519).

Even Bertrand Conway, a Catholic priest and defender of the Roman Catholic faith, has candidly admitted the difficulties of this theory. He wrote:

"We will never know to a certainty the exact relationship of the four brothers, James, Joseph, Simon and Jude. It will always remain doubtful whether 'Mary of Cleophas (Cleophas) was the wife of Cleophas or his sister .... It will always remain doubtful whether James, the brother of the Lord, is James the Apostle, the son of Alphaeus; and again whether Alphaeus is the same as Cleophas (Alphaeus-Cleophas), the brother of Joseph" (**The Question Box**, 1929 Edition, pp. 354-355).

c. Based on the observations made by various scholars, let us summarize the difficulties of this theory.

1. The identities of *Alphaeus* and *Cleophas* are not established. According to the author of the **International Bible Encyclopedia**:

> "The identity of Cleophas and Alphaeus cannot be established, resting, as it does, upon obscure philological resemblance of Aramaic form of the two names. The most that such argument affords is a mere possibility."

2. The identity of *Mary of Cleophas* as the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus is not established in the New Testament. Catholic scholars admit this.

> "Nor is the identity of 'Mary the wife of Cleophas' with the sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus, established beyond a doubt."

On the other hand, we have seen that Salome could possibly be the sister of Mary, based on the gospel accounts of the women who witnessed the crucifixion.

3. According to Bertrand Conway, a Catholic priest:

> "It will always remain doubtful whether James, the brother of the Lord, is James the Apostle, the son of Alphaeus; and again whether Alphaeus is the same as Cleophas (Alphaeus-Cleophas), the brother of Joseph."

Conway wrongly assumes that James, the brother of the Lord is not the brother of Jesus because in John 5:2-5 his brothers were not belivers and later in Acts 1:12-14 Jesus' brothers were differentiated from his apostles, which included James of Alphaeus.

The Hieronymian View, therefore, offers no clear explanation regarding the brothers of the Lord. It has so many missing links with no possible answer. It has created more problems and doubts with no possible solutions. Therefore, this theory must be rejected for lack of historical merit and Biblical support.

3. The "Disciple" View — This view states that the brothers of the Lord were not his blood brothers, but his brothers in faith, or his apostles. Again, this is another weak and hopeless theory, which we can demonstrate as false and unscriptural.

Objection to this View: In the face of many Biblical evidences showing that these brothers of Jesus were unbelievers before the resurrection of the Lord, this theory is proved to be false.

a) These brethren of the Lord (before his resurrection) were not believers. John says:

*"Jesus' **brothers** said to him, 'you ought to leave here and go to Judea, so that your disciples may see the miracles you do. No one who wants to become a public figure acts in secret. Since you are doing these things, show yourself to the world.' For **even his own brothers did not believe in him**"* (John 7:3-5).

"But Jesus said unto them, 'A prophet is not without honor, save in his own country, and in his own house'" (Matthew 13:56).

b) In John 2:12 his *brethren* are differentiated from his *disciples.*

*"After this he went down to Capernaum, he, and **his mother**, and **his brethren**, and **his disciples**: and they continued there for a few days."*

The Apostle John told us that the brothers of Jesus did not believe him during his personal ministry (John 7:1-5). This attitude of unbelief and hostility, however, had changed into belief and adoration after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, for in Acts 1:14 we found *the brothers of the Lord* in the company of

Mary and the other disciples, praying and waiting for the promised Holy Spirit. Once more, the *brethren of the Lord* are differentiated from *the apostles*. We read thus in Acts 1:13,14:

> *"When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and* ***Mary the mother*** *of Jesus, and with* ***his brothers.***"

Please take note that the **apostles** (verse 13) are differentiated from **his brethren**. It is clear, therefore, that these brethren of the Lord were not members of the apostolic band but separate and distinct from them.

After examining the three theories advanced by the Roman Catholic Church, we can only conclude that the *Dogma of the Perpetual Virginity of Mary* is *not an apostolic tradition,* but *a human invention* and an erroneous opinion based on the heretical doctrines of the *Gnostics*, which teach that virginity is more exalted than marriage. This doctrine is against the teachings of the Bible.

Chapter Two
The Immaculate Conception

POPE PIUS IX OFFICIALLY PROCLAIMED the dogma of the Immaculate Conception of Mary on December 8, 1854, in the constitution **Ineffabilis Deus**, which states:

> "In honor of the holy and undivided Trinity, for the glory of the Virgin Mother of God, for the exaltation of the Catholic faith and the Christian religion, by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, of the blessed apostle Peter and Paul of our own office, we declare, pronounce and define the doctrine which holds that the most blessed virgin Mary was in the first instance of her conception by the singular grace and privilege of Almighty God, with the regard to the merits of Christ Jesus the Savior of the human race, preserved free from every stain of original sin, has been revealed by God, and therefore is to be firmly and constantly believed by all the faithful."

The **Dogma of Immaculate Conception** is the necessary consequence of the *unscriptural doctrine taught by Catholic theologians that all newborn children inherited the Adamic sin.* The Catholic Church erroneously teaches that man is born a sinner due to the alleged inherited sin from Adam. If it were true that children are born sinners, this would make Mary a sinner. If Mary inherited the original sin from her parents, Jesus would in turn inherit it from her. Such a concept is repugnant to every thinking person. In order to avoid this dilemma, the Catholic Church had to invent a doctrine that would exempt Mary from the contagion of the original sin. Thus, the *Doctrine of Immaculate Conception.*

Many Roman Catholics today would be surprised to know

that this dogma was the subject of a very long and heated discussion among Roman Catholic theologians during the past centuries, and many Catholic authorities including *popes* and *saints* and *theologians* rejected this dogma.

Historical Development of the Doctrine

Dr. Ludwig Ott, a Catholic theologian, in his book, **Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, tells us how the doctrine of Immaculate Conception developed into a dogma. In Chapter 2, which is titled *The Privileges of the Mother of God*, under the heading *Historical Development of Dogmas*, he wrote:

> "Since the seventh century a Feast of the Conception St. Anne ..., that is, of the passive conception of Mary was celebrated in the Greek Eastern Church. The celebration and the Feast spread later to the West, first to southern Italy, then to Ireland and England, under the title, *Conceptio Beatae Mariae Virginis*. The object of the feast was initially the active conception of St. Anne, which, according to the *Proto-Gospel of James*, occurred after a long period of childlessness, and was foretold by an angel, as an extraordinary manifestation of God's grace.
>
> "At the *beginning of the twelfth century*, the *British monk Eadmer*, a pupil of St. Anselm of Canterbury, and Obsert of Clare, advocated the Immaculate (passive) Conception of Mary, that is, her conception free from original sin. Eadmer wrote the first monograph on this subject. On the other hand *St. Bernard of Clairvaux*, on the occasion of the institution of the Feast in Lyons (about 1140), *warned the faithful that this was an unfounded innovation*, and taught that Mary was sanctified after conception only, that is, when she was already in the womb (Ep. 174). *Under the influence of St. Bernard, the leading theologians of the twelfth and thir-*

teenth centuries (Petrus Lombardus, St. Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure, St. Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas; cf. S. th. III 27,2), *rejected the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception*. Their difficulty was that they had not yet found the way to bring Mary's freedom from original sin into consonance with the universality of original sin, and with the necessity of all men for redemption.

"The correct approach to the final solution of the problem was first achieved by the Franciscan theologian, **William of Ware**, and this was perfected by his great pupil, **John Duns Scotus** (died 1308). The latter taught that the animation (*animato*) need not precede the sanctification in order of time (*ordo temporis*) but only in order of concept (*ordo naturae*). Through the introduction of the concept of praeredemptio (preredemption), he succeeded in reconciling Mary's freedom from original sin with her necessity for redemption. The preservation from original sin, is, according to Scotus, the most perfect kind of redemption. Thus, it was fitting that Christ should redeem His mother in this manner. The Franciscan Order allied itself with Scotus, and in contrast to the Dominican Order, decisively advocated the doctrine and the Feast of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

"In the year 1439, the Council of Basle, in its Thirty-sixth Session, which however, had no ecumenical validity, declared in favour of the Immaculate Conception. Pope Sixtus (1471-1484) endowed the celebration of the Feast with indulgences and forbade the mutual censuring of the disputing factions (D 734 et seq.). The Council of Trent, in its Decree on original sin, makes the significant declaration 'that it was not its intention to involve Mary, the Blessed and Immaculate Virgin and Mother of God in this decree' (D 792). In 1567, Pope Pius V condemned the proposition

advanced by Baius, that nobody but Christ had been free from original sin, and that Mary's sorrows and her death were punishment for actual sins or for original sin (D1073). Pope Paul V (1616), Gregory XV (1622) and Alexander VII (1661) advocated the doctrine (Cf. D. 1100). On the eighth day of December 1854, Pope Pius IX, having consulted the entire episcopate, and speaking Ex Cathedra, declared the doctrine of Immaculate Conception to be a Dogma of the Faith" (**Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, pages 201-202).

I. Based on a False Doctrine.

1. The Bible teaches that sin is not inherited.

"The soul who sins is the one who will die. The son will not share the guilt of the father, nor will the father share the guilt of the son. The righteousness of the righteous man will be credited to him, and the wickedness of the wicked will be charged against him" (Ezekiel 18:20).

2. Sin is a violation of God's law.

"Everyone who sins breaks the law; in fact, sin is lawlessness" (1 John 3:4).

II. Based on Human Opinion.

1. This doctrine was based on men's opinion: William Ware and John Scotus

"The correct approach to the final solution of the problem was first achieved by the Franciscan theologian, William Ware, and was perfected by his pupil John Dunn Scotus (1380)" (**Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, pp. 199-200).

Henry Sheldon has this to say:

"Duns Scotus, who wrote at the end of the thirteenth and

beginning of the fourteenth century, was the notable champion of the doctrine, and based it on speculative, not historical grounds" (**History of the Christian Church**, Sheldon, Vol. V., p. 47).

2. **Scotus' opinion was against the prevalent view of that time.**

"He gives *his own opinion* in favor of the Immaculate Conception with timidity which clearly betrays his consciousness that the general opinion was on the other side" (**Catholic Dictionary**, Addis and Arnold, p. 424).

3. **Scotus' was a "new opinion".**

"Scotus, however, farther on in the same work, expresses a more decided view, and he **inaugurated a new state of opinion...**"

"Gerson who wrote in the 15th century said that the belief of the Immaculate Conception is a newly revealed doctrine" (**History of the Christian Church**, Sheldon, Vol. V, p. 47).

4. **Pope Benedict XIV was inclined to the opinion but refused to define it as an article of faith.**

"Benedict XIV, writing about the middle of the eighteenth century, sums up the whole state of the question in his day thus: 'The Church inclines to the opinion of the Immaculate Conception; but the Apostolic See has not yet defined it as an article of faith" (**Catholic Dictionary**, Addis and Arnold, p. 425).

III. Based on a False Gospel.

The **Doctrine of the Immaculate Conception** has its roots in the **Proto-Gospel of James**, *an apocryphal writing*. The Catholic Church admits that this writing is *purely fictitious and*

legendary, but from this fictitious apocryphal account the Roman Catholic Church has built a dogma — the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception of Mary.

> "We know for instance the names of the parents of Virgin Mary and Ana, only from the false Gospels" (**Catholic Digest**, Dec. 1961, p.16).

From this historical development of the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, we can see that this dogma had naturally developed from the desire of the Roman Catholic theologians to exempt Mary from the stain of original sin (a dogma which is unscriptural). We have seen how Catholic theologians were divided; that many of the most influential and leading theologians of the church were vehemently opposed to the doctrine and how popes hesitated to make it an official teaching of the church. For so many centuries, the popes had allowed the opposing factions to discuss this very controversial doctrine. It was only on December 8, 1854, that the pope of Rome had found an opportune time to make this "*controversial opinion*" a dogma of the Roman Catholic Church.

Here we have seen how *human folly* triumphed over the truth and how a *human opinion* became a *dogma of faith* in the Roman Catholic religion.

Paul warns us about people who will preach another Gospel that is not in accordance to the Bible.

> Galatians 1:7-9 - *"Which is not another gospel only there are some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema. As we have said*

before, so say I now again, if any man preacheth unto you any gospel other than that, which ye received, let him be anathema."

On this basis alone we have enough reason to reject this dogma. But we will go on.

IV. Opposed by many Catholics: Saints, Popes, Cardinals and Theologians.

Many Catholics today are not even aware that a great number of the Catholic saints, theologians, cardinals and even popes were opposed to this Doctrine of Immaculate Conception.

1. St. Bernard of Clairvaux, "warned the faithful" that the belief of the Immaculate Conception of Mary, "was an unfounded innovation".

"On the other hand St. Bernard of Clairvaux, on the occasion of the institution of the Feast in Lyons (about 1140), *warned the faithful that this was an unfounded innovation*, and taught that Mary was sanctified after conception only, that is, when she was already in the womb (Ep. 174). Under the influence of St. Bernard, the leading theologians of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Petrus Lombardus, St. Alexander of Hales, St. Bonaventure, St. Albert the Great, St. Thomas Aquinas; cf. S. th. III 27,2), rejected the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. Their difficulty was that they had not yet found the way to bring Mary's freedom from original sin into consonance with the universality of original sin, and with the necessity of all men for redemption" (**Fundamentals of the Catholic Dogma**, p. 201).

The author of the **Catholic Dictionary** has proved that *"the opinion of St. Bernard was the prevalent one before and during his own age."*

"The quotations in Petavius, from St. Peter Damian, St. Anselm, Peter Lombard and others abundantly prove that *St. Bernard's opinion was the prevalent one before and during his own age.* In the following century St. Thomas held that Mary was only sanctified in the womb after her body was already formed, he argues that if the Virgin 'had not incurred the stain of the original guilt,' she would have stood in no need of being saved and redeemed by Christ, whereas Christ, as the Apostles declare, is the Savior of all men" (p. 424).

2. **The Dominicans were also great adversaries of the doctrine (Catholic Dictionary**, p. 667). "In the order of St. Dominic 92 writers are of the contrary opinion" (**Glories of Mary**, p. 365 and **Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, p. 202).

"The Dominicans, indeed kept up a stubborn opposition for centuries... against the opinion of Scotus" (**History of the Christians Church**, Henry Sheldon, Vol. V, p. 49).

"A Dominican Doctor, John Montessono and Cardinal Torquemada were adverse to the doctrine" (**Catholic Dictionary**, p. 425).

3. **Other Catholics who were opposed to the doctrine of the immaculate conception:** Antoninus (Archbishop of Florence), Melchior Canus, Cardinal Cajetan, St. Catherine of Siennae, St. Augustine, St. Ambrose, Pope Gregory the Great, Pope Innocent III.

V. The Scotists and the Thomist Had a Loud Controversy on this Doctrine.

According to the church historian:

"The dispute which roused the loudest controversy between Thomist and Scotists was regarding the Immaculate

Conception of the Virgin Mary. Aquinas, concerned to maintain and underline the view that Jesus was the Savior of all men, had taught that she shared in the original sin of the race. Scotus held that she was free from it — a doctrine that was to be declared dogma of the Church by Pope Pius IX (1846-1878) in 1854" (**A History of the Christian Church**, Williston Walker, p. 251).

VI. This Doctrine Has no Scriptural Support.

The Catholic authorities admit the fact that the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception is not based on the Scriptures.

1. **Bertrand Conway declared:**

"The Scripture nowhere expressly teach this doctrine" (**The Question Box**, p. 359).

Laborde, a French prelate, said that the definition by the pope of this doctrine was:

"A false supposition, and empty definition, a surreptitious definition, which depended not on the Holy Spirit, but on falsehood and fraud" (**The Impossibility of the Immaculate Conception**, pp. 111, 112 and 155).

2. The author of the **Fundamentals of the Catholic Dogma** states:

"The doctrine of Immaculate Conception is not expressly revealed in the Holy writ" (p. 198).

3. **Melchior Canus, a Catholic author said:**

"The Dogma which holds that the blessed Virgin was free from original sin is nowhere delivered in the Scriptures, according to their proper sense..."

4. **The gospel of the nativity of Mary is not based in scripture.**

"The Gospel of the Nativity of Mary is not of course, one of the books of the Bible" (**Catholic Digest**, Dec., 1961, p. 16).

5. **A Catholic Archbishop admits that the doctrine is not taught either in the Bible or in the writings of the early Christians.**

Roman Catholic Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis, as late as 1870, "declared that he had never been able to find where the doctrine was taught, either in the Scripture or in the writings of the fathers....." (**History of the Christian Church**, Vol. V, Henry Sheldon, p. 49).

Duns Scotus' Opinion Finally Prevailed

The authority of Duns Scotus, however, was decisive with the Franciscans, and an increasing party after his day advocated the Immaculate Conception. The Dominicans, indeed, kept up a stubborn opposition for centuries; but when the Jesuits were added to the lists of the Immaculists, there was no obstacle sufficient to prevent the speculation of Duns Scotus from being enthroned (**History of the Christian Church**, Sheldon, Vol. V, p. 49).

Since it is freely admitted that *this doctrine has no scriptural support*, it is therefore clear that the Roman Catholic Church is guilty of adding to the Word of God, which directly violates some of its emphatic prohibitions found in Deuteronomy 4:2 and other similar verses. The Catholic authorities cannot appeal to the so-called "*apostolic tradition*" since it has been abundantly proved that this dogma was based on the opinion of a certain John Duns Scotus and was strongly opposed by many Catholic theologians.

It is therefore proved beyond reasonable doubt that the Doctrine of Immaculate Conception has no basis in the Bible, in history or in tradition, but it is purely based on the authority of a pope who declared an opinion as a dogma of the church.

Again let us repeat what the Roman Catholic Archbishop Kenrick of St. Louis, had said, as late as 1870:

> "...That he had never been able to find where the doctrine was taught, either in the Scripture or in the writings of the fathers..." (**History of the Christian Church**, Henry Sheldon, Vol. V, p. 49).

Laborde said that the *"pope committed a palpable and monstrous novelty"* when Pope Pius IX declared this opinion as a dogma of the Catholic Church. He called it:

> "...A false supposition, and empty definition, a surreptitious definition, which depended not on the Holy Spirit, but on falsehood and fraud" (**The Impossibility of the Immaculate Conception**, pp. 111, 112, 155).

Catholic Argument Answered

Catholic Argument: The Bible says that Mary is *full of grace.* Grace implies divine favor, since Mary is full of grace, therefore she is free from sin. Conway said:

> "The words of the Angel Gabriel, 'Hail Mary full of grace,' are true in their fullest sense only if we believe the Blessed Virgin to have been immaculately conceived" (**The Question Box**, Bertrand Conway, p. 377).

Answer: Bertrand Conway is making a false assumption when he said that the meaning of the phrase "full of grace" has reference to the doctrine of Immaculate Conception. Where did he get

this idea? If such interpretation is indeed sound and Biblical then why it is not found in the Bible? And why did many of the Catholic scholars reject the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception? Mary, being full of grace, does not necessarily mean she was sinless and faultless. Being full of grace and sinless are two different things.

Stephen, one of the seven deacons, was said to be *full of grace and power* (Acts 6:8). Was Stephen also immaculately conceived? Not only was he full of grace he was also *full of the Spirit, full of wisdom and full of faith* (Acts 6:3,5). Would these phrases also mean that while Stephen was in his mother's womb, he already knew everything because he was full of wisdom?

Why did the angel Gabriel say to Mary that she was full of grace? It was because she found favor with God and she was going to conceive Jesus, who is the Son of God. John said that Jesus is *"full of grace and truth"* (John 1:17).

Mary was full of grace at the time she conceived the Son of God, not because she herself was immaculately conceived!

Summary

We have learned from this study that the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception is objectionable in many points.

First, it is based on an erroneous doctrine that infants inherited the Adamic sin and, therefore, that all infants are born enemies of God. This is an unscriptural and very ungodly doctrine.

Second, the idea started with an apocryphal gospel, which according to scholars was fanciful and full of lies.

Third, even among Catholics themselves, their most able and well-respected theologians opposed this doctrine.

Fourth, the Catholics admitted that this was only an opinion. For many centuries popes did not even dare to pronounce this opinion as a dogma of the Catholic church.

Fifth, this dogma was based on the opinions of William Ware and John Duns Scotus.

Finally, Pope Pius IX only defined this dogma on December 8, 1854. If this was the truth, why was it not known during all those earlier centuries?

It is, therefore, clear that this doctrine is not a Biblical doctrine because all Christians did not teach it in all places and at all times.

Chapter Three
Mary Is Free from Actual Sin

"As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one: ... For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10,23).

RELATIVE TO THE DOCTRINE of the Immaculate Conception of Mary is the doctrine that Mary has never committed any single personal sin. The Council of Trent affirms that:

> "If any one say that man once justified, can during his whole life avoid all sins, even venial sins, unless by a special divine privilege, as the Church holds in regard to the Blessed Virgin, let him be anathema" (**The Canons & Decrees of the Council of Trent**, Sixth Session, Canon, 23, p. 45).

A. Early Tradition Opposed this View.

James Toll, pointed out that:

> "While many of the early apocryphal works would tend to encourage this doctrine by referring to Mary as "all holy" and undefiled before God (e.g., The Falling Asleep of Mary), the main early religious leaders spoke against it. Tertullian, Irenaeus, Origin and Chrysostom all taught that Mary was guilty of sin, interpreting Christ's words at the wedding of Cana (John 2:4) as a rebuke to her unreasonable haste and immoderate ambition. Crysostom said, in his **Homily** XLIV, p. 279: 'For in fact that she (Mary) assayed to do was superfluous vanity, in that she wanted power and authority over her Son, imagining not as yet anything great concerning Him...'" (Quoted by James Toll, **Mary... Fact and Fiction**, p. 9).

B. The Bible Says: All Are Sinners. This includes Mary.

1. **The Bible says:**

"None is righteous, no, not one... For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:10,23).

Jesus is the only exception to this. In 1 Peter 2:22 we are told:

"He (Christ) committed no sin; no guile was found in his mouth."

Hebrews 4:15, it also says:

"...He was tempted in every respect as we are, yet without sin."

Can we read also that Mary was sinless like Jesus? Where is the verse in the Bible that states that Mary was without any sin? You may search the entire Scripture, and you will not find such an idea. *The doctrine that Mary was free from any personal or actual sin is not from God but only a human opinion.* This opinion was never taught by any single inspired teacher of God. It came hundreds of years after the apostles died. The apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit into all truth, but they did not teach that Mary was sinless. Therefore, the doctrine that Mary is free from all actual or personal sins is not of the truth.

2. **Even Mary said that she needed a Savior.** She said:

"My spirit doth rejoice in God my Savior" (Luke 1:47).

3. **Mary went to the temple to offer a sin offering for herself.**

    a. The Law requires that a Hebrew woman after giving birth to a child must *"bring a lamb of the first year*

*for a burnt offering, and a young pigeon or turtle dove, for **a sin offering**, unto the door of the tabernacle of the congregation, unto the priest..."* (Leviticus 12:6-8).

b. Mary and Joseph went to the temple according to the Law of the Lord.

*"And when the **days of her purification** according to the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Jerusalem, to present to the Lord: (As it is written in the Law of the Lord, every male that openeth the womb shall be called holy to the Lord.) and to offer a sacrifice according to that which is said in the Law of the Lord, a pair of turtle doves, or two young pigeons"* (Luke 2:22-24).

If Mary was sinless, then why did she have to do all the requirements of the law concerning **purification** and **sin offering**?

4. **The Bible affirms that Jesus died for all men.** The Apostle Paul said:

*"For the love of Christ controls us, because we are convinced **that one has died for all**; therefore all died. And **he died for all**, that those who live might live no longer for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised"* (2 Corinthians 5:14).

Thus we have seen again that *the doctrine that Mary is free from all personal sin is unbiblical.* The Bible says: *"If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us"* (1 John 1:8). The same can be said about Mary or any other person on earth.

The Catholic authorities were forced to admit that:

> "Some great Fathers allege that the sword which was to pierce Mary's heart was doubt in her soul beneath the cross, and again, that Christ reprehended His mother for some fault of haste or the like, at the marriage of Cana" (**Catholic Dictionary**, Addis and Arnold, p. 540).

Irenaeus, Origen, Chrysostom, Basil, Cyril of Alexandria, Justin Martyr, and many more believed that Mary was not exempt from committing actual sins (**History of the Christian Church**, Vol. V, Henry Sheldon, p. 47).

Chapter Four
Theotokos: Mother of God

THE MOST COMMON TITLE that the Roman Catholics use in addressing Mary is the title *"Mother of God"*. Is this a Biblical and an apostolic doctrine? It is our studied conviction that the title "Mother of God" is unscriptural and illogical. When we deny that *"Mary is the mother of God"*, we do not deny that Jesus is God, for we believe that the Bible has abundantly taught that Jesus is the God who came to earth to become our Savior (John 1:1-14; Philippians 2:5-8). But what we are trying to say is that Mary was the mother of Jesus **only** *in the flesh.* Mary could never be the mother of His *Divine nature* because the Divine nature of Jesus already existed before He was born through Mary. The fact that no New Testament writer ever used this epithet to describe Mary proves that she is not the mother of God. Besides, we all know that divinity is indivisible. To say that Mary is the mother of God would mean that she is also the mother of the Divinity of the Father and the Holy Spirit, which would be absurd.

I. This Title Was Used at the Close of the Third Century.

The epithet **theotokos** (Greek) *mother of God* literally, god-bearer) was a title applied to Mary toward the close of the 3rd century by the Alexandrians.

> "This title was first used in 319 A.D. by Alexander, Bishop of Alexandria, when he announced to his colleagues the deposition of Arius. Before the fourth century there is no indisputable evidence that it was used as a title for Mary" (**The Mystery of the Woman**, p. 7).

II. This Title Was Based on an Apocryphal Writing.

The apocryphal work: The Falling Asleep of Mary, of which the earliest version is from the fifth century, describes Mary as "...all-holy, glorious mother of God" (Quoted by James Toll, **Mary...Fact and Fiction**, p. 5).

III. Declared During the Council of Ephesus in 431.

The *third ecumenical Council of Ephesus*, held in Asia Minor and attended by almost 200 bishops under the leadership of Cyril, Bishop of Alexandria, Egypt, declared officially that Mary is **theotokos**: Mother of God. From that time on, the title has become a cardinal dogma of the Roman Church.

IV. This Title Is Not Used in the Bible.

1. Mary was never called the *mother of God* in the New Testament.
2. Elizabeth refers to Mary as *"mother of my Lord"* (Luke 1:43), or the mother of Jesus, by John (John 2:1).
3. Jesus is referred to as the *"seed of David according to the flesh"* (Romans 1:3).
4. That which is born of the flesh is flesh (John 3:6).
5. It was not the Deity of Jesus Christ that Mary conceived in her womb but his human nature.

James Toll has aptly commented, when he said:

"We can rest assured that one of the inspired apostles would have designated her as God's mother if it were according to the divine will."

The fact is that she was never called *"mother of God"* in the

Bible, so we can safely assume that it was never God's will to call her such a title. For Mary to become "the mother of God", she must exist prior to God. This is, of course, preposterous. It was not the deity of Jesus that Mary conceived in her womb, but his humanity. John told us, *"And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us"* (John 1:14).

The divinity of Jesus existed even before Mary was born. Jesus existed before the creation of the world, for he himself created the world (John 1:1-3,10; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-3,10,11).

Jesus existed even before the time of Abraham. He said: *"Before Abraham was, I Am"* (John 8:58). Therefore, it is unscriptural and illogical to call a human being the "mother of divinity".

In the Bible we also read that *"the Christ was the son of David"* (Matthew 22:42-45). Was David also called the "father of God"? The Bible tells us that *"Jesus Christ descended from David according to the flesh"* (Romans 1:3). But Jesus was also *"the Lord of David"* (Matthew 22:43-45; Psalms 110:1; Acts 2:34). Jesus asked the Jews, *"If David thus calls him Lord, how is he his son?"* The Jews did not want to answer this question. But the correct answer is this: *In the flesh Christ was the descendant of David,* ***but as God, He was David's Lord.*** This is the truth that the Jews did not want to admit.

This is the Biblical language used by Jesus Christ and the inspired apostles. In the same way, like King David, Mary was also the mother of Jesus *according to the flesh.* Mary was, therefore, the mother of the humanity of Jesus, *but she was not the mother of Christ's divinity.* Nowhere in the Bible can we read

that Mary was addressed by any apostle as "the mother of God." It would be wrong to call a human being the mother of her creator.

Jesus **as God**, has *no mother* and **as a man**, he has *no human father*!

Chapter Five
The Bodily Assumption

THE DOCTRINE OF THE ASSUMPTION OF MARY to Heaven was officially pronounced and promulgated on November 1, 1950 by Pope Pius XII. The process in which the dogma was promulgated is explained in the **Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma** in this manner:

> "After Pope Pius XII, on 1st March, 1946, had addressed to all bishops in the world the official query whether the bodily assumption of Mary into Heaven could be defined as a proposition of faith, and whether they with their clergy and people desired the definition, and when almost all the bishops replied in the affirmative, on 1st November, 1950, he promulgated by the Apostolic Constitution (**Munificentissimus Deus**) as a dogma revealed by God that: 'Mary, the immaculate perpetual Virgin Mother of God, after the completion of her earthly life was assumed body and soul into the glory of Heaven'" (Dr. Ludwig Ott, p. 208).

If the *Bodily Assumption of Mary* is a teaching from God, then why is it necessary for the pope to inquire from all the bishops throughout the world? Has the church any right to promulgate a new doctrine? Even Jesus Christ said that his doctrine is not his but from the Father.

> *"There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; that very word which I spoke will condemn him at the last day. For I did not speak of my own accord, but the Father who sent me commanded me what to say and how to say it. I know that his command leads to eternal life. So whatever I say is just what the Father has told me to say"* (John 12:48-50).

The Holy Spirit also does not *"speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear; that shall he speak."*

> *"But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth.* ***He will not speak on his own****; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come"* (John 16:13).

It should be remembered also that the pope today receives no new revelation from God and his job is only to expound the teachings taught by the apostles. A book authored by John O'Brien, a Catholic priest, says these things:

> "First, let us consider what papal *infallibility* does *not* mean. Contrary to the idea of many people, infallibility *does not mean that the popes are inspired.* The Apostles and Evangelists received this gift, and their writings are accepted as the revealed Word of God. But the Church does not teach that the pope is inspired, or that he receives a divine revelation properly so-called.
>
> Thus the Vatican Council declares:
>
> "For the Holy Spirit was not promised to the successors of Peter in order that they might spread abroad *new doctrine* which He reveals, but that under His assistance, they might guard inviolably, and with fidelity explain, the revelation or deposit of faith handed down by the Apostles'" (**Faith of Millions**, by John O'Brien, pp. 107-108). (Emphases added).

In this quotation we are told by John O'Brien what *is not* and what *is meant* by the doctrine of Papal Infallibility.

First, he said that papal infallibility does not mean that the pope is inspired. The popes, therefore, unlike the apostles, are not inspired.

Second, papal infallibility does not mean that the pope can "spread new doctrine." The popes, therefore, are not authorized to teach and formulate new doctrines.

Third, infallibility only implies that the popes should *"guard inviolably"* and must *faithfully* explain the deposit of faith handed down by the Apostles.

If these three conditions were violated, it would prove that the popes are not infallible.

Now let us test these conditions in the *Dogma of the Assumption of Mary* and let us ask the following questions:

1. Is this not a *"new dogma"* taught by the pope without any historical and Biblical basis?
2. Since the Holy Spirit does not guide and inspire the pope to teach a *"new doctrine"*, who guided and inspired the pope to teach this new doctrine?
3. Is this not a clear demonstration that the pope has not been true and faithful in guarding the doctrines handed down by the Apostles?

I. This Dogma Has No Proof from the Scripture.

It is admitted by the Roman Catholic Church authorities that:

"The New Testament is silent about the Assumption of Mary" (**The Book of Miracles**, p. 139).

"Direct and express scriptural proofs are not to be had" (**Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, p. 208).

"It cannot be proven from the Bible or from contemporary historical witness ..." (**The Question Box**, 1929 Edition, p. 361).

II. Fathers in the First Five Centuries Do Not Mention It.

1. "Some may think it strange that the fathers of the first five centuries do not mention it" (**The Question Box**, p. 361).

2. "...It has been accepted in the church at least since the 6th century" (**The Book of Miracles**, p. 139).

III. Pope Benedict XIV Declared It to Be an Opinion Only.

> "Pope Benedict XIV (1740-58) declared the doctrine of the Assumption to be a pious and probable opinion, but in so doing, did not declare that it belonged to the depositum fidei" (**Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, p. 210).

Please take note that Pope Benedict XIV declared that it was only a *pious and probable opinion, **NOT*** a part of the *depositum fidei*, or deposit of faith and therefore it is *not a part of the apostolic tradition* handed down by them (Jude 3; Acts 20:27; 2 Thessalonians 2:15).

In a joint-study made by Catholic and Protestant scholars, they have concluded that:

> "...The notion of Mary's Assumption into heaven has left no trace in the literature of the third century, much less of the second century. M. Jugie, the foremost authority on this question, concluded in his monumental study: 'The Patristic tradition prior to the Council of Nicea does not furnish us with any witness about Mary's Assumption.' The actual development of this tradition must be linked to the expansion of the Marian devotion and piety in later centuries" (**Mary of the New Testament**, p. 266).

You notice that according to this study the doctrine of the *Assumption of Mary* like the other *Marian Dogmas* in the Roman

Church came as a result of the increasing devotion to Mary in the later centuries. This practice did not originate from Christ or from his apostles. It came as departure from the true gospel of Christ.

The same study has pointed out that *"there was lack of interest in Mary's role during Jesus' ministry"* (ibid, p. 267).

IV. No Witness of Her Bodily Assumption.

> "As a matter of fact, in the final analysis there could not have been any human witness of our Lady's Assumption into heavenly glory" (**The Mystery of the Woman**, p. 79).

Notice this statement. There was no eyewitness that Mary was assumed to heaven.

V. It Is Alleged that Mary Was Secretly Assumed to Heaven.

> "As Pope Pius XII came to say in a key passage of Munificentissimus Deus: Hence the revered Mother of God, from all eternity joined in a hidden way with Jesus Christ in one and the same decree of predestination (**Ineffabilis Deus**)" (**The Mystery of the Woman**, p. 67).

This is a direct admission that there is no evidence to support the belief that Mary was taken to heaven. The only thing that the Roman Catholic Church can show is their own statement of their belief of this doctrine, which is nothing but mere presumptions and empty claims.

VI. Ressurection of Jesus Vs. the Assumption of Mary.

In this portion of our study we will make a little comparison of the resurrection of Jesus with that of the alleged Assumption of Mary.

The Assumption of Mary and Resurrection of Jesus Compared

Resurrection of Jesus	Assumption of Mary
1. Jesus prophesied his own resurrection (John 2:19-21).	1. There is no prophecy about her assumption.
2. The angel declared that Jesus was resurrected (Luke 24:2-6).	2. Angels are silent about her assumption.
3. More than 500 people saw the resurrected Lord (1 Corinthians 15:1-8).	3. Not a single person saw the Assumption of Mary. It is all based on presumption.
4. Paul, persecutor of the church saw the resurrected Lord (Acts 9; 1 Corinthians 15).	4. None of the inspired apostles and writers of the New Testament never mentioned her assumption.
5. Even enemies of Jesus testified that he was resurrected.	5. Again, there is no testimony from either friend or foe that they had seen her.
6. The grave of Jesus was empty (Acts 2:29-32).	6. There is no competent witness that testified that Mary was indeed assumed to heaven, body and soul.
7. All the apostles could testify to it. The apostles did not follow fables when they told about the resurrection of Jesus, but they were eyewitnesses of his majesty (2 Peter 1:16).	7. This doctrine is just a human invention based on fables. This is a new teaching with no divine authority.

Chapter Six
The Veneration of Mary
Cultus Hyperduliae

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH has developed a tradition which made a distinction between divine worship and Marian devotion. To the Catholic Church only God deserves the true devotion which they call *"adoration"*. However, they insist that Mary being the "Immaculate, Perpetual virgin Mother of God", also deserves a kind of devotion, although lower than God's but also higher than the respect given to the "saints". This devotion to Mary is called by the Roman theologians "hyperdulia" or *super veneration*.

According to the **Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**:

> "Mary, the Mother of God, is entitled to the Cult Hyperdulia. In view of her dignity as the Mother of God and the fullness of grace, a special veneration is due to Mary. This is substantially less than the cultus latriae (adoration) which is due to God alone, but is higher than the cultus Duliae (veneration) due to the angels and to the other saints, the special veneration thus given to Mary is called cultus hyperduliae" (p. 215).

While it is true that the official doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church has made a distinction between the worship (adoration) of God and the worship (veneration) of Mary on an intellectual level, the majority of Catholics are not aware of these subtle theological distinctions and have continued to worship Mary as if she is indeed a divine person. The Roman hierarchy has not only failed to check this abuse but even encouraged this unscriptural Marian devotion.

This Roman Catholic tradition was never heard nor taught in New Testament times. Mary never received this kind of devotion during the days of the apostles in her lifetime. It only came hundreds of years later.

I. Mary Was Not Worshipped in the Bible.

1. Matthew 2:21- She was not worshipped by the magi.

"And when they were come into the house, they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down, and ***worshipped him****: and when they had opened their treasures, they presented unto him gifts, gold, and frankincense, and myrrh."*

2. Acts 1:14 - Mary was praying with the other disciples. She was not the object of their prayer.

"These all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and his brethren."

II. The Bible Prohibits any Worship to any Created Beings.

1. God must be the only object of our worship.

Matthew 4:10b - *"...Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God and Him only shalt thou serve."*

2. True worshippers worship God. And God seeks true worshippers.

John 4:23,24 - *"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."*

3. Angels are not to be worshipped.

Revelation 19:10 - Angel of God prohibits it.

"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..." (Read Revelation 22:8,9 also.)

Paul warns us about it.

Colossians 2:18 - *"Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels..."*

4. Men are not to be worshipped.

Acts 10:25,26 - Peter refused it from Cornelius.

"And as Peter was coming in, Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter took him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man."

Acts 14:13-15 - Paul and Barnabas restrained the people from worshipping them.

"The priest of Zeus, whose temple was just outside the city, brought bulls and wreaths to the city gates because he and the crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to them. But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard of this, they tore their clothes and rushed out into the crowd shouting: 'Men, why are you doing this? We too are only men, human like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made heaven and earth and sea and everything in them.'"

Acts 12:21-23 - Herod was punished for accepting the adoration of the people.

"On the appointed day Herod, wearing his royal robes, sat on his throne and delivered a public address to the people. They shouted, 'This is the voice of a god, not of a man.' Immediately, because Herod did not give praise to God, an angel of the Lord struck him down, and he was eaten by worms and died."

Note: Since Mary was a godly woman, she too would have refused any worship attributed to Her.

5. God hates idolatry.

a. Exodus 20:3-4
b. Deuteronomy 4:16-19
c. Leviticus 26:1-ff
d. 1 John 5:21
e. 1 Corinthians 10:4
f. Romans 1:18-32
g. Acts 17:16-29
h. Acts 12:21-23
i. Isaiah 43:8
j. Isaiah 46:7
k. Isaiah 40:18-20
l. Jeremiah 10:1-5
m. Isaiah 44:10-19
n. Ephesians 5:5
o. Galatians 5:20
p. Revelations 21:8
q. 2 Kings 18:4

III. Jesus Did Not Command His Disciples to Worship Mary.

Although Jesus respected Mary as a mother, He by no means commanded His disciples in His time and in the future to worship her.

Observe the following verses:

1. Matthew 12:46-50 - Jesus pointed to his disciples as his true mother and brothers.
2. John 2:4 - In the marriage feast in Cana, Jesus told her: *"Woman, what I have to do with thee? Mine hour is not yet come."*

3. Luke 11:27,28 - *"And it came to pass as he spake these things, a certain woman of the company lifted up her voice, and said unto him, Blessed is the womb that bare thee, and the paps which thou hast sucked. But he said, Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it."*

Jesus once and for all rebuked the idolatrous attitudes of men towards Mary and has pronounced that those who do God's word are more blessed than she. This is what Jesus said, and all must listen to Him!

Chapter Seven
Catholic Fables Versus the Bible

In the Roman Catholic Religion Mary is given all the Honors and Titles of God and Jesus Christ

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH HAS BEEN correctly described by church historian, Philip Shaff, as Mary's Church. He said:

> "Her worship even overshadows the worship of Christ. She, the tender, compassionate, lovely woman, is invoked for her powerful intercession, rather than her divine Son. She is made the fountain of all grace, the mediatrix between Christ and the believer, and is virtually put in the place of the Holy Ghost. There is scarcely an epithet of Christ which devout Catholics do not apply to the Virgin" (Quoted by James Toll, **Mary ...Fact or Fiction**, p. 18).

In the past centuries many *Marian Dogmas* have been pronounced and promulgated by popes and councils in her honor. These dogmas have exalted Mary beyond measure. The simple woman from Nazareth who declared herself as a *"handmaiden of the Lord"* has now reached the status of a *"Queen of Heaven and Hell"*, "the dispenser of all graces" and a "co-mediatrix with Jesus Christ." In addition to these unscriptural titles, the Roman Catholic Church has also invented a special veneration for Mary alone, which they have termed *"hyperdulia"* or *"super veneration"*, worship, which was entirely unknown in the days of the apostles.

Alphosus de Ligouri, a canonized Catholic "saint", has been the chief promoter and champion of the Marian devotions. His book, entitled **The Glories of Mary**, has attributed to Mary many

unscriptural terms, which are false and blasphemous. Dollenger, a Catholic theologian, said that the writings of Ligouri are: *"the grossest fables, perverse and forgeries, and a storehouse of lies."*

In this section of our study we will show what the Roman Catholic Church teaches and what the Bible teaches.

Catholic Fables *Versus* the Bible

All Authority

Given to Mary	Given to Jesus Christ
"All power is given to thee in heaven and on earth, so that at the command of Mary all obey - even God... and thus God has placed the whole upon Mary..." (**Glories of Mary**, 1931 Edition, p. 112).	*"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: ..."* (Matthew 28:18-20).

Advocate

Mary Is also an Advocate	Jesus Is Our only Advocate
"Mary is also the advocate of the whole human race, for she can do what she will with God" (**Glories of Mary**, p. 193).	*"...And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world"* (1 John 2:1,2).

The Way of Salvation

Mary Is the Way and the Gate	Jesus Is the ONLY Way
"The Way of Salvation is open to none otherwise than through Mary, and since our Salvation is in the hands of Mary... he who is protected by Mary will be saved, he who is not will be lost" (**Glories of Mary**, pp. 169-170). "Mary is called the...blessed gate of heaven because no one can enter that blessed kingdom without passing Her" (**Glories of Mary**, p. 160).	**John 14:6** - Jesus said: *"I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh to the Father, but by Me."* **Acts 4:11,12** - There is no other Name, but the name of Jesus. **John 10:1,7,9** - Jesus said, *"I am the door. By me, if any man enter, he shall be saved."* **Romans 5** - *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand."*

Forgiveness of Sins

Mary Is the Hope for Forgiveness	Forgiveness Through Jesus
"St. Augustine calls her the only hope of sinners because through Mary alone do they hope for the forgiveness of sins."	**Ephesians 1:7** - *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."* **Matthew 26:28** - *"For this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."* **Hebrews 9:22** - *"...and without the shedding of blood is no remission of sins."*

Channel of Grace

All Grace Through Mary	All Grace Through Jesus Christ
"Every grace that has ever been given to man has come to him through Mary" (**Glories of Mary**, 1962, p. 98). "Mary is the Mediatrix of all graces by her intercession in Heaven" (**Fundamentals of Catholic Dogma**, p. 213). "You are our dispensatrix of all graces; our salvation is in your hands" (**Glories of Mary**, 1962 Ed., p. 10).	**John 1:16,17** - *"And of his fullness have all we received, and grace. For the Law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."* **2 Corinthians 12:9** - Jesus told Paul: *"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness."* **Hebrews 4:14-16** - Because of Jesus we now have boldness to approach the throne of grace. **Ephesians 1:7** - We were saved through the riches of Christ's grace. **Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:3,4**

John 3:16

The Roman Catholic Church Has Applied John 3:16 to Mary	This Verse Is Applied to God:
"Mary so loved us that she gave her only begotten son" (**Glories of Mary**, p. 59).	**John 3:16** - *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

Romans 8:31

The Catholics Applied Romans 8:31 to Mary	Paul Applied This Verse to God:
"St. Antoninus encourages us by saying: 'If Mary is for us, who is against us" (**Glories of Mary**, 1962 Edition, p. 58)	**Romans 8:31** - *"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us?"*

Mediator

Mary Is Our Mediator	Jesus Is Our Only Mediator
"The Way of Salvation is open to none otherwise than through Mary, and since our Salvation is in the hands of Mary... he who is protected by Mary will be saved, he who is not will be lost" (**Glories of Mary**, pp. 169-170).	**1 Timothy 2:5** - *"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the Christ Jesus."* **Romans 8:34** - Christ is our sin intercessor. **Romans 8:26,27** - *"In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express."*

Our Hope

Mary Is the Only Hope of Sinners	Jesus Is Our Hope of Glory
"St. Laurence Justinian called her 'the hope of malefactors;' since she alone is the one who obtains them pardon from God" (p. 83). "With reason does an ancient writer call her 'the only hope of *sinners*;' for by her help alone can we hope for the remission of our sins" (p. 83). "And thou...who art our Lady and Mother, hast to defend us; for after God, we have no other refuge than thee, who art our only hope and our protectress, towards thee we all turn our eyes with confidence" (p. 95).	**Colossians 1:27** - *"Christ in you, the hope of glory."* **1 Timothy 1:1** - *"The Lord Jesus Christ is our hope."* **Titus 2:13** - *"Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and Savior Jesus Christ."* **Psalm 38:15** - *"In thee, O Lord do I hope."* **Psalm 130:7** - *"Let Israel hope in the Lord for in the Lord there is mercy, and with him is plenteous redemption."* **Psalm 131:3** - *"Let Israel hope in the Lord from henceforth and forever."*

Our Life

Mary Is Our Life	Jesus Is Our Life
"St. Laurence Justinian called her 'the hope of malefactors;' since she alone is the one who obtains them pardon from God" (p. 83). "With reason does an ancient writer call her 'the only hope of sinners'; for by her help alone can we hope for the remission of our sins" (p. 83). "And thou...who art our Lady and Mother, hast to defend us; for after God, we have no other refuge than thee, who art our only hope and our protectress, towards thee we all turn our eyes with confidence" (p. 95).	**John 14:6** - Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life, no one can come to the Father but by Him. **John 1:4** - *"In him was life; and the life was the light of men."* **John 6:48** - The bread of life. **John 11:25,26** - Jesus is the resurrection and the life: he that believes in him though he were dead, yet shall he live ... etc. **Colossians 3:4** - Christ, who is our LIFE, shall appear. **2 Timothy 1:1** - The promise of eternal life is in Christ Jesus.

Fables About Mary vs. the Bible (Continued)

Catholic: All, even God, must obey Mary. Mary overrules God and Christ.

All, even God, obey Mary (**Glories of Mary**, p. 181).

Mary overrules God and Christ. "But now, if God is offended with any sinner, and Mary undertakes to protect him, she restrains the Son from punishing him and saves him" (**The Glories of Mary**, 1931 Ed., pp. 133, 181).

Note: This makes Mary more powerful than God!

The Bible Says: All must obey God.

Joshua 24:24 - *"And the people said unto Joshua, The LORD our God will we serve, and his voice will we obey."*

Acts 5:29 - *"Peter and the other apostles replied: 'We must obey God rather than men!'"*

Luke 11:28 - *"Jesus replied, 'Blessed rather are those who hear the word of God and obey it.'"*

Matthew 28:18-20 - *"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age'"* (Read also Deuteronomy 11:26-28; 27:10; 30:2.).

Catholic: We must invoke Mary to go to Heaven.

"He who does not invoke Mary will not go to heaven" (**The Glories of Mary**, p. 222).

"She *alone* can obtain their pardon from God" (**The Glories of Mary**, 1902 Edition, p. 83).

The Bible Says: Salvation is only in the name of Jesus.

Acts 4:12 - *"Neither is there any salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, where by we must be saved."*

Romans 10:13 - *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."*

1 Peter 2:6 - The Apostle Peter also said: *"...he that believeth on Him shall never be put to shame."*

Catholic: All things are under Mary's dominion.

"The whole dominion of the Church is put under the patronage of Mary" (**The Glories of Mary**, p. 181).

"In heaven, Mary rules over the Angels and the blessed" (**True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin**, p. 16).

"Everything in Heaven and on earth, even including God himself, is subjected to Mary" (**True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin**, p. 16).

"Mary is called: the leader of God's armies, the treasurer of God's mercy, the dispensatrix of God's graces, the fulfiller of God's mighty wonders, the reparatrix of the human race, the mediatrix of men, the exterminator of God's enemies and the faithful companion of God's splendors and triumphs" (**True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin**, p. 17).

Where in the world did they ever get these extravagant titles for Mary?

The Bible Says: The Church is under the dominion of Jesus.

Matthew 28:18-20 - *"Then Jesus came to them and said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.'"*

Ephesians 1:20-23 - *"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in*

this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

Ephesians 5:23-25 - *"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."*

Colossians 1:18 - *"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."*

Catholic: Mary is "deified" and is called by Catholics as "divine" mother.

"Mary is deified" (**The Glories of Mary**, p. 331).

Deify means "to make a god of, rank among the gods, to look upon or worship as a god. To glorify, exalt, or adore in an extreme way" (**Webster's World Dictionary, Second Edition**, p. 372).

"...All graces are dispensed by the hand of Mary alone, and that all those who are saved, are saved solely by means of this divine mother..." (**The Glories of Mary**, 1902 Edition, p. 19).

Mary is called "divine Mary" (**The True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin**, De Monfort, pp. 3, 40-41, 59, 117, 129).

The Bible Says: This is a blasphemy!

To attribute divinity to a mere human being is blasphemy. The Jews accused Jesus of blasphemy because he claimed divine

power to forgive sin (Mark 2:5-9). At another time the same accusation was charged against him for claiming God to be His Father, which was a claim to deity (John 5:17,18; 10:28-36). They did not know that Jesus was God.

> *"One day Herod, arrayed in royal apparel, sat upon his throne, and made an oration unto them. And the people gave a shout, saying, 'It is the voice of a god, and not of a man.' And immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and was eaten of the worms and gave up the ghost"* (Acts 12:21-23).

This should be a lesson to be learned by all Catholics who have falsely attributed to Mary some kind of divinity.

The *apostles and angels,* when they were worshipped, refused the homage, and directed the misguided worshippers to worship God, and reminded them that they were only God's servants. Peter, when he was worshipped by Cornelius, asked Cornelius to stand up (Acts 10:25,26). When Paul and Barnabas where mistaken for gods, they tore their clothes and prevented the people from worshipping them (Acts 14:8-18). Even angels refused to be worshipped. Two times the Apostle John paid homage to an angel, and twice he was told not to, and was commanded to worship God alone (Revelations 19:10; 22:8,9).

Catholic: The Holy Ghost was sterile without Mary

> "The Holy Ghost was sterile without Mary" (**True Devotion to the Blessed Virgin**, De Monfort, p. 12).

Answer: This is a very blasphemous statement!

Only a depraved mind can possibly conceive of such a concept. This is blasphemy against the Holy Spirit!

Catholic: God's Glory is Mary's glory.

"God considers her glory as His own" (**The Glories of Mary**, 1962 Edition, p. 17).

The Bible Says: GOD will not give His Glory to another.

"I am the Lord; that is my name! I will not give my glory to another or my praise to idols" (Isaiah 42:8).

Catholic: Mary is the mercy seat and the propitiation.

Mary is the Mercy seat and the Propitiatory of the whole world (**The Glories of Mary**, p. 67).

The Bible Says: Jesus is the Propitiation for the sins of the whole world.

1 John 2:1,2 - *"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."* (King James Version).

Hebrews 2:17 - *"Wherefore it behooved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people."* (American Standard Version).

Romans 3:24,25 - *"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God set forth to be a propitiation, through faith, in his blood, to show his righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God."* (American Standard Version).

Catholic: **The day Mary was assumed to Heaven, Purgatory was emptied.**

"On the day of Mary's Assumption to heaven, Purgatory was entirely emptied" (**The Glories of Mary**, pp. 148,149).

Answer: **This is a double lie! The Bible makes no such claim.**

First, the doctrine of purgatory is false; it is not taught in the Bible. The Bible speaks of only two places: **heaven** and **hell.** The doctrine of Purgatory was only invented by men.

Second, the Assumption of Mary to heaven, body and soul, is only a myth. It is not taught in the Scripture.

Is Mary More Merciful than God and Christ?

One Catholic author in recent times has made shocking observations on how the Marian devotion has developed in the Roman Catholic Church. She wrote:

"Medieval writers divided the kingdom of God into two zones, **justice** and **mercy**; Jesus was the King of Justice, while Mary was always the Queen of Mercy. As an exaggerated emphasis on God's transcendent justice flourished, devotion to Mary progressed proportionately. In this long historical process, the God of Christian belief became ever more remote and judgmental. It was believed that it was impossible for God to forgive sin without demanding satisfaction, so an experience of divine mercy found its expression in Mary. It was she who assumed the life-giving, motherly qualities so characteristic of the God whom Jesus preached about. She thereby helped to balance an inadequate, diminished understanding of God as a benevolent,

yet powerful patriarch. In revealing the intimate healing aspects of divine activity, she insured the appreciation of the religious bodiliness, sensitivity, and the caring qualities conventionally associated with women" (Kathleen Coyle, pp. 92,93) (Emphases added RSE).

This Catholic author attributed the development and the progress of Marian devotion to the so-called "exaggerated emphasis on God's transcendent justice" (by the Medieval writers) and the "diminished understanding" of God's benevolent character on the part of the ordinary members. These two factors can be attributed solely to the diminished emphasis and even to the total neglect of the Scripture during Medieval times. During this darkened time, forgeries, false visions and false apostolic traditions were introduced and taught by priests, theologians and canonized "saints" as if they were "gospel truths". No wonder people abandoned true devotion to God and went on worshipping Mary as the "alternative" because of an unbalanced understanding of God's justice and mercy.

There is no doubt that the culprits of this false devotion to Mary were the Roman Catholic priests, theologians, and popes, who for centuries have neglected the word of God and have kept the Bible away from its members.

The prophet Hosea in the Old Testament lamented:

"My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me: seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children" (Hosea 4:6).

The moral and spiritual conditions that developed in Old Testament times were the same conditions that happened during Medieval times — a total neglect of the word of God by the

priests who were supposed to be the leaders and guides of the people. The Old Testament prophets of Jehovah God said:

"The priests did not ask, 'Where is the LORD?' Those who deal with the law did not know me; the leaders rebelled against me. The prophets prophesied by Baal, following worthless idols" (Jeremiah 2:8).

"A horrible and shocking thing has happened in the land: The prophets prophesy lies, the priests rule by their own authority, and my people love it this way. But what will you do in the end?" (Jeremiah 5:30,31).

In these ancient times everybody was to be blamed: the prophets, the priests and the people.

"From the least to the greatest, all are greedy for gain; prophets and priests alike, all practice deceit" (Jeremiah 6:13).

"Yet my people have forgotten me; they burn incense to worthless idols, which made them stumble in their ways and in the ancient paths. They made them walk by paths and on roads not built up" (Jeremiah 18:15).

"'The land is full of adulterers; because of the curse the land lies parched and the pastures in the desert are withered. The prophets follow an evil course and use their power unjustly. Both prophet and priest are godless; even in my temple I find their wickedness,' declares the LORD. 'Therefore their path will become slippery; they will be banished to darkness and there they will fall. I will bring disaster on them in the year they are punished,' declares the LORD" (Jeremiah 23:10-12).

"'For the lips of a priest ought to preserve knowledge, and

from his mouth men should seek instruction — because he is the messenger of the LORD Almighty. But you have turned from the way and by your teaching have caused many to stumble; you have violated the covenant with Levi,' says the LORD Almighty. 'So I have caused you to be despised and humiliated before all the people, because you have not followed my ways but have shown partiality in matters of the law'" (Malachi 2:7-9).

Now, let us compare the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church about Mary with the teachings of the Bible.

The Catholic Church Teaches that Mary Is More Merciful than God or Christ

"St. Anselm, to increase our confidence, says this: 'When we have recourse to Mary, not only have we her protection, but often we will be heard by Mary more speedily than if we have recourse to Jesus, our Savior.' The reason he gives is that it is the office of Jesus as Judge to punish, but it is Mary's role, as other, to be merciful. ...When we remember that Jesus is our judge, and that it is His province as Judge to punish ungrateful sinners, we may become apprehensive and lack the confidence we need to be heard. Surely our confidence is greater when we go to Mary, whose only office as Mother of Mercy is to help us and be our advocate. To substantiate this we have the beautiful words of Nicephorus: 'Many things are asked of God and not obtained. Many things are asked of Mary and obtained'" (**The Glories of Mary**, 1962, p. 84).

"At times we are saved more quickly by invoking Mary's name than by invoking the name of Jesus" (**The Glories of Mary**, pp. 164,154).

"Mary is more merciful than Christ is" (**The Glories of Mary**, p. 183).

This doctrine is a lie! Nothing could be farther from the truth!

God Is a Merciful God

Psalm 78:38 - *"But He, being full of compassion forgave iniquity, and destroyed them not: yea, many a time turned He His anger away, and did not stir up all His wrath."*

Psalm 86:15 - *"But, thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion, and gracious, long suffering, and plenteous in mercy and truth."*

Lamentations 3:32 - *"But though He cause grief yet will He have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies."*

Lamentations 3:22 -26 - *"Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassion never fails. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, 'The LORD is my portion; therefore I will wait for him.' The LORD is good to those whose hope is in him, to the one who seeks him; it is good to wait quietly for the salvation of the LORD."*

Jesus Is Our Merciful Savior

Hebrews 2:14-18 - *"Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death — that is, the devil — and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death. For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants. For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement*

for the sins of the people. Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."

Hebrews 4:14-16 - *"Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has gone through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."*

John 3:16,17 - *"For God so loved the world that He gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not His Son into the world; but that the world through him might be saved."*

Romans 5:6-10 - *"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly... But God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."*

1 Timothy 1:13-16 - *"Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus. Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners — of whom I am the worst. But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might dis-*

play his unlimited patience as an example for those who would believe on him and receive eternal life."

2 Timothy 1:16-18 - *"May the Lord show mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains. On the contrary, when he was in Rome, he searched hard for me until he found me. May the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! You know very well in how many ways he helped me in Ephesus."*

2 Timothy 2:1 - *"You then, my son, be strong in* ***the grace*** *that is* ***in Christ Jesus.****"*

Note: The doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, which teaches that Mary is more merciful than God and Jesus Christ, is one of the greatest lies ever taught by man. Not only is this ridiculous and blasphemous but it subverts and undermines God and Jesus Christ and the work of Jesus as a merciful Savior and High Priest.

Someone has said, "A lie repeated a thousand times will assume the substance of truth." The lies about Mary have now assumed *"the substance of truth"*, and millions have believed it. When people reject the truth they will soon embrace errors and lies. Paul said to Timothy:

2 Timothy 4:1-4 - *"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word; be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage — with great patience and careful instruction. For the time will come when men will not put up with sound doctrine. Instead, to suit their own desires, they will gather around them a great number of teachers to say what their itching ears want to*

hear. They will turn their ears away from the truth and turn aside to myths."

Two Roman Catholic authors, Addis and Arnold wrote:

> "Evil indeed, would this devotion be, if it diminished or obscured, even so little, that supreme devotion to God who is over all, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. But one who dared to put Mary on an equality with God, or deny that Christ is the 'one mediator between God and man', — i.e., the sole author of our redemption, the beginning and finisher of our faith — would, by that very fact, cease to be a Catholic" (**Catholic Dictionary**, p. 540).

We say amen to this. Not only do these devotions to Mary diminish the devotion to God, but they subvert and undermine the worship of God. The Marian devotion that is now practiced in the Roman Catholic Church robs God and Christ of their honor and glory.

Dollinger, a Catholic historian, protested against the canonization of Alfonsus de Liguori:

> "Dollinger characterizes the papal declaration of Liguori as Doctor of the Church, as '*the greatest monstrosity* which has ever occurred in the domain of theological doctrine,' as 'lifting to the rank of Augustine...*a man whose false morals, perverse worship of the Virgin, and constant use of the grossest fables and forgeries, make his writings a store house of errors and lies.*'" (**History of the Christian Church**, Henry Sheldon, Volume V, p. 81) (Italics mine, RSE).

Addis and Arnold tried to assure us that extravagant and ill-founded praises to Mary are discouraged and would not be tolerated within the Roman Catholic church. But we have only to

read the book written by devotees of Mary, like Alfonsus de Ligouri and De Monfort, to be shocked by their extravagant and unrestrained praises to Mary, which Augustine said is a *"kind of idolatry."*

> "We are far, of course, from any wish to defend exaggerated or imprudent language. One of the greatest of the church father's theologians, among whose many virtues a tender devotion to the mother of God was not the least, protests against extravagant and ill-founded praise to Mary. *'This kind of idolatry,'* he writes, *'secret, and natural to the human heart, is far removed from the grave character of theology — that is, heavenly wisdom.'*...Gerson, also a devout client of Mary,...'restrains immoderate license in setting forth the praises of the Blessed Virgin, and confines it within the limits of a sober and manly piety.'" (**Catholic Dictionary**, p. 540).

Conclusion

Who is really to be honored? Is it God and Jesus Christ, or Mary? According to the Bible, God and Jesus Christ deserve the entire honor and praise from men.

After Jesus performed his first miracle in Cana, who was glorified? Was it Mary or Jesus Christ?

> **John 2:11** - *"This beginning of his signs did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on him."*

In contrast to the testimony of Scripture, the Roman Catholic Church would want us to believe that it was Mary who manifested her power, not her Son Jesus Christ.

According to Paul, who should be glorified in the Church?

Ephesians 3:21 - *"Unto him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen."*

According to Scripture Jesus is to be glorified, in the church, not Mary. But in the Roman Catholic religion Mary receives more honor than Jesus Christ does.

How about in heaven? Who is to be glorified there? Let us see what John has to say regarding these things. In heaven it is God and Jesus Christ who are honored. There is no hint or a single verse in the Bible that says that Mary is also honored in heaven.

Revelation 4:8-11 - *"And the four living creatures, having each one of them six wings, are full of eyes round about and within: and they have no rest day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come. And when the living creatures shall give glory and honor and thanks to him that sitteth on the throne, to him that liveth for ever and ever, the four and twenty elders shall fall down before him that sitteth on the throne, and shall worship him that liveth for ever and ever, and shall cast their crowns before the throne, saying, Worthy art thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power: for thou didst create all things, and because of thy will they were, and were created."*

Revelation 5:11-14 - *"And I saw, and I heard a voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a great voice, Worthy is the Lamb that hath been slain to*

receive the power, and riches, and wisdom, and might and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every created thing which is in the heavens, and on the earth, and under the earth, and on the sea, and all things are in them, heard I saying, Unto him that sitteth on the throne, and unto the Lamb, be the blessing, and the honor, and the glory, and the dominion, for ever and ever. And the four living creatures said, Amen. And the elders fell down and worshipped."

One Catholic author has well said: *"Mary is only honored by the truth."* The unscriptural titles that the Roman Catholic Church has falsely attributed to Mary actually dishonor her and take away the honor from God and Christ.

We have seen that all major doctrines about Mary that are taught in the Roman Catholic Church today had a human beginning. None of these doctrines were taught by any of the original apostles of Jesus Christ.

We have, further, demonstrated that all the titles and honors that are being attributed to Mary are against the clear teachings of the Scripture. The worship that the Roman Church gives her is *blasphemous and idolatrous*. In the Bible, Mary was never worshipped. She never declared herself as the Queen of Heaven and Earth. The disciples did not consider her as mediatrix, for Paul said, *"there is only one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus"* (1 Timothy 2:5).

On the other hand, the Mary of the New Testament was a humble and obedient servant of God. In Luke 1:38, after Mary knew that she was going to be God's instrument in bringing God's only Son to earth, she said: *"Behold the handmaiden of the Lord; be it unto me according to thy word."*

The word, *"handmaiden"* is from the Greek word, which means a female slave (**Strong's, Exhaustive Concordance of the Bible, Concise Dictionary of the N.T.**, p. 24). Mary did not consider herself as queen who would dictate to God, but a slave willing to obey God's will in her life. It was never God's design to make Mary our advocate. Those who would elevate her to that position are running ahead of God and do not abide in God's doctrine. The Apostle John warns us:

"Whosoever transgresses, and abides not in the doctrine of Christ, has not God. He that abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son" (2 John 9).

"In vain do they worship me teaching as doctrines the precepts of men", and, *"Every plant which my Heavenly Father has not planted will be rooted up"* (Matthew 15:9,13).

In this study we have learned the following facts:

1. The doctrine that Mary remained a Virgin after she gave birth to Jesus *has no historical or Biblical basis.* We have learned from the Bible that Joseph and Mary lived a normal married life after Mary had given birth to Jesus. We also learned that *Jesus had brothers and sisters.* These brothers and sisters of Jesus were the children of Joseph and Mary.

2. The doctrine of Immaculate Conception *was not a part of the "doctrines taught by the apostles"* but was based on the opinions of men (John Dunn Scotus and others). Many Catholic theologians rejected this doctrine in the past, including Thomas Aquinas, St. Bernard, and other Catholic authorities.

3. Mary was not exempt from personal sin, for the Bible

declares, *"all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"* (Romans 3:23).

4. The title "theotokos" or "mother of God" *is not only unscriptural but also illogical*, because for a human to be the mother of God, she must have existed before God.

5. The Bodily Assumption of Mary to heaven is a doctrine that has no basis in history or in the Scripture but is a mere invention of men, defined only on November 1, 1950, too late to be an apostolic doctrine. For six hundred years this idea was unknown to the early Christians, as admitted by Catholic writers.

6. The Veneration of Mary is a kind of idolatry, and their teaching on three kinds of worship, *Latria* (for God alone), *hyperdulia* (a special worship for Mary alone), and *dulia* (worship for the saints), are mere Roman Catholic inventions which violate the teachings of the Scripture. God alone is the right object of worship, and there can be no other (John 4:24; Matthew 4:4-10, Acts 10:25,26; Revelation 22:8,9).

7. Finally, we have learned that the fables told about Mary are not only bold lies but are also blasphemous. These lies about Mary have, in fact, robbed God of his rightful honor and glory.

Since all these present Dogmas of the Church of Rome concerning Mary are not part of God's teaching, no sincere person can accept it and expect God's approval. After the establishment of the Church, the New Testament was silent about Mary. This is because Mary had already fulfilled her role in bringing forth Jesus into the world. The emphasis of the apostolic doctrine was

Jesus Christ as the central figure of the Church, which revolves around His death and His resurrection and His ascension into heaven.

The message of the apostles was "Jesus Christ and Him crucified". This was the saving message of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 1:18-24).

The best way to honor Mary today is to listen to her advice. In the Gospel of John we have these words of Mary.

"Whatsoever he (Christ) saith unto you, do it" (John 2:5).

Mary knew that only the words of Christ are authoritative. She knew that doing what Jesus commands us to do is the most important thing in the world. Are you willing to take this challenge? If you are really sincere in honoring Mary, then you should listen to Christ, and do His will. Jesus has said:

"Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it" (Luke 11:28).

True blessedness is found only in doing God's will, not in worshipping Mary.