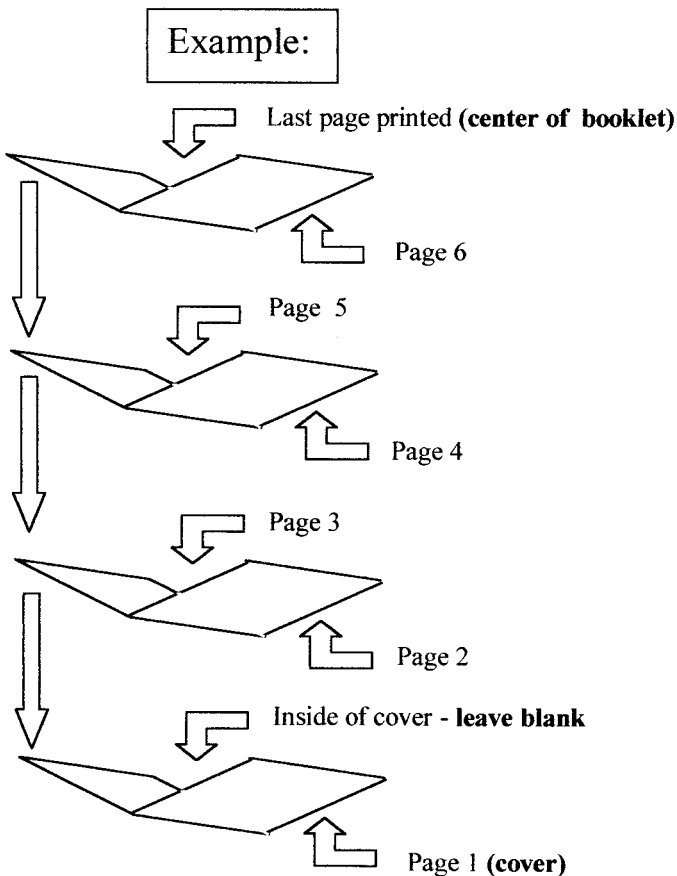


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- Print the first page (**the cover**) separately, on its own sheet of paper. Leave the back-side of this sheet blank.
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Roman

Catholicism

Martyn Lloyd-Jones

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Martyn Lloyd-Jones

this horrible counterfeit; it is what is called here "the whole armour of God". It is a biblical, doctrinal, theological presentation of the New Testament truth. That was how it was done in the sixteenth century. Luther was not just a superficial evangelist, he was a mighty theologian; so was Calvin; so were all of them. It was that great system of truth, worked out in its details and presented to the people, that undermined and even shook the Church of Rome. Nothing less than that is adequate to meet the present situation.

Christian people, your responsibility is terrible. You must know the truth, you must understand it, you must be able to counter false teaching. There are innocent people who are being deluded by this kind of falsity, and it is your business and mine to open their eyes and to instruct them. Not only that, it is as we stand foursquare for the truth of God that we shall be entitled to pray with fervour and with confidence for the blessing of the Holy Ghost upon us. It is as we stand on the Scripture and its truth that the Spirit of God, I believe, will descend upon us in a mighty revival. And nothing less than such a revival can shake that horrible institution, that great "whore" which calls herself "The Church of Rome".

May God give us enlightenment and understanding of the times in which we are living, and awaken us ere it be too late.

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

by Dr. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

"Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil."—Eph. 6 : 11.

THERE are certain things happening at the present time which make it imperative that every intelligent Christian should know something about Roman Catholicism. There are movements afoot, and meetings taking place which are trying to bring a kind of rapprochement between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism; and there are people who rejoice in this and say that it is a wonderful thing that we are beginning to draw together again, and that we can co-operate in certain respects, and that this is a wonderful manifestation of the Christian spirit.

Now that kind of thing makes it imperative that we should understand something about what is happening; and as you look into the future the matter becomes urgent, for there are certain possibilities which must be envisaged. I understand from the statistics that there are certain countries in the world which, if the modern trends continue, will have a great majority of Roman Catholics in them soon; so if we continue with the democratic principle of deciding our form of government by counting heads, there will be a Roman Catholic majority. It is not difficult to envisage certain possibilities that may result from that. Indeed that may even happen in this country given a certain number of years. So from all standpoints it is imperative that we should look at this position and at this great fact which is confronting us.

Whether we like it or not it is something that we have to do. I personally have never done this before. I do not belong to any "Protestant society" as such. I have never spoken on such a platform. My view has always been that the only final answer to Roman Catholicism is the positive preaching of the Christian truth and

the great Reformed doctrines. Nothing else has ever been able to deal with this, nothing else will ever be able to deal with it. Negative protests, it seems to me, are of very little value. They have been going on now for a number of years, but the facts are that this Roman Catholic body is increasing in practically every country and all the negative protestations seem to be of no value. My contention is that the increase in Roman Catholicism is due to one thing only, and that is a weak and flabby Protestantism that does not know what it believes. That is why I spend my time in giving positive teaching. But our text compels me to deal with this—"the wiles of the devil", the activities of the principalities and powers, the world rulers of this darkness, the spiritual wickedness in high places.

Very well then, what do we find? Let me make it abundantly clear that I am not concerned about individuals. There are, of course, individuals who are both Roman Catholics and Christians. You can be a Christian and yet be a Roman Catholic. My whole object is to try to show that such people are Christians in spite of the system to which they belong, and not because of it. But let us be clear about this; it is possible to be an individual Christian in the Roman Catholic Church. I am not considering individuals, nor am I considering the matter mainly from the political standpoint. I do not mean for a moment by that that the political aspect is not important. I have just been giving evidence to show that it can be tremendously important. We know the record of the history of this institution, we know what happens politically, we know its claim to be a political power, and therefore even from that aspect it is important. But I am not concerned about that now. That is the business of Christian laymen, it seems to me, and Christian statesmen. I am concerned rather with the spiritual aspect, because that is the thing which the apostle Paul puts before our minds.

I. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SYSTEM

What, then, are we looking at? We are looking at a system; and I would not hesitate to assert that this system, known as Roman

they were wrong, that they were mistaken. Realise what you are doing, and do not be taken in by these specious arguments.

The problem has become acute because of the wireless and the television. You see these men appearing; how polite, how kind they are, how nice they are, how accommodating. They often seem to be much nicer than our people! Foolish, ignorant Protestants are saying things like that, and are ready to swallow the bait!

"Ah but," you say, "has not the Roman Catholic Church changed? You are simply looking back, you are speaking as if you lived in the sixteenth century—don't you realise you are living in the twentieth century?" My answer is quite simple. The proudest boast of the Roman Catholic Church is this, that she never changes. "Semper eadem." How can she change? If she changes she will be admitting that she was wrong in the past—but she was saying then that she was infallible, and that the Pope is the Vicar of Christ and that he cannot make a mistake. If she says that she is capable of change she is denying her central claim! She does not say that she is changing, and she never will. The Church of Rome remains the same. If anything, she is even worse. She has "added" things to what she taught in the sixteenth century, such as papal infallibility. No, there is no change in the Church of Rome. And if ever there is one great world church it will be because the Church of Rome has absorbed all the rest and swallowed them in their ignorance!

There is no difficulty about this; this is a counterfeit, a sham; this is prostitution of the worst and most diabolical kind. It is indeed a form of the antichrist, and it is to be rejected, it is to be denounced; but above all it is to be countered. And there is only one thing that can counter it, as I said at the beginning, and that is a biblical, doctrinal Christianity. A Christianity that just preaches "Come to Christ" or "Come to Jesus" cannot stand before Rome for a second. Probably what that will do ultimately will be to add to the numbers belonging to Rome. People who hold evangelistic campaigns and say, "Ah, you Roman Catholics, go back to your church", are denying New Testament teaching. We must warn them.

There is only one teaching, one power, that can stand against

it does so, because the individual does not count and is not appealed to. All he has to do is to obey what the Church tells him, to hand himself over, and the Church will look after his soul. So it leads to all that, and the terrible persecution of the true way that has ever been a manifestation of this system. They have shed the blood of martyrs, and are still doing so wherever they can venture to do so.

I ask, as I close, Have we been wasting our time? Need we be concerned about all this? Ought we to be rejoicing that there is a new approach to Roman Catholicism? Should we not all be rejoicing in the fact that it is possible for us all to stand together as Christians over and against Communism? That is the question you have to face. For myself I do not hesitate about the answer. This system is altogether more dangerous than is Communism itself, because this is a counterfeit, this does it in the "name" of Christ. This is the "scarlet woman", this is the most horrible, foul deception of all, because it uses His name. The other is open and obviously atheistical godlessness.

No, the Protestant Reformers were not just bigoted zealots, they were not just fools. These men had their eyes opened by the Holy Spirit. That is what happened to Luther, that is what happened to Calvin, that is what happened to Knox, that is what happened to all of them. These men had their eyes opened, they saw it, they saw this horrible monstrosity depicted in the Bible in the warnings against it, and at the risk of even losing their lives they stood up and they protested. They said that that was not true. So they began to assert justification by faith, the supreme, final, adequate authority of the Scriptures, the universal priesthood of all believers and so on. They were ready to die for those truths, and many did die for them!

Let me warn you very solemnly that if you rejoice in these approaches to Rome you are denying the blood of the martyrs! Never go near Smithfield if you believe that kind of thing. Those men were burnt at the stake there in Smithfield, John Bradford and the rest, because of their denunciation of Roman Catholicism. You are denying them, you are going back on them, you are saying

Catholicism, is the devil's greatest masterpiece! It is such a departure from the Christian faith and the New Testament teaching, that I would not hesitate with the Reformers of the sixteenth century to describe it as "apostasy". Now let us be clear about this. We define apostasy as a kind of total departure from the Christian truth. "Well," says someone, "are you saying that about the Roman Catholic Church?" We have to be most careful here. If we say that Roman Catholicism is apostasy we must be clear as to the sense in which that is true. Let me put it like this therefore. Here it is not so much a matter of "denial" of the truth, but rather such an addition to the truth that eventually it becomes a departure from it.

Let me explain—and this is where the whole subtlety comes in, where the wiles of the devil come in. In one sense, and if you look at it casually, you might well think that the Roman Catholic Church is the most orthodox Church in the world. If you are considering something like the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ there is no question as to the orthodoxy of the Roman Catholic Church. The Roman Catholic Church believes that Jesus of Nazareth was the eternal Son of God; it believes in the Virgin Birth; it believes in the Incarnation; it believes in His miracles; it believes in His substitutionary work upon the cross and His resurrection physically. There is no question about that. It believes in His ascension, in His heavenly session. On the question of the Person of our Lord the Roman Catholic Church is absolutely orthodox—alas, much more orthodox, one sometimes thinks, than most Protestants. That is what makes this position so appalling. In the same way, if you are concerned about the work of our Lord there is no question about her orthodoxy. If you are concerned about the principle of grace as such, it is one of their central tenets. If you are concerned about the divine inspiration and authority of the Scriptures, they hold it and believe it is the Word of God. Again, alas, much more so than most Protestants.

So that if you merely look at her in that general manner you might well come to the conclusion that this is the most orthodox body in the world. But at this point the subtlety comes in and the difficulty arises. To all that she "adds", with a damnable plus,

things which are utterly unscriptural and which, indeed, become a denial of the Scripture. So she lands us eventually in a position in which, if we accept her teaching, we are believing a lie! In other words, her dogma is a counterfeit; she is, as the Scripture puts it, "the whore".

Now this matter is extremely subtle, but our theme is the "subtlety", the "wiles" of the devil. If you really want to know something about subtlety you have to read the literature of the Roman Catholic Church. She can appear to be everything and all things to all men. Her system is so vast and her subtlety is so great that she almost seems to be quite impregnable. I take one instance at random. You must have noticed this many times. You have heard it said that the Roman Catholic Church does not countenance divorce, and that if any of her members are divorced they shall be excommunicated. And then you suddenly read in the newspapers of the divorce of some Roman Catholic nobleman or woman, and you ask, "How can that happen?" Ah well, they are able to explain it. They say that there never really was a true marriage! They can explain everything, there is no difficulty. Their system of casuistry is such, and their developed argument is such, that they can appear to be facing in all directions at the same time.

Or, to put it another way, How many faces has the Roman Catholic Church in reality? I mean this. Look at her in this country, then look at her in Ireland, Southern Ireland. Look at her in the United States of America, then look at her in some of those Latin states in South America, and you find it very difficult to believe it is the same institution. Look at her in countries like Spain and Italy and other similar countries, and contrast her as she appears in Germany or somewhere similar—she is quite different. You would not imagine that it was the same institution. But it is. She is able to change her colour and her appearance and her form; she is, I say, all things to all men everywhere, she is everything.

You remember that the apostle has told us that it is one of the characteristics of the devil himself that he can transform himself into an angel of light. So can this Church. There is no limit, there

no, says Rome, it is not enough. The problem of your post-baptismal sins is a different one. What do I do about them? I must go and confess to the priest; he alone can deal with them.

But even he cannot deal with them all, so I may come to the end of my life, and here I am with these post-baptismal sins threatening me with hell and damnation. What can I do? It is all right, they say, here is the sacrament of penance. The priest alone can administer that for you, but he can. So you have the sacrament of penance, you make an unusual confession and you are given an absolution.

Does that guarantee that I am all right? No, not even that! That takes you most of the way, but there will still be some sins that are not forgiven. What do I do about them? Well, fortunately, there is a place, they tell us, which is called "purgatory", and I am allowed to go there to get rid of this remaining sin which is unforgiven, this post-baptismal sin that is unforgiven. What happens to me there? Well, my relatives who are still left are praying for me and they are paying money as they do so. So you have all the "indulgences" and all the "prayers for the dead", and all your candles and the money paid. The more you pay the sooner will these sins be dealt with in purgatory, and the sooner will this person be allowed to go on. You see nothing about that in the Bible, do you? Of course you do not! This is part of the further revelation they claim to have had, this is all addition.

The work of Christ is not enough, it has got to be supplemented in all these ways. Am I going too far therefore when I say that this is apostasy?

III. CONCLUSIONS

What is the result of it all? Their people are kept in ignorance and in a state of superstition. Not only that, it leads to a type of life and living which we in this country have sometimes called "the Continental Sunday", which means that if you go to Mass on Sunday morning you can do anything you like during the rest of the day. You can make the day the same as every other day, with sports and pleasure. It leads to that, and it is not surprising that

the underlings, all these are necessary. So on this vital doctrine of justification they teach a lie.

Then you come to the question of the Christian life. Here is another serious matter; the emphasis is not so much upon holy living as upon our observation of ceremonies and rites. They teach their people not so much to strive after holiness and to understand the New Testament teaching about sanctification; they teach the people to attend Mass and to go and confess to the priest. There is none of this direct responsibility and holding men there before the teaching and exhorting them to practise it. No, the teaching is that you have to conform to the rules of the Church. You watch the ceremonies, you do what they tell you: you fast at certain times and you do this and don't do that, and you attend your priest and make your confession. You come to the Mass and then go and do what you like almost. You are covered, you are put right again and on you go. Instead of holy living in its simplicity as we have it in the Scriptures, you have ceremonies and rites and observances.

Another serious error is that it completely denies the doctrine of "assurance of salvation". There is nothing more glorious than the doctrine of assurance of salvation. There is a magnificent statement of it in the eighth chapter of Romans, verse 16: "The Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." Do you know what that means? There is nothing more wonderful than that; but the Roman Church denies it completely. There is no such thing as certainty in this life. Why? This is her argument, and it is quite logical. (That is where the system is seen to be so devilish; no one less than the devil could have worked it all out with this extraordinary ingenuity.) It works like this. In your baptism your original sin is cancelled and you are made righteous and you are right with God. Ah yes, but what about post-baptismal sins, what about the sins that are committed after baptism? Your baptism has got nothing to do with that. What are you going to do about that? That is the problem. Protestant teaching is that the blood of Jesus Christ still cleanses us from all sin and unrighteousness; that what He did on the cross covers my past sins, my present sins, my future sins. The one act was enough. No,

is no end to the various "guises" in which she can appear. Here in this country she appears as highly intellectual and encourages her people to read the Bible; in other countries she prohibits their doing so, and is not only not intellectual but deliberately encouraging to superstition. Here she seems to be tolerant, ready to listen and to argue and to concede and to be friendly; in other backward countries she is utterly intolerant, vicious and vile in her persecuting zeal—but still the same body, the same institution, the same people. That is my evidence for saying that this is surely the devil's masterpiece.

Here is a great body, an institution, that has from time to time throughout the centuries—and still is doing this very thing—manifested the wiles of the devil in all its subtlety and deceitfulness, "with all deceivableness of unrighteousness" as the Scripture puts it. All this is clearly prophesied in the Scriptures. You will find it in the second chapter of Paul's Second Epistle to the Thessalonians. It is not the only explanation of that passage; but it is one of them. It may be that there you have this system "raised", as it were, to the nth power, but that is what the system has already been doing. You have it depicted also in the second beast in the thirteenth chapter of the book of Revelation; and I suggest that it is also in the seventeenth chapter of Revelation in the picture of "the great whore" sitting on those seven hills, as Rome does and always has done.

All this has shown itself in history. It did so in this way. Here is something that came in and at one time monopolised virtually the whole of the Christian Church. It came in slowly, subtly, and worked its way in and eventually became almost universal in its control.

II. THE MAIN ERRORS OF ROME

What has she done? It would take us months to deal with this adequately. All I am concerned to try to do in this one sermon is to give some of the headings which show that my contention is true. So I divide it into three main headings.

is, or do we? I sometimes wonder whether we do, many of us Protestants. It is not surprising that Roman Catholicism is increasing when Protestants do not know what justification means. Roman Catholicism is bound to succeed while Protestants think that merely to live a good life is enough. It is not surprising that Roman Catholicism is sweeping through the countries and the nations. Justification by faith! Roman teaching is that good works, meritorious works are possible in man, in sinful man; that man can contribute something to his own justification. They believe that and teach that. We teach that "there is none righteous, no, not one", that "all our righteousness is as filthy rags", or, as the apostle Paul puts it in writing to the Philippian, "dung"—refuse, worthless. No, no, they say, there is value in it and it will count, it will help.

But still more serious is that ultimately they teach that justification is the result of baptism. That is where it all links up. In baptism, they teach, not only are your sins forgiven, but a righteousness is infused into you, you are made righteous by your baptism. Though you were an unconscious infant it does not matter, you are given this righteousness, your original sin is cancelled there and you are given this positive righteousness. Incidentally, it is not the righteousness of Christ, according to them, it is a righteousness which is made by God for those who are baptised. They are not "clothed with the righteousness of Christ", but they are made righteous in the sight of God. And the result is that they denounce as dangerous heresy the Protestant teaching of justification by faith only.

You see how it works—everything in their teaching makes you dependent upon the Church. Are you saying that you can repent and go to Christ and believe in Him and be saved? No, you must have this operation worked upon you by the priest through your baptism. All along it makes the priest and the Church absolutely essential. You are helpless without them, you are bound to them. There is no direct trafficking with Christ, you have always to go through these intermediaries. The Bible says that there is only one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus. Not so in Rome—Mary, the Pope, the priests and all the hierarchy and all

ROMAN CATHOLICISM

6

1. The first is to show the way in which she has been guilty of introducing idolatry and superstition.

Now there is nothing that is so condemned in the Scripture as idolatry. We are not to make "graven images". But the Roman Catholic Church is full of images. She teaches her people to worship images; they worship statues and forms and representations. If you have been to any of their great cathedrals you will have seen people doing so. Go to St. Peter's in Rome and you will notice that there is a sort of monument to the apostle Peter, and if you look at one of the toes you will find that it is smooth and worn away. Why? Because so many poor victims of Roman Catholic teaching have been there kissing this toe! They bow with reverence and they worship images, statues and relics. They claim to have relics of certain saints, a bit of bone, something he used, and it is put in a special place and they worship it and bow down before it. This is nothing but sheer idolatry.

2. The second great charge is that her whole system and teaching come between us and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the most terrible charge in many ways.

For instance, the Church herself comes between us and the Lord Jesus Christ. She claims that she is essential to salvation. Outside the Church—"extra ecclesiam", there is no salvation—"nulla salus". She is absolutely essential. She puts herself between my soul and the Lord Jesus Christ. She arrogates that position to herself. You do not find anything like that in the New Testament; but you find it in Roman Catholicism. She alone knows what truth is, she claims. She describes it and she alone can define it and interpret it. Over against that, of course, Protestantism teaches the "universal priesthood of all believers" and the right of every man to read the Scripture for himself and to interpret it under the illumination of the Holy Spirit. Rome denies that completely and absolutely. She, and she alone, is able to understand and to interpret the Scripture and to tell us what to believe. She says this partly because she claims that she has received "continuing revelation". She does not

And this, you see, so builds up the Virgin Mary, and makes her so prominent that Christ Himself is hidden out of sight.

Lastly, you add even to the Virgin Mary, the saints. Roman Catholic people are taught to pray to the saints. How does this come to pass? Well, their teaching is this. They believe in perfectionism in this life, and they say that some of these saints have lived a perfect life. The result of this is that they have acquired and built up so much "merit" that they have much more than they need for themselves; so they have a superabundance of merit. The result is that you and I, who may be failing and who are so lacking in merit, can go and pray to the saints and ask them to give to us a certain amount of their superabundance. They call this the work of "supererogation", that the saints can intercede for us, and can even impart some of their overplus of merit to us to make up the deficiency and the lack which is to be found in us. So you have worshipping of the saints, prayers to the saints, and a dependence upon the saints. You see, the merit of Jesus Christ is not enough, you must have something extra; it needs to be supplemented.

I have simply picked out five of the main ways in which this whole system and institution comes between the believer and the Lord Jesus Christ. Remember that it is done by people who attribute to Him full deity and who are quite clear about the Incarnation and the Virgin Birth and all these things. That is where "the wiles" of the devil come in. On the one hand they seem to be saying everything that is right; but then they add all this which is so wrong that you begin to wonder what is left of that which is right.

3. *But let me go on to the third thing, which is the way in which they not only rob Him of His position, but detract from the glory and the perfection and the completeness of the great salvation that He offers us and gives us.*

Take the first example of this, their teaching with regard to the question of justification—justification by faith. As Luther said this is, "the test of a standing or a falling Church"—the whole glory of Protestantism, the thing that brought it into being. Look at their teaching with regard to justification. We know what ours

believe, as true Protestants do, that revelation ended with what we have in the New Testament. She claims a continuing and a continuous revelation. She therefore does not hesitate to say that you must add to the truth in the Scriptures. While saying that the Bible is the Word of God, she claims that her tradition, which she adds on, is equally authoritative and equally binding. And that is the way in which she takes from the Bible, because she says things in what she adds on in her tradition that deny biblical teaching and take from it. That is where the subtlety comes in.

In the end it comes to this, that she claims our totalitarian allegiance. She claims to govern us in what we believe and in what we do. She claims to be responsible for our soul and its salvation. We must therefore submit utterly and absolutely to what the Church tells us and what the Church teaches us. She has a totalitarian system. There is no question but that she binds the souls of her people absolutely, as much as Communism does, as much as Hitler did under his horrible system. It is a totalitarian system. The Church is supreme and thus stands between us and the Lord Jesus Christ.

A second manifestation of this, and a logical outcome of course, is the Pope, and all that they teach about him. He is said to be the Vicar of Christ. He is said to be a direct spiritual descendant of the apostle Peter—apostolic succession—who has all the authority of the apostle Peter. I must not allow myself to be side-tracked to query even the position they attribute to Peter himself, but that is their claim, and that thus, this person whom they call the Holy Father—though the Scripture tells us specifically not to call any man "Father" on earth because there is only one Father, the Father who is in heaven—is the Holy Father, the Vicar of Christ. And they say that speaking ex-cathedra in his council of cardinals he is "infallible". They defined that doctrine in 1870; they believed it long before. But now, as thus defined, his pronouncements are claimed to be infallible, as infallible as the Word of God, as infallible as Christ Himself, for he is the Vicar and the Representative of Christ. And thus, you see, the power of the Church is headed up in this one man who speaks, as 2 Thessalonians 2 says, "as God". He is worshipped by people; they bow down before him,

and they express to him a sense of adoration that should be given to no one but the almighty God Himself.

The third manifestation is to be found in the priests. The priests in the Roman Church are a very special people. They do not believe in the universal priesthood of all believers. The only people who are "priests" are those whom the Church herself has trained, and who have been ordained, and who receive something of this authority which comes from the "apostolic succession". But 1 Peter 2 : 9, tells us that we are all priests: "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood." In other words, "a kingdom of priests". No, says Rome, you are the laity, you are not priests, these alone are priests.

Then they attribute to these priests certain unique powers, such as that of working miracles. Here we come to a very central and crucial matter. They claim that the priest is able to change the water that they use in baptism so that grace enters into it. They claim that the priest is able to work a miracle in connection with the bread and the wine at the Lord's Supper, that he is able to work this miracle of what they call "transubstantiation". They say that the bread is no longer bread but that it becomes the body of Christ; that the accidents of colour and so on remain, but that the substance has been changed into the body of Christ, and that this miracle has been worked by the priest who has the power to work such a miracle.

That in turn brings in their whole doctrine concerning the sacraments. They have seven sacraments, but I am concerned particularly about baptism and the Lord's Supper, where they do not hesitate to teach that in those sacraments a miracle is worked. Their theory is, that this miracle having been worked by the priest in the water and the bread and the wine, these are now charged with the grace of God in a special manner, and so they work more or less automatically. Their phrase is that they work "ex opere operato". In other words, it is no longer just water, it is charged with the grace of God, and therefore when it is put upon that child a miracle is worked in the child. Or when you take the bread in the communion service—and, incidentally, they do not let you take the wine—you are really taking the body of Christ Himself.

This, you see, is all a manifestation of this subtlety of the devil, of the wiles of the devil. All this is added, there is not a word about it in the New Testament. But before we leave the priest we have to remember this, that he is also one to whom we must go and confess our sins, because he has power to pronounce absolution and to grant us forgiveness of sins. Nobody else can do it except this priesthood, these people to whom they allocate these special powers. So the people are taught to go and confess to them. There is not a word of that in the Scripture. We confess our faults to God and to one another in the Christian Church; but not to a "priest". So there is another manifestation. I am showing you the ways in which this system comes between us and the Lord Jesus Christ. You and I, as Christians, go to Him to confess; they go to the priest.

Let us go on to the fourth manifestation—and this is one of the most alarming and extraordinary things of all. The cult of the Virgin Mary in Roman Catholicism is increasing rapidly in an alarming manner. They say that she is the "Queen of Heaven", and that she is the one to whom we should go primarily. In many of their churches you will find that she is placed in front of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is almost hidden by her somewhere in the background. Why? This is what they say, that she being human is much more loving and tender than He is; that He is so great and powerful and authoritative, that He is so stern—this is what they teach, this is the whole explanation of the cult of the Virgin Mary—that He is such that we cannot go to Him directly. Ah, but fortunately she is there, and she is loving; and after all she was His mother and she can influence Him. So we should pray to the Virgin Mary and ask her to intercede on our behalf. She is right there between us and the Son of God, the Saviour of our souls. And increasingly they have been adding to her power. They began in 1854 to teach the "Immaculate Conception" which means not only that the Lord Jesus Christ was born free from sin, but that Mary was also. Then recently they have announced this doctrine of the "Assumption of Mary", that she never died like everybody else and was buried, but that she literally ascended up to heaven even as her Son did.