

Great Controversy Series
Can Apostasy and Truth Walk in Unity?
Chapter 35 - Liberty of Conscience Threatened
Bible Sermon Study Notes: Cary Rodgers, Jr., pastor

Why do the majority of people believe a lie? Because ALL lies please the sinful flesh. Bible truth pricks and disturbs our sinful flesh and calls for a total change and transformation.

Why do we need to study and understand the Bible?

2 Timothy 3:16-17

16 All scripture is given by **inspiration of God**, and is profitable for **doctrine (instruction)**, for reproof (**evidence**), for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

2 Peter 1:19-21

19 We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts:

20 Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.

21 For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.

Why do we need to learn from Israel's history of apostasy?

Romans 15:4

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our **learning (understanding)**, that we through **patience** and **comfort** of the scriptures might have **hope**.

1 Corinthians 10:11

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples (model): and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Admonition [Greek]: attention to, rebuke or warning

In these last days we need to be "fruit inspectors" to discern the truth!

1 John 4:1

1 Beloved, **believe not every spirit**, but **try [test] the spirits** whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.

Isaiah 8:20

20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.

Matthew 7:20

20 **Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.**

How does Jesus describe the character of church leadership (pastors, bishop, priests) who are in apostasy?

What did he say directly to the Pharisees (church leadership)?

Matthew 15:1-9

- 1 Then came to Jesus scribes and Pharisees, which were of Jerusalem, saying,
- 2 Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders? for they wash not their hands when they eat bread.
- 3 But he answered and said unto them, Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition?
- 4 For God commanded, saying, Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death.
- 5 But ye say, Whosoever shall say to his father or his mother, It is a gift, by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me;
- 6 And honour not his father or his mother, he shall be free. Thus have ye made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition.
- 7 Ye **hypocrites (actors/pretenders)**, well did Esaias prophesy of you, saying,
- 8 This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me.
- 9 But in **vain** they do worship me, teaching for **doctrines** the commandments of men.

Vain (Greek): folly or no purpose (Strong's)

Doctrines (Greek): Instructions (Strong's)

Matthew 16:1-3

- 1 The Pharisees also with the Sadducees came, and tempting desired him that he would shew them a sign from heaven.
- 2 He answered and said unto them, When it is evening, ye say, It will be fair weather: for the sky is red.
- 3 And in the morning, It will be foul weather to day: for the sky is red and lowring. O ye hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the sky; but can ye not discern the signs of the times?

Let's look at some more characteristics of an apostate church and its leadership

What did Jesus say directly to the multitude?

Matthew 23:1-10, 15, 34

- 1 Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples,
- 2 Saying, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in **Moses' seat** [leadership position of influence over a multitude of people]:
- 3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.
- 4 For they bind heavy burdens and grievous to be borne, and lay them on men's shoulders; but they themselves will not move them with one of their fingers.
- 5 But all their works they do for to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments,
- 6 And love the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the synagogues,
- 7 And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi.
- 8 But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren.
- 9 And call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven.
- 10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.
- 15 Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte, and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves. (make apostate disciples and followers after themselves)

34 Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city:

What did Jesus call the apostate church leaders to sum up their characters?

Matthew 23:16, 17, 33

16 Woe unto you, ye blind guides...

17 Ye fools (dull or stupid) and blind...

33 Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?

Summary of characteristics of apostate church leadership as taught by Jesus:

- 1) Church policies (tradition) has priority over the Bible
- 2) Hypocrites (actor / pretenders)
- 3) Lip Service, no true heart service – really don't believe
- 4) Vain worshipers – no real Biblical purpose
- 5) Teaches the commandments of men over the ten commandments of God!
- 6) Does not discern signs of the times or fulfillment of Bible prophecy
- 7) Instructs followers, but don't follow their own instructions
- 8) Proudful & puffed up – love to be seen by his follower
- 9) Love titles of authority before their names “doctor”, “pastor”, “reverend”, “bishop”, or “apostle”
- 10) Apostate Evangelism - (make apostate disciples and followers after like themselves)
- 11) Persecutors & murders of the righteous
- 12) Blind guides & fools
- 13) Deceptive as a snake and has a poisonous bite like a viper

Papal Rome and those who unite with them have exactly the same of characteristics of an apostate church like Israel at the time of Jesus Christ.

Israel's leadership of the Pharisees, Sadducees, and scribes were highly respected among the multitude of Israel. Jesus struck a blow at the leadership that lovely called them to repentance. Their “gig” was exposed in broad daylight so everyone can see! **This even made Jesus disciples nervous! What did they tell Jesus?**

Matthew 15:12

12 Then came his disciples, and said unto him, Knowest thou that the Pharisees were offended, after they heard this saying?

If we are in apostasy, the instruction of Jesus will offend because it is contrary to the sinful flesh! Jesus was not exposing the apostasy of the church leadership for popularity, it was a sincere call to repent, turn from sin and turn to Jesus!

What are we instructed to do concerning apostate church leadership?

Does Jesus instruct us to follow them anyway in hopes of reforming them to the truth? Or Stick around and hope they change for the best, “just grin and bare it”?

Matthew 15:13-14

13 But he answered and said, Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.
14 **Let them alone:** they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.

Matthew 23:3, 10

3 All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do; but **do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.**

10 Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ.

In other words, do not do what apostate leadership does and follow Jesus

Leave them alone! Let's look at more scriptures

1 Timothy 6:5 - "Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and **destitute of the truth**, supposing that gain is godliness: **from such withdraw thyself.**"

2 Timothy 3:5 - "Having a **form of godliness**, but denying the power thereof: from **such turn away.**"

2 Thessalonians 3:14 - "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and **have no company with him**, that he may be ashamed."

Revelation 18:4 - "And I heard another voice from heaven, saying, **Come out of her**, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."

2 Corinthians 6:14 - "**Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers**: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"

Amos 3:3 - "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?"

How can apostasy and truth walk in unity, they cannot unless they both either walk together in apostasy or walk together in the truth! Truth and apostasy can never walk together in unity! The Bible instructions are very clear without compromise, when apostasy has been revealed in the church leadership or church, GET OUT and unify with TRUTH. Unify Jesus and he will lead you to fellowship with others who are teaching and living by God's truth in these last days. If there is not a church fellowship in your area start one yourself with the instruction and directions of Jesus Christ. Remember what Jesus says, Matthew 18:20, "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."

What happens when a leadership and church reject truth and repentance?

Matthew 23:37-38

37 O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!

38 Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.

Jesus is NOT in any apostate church (period).

If the real Jesus not there who is?

Matthew 24:24

24 For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and wonders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect.

Apostate churches are worshiping false christs like a humanistic worldly "Jesus" that enjoys the sinful pleasures like they do! This is idol worship, the imagination of human reasoning over the truth of God's Word!

Revelation 18:2

2 And he cried mightily with a strong voice, saying, Babylon the great is fallen, is fallen, and is become the **habitation of devils**, and the hold of **every foul spirit**, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

1 Timothy 4:1-2

1 Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;
2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Get out! It a house of devils speaking lies! The real Jesus is NOT there. The real spirit is NOT there.

2 Thessalonians 2:3-4

3 Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition;
4 Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God.

The Bible clearly exposes the “man of sin” and “son of perdition” as Papal Rome that exalts itself as God and is worshiped like God. Papal Rome who is both a sovereign government with the pope as king and a religious church with the pope as their spiritual leader. Papal Rome has clearly proven itself over the years as an apostate church that as rejected Bible truth and embraced pagan worship.

Who is the “power” behind the papacy identified as the seven headed leopard like beast of Revelation 13?**Revelation 13:2**

2 And the beast which I saw was like unto a leopard, and his feet were as the feet of a bear, and his mouth as the mouth of a lion: and the **dragon gave him his power, and his seat, and great authority.**

The dragon is Satan (Revelation 12:9). In other words the papacy is united with Satan! He is their true leader. Those who unite with Satan can in no way unify with the true Jesus Christ of the Bible.

Here is the Biblical principle:

1 Corinthians 10:21

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

Apostate Protestants

“Romanism is now regarded by Protestants with far greater favor than in former years. In those countries where Catholicism is not in the ascendancy, and the papists are taking a conciliatory course in order to gain influence, there is an increasing indifference concerning the doctrines that separate the reformed churches from the papal hierarchy; the opinion is gaining ground that, after all, we do not differ so widely upon vital points as has been supposed, and that a little concession on our part will bring us into a better understanding with Rome.” - GC 562

October 31, 2017 at the 500th anniversary of Martin Luther official protest of the papacy by nailing his 95 theses on the chapel in Wittenburg, Germany all apostate protestants celebrated their unity with the papacy. It has been declared that the protestant reformation is over. There is no more protest. They said have put away their differences and united with the things that have in common. As we studied this is NOT biblical. How can you find something in common with an apostate, if you have not become and apostate.

“It is prepared for two classes of mankind, embracing nearly the whole world--those who would be saved by their merits, and those who would be saved in their sins. Here is the secret of its power.” GC 572

Has the papacy changed? NO

The papacy who at one time had an empire from 538 to 1798, as not changed! They are still as corrupt as they were then, but more refined and stealth! As the Bible predicts they are actually more successful at their deceptions as the were in the past! This time the whole world will wonder after the beast, Papal Rome (Revelation 13:3).

Must we forget and ignore their character and doctrine as the Bible reveals lets look at a few

Blasphemous Character

Revelation 13:6 says, “And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name, and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven.” Similarly the little horn in Daniel 7:25 says that “he shall speak great words against the most High...” Also Daniel 8:11 says that “he magnified himself even to the prince of the host.”

The pope and Papal Rome blaspheme God’s name by claiming titles, roles, rights, and privileges that ONLY belong to God.

“The Pope is not only the representative of Jesus Christ, but he is Jesus himself, hidden under the veil of flesh.”
- The Catholic National 1895

“He is the infallible ruler... the supreme judge of heaven and earth, the judge of all, being judged by no one, God himself on earth.” - The New York Catechism (Taken from Roman Catholicism, p. 127)

“We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty.” - Pope Leo XIII, in an Encyclical letter, June 20, 1894

“All the names which in the Scriptures are applied to Christ, by virtue of which it is established that he is over the church, all the same names are applied to the Pope.” - Robert Bellarmine, On the Authority of the Councils, chapter 17, 1628 ed., vol. 1, p. 266

Blasphemous Titles of the head of the papacy

- 1)Pope (Italian for “papa” which is an abbreviation of pater patrum which means father of fathers or principal father)
- 2)Most Holy Father
- 3)Vicar of Christ (“vicar” = a person who acts in place of another; substitute. Dictionary.com)
- 4)Supreme Pontiff (Latin = Pontifex Maximus = greatest “bridge builder” or “constructor of the way”)
- 5)His Holiness

Confession of Sins to Priest - Blasphemous

Papal Rome blasphemes God by claiming that the pope and its priests have the power to forgive people from sin. They believe that Jesus gave them the “Sacrament of Reconciliation” also known as Penance or Confession which allows people to confess their sins to a Catholic priest because a priest stands “in Persona Christi” meaning that “he is in the person of Christ.” - lifeteen.com/blog/why-do-catholics-confess-to-a-priest/

Eucharist, Mass – Extremely Blasphemous!!!

“Transubstantiation is, according to the teaching of the Catholic Church, the change of substance by which the bread and the wine offered in the sacrifice of the sacrament of the Eucharist during the Mass, become, in reality, the Body and Blood of Jesus the Christ” - en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Transubstantiation

“The saint assigns the reason of the superiority of the priesthood over Mary; she conceived Jesus Christ only once; but by consecrating the Eucharist, the priest, as it were, conceives him as often as he wishes, so that if the person of the Redeemer had not as yet been in the world, the priest, by pronouncing the words of consecration, would produce this great person of a Man-God. ‘O wonderful dignity of the priests’; cries out St. Augustine; ‘in their hands, as in the womb of the Blessed Virgin, the Son of God becomes- incarnate.’ Hence priests are called the parents of Jesus Christ: such is the title that St. Bernard gives them, for they are the active cause by which he is made to exist really in the consecrated Host.” Alphonsus de Liguori, Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva, pp. 32

“Thus the priest may, in a certain manner, be called the creator of his Creator, since by saying the words of consecration, he creates, as it were, Jesus in the sacrament, by giving him a sacramental existence, and produces him as a victim to be offered to the eternal Father.” - Alphonsus de Liguori, Dignity and Duties of the Priest or Selva, pp. 32, 33

“2181 The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice... Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin.” - “Catechism Of The Catholic Church” which is online at their official website, www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s2c1a3.htm, concerning “ARTICLE 3 -THE THIRD COMMANDMENT” referring the sabbath commandment.

War With The Saints” - Persecute God’s Faithful

Daniel 7:21 that the little horn “made war with the saints, and prevailed against them,” and in Daniel 7:25 it “shall wear out the saints of the most High.” In Revelation 13:7 the beast also made “war with the saints.”

The British historian, William Edward Lecky wrote: “That the Church of Rome has shed more innocent blood than any other institution that has ever existed among mankind, will be questioned by no Protestant who has a competent knowledge of history.”- The History of the Rise of the Spirit of Rationalism in Europe, Vol. 2, p. 32

Persecuted God’s people in the past and will do it again in the near future.

Attacks True religious liberty – Freedom of conscience

“The Constitution of the United States guarantees liberty of conscience. Nothing is dearer or more fundamental. Pope Pius IX, in his Encyclical Letter of August 15, 1854, said: ‘The absurd and erroneous doctrines or ravings in defense of liberty of conscience are a most pestilential error--a pest, of all others, most to be dreaded in a state.’ The same pope, in his Encyclical Letter of December 8, 1864, anathematized ‘those who assert the liberty of conscience and of religious worship,’ also ‘all such as maintain that the church may not employ force.’” GC 564

“Think” to change God’s Holy Seventh-day Sabbath to the First day of the week

Daniel 7:25 - “... think to change times and laws.”

“Sunday is our Mark of authority...The church is ABOVE the Bible, and this transference of Sabbath observance is proof of that fact.” - Catholic Record, September 1, 1923

“Of course the Catholic Church claims that the change [of the Sabbath to Sunday] was her act. It could not have been otherwise, as none in those days would have dreamed of doing anything in matters spiritual and ecclesiastical and religious without her. And THE ACT IS A MARK of ecclesiastical power and authority in

religious matters.” - James Cardinal Gibbons, in a letter to J .F. Snyder of Bloomington, Illinois, dated November II, 1895, and signed by H.F. Thomas, Chancellor for the Cardinal

“If Protestants would follow the Bible, they should worship God on the Sabbath day. In keeping the Sunday, they are following a law of the Catholic Church.” - Chancellor Albert Smith for Cardinal of Baltimore Archdiocese, letter dated February 10, 1920

The papacy sees that Sunday worship unifies others to them as long as they keep the Sunday institution that they established.

Do protestant churches agree with this statement by their actions?

“I also believe that our communal Sunday practices are a sign of unity (something we share as fellow believers) that what unites us is stronger and more profound than what divides us.” - Scott Brill, “Sunday as a Mark of Christian Unity.” *The Lord’s Day Alliance of the United States*, Spring 2015, Vol 102, No. 1: p. 9

Even though the light of the seventh-day Sabbath has shined in the faces of many protestant churches they have rejected that light and continue to embrace Sunday as the Day of the Lord. In their rebellion they have clung on to Sunday as a unifying doctrine they brings Catholics and protestant alike together.

Since protestant churches have made their peace with Rome many years ago by continuing to embrace Sunday worship, what was true purpose behind the ecumenical movement of the papacy?

The main purpose of the ecumenical movement of the papacy was to get church who are keep and teaching God’s true seventh-day sabbath to unite with them. This was Satan master plan and golden prize!

For years the papacy was trying to make ecumenical relationship with the seventh-day Adventists church. As long as the corporate church stayed true to principal of the Word of God, papal Rome would have been unsuccessful. The sad sorry is the Seventh-day Adventist corporate church have made ecumenical compromises with papal Rome for several years now.

MAY 18, 1977 - *Book, Medallion Presented to Pope* (Review Herald, August 11, 1977 p. 23)

“In connection with a recent consultative meeting of secretaries of World Confessional Families held in Rome, Bert B. Beach, secretary of the Northern Europe-West Africa Division, one of the 15 participants and the only Adventist in the group, presented a book and a medallion to Pope Paul VI on May 18. *The book presented was the Adventist missionary book Faith in Action*, and the medallion was a gold-covered symbol of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.”

2001 – Bert B. Beach – SDA Conference official meets with Pope John Paul II

Bert B. Beach, author “Vatican II: Bridging the Abyss” & “Ecumenism: Boon or Bane?”

October 2016 – **Dr. Ganoune Diop, director of Public Affairs and Religious Liberty (PARL) for the Seventh-day Adventist world church.**

This unity with the beast, reveals the deep apostasy with the corp SDA church. Should we unite just because they still have the name “Seventh-day Adventist”? No leave them alone as Jesus says. They are blind guides leading the blind!

The papacy may have tweaked some of their words to make themselves more attractive to Papal Rome. Their say, yes we believe in “righteousness by faith” has they continue in the idol worships, penences, confessionals, blasphemous mass, etc...

“The defenders of the papacy declare that the church has been maligned, and the Protestant world are inclined to accept the statement. Many urge that it is unjust to judge the church of today by the abominations and absurdities that marked her reign during the centuries of ignorance and darkness. They excuse her horrible cruelty as the result of the barbarism of the times and plead that the influence of modern civilization has changed her sentiments.” GC 563

Sun Worship Enforcement in the past in coming soon again – worldwide

“It is the spirit of the papacy--the spirit of conformity to worldly customs, the veneration for human traditions above the commandments of God--that is permeating the Protestant churches and leading them on to do the same work of Sunday exaltation which the papacy has done before them.” - GC 573

“The first public measure enforcing Sunday observance was the law enacted by Constantine. This edict required townspeople to rest on "the venerable day of the sun," but permitted countrymen to continue their agricultural pursuits. Though virtually a heathen statute, it was enforced by the emperor after his nominal acceptance of Christianity.” - GC 574

Signs and Sunday wonders in the past and coming soon

2 Thessalonians 2:9

9 Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders,

Revelation 13:13-14

13 And he doeth great wonders, so that he maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men,

14 And deceiveth them that dwell on the earth by the means of those miracles which he had power to do in the sight of the beast; saying to them that dwell on the earth, that they should make an image to the beast, which had the wound by a sword, and did live.

“Miracles also were called into requisition. Among other wonders it was reported that as a husbandman who was about to plow his field on Sunday cleaned his plow with an iron, the iron stuck fast in his hand, and for two years he carried it about with him, "to his exceeding great pain and shame."--Francis West, Historical and Practical Discourse on the Lord's Day, page 174.” - GC 575

“An ecclesiastical council brought forward the argument, since so widely employed, even by Protestants, that because persons had been struck by lightning while laboring on Sunday, it must be the Sabbath.” - GC 575

“A zealous advocate of Sunday, who about the close of the twelfth century visited the churches of England, was resisted by faithful witnesses for the truth; and so fruitless were his efforts that he departed from the country for a season and cast about him for some means to enforce his teachings. When he returned, the lack was supplied, and in his after labors he met with greater success. He brought with him a roll purporting to be from God Himself, which contained the needed command for Sunday observance, with awful threats to terrify the disobedient. This precious document-- as base a counterfeit as the institution it supported--was said to have fallen from heaven and to have been found in Jerusalem, upon the altar of St. Simeon, in Golgotha. But, in fact, the pontifical palace at Rome was the source whence it proceeded. Frauds and forgeries to advance the power and prosperity of the church have in all ages been esteemed lawful by the papal hierarchy.” GC 576

“A miller who attempted to grind his corn, saw, instead of flour, a torrent of blood come forth, and the mill wheel stood still, notwithstanding the strong rush of water. A woman who placed dough in the oven found it raw when taken out, though the oven was very hot. Another who had dough prepared for baking at the ninth hour, but determined to set it aside till Monday, found, the next day, that it had been made into loaves and baked by divine power. A man who baked bread after the ninth hour on Saturday found, when he broke it the next morning, that blood started therefrom. By such absurd and superstitious fabrications did the advocates of Sunday endeavor to establish its sacredness. (See Roger de Hoveden, Annals, vol. 2, pp. 526-530.) {GC 576.2}

Repeat: It's coming be ready!

“Let the principle once be established in the United States that the church may employ or control the power of the state; that religious observances may be enforced by secular laws; in short, that the authority of church and state is to dominate the conscience, and the triumph of Rome in this country is assured.” GC 581

“Stealthily and unsuspectedly she is strengthening her forces to further her own ends when the time shall come for her to strike. All that she desires is vantage ground, and this is already being given her. We shall soon see and shall feel what the purpose of the Roman element is. Whoever shall believe and obey the word of God will thereby incur reproach and persecution.” GC 581