

ROMANISM

In the Light of Scripture

by

J. Dwight Pentecost

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CHAPTER FIVE

IS SALVATION BY WORKS OR BY FAITH?

THE WHOLE COURSE of the professing church, as well as the course of world history, was changed because the truth of Galatians 3:11, “**The just shall live by faith,**” was brought home to one who had been seeking for salvation by works. As this truth dawned upon Martin Luther as sun that dispels darkness, the teaching of the Word of God thundered forth. This great apostle of salvation by faith caused his voice to trumpet through the church to affirm the scriptural truth that man is not justified by the works of the law—for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified—but is declared acceptable by faith and by faith alone.

Because of the Reformers’ strong declaration of justification by faith alone, the Roman Church found it necessary to call a church council to formulate a reply. At the Council of Trent in 1545 they officially denied the doctrine of justification by faith which Martin Luther and those who followed him had been heralding. The Council said,

“Whosoever shall affirm that the ungodly is justified by faith only, so that it is understood that nothing else is required to co-operate therewith in order to obtain justification, and that it is on no account necessary that he should prepare and dispose himself by the effect of his own will, let him be accursed.”

The Council of Trent said further,

“Whosoever shall affirm that men are justified solely by the imputation of righteousness of Christ, to the exclusion of grace and charity that is shed abroad in their hearts and inheres in them, or that the grace by which we are justified is only the favor of God, let him be accursed.”

With this pronouncement of the Council of Trent the battle lines were clearly drawn between those who held with the Roman system, that salvation is by grace plus works and those who held with the great Reformers that salvation is by faith alone.

We will address ourselves to the question, *Is salvation by faith, or is salvation by faith and works?* We have to acknowledge that the Church of Rome teaches that salvation is by grace. But we have to observe that they redefine the doctrine of grace and give it a concept that is entirely foreign to the Word of God.

According to the Word of God, grace is that *unmerited favor* by which God sets aside what the sinner deserves in order to give the sinner what he never could deserve. By grace God has put our sins upon the Lord Jesus Christ that He who was sinless might become sin for us that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. Although Rome says that salvation is by grace and no one can be saved apart from grace, grace is redefined.

James Cardinal Gibbons in his book *The Faith of Our Fathers* writes as follows:

“The grace of God is that supernatural assistance which He imparts to us through the merits of Jesus Christ for our salvation. The grace of God is obtained chiefly by prayer and the sacraments. A sacrament is a visible sign, instituted by Christ, by which grace is conveyed to our souls.”

Cardinal Gibbon, in putting forth the doctrine of grace as it is taught in the Roman church, says that grace is what comes to the individual not from God Himself, but what comes to him through his participation in the sacraments of the Roman church. It is our purpose to trace something of the doctrine of grace to see the teaching of Rome concerning the forgiveness of sin, that we may contrast it with the scriptural revelation of the gracious gift of God, salvation through Christ.

The Romanist says that grace is the result of the incarnation and passion of Christ; that Christ, by His death, opened up an eternal fountain of grace for all men, and that this reservoir of grace rests upon His work.

With this statement we would not be in essential disagreement, for we would certainly confess, with the Romanist, that Christ is the source and the fountain of all grace. We would confess with them that Jesus Christ has opened to us a great reservoir so that grace may be poured out upon us, grace heaped upon grace. We could confess with the Apostle John that “**of his fulness have we all received and grace for [or upon] grace**” (John 1: 16).

But we have to differ with what is built upon this concept, for the Romanist hastens on to say that, while Christ opened up a great fountain of grace, that grace is not directly available, nor is it open to the sinner who stands in need of the bestowal of God’s grace. This fountain of grace is supplemented and the fountain which Christ opened is added to by the meritorious work of Mary, by the works of the apostles, by the meritorious works of all the saints down through all the ages, as well as by the prayers of the faithful on earth today.

There is a basic contradiction in this concept. The Romanist says that Christ has opened up an eternal fountain of grace for sinners. This eternal fountain is an infinite fountain. If it is infinite and eternal it must of necessity be complete. And yet to that infinite grace of God in Jesus Christ, according to the Romanist, Mary can make her addition, the apostles can make their contribution, the saints of the ages can add their bit, and the prayers of the faithful on earth can enlarge the fountain that was opened up.

According to this concept, the grace of God that was manifested in Jesus Christ was only the beginning of the outpouring of His grace.

The grace provided for by Christ was insufficient and inadequate. It needs the addition made by Mary and by all the apostles and the saints and the faithful on the earth today to be sufficient grace for all men. After they proclaimed that grace had its source in the Lord Jesus Christ, they also affirmed that this fountainhead of grace may be supplemented as we add to the efficacy and the value of His work.

The next step that the Romanist takes is to affirm that this fountain of grace, opened up by Jesus Christ and added to by Mary, the apostles, the saints and the faithful, is dispensed by Mary.

It is as though we were to visualize a great reservoir of grace sufficient for all men, but a reservoir with only one pipe; that pipe bears the name of Mary, so that she is the one channel by which this abundance of grace is administered to all men.

Several quotations from the pronouncements of the popes will show their concept of the position of Mary in relation to the value of the work of Christ.

Leo XIII, September 8, 1894, in the Papal Bull, *Iacunda Semper*, said,

“It is impossible to measure the power and scope of Mary’s offices since the day she was taken up to that height of heavenly glory in the company of her Son, to which the dignity and luster of her merits entitles her. From her heavenly abode, she began, by God’s decree, to watch over the church, to assist and befriend us as our mother, so that she who is so intimately associated with the mystery of human salvation is just as closely associated with the distribution of the graces which for all time will flow from that redemption.”

Pius X in 1905, in his pronouncement entitled *Acta* said,

“Mary is the principal minister of the graces to be distributed to men.”

And more recently, Pius XI, in 1928, in his *Misericordissimus Redemptor*, said,

“Mary is the dispenser and mediatrix of grace.”

Louis D’ Montfort said,

“God has entrusted Mary with the helping, the administration and the distribution of all His graces so that all His graces and gifts pass through her hands.”

These statements teach that while Christ has opened up a great fountain of truth and grace, that fountain of grace cannot come directly to the needy sinner. That fountain of grace has to be channeled through the dispenser and the mediator of all grace, Mary herself. Therefore this free, limitless grace that God offers to man is no longer free and limitless, but is held in reserve for those who come to God through Mary.

From this, the Roman church takes an additional step.

They affirm that while this grace is dispensed by Mary, it is channeled through the Roman church and that the Roman church has been given seven sacraments, holy things ordained and instituted by the Lord Himself, which are the means by which Mary passes on this grace to those who are in need. If in your mind's eye you are picturing that great reservoir of grace with the single outlet, you will have to see that pipe flowing into a smaller reservoir, entitled the Roman Catholic Church, and seven pipes flowing out of that small reservoir. The seven pipes that administer grace from the infinite fountain of grace will have to be labeled baptism, confirmation, the Eucharist, penance, extreme unction, holy orders, and marriage. These are the seven sacraments recognized by the Roman church.

Now certainly we would have to say that this is a far different concept than what Martin Luther preached, "**The just shall live by faith.**" It is far different from what the Apostle Paul declared when he quoted from the Old Testament, "**The just shall live by faith.**"

As we shall see, it is quite different from the teaching of the New Testament concerning the forgiveness of sin. The Romanist tells us that the grace given by God through Mary, to the church through the sacraments, is appropriated not by faith but by receiving and participating in the external sacrament; so that the forgiveness of sin depends not upon faith in the death of Jesus Christ, nor receiving the gift of God by faith (eternal life), but upon receiving these sacraments which have been instituted, according to the Roman system, to dispense the forgiveness of sin.

In order to understand something of this Romanist doctrine of salvation, we have to go back to the Roman concept of sin. In Romans 3:23 Paul testifies, "**All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.**"

The Roman error in regard to the doctrine of salvation arises, in great measure, out of the false concept of sin held in Roman theology. Rome recognizes, first of all, what is referred to as original sin: when Adam sinned the whole human race partook of his sin and became a fallen race. Every individual born in Adam's line was born a sinner with a sin nature. We recognize this as truly the teaching of the Word of God.

Then Rome makes a distinction between original sin and what they refer to as daily sins. They divide daily sins into two categories, *mortal sins and venial sins*.

In the book entitled *Father Smith Instructs Jackson*, these two categories of sin are defined.

"Mortal sins are sins purposely committed with the knowledge that it is sin and with the realization of the consequences to follow. These sins destroy the supernatural life of the soul and offend God seriously so that the guilty one makes himself deserving of punishment in Hell."

Mortal sins will take away the gift of eternal life which the individual received by following the Roman system. A person, according to Romanist doctrine, may have the gift of life or, as they refer to it in the catechism, supernatural life of the soul, but by committing mortal sins he may lose that eternal life and be destined for the punishment of Hell, from which there is no escape.

The second category of daily sins Rome calls venial sins.

“Venial sins are those sins when evil is done, but it is not seriously wrong, or when the evil is seriously wrong, but the sinner sincerely believes that it is only slightly wrong, or does not give full consent to it. Such sin makes us less fervent in the service of God and breaks down our resistance to mortal sin.”

We have to disagree with the concept that all sin is not sin in the sight of God, as though the sins of believers were less grievous in His sight, or as though there were gradations of sin.

According to Roman doctrine, original sin is *removed by the sacrament of baptism*. The Romanist teaches us that an individual born into the world with a fallen sin nature needs some manifestation of the grace of God. By baptism original sin is washed away, and the guilt of sin and the penalty of it is gone.

The *Baltimore Catechism*, an official book for catechetical instruction in the Roman church, gives the definition of baptism. The Baltimore Catechism asks the question, “What is Baptism?” The answer is given,

“Baptism is the sacrament that gives our souls the new life of sanctifying grace by which we become children of God and heirs of Heaven.”

And then the explanation is appended,

“Baptism is the most necessary sacrament because the other sacraments may not be received without it and because it is the beginning of the spiritual life in man. By it we become members of the church on earth and members of God’s family in Heaven.”

Will you notice what that catechism has said? It is baptism that has given the individual the gift of life and has made him a member of the church on earth and the family of God in Heaven.

The next question is, “What sins does baptism take away?” And the answer is,

“Baptism takes away original sin and also actual sins and all the punishment due them if the person baptized be guilty of any actual sins and is truly sorry for them.”

According to this statement the Roman church teaches that if an infant is baptized, he is saved and made a member of the family of God in Heaven, because baptism takes away all original sin.

If an adult is baptized, baptism takes away not only the original sin, but also all of the mortal sins, as well as the venial sins that that individual has committed up to that point in his experience. Thus baptism does the work of granting the forgiveness of original sin; baptism takes one out of Hell; baptism will remove all mortal sins that would send that sinner to Hell.

James Cardinal Gibbon, in the book, *Faith of Our Fathers*, gives four results that he affirms come from baptism:

“First, baptism washes away original sin and also actual sins from the adult who may have contracted them; second, by our new birth in baptism, we become Christians and children of God; third, baptism also clothes us with the garment of sanctity so that our soul becomes a fit dwelling place for the Holy Ghost; fourth, baptism makes us heirs of Heaven and co-heirs with Jesus Christ.”

Gibbon’s statement on the fourfold results of baptism attributes to baptism all that the New Testament attributes to the value of the blood of Jesus Christ. In the New Testament it is the blood of Jesus Christ that grants us forgiveness and breaks the bondage of original sin.

- It is by the blood of Christ that we are born anew into the family of God.
- It is by the blood of Christ we are clothed with the garment of Christ’s righteousness,
- it is by the blood of Christ that we are made heirs of Heaven and coheirs with Jesus Christ.

But I observe that according to the Roman system all that the New Testament says the blood of Christ does for a sinner is said to have been done for that sinner by the rite of baptism as it is administered by the Roman priest, for that matter, by any individual who puts water upon a sinner and pronounces the words, “I baptize thee in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.”

As we have found in past studies, Rome has always quoted a verse or two to support their doctrine. Roman theologians turn to two specific passages and generally use only these two. The first one is the prophecy of Ezekiel 36:24-27, as God says to the nation Israel, **“I will take you from among the heathen, and gather you out of all countries, and will bring you into your own land. Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgments, and do them.”**

This passage, particularly verse 25, is the first major passage used by the Romanists to proclaim that salvation is by baptism: **“I will sprinkle clean water upon you.”**

I remind you that Ezekiel the prophet is writing to the nation Israel. He is not writing to Gentiles; he is not writing to the church; he is writing to a nation that has gone into apostasy and is experiencing the judgment of God, the Babylonian captivity, because of their idolatry. The prophet Ezekiel tells us that God is not going to forget His mercy with His people, but He is going to bring great spiritual blessing upon them when Messiah comes. Sprinkling with water was the Old Testament ritual of cleansing. Thus God promised to cleanse His people.

In Jeremiah 31 we find almost the same words: **“Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah . . . this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people . . .**

“They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more” (Jeremiah 31:31-35).

Jeremiah is prophesying of the work of God that is going to give a new heart and grant forgiveness of sin.

Now what are Ezekiel and Jeremiah speaking of? The apostle writes in Hebrews 8:8-12 and quotes the prophecy of Jeremiah:

“The days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day when I took them by the hand to lead them out of the land of Egypt; because they continued not in my covenant, and I regarded them not, saith the Lord. For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: . . . I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.”

Now to what is the writer to the Hebrews referring when he quotes the prophecies of Jeremiah and Ezekiel and says that God has fulfilled that promise and the fountain for cleansing and for forgiveness of sins is now available?

The Romanist says, Why that fountain opened up for the forgiveness of sins is the Roman baptismal font. But if you read into chapter 9 of the book of Hebrews, you will find that in verses 22-28 the writer says,

“Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission. It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these. For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are the figures of the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us: nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with blood of others; . . . and as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”

The writer in Hebrews 9 explains that fountain for the remission of sins. It is not baptism by water, but rather it was the blood of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, shed to take away the sin of the world, that would fulfill the promise of Ezekiel and Jeremiah and give God the basis for forgiving our sins.

The second scripture used by the Romanist to support his doctrine is in Acts 2. At the conclusion of Peter’s sermon on the day of Pentecost, the Jews having listened to him preach said, **“Men and brethren, what shall we do?”**

Peter said unto them, **“Repent and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost”** (Acts 2:38).

And there, the Romanist says, we have a very clear teaching that the forgiveness of sins depends on baptism.

Look back into this great sermon: Peter has been trying to prove that the very Jesus the Jews rejected was God’s Son, and God’s Messiah. Peter’s text is stated for us in Acts 2:36:

“Let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and [Messiah] Christ.”

Peter’s whole sermon has been to prove to the nation Israel that the very one they rejected was God’s Son who had been sent to redeem and to reign. As Peter has pointed to the resurrection of Christ, the evidence was so overwhelming that those who heard him preach came to him and asked, “In the light of the guilt of the nation Israel, what should we do now?”

Peter said, first of all, that they must repent. That word repent does not mean to be sorry for your sins so you can approach the baptismal font to have them washed away. Repent means to change your mind—change your mind about Christ. The Jews had said He was an impostor, a blasphemer, and insane, and that He ought to be put to death. Before this guilty nation could receive the gift of salvation they must change their mind about the person of Christ; there must be repentance.

Second, Peter said that they must be baptized. What did baptism do? Baptism took them out of the nation Israel and put them into a new fellowship; into a new society. The baptism cut them off from their old relationship and identified them with a new group of believers.

Baptism separated them from the old system, the old law of works, and their old religion, and brought them over into fellowship with those who had believed that Jesus was both Lord and Messiah. When they changed their attitude about the person of Christ and by faith received Him as Saviour and received the identifying sign that separated them from the old system, they by receiving Christ received forgiveness of sin.

It was not the water of baptism that washed away their sins; it was the person of Jesus Christ unto whom they were coming. Peter is exhorting these who have heard the message and have been convinced that Jesus is Lord to separate themselves from the old order and identify themselves with the new fellowship because they have accepted Christ.

The Word of God does not support the doctrine that salvation is by water baptism. Baptism separated but did not save. Let me show you the inability of water to cleanse. If you will turn to Matthew 27:24 you will see a most pathetic figure. There is one in a position of authority in the Roman government who has had to sit in judgment upon an innocent man. Pilate had acceded to the wishes of the Jews in their demand for Christ’s life, and he had delivered Him to be crucified. After Pilate committed this sin he called for water:

“Pilate . . . took water, and washed his hands before the multitude, saying, I am innocent of the blood of this just person.”

Who would claim that the sin of Pilate was washed away by the application of water? Pilate stands condemned as one who delivered an innocent man to death, and the guilt is his. You can no more wash away your sins by the application of water to your body than could Pilate wash away his guilt by the application of water to his hands.

According to Roman doctrine, all original sin and all sin that may have been committed up to the time of baptism has been washed away by water baptism. But how does the Romanist tell us to deal with daily sins?

According to their doctrine the sacrament of penance will deal with the problem of sin in one's life. We quote the Baltimore Catechism for an official presentation of their doctrine. The question is asked. “What is the sacrament of penance?” The answer, “The sacrament of penance is the sacrament by which sins committed after baptism are forgiven through the absolution of the priest.” Then the explanation follows, “Penance remits not only sins but also the eternal punishment and at least some of the temporal punishment.”

The next question asks, “With what words does the priest forgive sins?” And the answer: “The priest forgives sins with the words, ‘I absolve thee from thy sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.’”

The explanation follows:

“The words of absolution give grace, the same as the words of baptism do. Absolution is not a mere declaration, but an actual forgiving of sins.”

Then the next question, “What are the effects of the sacrament of penance worthily received?” And the answer,

“The effects of the sacrament of penance worthily received, are: First, sanctifying grace; Second, the forgiveness of sins; Third, the remission of the eternal punishment, if necessary, and also, a part at least, of the temporal punishment due our sins; Fourth, to help to avoid sins in the future; and Fifth, the restoration of the merits of our good works which have been lost by mortal sin. There is no forgiveness of mortal sin without confession and penance.”

This is the second aspect of the Romanist doctrine of forgiveness. Baptism takes away every bit of original sin so that the baptized one is delivered from Hell.

If there be sins in the life of one who has been baptized, those sins are forgiven by the grace that is given to the priest to grant forgiveness on the basis of confession.

I want to give you the words of James Cardinal Gibbon as he writes about the confessional:

“Of all the labors that our sacred ministry imposes on us, there is none more arduous or irksome than that of hearing confessions. It is no trifling task to sit for six or eight consecutive hours on a hot summer day, listening to stories of sin and sorrow and misery. I have seen the man whose conscience was weighed down by the accumulated sins of twenty winters. Upon his face were branded guilt and shame, remorse and confusion. There he stood by the confessional with downcast countenance, ashamed, like the publican, to look up into Heaven. He glided into the little mercy seat. No human ear will ever learn what there transpired; the revelations of the confessional are a sealed book. But during the brief time spent in the confessional, resurrection occurred, more miraculous than the raising of Lazarus from the tomb. It was the resurrection from the grave of sin of a soul that had long lain worm-eaten. During those precious moments, a ray from Heaven expelled the darkness and gloom from that self-accuser’s mind; the genial warmth of the Holy Spirit melted his frozen heart and the purifying influence of the same spirit that came on the Apostle like a mighty wind from Heaven, scattered the poisonous influence in which he lived and filled his soul with divine grace. When he came out, there was quickness to his step, joy on his countenance, a new light in his eye; had you asked him why, he would have answered, ‘Because I was lost and am found; having been dead, I am come to life again.’”

Cardinal Gibbon makes two statements that, in the light of the Scriptures, are amazing.

First of all he calls the confessional box the “*mercy seat.*” Do you realize what that means? The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 3:24

“Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation” (or as it might be paraphrased, *whom God hath set forth to be the mercy seat—or, whom God hath set forth as that which satisfies God*).

This Roman cardinal claims that that confession box does what Paul says Jesus Christ, in His death, has done for the sinner. He states further, it is this confessional box and this sacrament of penance that has given life to the sinner. Truly Rome and the Scriptures have two diametrically opposite methods of dealing with sin.

Several passages from the Word of God will let you see that sin is not forgiven by baptism and by penance. Baptism does not take away original sin, and penance and the confessional do not take away the daily sins, but the work of the Lord Jesus Christ. Hear the word of one whom Rome claims as her first Pope:

“Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of the lamb without blemish and without spot” (I Peter 1:18).

Or again in I Peter 2:24-25,

“Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls.”

Listen to the Apostle John, the one who leaned upon our Lord's breast at the Last Supper, as he testifies in John 3:18:

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.”

According to John's testimony, forgiveness of sins was by faith plus nothing; not works, not righteousness, not baptism, not confession, not penance. It was by believing on His name. Like Peter, he tells us that it was not by works of our hands, not by silver and gold, but by the blood of Jesus Christ that we were forgiven.

Listen as Paul writes in Ephesians 2:8-9, **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; [not, by grace are you saved through baptism plus confession plus penance—but by grace, through faith] and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, [not the work of baptism, not the work of confession, not the work of penance] lest any man should boast.”**

Paul writes in the Epistle of Titus 3:5-7:

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost: which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.”

We are not saved by grace administered by Mary to the church, to be dispensed by the priests through the sacraments, but by grace that is conferred by God upon any sinner who will come and receive Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour.

In I John 5:11, John gives his testimony,

“This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.”

Not in the Son's mother, not in the church, not in the baptismal font, nor in the confessional.

“He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life. These things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God.”

Finally, Paul gives his testimony in Romans 4:4:

“Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.”

God has a gift and that gift is eternal life.

There is a fountain filled with blood, drawn from Emmanuel's veins, and that fountain is open to anyone who will come to receive the forgiveness.

- You don't come through the baptistry,
- You don't come through the confessional,
- You don't come through the church,
- You don't come through Mary,
- You don't come through the apostles.

You come directly to that fountain because the way into the holiest has been opened by Jesus Christ through His death. He has caused the veil to be rent asunder and we may come with boldness to the throne of grace to obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Not by works of righteousness which we have done but by His grace He saved us.

Have you received this salvation? Do you know Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour? Could it be that you have felt that you could add something to the reservoir of grace?

If you have felt that you could co-operate with God by adding your works, your church membership, your baptism, or anything, let me remind you, on the authority of the Word of God, Jesus Christ meant what He said when He proclaimed, "**It is finished.**"

The plan of redemption has been forever settled in Heaven and the fountain has been opened. You may come by simple faith to receive the free gift of God.

~ end of chapter 5 ~

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