**“Christ or Peter—Which?” The Present Truth, 10, 49, pp. 772, 773.**

THE dogma of papal infallibility is, that the Pope is “infallible,” not by any promise to him himself either as an individual or as an official, but “by the Divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter.” {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.1}

Therefore, in the study of this subject, it is proper enough to inquire, How do they find this thing promised to Peter? and, Was there in fact ever any such thing promised to Peter, or to the Pope “in blessed Peter,” or in anybody else? {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.2}

The claim being that this thing is promised to him only “in blessed Peter,” it is essential to make some sort of a connection between the Pope and Peter. And this essential connection is made when the Pope speaks “*ex cathedra*, that is, ‘from the chair’ of St. Peter.” But if it should turn out that no such thing as infallibility was ever promised to Peter at all, then it would follow that even the chair of St. Peter cannot supply to the Pope the much desired infallibility. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.3}

The truth is, that this promise of infallibility to Peter, and consequently, to the Pope, “in blessed Peter,” springs from the same law that we have already found to be the source of the “infallibility” of the Pope, namely: the law that like produces totally unlike, and out of nothing something comes. It is in fact created by {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.4}

**TWO ENORMOUS ASSUMPTIONS**

*first*, that the church of Christ “must have a visible head,” and *secondly*, that Peter is that head. The first of these assumptions is thus stated by Cardinal Gibbons:— {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.5}

Unity of government is not less essential to the Church of Christ than unity of doctrine. Our Divine Saviour never speaks of His churches, but of His Church. He does not say: “Upon this rock I will build My churches,” but “Upon this rock I will build My Church,” from which words we must conclude that it never was His intention to establish or to sanction various conflicting denominations, but one corporate body, with all its members united under one visible head; for as the church is a visible body, it must have a visible head.—*Faith of Our Fathers, pp. 24, 25*. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.6}

Upon this sheep assumption, that the church of Christ “must have a visible head,“—upon this is built the whole Papacy with its claim of infallibility and everything else that it claims to have and to be. But nothing could be more false than the idea that the church of Christ has or “must have a visible head.” {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.7}

Jesus Christ Himself is head of the church; for it is written: “I would have you know that the head of every man is Christ.” And, “Ye are the body of Christ and members in particular.” And He “is the head of the body, the church.” {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.8}

The Lord Jesus lived in this world a whole lifetime *as man*, subject to all the weaknesses and infirmities of a man; for He said of Himself, “Of Mine own self I can do nothing.” And as He said likewise to all men, “Without Me ye can do nothing,” and likewise of Himself, “Of Mine own self I can do nothing,” it is perfectly plain that in this world He put Himself in the place where man is; yet He was led of the Father all the way, for He said, “The Father that dwelleth in Me, He doeth the works.” {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.9}

Thus He did not assert Himself, and take of *Himself*, His own way, but He trusted the Father, and was led of Him, and was taught of Him, as all of *us* must be who shall be saved by Him. He did not of Himself follow His own way, but only as He was guided by the Father; that is to say, that *the Father* was *His head* all the time that He was in this world as man; and the Father, as that head, was all this time *invisible*. And this is to show, and does plainly show, that in showing to man the way that he must take, Jesus Christ lived the Christian life in this world {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.10}

**WITHOUT A VISIBLE HEAD**

For the Lord Jesus to have asked in this world for a *visible* head to be His guide, would have been to deny the Father. And for any professed believer in Jesus to ask for a *visible* head to be his guide, it to deny Jesus Christ. The Christian is to see Him who is invisible. Hebrews 11:27. The Christian is to look at the things that are not seen. 2 Corinthians 4:18. And the invisible things of God are clearly seen. Romans 1:20. So that nothing could more plainly expose the essential earthliness and carnality of all the papal conceptions than does this demand that there shall be “a *visible* head” to the church of Christ. Any church that has a visible head is not, and cannot be the church of Christ. And such is the Roman Catholic Church. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.11}

Again, the Cardinal says:— {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.12}

His Church is compared to a human body. In one body there are many members, all inseparably connected with the head. The head commands and the foot instantly moves, the hand is raised and the lips open. Even so our Lord ordained that His Church, composed of many members, should be all united to one supreme visible head, whom they are bound to obey.—*Id. pp. 26*. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.13}

The church of Christ is the body of Christ, it is true. And Christ Himself is the head of this “His body, which is the church.” And to take away Christ, the true head of this body, and put another—a man—in His place, is only to take away all life from the church and so leave it only a lifeless thing so far as the Lord or spirituality is concerned. To take away the true head of any body and put another head in the place of the true one, is to destroy the life of that body. Even though the substitute head be really fastened on in some way, all that there can be of the things is but *a dead form*. And such is the Catholic Church, according to every idea of it that is set forth by the Papacy itself. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.14}

Again we quote from the same authority:— {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 772.15}

The Church, in fine, is called in Scripture by the beautiful title of bridle or spouse of Christ, and the Christian law admits of only one life.—*Id*. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.1}

True enough this is, *in itself*. And that same Christian law admits of only one *husband*. Now, in this scriptural symbol, Christ occupies the place of husband to the wife. And as the Christian law admits of only one husband, it follows as plainly as can be, that for another person to put himself in the place of husband to this wife—the church—is positively to violate the Christian law. And for any wife—any church—claiming to be the bride or spouse of Christ, to allow another person to take the place of Christ, the true husband to her, is positively to {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.2}

**VIOLATE THE CHRISTIAN LAW**

and to proclaim herself an adulteress and a harlot. And such is the Catholic Church, according to her own authoritative statement. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.3}

To claim that Peter was the first to occupy this illegitimate place toward the “spouse of Christ,” or that this “spouse” accepted Peter as the first substitute for her true and living husband—this does not in the least alter the essential immorality of the thing, nor does it relieve it of the just charge that it is a positive violation of the Christian law which admits only of one husband. “For the woman that hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband *so long as he liveth*.... So, then, if while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that *ye should be married to another*, even *to Him that is raised from the dead*.” Romans 7:2-4. Thus, according to the Scripture, the Christian, and in this the Christian church, is married to Christ—“to Him that is raised from the dead”—*as long as He liveth*. Therefore, for any Christian church to be joined to another husband *while Jesus Christ liveth*, is to be called by the Scriptures of truth “*an adulteress*.” Now, as the Catholic Church claims to be “the spouse of Christ,” and yet claims “another man” as her visible husband, her “visible head,” to “speak to her His sentiments in faith and morals” as this is her own showing, and she pretends to make no other, she is therefore obliged to claim that Jesus Christ *is dead*, or else confess that she is an adulteress. And in either case it is perfectly plain that she is not the bride or spouse of Christ; for if she will claim that He is dead and that therefore she has right to be joined to this other one, then she is not *His* spouse but the spouse of *the other man;* while if she will not allow that Christ is dead, “then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress,” and in this she is just as certainly not His spouse. So from her own showing and upon her own claims it is certain that the Catholic Church is not in any sense a Christian church. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.4}

It is therefore perfectly clear that in the first of her assumptions, namely, that “the church must have a visible head,” the Papacy is all at sea. How, then, is it with {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.5}

**HER OTHER ASSUMPTION**

that Peter was appointed that visible head, and so the Pope by succession from him, and therefore “by the Divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter,” “is infallible” “when he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, ‘from the chair’ of St. Peter”? Here are the cardinal’s words on that:— {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.6}

Let us now briefly consider the grounds of the doctrine [of the infallibility of the Pope] itself. The following passages of the Gospel, spoken at different times, were addressed exclusively to Peter: “Thou art Peter; and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.” “I, the Supreme Architect of the universe,” says our Saviour, “will establish a church which is to last till the end of time. I will lay the foundation of this church that the winds and storms of error shall never prevail against it. *Thou, O Peter, shalt be the foundations of this church*. It shall never fall, because thou shalt never be shaken; and thou shalt never be shaken, because thou shalt rest on Me, the rock of truth.” The church, of which *Peter is the foundation*, is declared to be impregnable, that is, proof against error. How can you suppose an immovable edifice built on a tottering foundation? for it is not the building that sustains the foundation, but the foundation which supports the building.—*Id., pp. 150, 151*. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.7}

Now on their very face these statements plainly show that the conception which they define is utterly incongruous and fails at every turn, as applied to Peter or any other man or succession of men. And all that is needed to annihilate the whole theory, is but to read two or three passages of scripture which speak directly on this subject. Even admitting that the word Peter means a stone or rock, allowing the scripture to explain its own statements it is seen that this is far from proving that Peter was *the* rock upon which the church of Christ was to be built. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.8}

For it is written: “Other foundation can no man lay that *is* laid, *which is Jesus Christ*.” 1 Corinthians 3:11. And again: “Ye are built upon *the foundation* of the apostles and prophets, *Jesus Christ Himself* being the chief corner stone. *In whom* [in Jesus Christ Himself, not in Peter] *all the building* fitly framed together growth unto an holy temple in the Lord. *In whom* also *ye are builded together* for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:20-22. Please note particularly that this scripture does *not* say that Ye are built upon the foundation *which is* the apostles and prophets, but it does say, “Ye are built upon the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets,” that is, Ye are built upon the foundation *upon which* the apostles and prophets are built. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.9}

Ye are built upon the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets. And {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.10}

**WHO IS THE FOUNDATION**

of the apostles and prophets? Answer: “Jesus Christ Himself,” and “other foundation can no man lay than that *is* laid *which is Jesus Christ*.” Therefore, as “the foundation of the apostles and prophets” is “Jesus Christ Himself,” and as Christians are “built upon the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets,” it is settled by the Scriptures of truth, that whoever is not built upon “Jesus Christ Himself” as the only foundation that is laid, or that can be laid, is not a Christian; and any church that is not built upon “Jesus Christ Himself” as the only foundation that is laid, or that can be laid, is not in any sense a Christian church. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.11}

And such, by her own exclusive claim, is the Catholic Church. She does not claim to be “built upon the foundation *of* the apostles and prophets,” which is “Jesus Christ Himself,” as the only foundation. She claims to be built upon *one of the apostles himself* as the foundation. The church *of Christ* is not built on any such “foundation.” The church of Christ is not built on a foundation of dust, nor even on a rock that is made out of dust. It is built upon the eternal, *self-existent* Rock which is “Jesus Christ Himself.” {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.12}

Next week we will examine the inspired testimony of Peter himself upon this question. {PTUK December 6, 1894, p. 773.13}

A. T. JONES.

**“Christ or Peter—Which? Did Peter Have Infallibility to Give?” The Present Truth 10, 50, pp. 788-790.**

**DID PETER HAVE INFALLIBILITY TO GIVE**

IN our consideration of Papal “infallibility” last week, we found that Christ and not Peter is the rock upon which the church is built. But let us have the word of the Lord by Peter himself on this point. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 788.1}

Thus it is written by the hand of Peter: “As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: if so be ye have tasted that *the Lord* is gracious: *to whom coming* as *unto a living stone*, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God and precious, ye also as lively stones are *built up a spiritual house*, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore it is also contained in the Scripture, Behold I lay in Sion {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 788.2}

**A CHIEF CORNER STONE**

elect, precious: and he that believeth on Him shall not be confounded. Unto you, therefore, which believe, He is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner.” 1 Peter 2:2-7. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 788.3}

That the “stone” here referred to is none other than Jesus Christ Himself, and not Peter in any sense, is clear from the words spoken by Peter in another place, thus, speaking of “Jesus Christ of Nazareth,” whom the Jews had crucified, he says, “This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner.” Acts 4:10, 11. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 788.4}

In the first of these passages from the words of Peter, he says that this “is contained in the scripture,” and then quotes a portion of this “scripture.” Let us turn to that scripture to which Peter here refers, and which he says means “Jesus Christ of Nazareth,” and see what it does say in full. Here it is: “Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion *for a foundation*, a stone, a tried atone, a precious corner stone, *a sure foundation:* he that believeth shall not make haste.” Isaiah 28:16. Peter himself says that *this stone* which is laid “for a foundation” is “Jesus Christ of Nazareth,” and that “*this stone*”—this “Jesus Christ of Nazareth,”—“*is the head*.” And Peter says that it is to this “*living stone*” that men must come in order to be of the building of Christ—in order to be of this “spiritual house,” which is the church of the living God. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 788.5}

Now, to every one who cares for the truth only, the testimony of Peter *himself* is better than the testimony of the Catholic Church *about* Peter. And to every such one the inspired testimony of Peter himself as to who is the foundation and head of the church, is far better than is the uninspired and self-interested testimony of the Catholic Church and her Popes *about* Peter. The {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.1}

**INSPIRED TESTIMONY OF PETER**

himself is that “Jesus Christ of Nazareth” is “the stone,” the “living stone,” which is the “sure foundation” and “the head” of the building of God, this “spiritual house,” which is the church of Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. This is also the inspired testimony of the Apostle Paul. In other words, this is the testimony of Jesus Christ Himself, that *He* and *He alone* is the foundation and head of the apostles and prophets and of the whole church of Christ, and that “other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, *which is Jesus Christ*.” {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.2}

And this word demonstrates that the claim of the Papacy that Peter is the foundation and bead of the church of Christ is as false; fleeting, baseless, and intangible, as is “the stuff that dreams are made of.” It therefore and of necessity follows that the “infallibility of the Pope,” as derived from “the divine assistance promised to him in *blessed Peter*,” is also as false, fleeting, baseless, and intangible, as is “the stuff that dreams are made of.” {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.3}

Cardinal Gibbons, in “Faith of our Fathers,” makes Jesus say to Peter, “Thou, O Peter, shalt be the foundation of this church. It shall never fall, because thou *shalt never be shaken*.” In noticing the words of Christ to Peter that He had prayed for him, that when he should be sifted as wheat, his faith should not fail, the Cardinal further says: “Therefore the faith of Peter will always be firm” (page 152); that, consequently, the faith of Peter’s “successors” would always be firm, and therefore these “successors” would always be infallible in the faith. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.4}

This argument, like all their other ones in favour of the infallibility of the Pope, is utterly groundless, from the divinely recorded fact that {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.5}

**PETER WAS SHAKEN**

and that his faith did fail more than once. For it was after these words were spoken by the Lord that Peter denied Him *three times* and declared that he did not know Him. It will not do to say that this was not a point “regarding faith or morals,” and that therefore infallibility was not involved. It was entirely a question of faith and morals. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.6}

It was a question of *faith*, for the knowing of the Lord Jesus is nothing else than a matter of faith; and to deny Him is nothing else than to deny the faith by which alone He is known. {PTUK December 13, 1894, p. 789.7}