

Preached on: Tuesday, October 24, 2017

Truth Community Church
4183 Mt. Carmel Tobasco Road
Cincinnati, OH 45255

Website: truthcommunitychurch.org
Online Sermons: www.sermonaudio.com/tcomm

Tonight we return to our study of the Bible and Roman Catholicism as we've titled this series. To do any kind of examination, any kind of biblical examination of the Roman Catholic Church, is to have your spiritual sensibilities assaulted repeatedly. The Pope claims authority over the Church in place of Christ. Catholic tradition is elevated over the Bible. The Catholic Mass corrupts the cross of Christ. The things that we hold dearest as Bible believing Christians are assaulted and rejected and replaced with demonic substitutes and imaginations that are just unpleasant, really, when you think about it, and when you start to see it collectively in a system of teaching as we've tried to do here. And I want to say that any one of the things that we are in the process of refuting here, the Pope, the Catholic Mass, Catholic tradition, tonight we study Mary, to refute any one of them is sufficient to have the whole system collapse and be disproven as false and demonic, but when you start to add these things together, you just realize what a colossal monstrosity Roman Catholicism is and what an assault it is on the Bible.

And someone might ask, "Well, then why are you doing this? Why do such an extended series on this?" Yes, the Reformation is next week, a week from tonight, and we have already gotten feedback from people; it's been very encouraging that even in the midst of this series you have found these things to be helpful in witnessing to Catholics and talking to Catholics. That's one reason to do it and it would certainly justify the approach, but also, beloved, I just want to tell you that the deep desire of my heart is simply to protect you. That no one would deceive you with persuasive arguments about, "It's okay to go into Catholicism and there is no real difference." You should have it clear in your mind already that there is a vast gulf, there is an ocean between biblical Christianity and Catholicism. The two really have nothing in common and that needs to be clear in your mind, and people will come to our church for a while, they'll go out, they'll move to other places or whatever, they need to take this with them and be protected from it.

You know, it was only a few years ago that the President of the supposedly biblical Evangelical Theological Society, ETS, departed from what he had taught and went to Catholicism and embraced Catholicism and became a Catholic, and it's just a monstrosity that these things happen. It's such a betrayal of the Lord, such a betrayal of the truth that has been entrusted to us, for men and women to do that and to depart from the Bible and embrace Catholicism. I don't want that for any one of you. I want to protect you from betraying the faith and I also want to protect your soul. Those who entrust their souls to

the Catholic Church have dammed themselves. They have put themselves in a position where they are on the fast track to eternal damnation in hell. It cannot be said any other way. The Catholic Church does not save people. The Catholic people and its teaching condemns them to hell.

So we need to have this clear and I want that to be anchored in your mind and not simply because I make an assertion like that, you know, and I state things dogmatically, in some ways it's easy to say stuff like that when you're in your own pulpit, but you need to understand biblically that the Catholic Church is a false church. It is a demonic piece of idolatry from beginning to end so that you would have it settled in your heart that not only is it a possibility that it's true, it's not, but it would be anchored in your heart never to take the first step toward Catholicism ever and to do everything in your power when you have opportunity to talk to people to guard them in the same way.

So that's why we're doing this and tonight we turn to another subject, "The Bible and Mary," and to give you a sense of how distasteful this is to me, to deal with this topic, I have taught a bit over the past 25 years, I have never so found my preparation so distasteful as the preparation for this message tonight because to immerse yourself into it enough to understand it to be able to reproduce it, is to just see the corruption and idolatry that is all over, that is stamped all over this entire system and Mary is in some ways the pinnacle of that idolatry.

So we come to another Catholic invention which is their veneration of Mary. Mary is central to Catholicism and here is one measure by which you can see that. When Pope John Paul II released the Catechism of the Catholic Church on October 11, 1992, the official source for their teaching distributed to the masses some 25 years ago, we just missed the 25th anniversary of it as I'm doing the math in my head, he wrote as follows in the introduction. He said and I quote, "I beseech the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of the Incarnate Word and Mother of the Church, to support with her powerful intercession the catechetical work of the entire Church on every level." In other words, what he's saying is, "Here is our Catholic Church Catechism in all of its glory and I am commending to Mary, the Blessed Virgin Mary, the results of it and I pray that she would give success to our work in instructing the masses in Catholic doctrine." He prayed to Mary in the introduction of the Catechism. Not to God the Father, not to Christ, he didn't ask for the help of the Holy Spirit, he appealed to the Virgin Mary. And Pope John Paul II was famous for having as his life motto, "Totally yours," by which he meant, "Mary, I am totally yours." Now that should be so distasteful to your ears to hear that. This was the Pope, the leader of the Catholic Church, and this was his view on his spiritual life. He belonged entirely to Mary and he committed all of the instruction of the Catholic Church to her keeping. It's unthinkable.

Now, we are only going to give one session to Mary and so I have to be selective and not at all comprehensive in what I say; that we are going to skip a lot of things that could be said. By way of comparison, when John MacArthur at Grace community Church taught on Mary, he gave four messages over to it and we're going to do it in one so we are going to kind of compress things. And what I want to do is just to give you five basic points

about the Catholic teaching on Mary and then five biblical refutations of it, kind of going parallel, just enough for you to see the impossibility of any biblical truth being associated with what Catholics say about Mary. And when you realize how central Mary is to their system, and when you realize how utterly fabricated and false it is, you realize that there is no way that anyone who has the Spirit of God living within them could ever continue in the teaching of the Catholic Church in light of what we're going to see tonight. It's an impossibility. There is no way that a born-again Christian, better stated, there is no way that the true evangelical church could ever find harmony with Rome, and there is no way that any evangelical Christian should refer to a practicing Catholic as a brother or sister in Christ because these things cannot be reconciled. These things are impossible. Practicing Catholics are not our brothers and sisters in Christ, they are our mission field. They need the Gospel of Jesus Christ because they have missed it completely if they follow the teachings of their church.

So what can we say about Mary just by way of brief introduction? Scripture teaches that Mary certainly received divine favor. She was blessed among women to be chosen by God to be the mother of the human nature of Jesus. To give birth to the Messiah was the pinnacle of a woman's hope in Judaism and that is what Mary was blessed with. She was blessed with a unique relationship with Jesus Christ but it was unique only in a human level. It was unique only in the sense of a parental involvement. It did not give her a special place in the dispensation of salvation as Catholics teach. She received divine favor, Catholics distort her role to say that she dispenses divine favor. It's not just that she received a gift from God, now she is the Mediatrix or the one who mediates God's blessings to the world. That is their teaching as we are going to see tonight and so they have turned everything that Scripture would say about Mary on its head. They have added inventions of their own as recently as 1950 in the doctrine of her Assumption, and you just have to realize that these things have no place whatsoever in the realm of biblical Christianity, and what Catholics teach about Mary has no room whatsoever in your heart to embrace even the tiniest little bit of it.

So what can we say about this? What is the Catholic teaching on Mary? I'm going to give you five subpoints. This is our first main point tonight on the Catholic teaching on Mary. I'm going to give you five subpoints to help break down for you. Again, this is not exhaustive. It is representative and it's, I believe, a sufficient detailing of the main points that they would say. Roman Catholics teach a number of things about Mary to exalt her and the first thing that they say is this: Mary is sinless. Use the present or the past tense, I guess. Mary was sinless and because she lives on, they would say that Mary is sinless and always was. That may surprise you to hear them say that. If you have not been around Catholic teaching, you would be shocked at the things that I'm going to read to you here this evening and it starts with this.

Let me just say the way that I've chosen to structure this whole series is to rely predominantly on their Catechism to make the points. You could go back and look at more ancient promulgations from the Church, different doctrines that they announced at the Council of Trent, at the different Vatican councils in 1870 or 1964, but for most of us, it's hard to access those documents, even though they are very important in the history of

it. I'm making a practical decision to rely on their Catechism because that's so easily available and it's so easy for you to verify the citations and go and read them for yourself. You can get the Catechism within two days at your house through Amazon Prime, not that that was a product placement or anything like that. But my point is that's how easy it is to get it and to verify what I'm saying to be an accurate representation of that. If I started quoting from the Council of Trent, that's not as easily accessible. Maybe you find it on the internet, but whatever. That's the reason that we're doing this.

So Mary is sinless according to the Catholic Church. Here is their teaching from paragraph 411 of their Catechism and I quote, Mary "was preserved from all stain of original sin and by a special grace of God committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life." At paragraph 493, they double down on that assertion. I quote, "By the grace of God Mary remained free of every personal sin her whole life long." In other words, she was not born as a sinner and she never sinned during the course of her life. She was completely preserved from any sin whatsoever by nature or by action and by choice.

Paragraph 508 says this, "Mary is the most excellent fruit of redemption: from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life." Does that sound like anything the Bible says about Mary? Have you seen any hint of that in anything in Scripture? Would you come to that conclusion simply by reading your Bible from cover to cover? No, you wouldn't.

In 1854, Pope Pius IX issued a papal encyclical titled "Ineffabilis Deus," in English, "Ineffable God," and that defined Mary's alleged immaculate conception. Maybe you've heard that term or seeing it on a church sign as you have driven through Covington or something. What you need to understand is that when the Catholics use the term "immaculate conception," they are not talking about the conception of Jesus, they are talking about the conception of Mary from her mother at the time of her conception. This is what that doctrine says at paragraph 491 of the Catholic Catechism and I quote again, "The most Blessed Virgin Mary was, from the first moment of her conception, by a singular grace and privilege of almighty God and by virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ, Savior of the human race, preserved immune from all stain of original sin." In other words, she did not inherit the sin that we all have received from Adam, from the head of the human race. God preserved her from that and here's the thing that I would have you see and think about: they defined this doctrine, they declared this doctrine in 1854. That is 1,750 years after the close of the biblical canon as we have studied it in the past. Don't you think if the Bible taught this somebody would have found it and declared it a doctrine without waiting 1,800 years to do so? This is insanity. This is demonic. This is completely false as shown simply by the timeline with which they do it and which they declared it. But this is what they teach in their own words: Mary is sinless; even at the point of her conception, she was excused from inherited sin.

Now secondly along with that, they teach that Mary is a perpetual virgin. A perpetual virgin and here's what they say about that at paragraph 499. I encourage you to stay with

me as we go through these things. And I quote, "The deepening of faith in the virginal motherhood led the Church to confess Mary's real and perpetual virginity even in the act of giving birth to the Son of God made man. The liturgy of the Church celebrates Mary as the 'Ever-virgin.'" Paragraph 510 says, "Mary remained a virgin in conceiving her Son, a virgin in giving birth to him, a virgin in carrying him, a virgin in nursing him at her breast, always a virgin." Paragraph 510, as I said. So their teaching is that even when she delivered birth, it did not violate her virginal integrity, is the phrase that is used to describe that. By a supernatural act, God preserved even her original integrity in the delivery of Christ. This is what they teach. If you find that shocking and distasteful, then you're starting to get a sense of the way we should view the entire Catholic Church.

Now, thirdly, not only was Mary sinless at all times, not only was she a perpetual virgin, but she was assumed into heaven at the end of her life. In 1950, Pope Pius XII released an apostolic constitution titled in English, "The Most Bountiful God." It defined a doctrine known as "The Assumption of Mary." This doctrine teaches that Mary's body did not undergo decay at the end of her life, God instead miraculously took her up to heaven in a way unique to Mary. And here's what it says at paragraph 974 of the Catechism and I quote, "The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body."

So from birth, if you think about it, Mary had quite the spectacular life according to the Catholics. She had a miraculous conception of her own. She was the mother of the Messiah. She never sinned throughout all of her life. And at the end of her days, God miraculously assumed her into heaven. That's quite a career. That's a pretty good gig if you can get it. The only problem is it never happened. None of it.

What else do they say about Mary? We will kind of collapse two into one here. Subpoint D if you're keeping score at home: Mary is the mother of God and the mother of the Church. The mother of God and the mother of the Church. And here's what you need to understand, for those of us that love the Lord Jesus Christ, this gets very personal and this becomes such an affront to the unique work and the unique person of Jesus Christ, but we'll cover that later in tonight's message. Catholics credit Mary with the conversion of believers and say that she intercedes for them at the right hand of her son in heaven now.

Listen to this as I quote, this is a Catholic teaching. I am not advocating this. I'm simply quoting what they say. "The Virgin Mary is acknowledged and honored as being truly the Mother of God and of the redeemer. She is clearly the mother of the members of Christ since she has by her charity joined in bringing about the birth of believers in the Church, who are members of its head. Mary, Mother of Christ, Mother of the Church." Will you find that language anywhere in the Bible? No, you won't. They make this up.

Further they say and I quote, "From the most ancient times the Blessed Virgin has been honored with the title of 'Mother of God,'" listen to this, "to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs." In other words, when believers, using the term loosely

and broadly according to how they describe it, when a believer has a problem or a struggle or a difficulty in life, when they are on the verge of death, who do they go to? They go to the virgin Mary. They fly to her in all their dangers and needs, they say.

Further I quote from paragraph 975 of their Catechism, "the Holy Mother of God, the new Eve, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven to exercise her maternal role on behalf of the members of Christ." They say that Mary is there in heaven watching over you, protecting you and, as we'll see, receiving even your prayers. This is demonic.

This is an idol set up in the place of Jesus Christ no matter what else they may say about it and you can see that as we look at our fifth and final point here, about it here this evening: they say that Mary is the Co-Mediator with Christ. The Mediatrix is one word that they use, the female version of Mediator. Catholics actually teach that Mary shares in the redemptive work of Christ and I've got three rather lengthy quotes to give you here and then we'll move into more of a biblical assessment of these things. It's painful to quote it.

Paragraph 964. Duty requires me to quote it. "There she stood," speaking of Mary, "There she stood in keeping with the divine plan, enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering," talking about Mary at the cross. "Enduring with her only begotten Son the intensity of his suffering, joining herself with his sacrifice in her mother's heart, and lovingly consenting to the immolation," another word for sacrifice, "of this victim, born of her." So what they say is that Mary is sharing in the redemptive sufferings of Christ when she was standing near the cross watching him suffer. We're going to deal with this later in the message. We're going to show why that is such a perverse distortion, but for now I just want you to understand what they say. And you should be shocked by it, you should be appalled by it, it should violate your most deep sense of righteousness to hear these things said and how glory is taken from Christ and given to his mother instead.

Paragraph 968, quote, "Her role in relation to the Church and to all humanity goes still further. In a wholly singular way she cooperated by her obedience, faith, hope, and burning charity in the Savior's work of restoring supernatural life to souls. For this reason she is a mother to us in the order of grace." If you are a Christian, they say, it's because Mary is your spiritual mother. It's because Mary had a role in it in bringing that to pass for you.

Finally, paragraph 969, "This motherhood of Mary in the order of grace continues uninterruptedly from the consent which she loyally gave at the Annunciation," when the angel came and announced in Luke 1 that she would be the mother of the Messiah, "and which she sustained without wavering beneath the cross, until the eternal fulfillment of all the elect. Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix." Now listen, who does Scripture call the Advocate? The Lord Jesus Christ. Who does it call the Helper but the Holy Spirit? Jesus said, "I will send

you a Helper to be with you." The Catholic Church takes these titles that are ascribed to the members of the Triune Godhead and applies them to Mary. This is blasphemy of the greatest, most vile sort.

And what does the Catholic Church do? Oh, this is just so grievous. This is just so grievous. Let me set this up with what I'm about to say. You know, we've all, most of us anyway, have experienced the death of loved ones close to us. Some of you have been bedside as your loved one slipped into eternity, maybe to depart unto heaven, maybe into a Christ-less eternity, but you know the intensity of that moment and the emotions that attend to it and you realize that the weightiness of eternal matters are playing out before your very eyes. What does the Catholic Church instruct its members to do in that hour? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and you shall be saved? No, the Catholic Church calls on the faithful to entrust themselves to Mary even at the hour of their death. They do this in their standard prayer known as the "Ave Maria," or the "Hail Mary," and here's the words of that prayer that they recite endlessly throughout their lives and I quote again because duty requires it, not because I have anything to do with this. They pray this and I quote,

"Hail Mary, full of grace. The Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou amongst women,
And blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
Pray for us sinners,
Now and at the hour of our death. Amen."

They are taught to call out to Mary at the hour of their death, to entrust their souls to Mary, and the Catechism explains that at paragraph 2677. By the way, let me interject a note here to remind all of you and those who hear this over the live stream, over subsequent media, that anyone who wants my notes to document everything, I am happy to share them with you. Just email us through the church website and we'll be delighted to send those to you as quickly as we can because I realize it's too much to take notes on as you are listening.

The Catechism explains at paragraph 2677, "By asking Mary to pray for us, we acknowledge ourselves to be poor sinners and we address ourselves to the 'Mother of Mercy,' the All-Holy One. We give ourselves over to her now, in the Today of our lives. And our trust broadens further, already at the present moment, to surrender 'the hour of our death' wholly to her care. May she welcome us as our mother at the hour of our passing to lead us to her son, Jesus, in paradise." And so they state very plainly in the hour of your death, give your soul to Mary and trust her to lead you to heaven.

Mary can't take anyone to heaven. Those who entrust their soul to Mary at the hour of their death will take their next living breath in eternal damnation. This is just the only conclusion that Scripture can lead us to. There is one name given to men by which we must say and that name is not Mary, it is the Lord Jesus Christ. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father except through Me." If you try to go to heaven through Mary, you're going to find the door is locked and, as it were, speaking

metaphorically, the trapdoor under your feet will open and you will collapse down into an eternal destruction in hell forever. That's why we're doing this, beloved. That's why we're teaching these things. There are eternal consequences to what's being said here tonight.

How does all of this play out in Catholic life in general? James MacArthur, who I have quoted often and relied on extensively in this series, says this. He's a former Catholic converted and then wrote a book after the Catechism was released. He says and kind of summarizing up everything that we've looked at here this evening. He says, "This is the Mary of Roman Catholicism, a woman whom the Church has exalted above every other created being and has assigned attributes, titles, powers and prerogatives that in Scripture belong to God alone. To her the Church has erected statues, shrines, churches, cathedrals and basilicas. To her the Church calls all the faithful to lift their prayers, petitions and praise." In other words, beloved, what does the Catholic Church do with this version of Mary that they have made up? They worship her. They worship her as though she was God.

Now in saying that, I recognize that technically, technically Rome denies that accusation, that charge. They distinguish between the worship that is given to God alone which goes by a Latin term called latria, versus the adoration or the veneration that they give to Mary which goes by a Latin term known as hyperdulia. But beloved, it is a distinction without a difference. If you bow down before a statue of Mary and kiss it, if you pray to her, if you call her Advocate, Helper, Mediatrix and Benefactress, if you call out to her in the hour of death and entrust your soul to her, she is your God no matter what else you might try to say to redefine it so that you cannot be so easily refuted by Scripture. What is the reality of it? Forget the technical terms that they try to use to cover it up and to paste it over. What's the reality of it? Listen, if you are entrusting your eternal soul to someone, you're saying, "You are my god." I don't care what else you say about it. And they are entrusting themselves to a god who cannot save them.

Now, if you ever have the opportunity, perhaps some of you who have traveled overseas in other lands where Catholicism is more predominant than it is in America, you will see this played out. The Catholic Church subdues Mary a bit in this American environment, in this American culture, but where they are unrestrained by strong historical Protestant influences, you see this played out in much greater depravity than you do here. I was in Italy a number of years ago and there are statues to Mary. Where I was, there were statues to Mary on virtually every street corner. I was in Beirut, Lebanon shortly before Truth Community Church began. I wish I had taken a picture of it to document it, but I was in Beirut, Lebanon, and there was an apartment building or a skyscraper of some kind with a six or seven or eight story image of Mary on the side of this building. Not just Mary, Mary hanging on the cross. This is deadly doctrines of demons. There is no other word for it.

Well, what can we say by response to this biblically? Point 2 tonight: a biblical response on Mary. A biblical response on Mary. And by the way, if there is any chance that on subsequent media a Catholic friend has listened this far, I'm grateful for that and let me just say to any Catholic that would come under the sound of my voice: we say these

things out of love for the good of your soul; to help you understand that you have been deceived by a very powerful system, a powerful earthly system with spiritual influences that are not good, that are evil and demonic; and we say these things plainly so that you can see the truth and come out of that system and come to the true Lord Jesus Christ who alone can save you. It's for the sake of your soul in part that we do this. We are not your enemy simply because we have told you the truth. We would be your enemy if we called you a brother or sister in Christ when we know that that's not true. We cannot participate in the deception that has already been played out upon your soul. God help you and God help us.

Point 2: a biblical response on Mary. The Catholic view of Mary has rightly been called Maryolatry. They give her honor that goes to God alone. It is the worst of sins and let me just remind you of the first of the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20 where God said,

3 You shall have no other gods before Me.

This is Exodus 20. Now we are in the Bible, okay? Now we're into something that we can believe and trust and give our souls over to. Now we can relax, in a sense, and say, "I don't have to have my guard up because the word of God is true," and as we read the words of Scripture, we are given the truth of God that guides us. Exodus 20:3-5 says,

3 You shall have no other gods before Me. 4 You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. 5 You shall not worship them or serve them; for I, the LORD your God, am a jealous God,

Make no mistake about it, brothers and sisters in Christ, God does not treat lightly this elevation that the Catholic Church gives to Mary. He does not tolerate competitors. He does not share his glory with others and this is ultimately why Maryolatry is the greatest of sins is because it is an affront to a holy God who is jealous for his own glory and it robs him of that. It turns attention from the one who truly is high and exalted to a figment of demonic imagination.

Now with that said as a framing thought, there are two passages from the Gospel of Luke that can orient you toward right thinking and I invite you to turn to the Gospel of Luke 8 now. The Gospel of Luke, chapter 8, and here is what I want you to see: Catholics have this distorted idea that Jesus is remote and unapproachable but he will listen to his mother. So you go to Mary and ask Mary to go to Jesus so that Jesus, man, Jesus won't say no to his mother. Well, that's such a reproach on the name of Christ who said, "I am gentle and humble in heart. Come to me you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Under what kind of false assault on the glory of Christ is he described as someone who is remote and unapproachable? Far to the contrary, Christ approached man when he left heaven and came to earth. Christ approached man in his suffering on the cross that man might be reconciled to a holy God. No. No. No. No. Never will we accept an accusation against our Christ that he is remote and unapproachable and unwilling to hear the prayers of those who approach him. The truth is the exact opposite. Jesus Christ

is the friend of sinners, not Mary. And Christ out of his own gracious character, will gladly receive your prayers. Christ out of his own gracious character, my unsaved friend, will hear you and respond when you call upon him for salvation because the Bible says whoever calls upon him will be saved, Romans 10:13.

What did Jesus think about Mary in his earthly ministry? Luke 8:19. Remember, all of this supposed elevation of Mary in Catholic teaching, did Jesus adopt that? Did Jesus point people in that direction during his earthly ministry? No. No. No. No. No. He didn't. Luke 8:19,

19 ... His mother and brothers came to Him, and they were unable to get to Him because of the crowd. 20 And it was reported to Him, "Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside, wishing to see You."

Appealing to the family relationship as if Jesus needed to respond to that. Remember, this is his mother and his brothers, which we'll have more to say about in a moment. Jesus said,

21 But He answered and said to them, "My mother and My brothers are these who hear the word of God and do it."

He said, "The one who has a real relationship with me is the one who by faith believes the word of God and obeys it. That's who my family is." And he diminished the physical biological connection and put things on a spiritual plane directly tied to the revealed written word of God.

Look at Luke 11:27. In one of my prior Bibles that I have since worn out, I had written in the margin of this passage, "Jesus rebukes the first Roman Catholic," and that's the case, although the woman wasn't a Roman Catholic. You'll see what I mean in a moment. Luke 11:27,

27 While Jesus was saying these things, one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed."

This is an incipient, a beginning budding form of the adoration of Mary. Catholics would say that in a heartbeat. "Blessed is the womb of Mary. Blessed are the breasts which nursed the Messiah." What does Jesus say? Verse 28, he had none of it. He would have nothing to do with it.

28 But He said, "On the contrary, blessed are those who hear the word of God and observe it."

Do you see the theme? He rejects any association of elevating his mother and he says the ones who are blessed are the ones who hear the word of God and do it, who observe it. The ones who receive the word and by faith believe and obey it, those are the ones who

are blessed, not his mother. How more clear could it be? How more clear could it be? Jesus disavowed any notion that a family relationship with him carried any special spiritual privileges, including his mother.

Beloved, beloved, you're all listening, right? Good. I want you to listen to this: the blessing of God comes through his written word, not through Mary, and Jesus made clear that when it came to his public ministry, it was he not Mary who was in charge.

Look at John 2. These are all just framing thoughts here. John 2, we'll begin in verse 1.

1 On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there; 2 and both Jesus and His disciples were invited to the wedding.

Notice how she is called "the mother of Jesus," not the mother of God. Verse 3,

3 When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "They have no wine." 4 And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does that have to do with us? My hour has not yet come." 5 His mother said to the servants, "Whatever He says to you, do it."

She came to Jesus and was suggesting that he needed to do something about the situation and Jesus made plain, "Woman, you are not in charge here, I am." And rather than someone going to Mary and prevailing upon Mary to get Jesus to do what they wanted done, Mary tells the servants, "You do whatever Jesus tells you to do." This is a complete reversal of Catholic teaching. Mary had no special privileges. That is contrary to everything that Catholics say.

Now, let's quickly go through the five-part refutation of the things that we outlined earlier. First of all, now these are just going to parallel the first points. The Catholic teaching is now a biblical response and we're just paralleling the points. First of all, Mary was not sinless. Mary was not sinless. Do you know what? Even though she was the mother of the Messiah, she needed salvation just like you and I do and she made that plain with her own lips.

Go back to Luke 1 with me. Far from being a Co-Mediator with Christ, what did Mary say in response to the news that she would give him birth? In verse 46, Luke 1:46,

46 And Mary said: "My soul exalts the Lord, 47 And my spirit has rejoiced in God my Savior. 48 For He has had regard for the humble state of His bondservant; For behold, from this time on all generations will count me blessed."

She says, "I am rejoicing in God my Savior." Why would she need a Savior if she was sinless? She needed a Savior because she was sinful and by calling God her Savior, Mary acknowledges her own sin and, beloved, that is consistent with other more general

passages in Scripture that talk about the universality of sin in the human race. Let me remind you of Romans 3:10-12 and listen to see if there is any room to squeeze in an exception for Mary. The Apostle Paul writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit said,

11 ... There is none righteous, not even one; 11 there is none who understands, there is none who seeks for God; 12 all have turned aside, together they have become useless; there is none who does good, there is not even one.

Mary says, "God my Savior, the one who redeems me from sin." Scripture says there is not one that is good, that does right, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. You have to rewrite the key passages of Scripture to introduce an exception for Mary.

You know, Scripture by the way, Scripture is very clear, isn't it, to protect the sinlessness of Christ, repeatedly saying that there was no deceit found in his mouth; that he was without sin. Scripture says that over and over again. If Scripture had intended us to believe that about Mary, certainly, and if that was going to be a core of what we believe, certainly Scripture would have done for Mary what it did for Christ. It didn't do it for Mary because it wasn't true of Mary like it was true of Christ.

Secondly, Mary was not a perpetual virgin. Her virginity only lasted until the birth of Christ. Look at Matthew 1:18,

18 Now the birth of Jesus Christ was as follows: when His mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child by the Holy Spirit.

Drop down to verse 24,

24 ... Joseph awoke from his sleep and did as the angel of the Lord commanded him, and took Mary as his wife, 25 but kept her a virgin until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.

Now look, beloved, Scripture is speaking in somewhat delicate ways making it plain that her virginity only lasted until the birth of Christ. It was before they came together, indicating that at some point in time they came together. They came together in marital intimacy. Verse 25, he kept her a virgin, not permanently, not throughout the course of their entire marriage but only until after she had given birth, and then their married life was like what any other biblical marriage should have been. Listen, if Mary had withheld herself from Joseph in intimacy, she would have been sinning against God to do so as 1 Corinthians 7:3-5 makes clear. The wife does not have authority over her body, but it belongs to her husband. Stop depriving yourselves. The whole command in marriage is that the husband and wife would be engaged in intimacy together. If Mary was a perpetual virgin, she sinned against God and against Joseph in doing so. The truth of the matter is she wasn't.

Now, there are other ways to see this. There is another way to approach this. Scripture in multiple places refers to the brothers of Jesus. The brothers of Jesus. Look at Matthew 12, beginning in verse 46. I'm only going to read one passage here. I've got four in my notes. Matthew 12:46. Once again, you find, notice the way that Jesus deals with his family members. Verse 46,

46 While He was still speaking to the crowds, behold, His mother and brothers were standing outside, seeking to speak to Him. 47 Someone said to Him, "Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You." 48 But Jesus answered the one who was telling Him and said, "Who is My mother and who are My brothers?" 49 And stretching out His hand toward His disciples, He said, "Behold My mother and My brothers! 50 For whoever does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother."

There again you see this reference to obedience being the mark of a true relationship to Christ in the spiritual realm, but notice that Scripture refers to the brothers of Jesus. Now, what is a brother except someone who shares a parent with you? Jesus was not born from the seed of Joseph, he was born of Mary, so how is it possible for him to have brothers except that Mary had given birth to a slew of them in the years that followed the birth of Jesus.

Matthew 13:55 says,

55 Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not His mother called Mary, and His brothers, James and Joseph and Simon and Judas? 56 And His sisters, are they not all with us?

Brothers and sisters galore. They had a huge family. You don't get a huge family if you never engage in marital intimacy, beloved. I hope that's not a shock to anybody. "I just realized. Whoa, that's what happens?"

Now, how do Catholics get around that? They say that, "Well, this word means cousins," that Scripture is just referring to the cousins of Jesus, "and it has been mistranslated as brothers." Do you know what? That doesn't work. The word "brother" in English, do you know what it means in Greek? It means brother. Sometimes it's used in a broader sense like we use brother in a broader sense, you know, we talk about being brothers and sisters in Christ and all of that. Here's the killer for their weak defense of their defenseless position: there is a biblical word for cousin and it is used in Colossians 4:10. The biblical writers had a word available in their vocabulary to describe cousins and they didn't use it. They used the word "brothers." Why? Because Jesus had many half-brothers and half-sisters who were born to Mary. Scripture uses the word "brother" because they had a common mother. And I don't want to be indelicate but if Jesus had brothers, Mary did not remain a virgin after his birth and, therefore, everything that the Catholic Church says

and builds up about her perpetual virginity is an absolute falsehood when measured by the teaching of Scripture.

Subparagraph C: Mary was not assumed into heaven. I'll treat this quickly. There is no scriptural warrant for the idea that Mary was assumed to heaven at the end for life. There is nothing in the Bible about that. Genesis 3:19 says,

19 ... You are dust, And to dust you shall return.

Romans 5:12 says,

12 ... death spread to all men, because all sinned.

Scripture says that believers are awaiting the resurrection of their body and Mary is waiting for the resurrection just like the rest of us, as do all saints who die. This is a complete fabrication made up in the course of some of your lifetimes. In 1950 they made this up saying it was something that they had always believed. That's the way they do it. The level of deception and the lies and just the misrepresentation of basic facts of history is appalling to me, but they declare a dogma in 1950 that Mary was assumed into heaven and say, "Well, this is what we've always believed." Well, if you've always believed it, why didn't you say it before now? It's because you're making it up. And beloved, when things are made up, they are false. And things that are false, are not true. And when a so-called system of salvation is based on what is false, it is a false salvation which means it is no salvation at all, which means that they are still in their sins destined for perdition unless they repent and forsake all of this Maryolatry and all of this false religion and embrace Christ alone for their salvation. This matters. These things have eternal consequence. If it was just about winning an argument, we would have closed things up a long time ago.

Fourthly: Mary is not the mother of God and she is not the mother of the church. Let me just say it this way, I've made this point before: whenever there is confusion about the person of Christ, it is almost always tied to the fact that people have confused the fact that Jesus was one person with two natures. You must remember the two natures of Christ. He is fully God, eternal deity, coequal with the Father and the Holy Spirit, and since his Incarnation, he is now fully man. His deity took on humanity in his Incarnation. Beloved, just remember this: his human nature had no father. Joseph was his legal father but not his biological father. In like parallel, his divine nature had no mother, suggesting that the mother existed prior to the one at stake. Every one of you came after your mother, right? Mary refers to her lowly state in Luke 1:48. Her state was humble. She was a servant. She was not an exalted being. She certainly was not the mother of deity in the sense of the divine nature of Christ. She gave birth to his human nature. He was the God-man but Scripture repeatedly calls her the mother of Jesus, never the mother of God.

Furthermore, Mary is not the church's mother. She had nothing to do with your salvation or mine. She is a part of the church but she had nothing to do with the communication of

grace to our souls. She had nothing to do with our regeneration. She had nothing to do with our redemption.

Look at Acts 1. We're getting close to finished here. We'll be out before midnight and beat the timing of the Apostle Paul when Eutychus fell asleep and fell out the window. Good old Paul.

Acts 1:12. This is after the ascension of Christ.

12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet, which is near Jerusalem, a Sabbath day's journey away. 13 When they had entered the city, they went up to the upper room where they were staying; that is, Peter and John and James and Andrew, Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon the Zealot, and Judas the son of James. 14 These all with one mind were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with His brothers.

She's there as one of the body of believers. Not over them. They are not praying to her. They are not seeking her. They are not adoring her and kissing her feet. She is there as one. She is there as part of the church, not as the mother of the church.

Well, finally, fifth and finally: Mary is not the Co-Mediator with Christ. Mary is not the Co-Mediator with Christ. Beloved, and it is a satanic blasphemy to say that she is. What does Scripture say? You can just jot down these Scripture references as I read them. 1 Timothy 2:5 says,

5 ... there is one God, and one mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus,

One mediator, not two. Only one. Once again, we come to this point that I made last week, talking about the one sacrifice of Christ: beloved, if you can count to one, you can refute the entire system of Roman Catholicism. They say, "Mary is a Co-Mediator." You say, "No, there's only one, Jesus. That excludes all others."

In John 14:13 and 14, remember the Catholics say, "Oh, go to Mary. Pray to Mary. She'll exercise her motherly charms on her son." No. In John 14:13-14 Jesus said,

13 Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.

There is an invitation from Christ, "Come to me directly," and he commands you, he sets forth an order of prayer that says, "You are to pray in my name and in my name alone," not in the name of his mother.

If you want to remember another thing to forbid the idea of praying to Mary, go to the most basic thing in the Sermon on the Mount about prayer in Matthew 6:9, Jesus says,

9 Pray, then, in this way [and what does he say?]: 'Our Father

Who do you address in prayer? God the Father. You ask in the name of the Son. There is no room for Mary to intrude upon that, and the real Mary, the true biblical Mary, would have none of it either.

Under no circumstances could Mary fulfill the role of a Redeemer or one who answers prayer. Acts 4:12 in speaking of Christ says,

12 ... there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved.

No other name. I'll come back to what I said last week about refuting the Catholic Mass: after a period of time you realize you're just shooting fish in a barrel. You can't miss.

Beloved, the greatest most important thing that you could urge upon your Catholic friends is not to listen to these messages, although I think they would be helpful if they would listen to them, call them, call them to read the Bible for themselves because most of them never crack open a Bible. You certainly don't need it in a Catholic Mass. Call them to read the Bible. The converting power of God is released through the Scriptures. Faith comes from hearing and hearing by the word of Christ. Call them to read the 66 books of the Bible, read the Gospels for themselves. That's where the power of God will be found to convert their souls.

So beloved, let's summarize this on this Co-Mediator thing. I'm almost done. It is an error of infinite proportions for Catholicism to suggest that Mary shared in the sufferings of Christ. You have to think through this. Did Mary suffer as she was watching her son being crucified? Did she suffer? Yes, she probably suffered in her heart. It was painful for her to watch the one that she had nurtured from birth to be dying like that, but make a clear distinction in your mind about the sufferings of Mary and the sufferings of Christ. Mary's suffering was one of compassion as her human son was crucified but, beloved, when we talk about the sufferings of Christ, it has nothing to do with that. Mary's suffering at the cross of compassion has nothing to do with the utterly unique nature of the sacrifice of Christ on the cross. What was Jesus doing on the cross? He wasn't suffering compassion, he was suffering the wrath of God poured out on him for the sins of everyone who would ever believe in him. And listen, Catholics talk about Mary offering up her son to God at that time, nooooo. No, we don't go there. We do not go there because the Bible says that Jesus offered up himself. He was both the offering and the one who made the offering. Mary did not offer Christ up, Christ offered up himself. Christ suffered for sin, Mary knew nothing of enduring the wrath of God on behalf of sinners. Christ actually died as the payment for sin, that was part of his suffering, Mary didn't die when she stood at the foot of the cross.

You see, there is no comparison but by a deft confusion of terms and combining into one things that should be kept separate, the Catholic Church says Mary suffered at the cross. Do you not understand – I'm asking this to the Catholic Church, not to you – do you not understand the first thing about the sufferings of Christ on the cross? That he endured eternal divine wrath in his body? And you're saying that Mary endured that? No, she didn't. You know, think about it this way: you might be alongside someone who is suffering in a hospital bed wracked by pain of cancer or something like that, and you feel sympathy and it hurts your heart to be there watching it, well understand that that compassion, that's great but you're not experiencing the same pain as the one going through it. You have an emotional pain but you are not going through the physical pain in the same way they are. To a much infinite greater degree, when Christ was suffering the wrath of God on the cross, Mary had no part in that and, therefore, had no part in what is properly called the sufferings of Christ.

So what can we say about this? I'll close with a couple of quotes. R. C. Sproul said this in his book, "Are We Together?" He said, "The biggest issue in the whole Maryology debate is the sufficiency of Christ. Is Christ alone our perfect sacrifice? Does he offer himself for the sins of his people or is he offered by his mother? Does he alone achieve our redemption or does he have to depend upon the cooperation of his mother?" To ask those questions is to answer them, and he asked them well.

Regarding prayers to Mary, Loraine Boettner asks this and think about this. Think about this and I quote this great theologian to whom I owe a significant debt in my life. Remember what we said, Catholics teach their people to pray to Mary and this happens repeatedly millions of times each day, praying to Mary. Think about it. Think about what that means. Boettner asks this, "How can any one of the perhaps 100 million practicing Roman Catholics throughout the world who desire Mary's attention, imagine that she can give him that attention during his prayers to her while at the same time she is giving attention to all others who are praying to her, attending to her duties in heaven, conducting souls to heaven and rescuing souls from purgatory? The average Roman Catholic acts on the assumption that Mary has the powers of deity."

Remember, Mary is a human. She is not God. She doesn't have the powers of infinite omniscience, infinite awareness. She's a creature. How on earth could it possibly make any sense to think that she could hear the prayers of hundreds of millions given to her simultaneously? Think about it, those of you that I have more than one kid, two or three kids start talking to you at once, it's enough to make you crazy. "Wait, wait, wait, just stop, one at a time, please." You can't process three kids talking to you at once, where on earth does anyone think that Mary can hear 100 million prayers simultaneously? The ultimate outcome of Catholic doctrine is that they will make Mary another member of the Godhead. I'm not the first person to suggest that. It's the only way that you could make their system work and you would have to do this, to make the Roman Catholic system work, you take a Bible and you throw it away. That's the only way you can get to Roman Catholicism.

So is Mary worthy of veneration? Did she help save our souls? I made five points. No. No. No. No. No. If you entrust your soul to Mary, you are denying Christ and you will face eternal judgment in the end. Christ alone is the hope of sinners. Friends, have you come to Christ alone for your salvation? Even through a message like this, he would extend his hands and call you to come to him because he receives everyone who turns from sin and comes to him for the salvation of their souls.

Let's pray together.

Dear Father, we ask you to rescue countless numbers from that wicked system of religion that we have examined again this evening. We ask you to have mercy on their souls. We thank you that you have had mercy on ours. Father, we rejoice in the fact that in Christ we truly do have the one Mediator; the one true Redeemer; the one who can truly deliver us from sin; the one who will never let us go; the one who will never leave us nor forsake us. Father, while it's been so distasteful to consider these teachings on Mary from Catholicism, it is a great blessing to turn away from that and to look up to the one true Redeemer, to Christ, our Savior and our Redeemer; to Christ, the mighty one of Jacob; to Christ, the one in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. To Christ and to Christ alone, O God, we commit our souls. We bow down and worship you through him and we thank you for that redemption, that forgiveness of sin which is found in Christ Jesus and in him alone. Bless us now as we go. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

Thanks for listening to Pastor Don Green from Truth Community Church in Cincinnati, Ohio. You can find church information, Don's complete sermon library and other helpful materials at thetruthpulpit.com. This message is copyrighted by Don Green. All rights reserved.