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## THE ALARMING GENIUS OF THE VATICAN PAPAL SYSTEM

By Richard Bennett

Truly, the world is thoroughly enamoured with Pope Francis. Whether it is on television, the radio, Internet news sites, or YouTube videos, Pope Francis is presented as the likeable hero of the day. What most people do not know is the stage on which Francis performs. Without the papal platform, Jorge Mario Bergoglio from Argentina would be unknown to most people in the world. The papal system stands unrivalled as a monolithic, institutional, religious system throughout the world, yet it appears friendly and inviting. The Papacy has immense wealth, worldwide dominion, and dictates its faith to millions. As the largest organization on earth, it shows superb skill in its many endeavors. The papal system is an elitist, priestly, bureaucratic machine. It is so powerful that even the Pope himself must conform to its rule or face the consequences. An example of this is what appeared to have been the murder of Pope John Paul I (Albino Luciani) in September 1978, only 33 days after his election.<sup>1</sup> At that time the Catholic news service Zenit, reported that Cardinal Ratzinger said, “his death was totally unexpected. John Paul I seemed to enjoy good health.” Ratzinger would also have known of the abnormal deaths of other popes. For example, the many alleged murders of popes include Stephen VII (896–897) strangled; Stephen IX (939–942) mutilated; John XII (955–964) murdered; Benedict VI (973–974) strangled; John XIV (983–984) starved to death or directly murdered; Gregory V (996–999) poisoned; Clement II (1046–1047) poisoned; Damasus II (1048) murdered; [Pope Pius XI](#) assassinated. Later, in 2013, Ratzinger, then Pope Benedict XVI, appeared to have been forced to resign.

### **An Overview of the History of the Papal System**

In the fourth and fifth centuries, as the Gospel was watered down to accommodate pagan worship, philosophical schools and Gnostic speculations, the true worship of God and the inner conviction of the Holy Spirit was enveloped by a spirit of worldliness. Pagan cultic practices were assimilated into what was called the Church, which was becoming merely an externalized form of Christianity alien to Scripture and devoid of authentic spiritual life and experience. The history of the Vaudois, the Waldenses, and the Paulician churches shows that what was called “Church” was more and more separating itself from true biblical faith. Thus, it was becoming a vicious persecutor of any who stood for the truth revealed in the New Testament. From the beginning of Christian times, the Gospel had produced an internal unity among the believers; however, the substitution of ritualism for the Gospel produced merely an external, visible unity for an institutionalized system. The fallacious clergy-laity division spawned an emergent priestly-episcopal authoritarian order of parochial dominion. This further devolved into an established hierarchy of ruling clergy lording it over the flock of God. By the end of the fifth century, these so-called “priests” presumed to mediate between God and man. These men had replaced the early pastors of the Gospel who had simply taught the Scripture. The Church

no longer was the fellowship of believers in Christ Jesus united by the Gospel; rather, for the most part, it was rapidly becoming a system dominated by a hierarchy of bishops and elders.<sup>2</sup>

Before this, in 330 A.D, the emperor Constantine removed the seat of the empire from Rome to Constantinople. This marvelously enhanced the power of this developing system. The barbarian invasions of the Western Roman Empire helped immeasurably to build the emerging structure of what would become the papal system. Then by religious assimilation, the bishop of Rome cemented his place as the unifying force that held a corrupt society together. From the decaying, confused ruin of the Western Empire, the Vatican system emerged triumphant by appropriating the prerogatives of the Caesars. In addition, it asserted itself as above Presidents Prime Ministers and Kings of the world, and as the main spiritual authority, subject to none of them.

### **Sacramentalism Commences**

Beginning in the fifth century, continuing through several successive centuries, as new tribes of people desired to become Christian and the papal system received these new peoples as they were. As the true gospel of salvation by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone, had been abandoned, there was no call to repent and believe. It simply baptized to receive people from the tribes into what was called the Church and their names were inscribed in its registers. This is in total contrast to the Scripture where there is an absolute connection between the Spirit and the Word of God ... not between physical water and grace. Coming to new birth, as seen in the New Testament, is by the Holy Spirit through the instrument of God's Word. Thus, the Apostle Peter proclaims, "*being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever.*"<sup>3</sup> Nonetheless, the papal teaching of alleged rebirth by water baptism, which started in those early centuries, still continues in the system to the present day. Thus the papal *Code of Canon Law* Canon 849 states,

"Baptism, the gate to the sacraments, necessary for salvation by actual reception or at least by desire, is validly conferred only by a washing of true water with the proper form of words. Through [water] baptism men and women are freed from sin, are reborn as children of God, and, configured to Christ by an indelible character, are incorporated in the [Roman Catholic] Church."

We saw already that in the fifth century men called priests presumed to mediate between God and men. In Scripture, before the All Holy God, an individual is saved by His grace alone. Scripture is crystal clear in [Ephesians 2:8-9](#), "*For by grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works lest anyone should boast.*" It is in His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus that God shows the exceeding riches of His grace. That He **alone** saves is the whole meaning of divine grace. Attempting to imitate saving grace from the late fifth century, the papal system began to claim that its sacraments were necessary for salvation. It took many centuries for this sacramental system to be fully developed into seven sacraments; as we see today, its official teaching states the following, "The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are *necessary for salvation.*"<sup>4</sup>

This is the guiding policy of the papal system. Thus, on Sunday May 3, 2015, Pope Francis strictly obeyed the Vatican's guiding policy regarding the sacraments. He said,

"Jesus is the vine, and through Him ... we are the branches, and through this parable, Jesus wants us [sic] to make us understand the importance of remaining united to him. Grafted by **Baptism** in Christ, we have freely

received from Him the gift of new life; and we are able to remain in vital communion with Christ. We must remain faithful to [our] **Baptism**, and grow in friendship with the Lord through prayer, listening and docility to His Word, reading the Gospel, participation in the **Sacraments**, especially the **Eucharist** and **Reconciliation** ... .”<sup>5</sup>

### **The Establishment of the System with the Pope as Actual Head**

Emperor Justinian I (527-565) was the one, more than anyone else, to establish the supremacy of the bishop of Rome as head of the system. He did it in a formal and legal manner by bringing purely ecclesiastical edicts and regulations under the control of civil law. The historian Froom summarized what took place, “[One of Justinian’s] great achievement[s] was the regulation of ecclesiastical and theological matters, crowned by the imperial Decretal Letter seating the bishop of Rome in the church as the ‘Head of all the holy churches,’ thus laying the legal foundation for papal ecclesiastical supremacy.”<sup>6</sup>

Emperor Justinian’s decree did not create the office of the Pope, but rather it set the legal foundation for advancement in ruling power by the bishop of Rome. The Emperor wished to allay the demise of the Imperial Empire, thus ecclesiastical unity was imposed. Consequently, the bishop of Rome became the head of the Empire’s church. Then the title of “Pope” began to fit the one who sat as “bishop of Rome,” who now was free to use the civil sword of coercion given him by Justinian’s decree. Formerly, ecclesiastical unity came by the moral persuasion of the Gospel and the Scripture to save individuals who then would be salt and light to their civil societies. Thus, it was in the eighth century that civil power came within the grasp of the Papacy. As the power of the “system” grew, so did the immoral lives of both those who led the system and the men and women who were under its control.

### **Immorality Followed by Ecclesiastical Murder and Torture**

The year 1073 was a turning point from the centuries of gross immorality. Rigorous discipline now became the norm of the Papacy. Reaching above the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of papal minds continued to clutch at total dominion, both ecclesiastical and civil. By this time, the line of Charlemagne had grown too weak to keep papal ambitions in check, and Pope Gregory VII (also known as Hildebrand) was ambitious beyond all who had preceded him. He was convinced that the reign of the Pope was in fact the reign of God on earth and determined to subject all authority and power, both spiritual and temporal, to the “chair of Peter.” It was Gregory VII who envisioned what was to become the vast structure of the papal system. His goal was to be the supreme ruler and judge of all leaders, both Church and State. It is with Gregory’s astute grasp of the notion, and his crushing ambition, coupled with the enormous wealth that the Roman Catholic Church by then possessed, which made its implementation possible. These shrewd enactments began to bear fruit even during Gregory’s own rule (1073-1085). Popes Innocent III (1198-1216) and Boniface VIII (1294-1303) put the final touches to the papal system’s spiritual and temporal power. Pope Innocent III proclaimed a crusade against the Albigenses<sup>7</sup> and offered to all who would engage in it the pardon of all sins to get to heaven without passing through purgatory. It was a war perpetrated with unimaginable cruelty. Whole villages and towns were indiscriminately butchered; thousands were burned at the stake, while others were subjected to the most hideous torture. The history of these horrendous deeds of cruelty and murder are established by numerous accounts. Pope Boniface VIII “was stubborn, ambitious, intelligent, vain, and unscrupulous. He believed deeply that the Pope was literally the Vicar of Christ on Earth and that he held extraordinary powers. Anyone who opposed him opposed God and therefore must certainly be wicked.”<sup>8</sup> He is most famous for a statement in his papal bull *Unum Sanctum*, “We declare, say, define, and proclaim to every human creature that they by necessity for salvation are entirely subject to the Roman Pontiff.”<sup>9</sup> Seventy-five popes, one after another, from

Pope Innocent III to Pope Pius VII, approved of torture, murder, and burning at the stake, and the confiscation of the property of believers in the horrific six centuries of the Inquisition.<sup>10</sup> The Papacy inflicted excruciating torture and cruel death on true believers.

### **The Glorious Reformation and the Malevolent Counter Reformation**

The Reformation in the sixteenth century greatly restored the biblical faith that had been proclaimed by the Apostles. Not only was biblical faith restored, but right across Europe the papal system was devastated. The men of the Reformation were such as Luther at Wittenberg; Erasmus, Colet at Oxford; Bilney, Latimer, and Cartwright at Cambridge; and Lefevre and Farel at Paris. These leaders of the Reformation were highly trained men of that generation. In some instances, as Beza and Tyndale, they ranked high as men of letters. The Reformation was a glorious spiritual awakening. The primary response of the Roman Catholic system to the biblical faith of the Reformers was the Counter-Reformation. It was advanced principally through the political and educational influence of the Jesuit Order. The Jesuits, in an uncompromising and militant manner, led a movement to restore the Roman Catholic system to the position it had had before the Reformation. The Jesuits' intention, then and now, is to indoctrinate populations. Populations that are not grounded in the Bible are notoriously superstitious and servile to all the motions of sentimental religion and mysticism. Because they do not have any sure knowledge of God through Jesus Christ and His written Word, Jesuit mysticism has a great appeal for them. To such people adrift in spiritual darkness, the Roman Catholic system offers both the spiritual authority of the Pope, his visible rituals and potent, psychological conditioning. By the mid-seventeenth century, the Jesuit Order had thousands of members across Europe. Their mission, then and now, has been undermining confidence in the Bible as the Word of God and the extirpation of the effects of the Reformation. Over the next few centuries, they became the Papacy's most powerful force to subvert Western culture from Christian-Biblical principles and liberties. The Jesuits have had a strong political influence with Catholic monarchies across Europe. They have led the main Counter-Reformation efforts for four centuries by upholding papal authority, restoring the sacramental system, and promulgating a compelling version of Roman mysticism and superstitions to many nations that had been touched by the biblical principles of the Reformation. Much of what papal Rome has achieved since the Reformation, and in modern times, has been due to the planning, strategy, and fanatical dedication of the Jesuits.

Devastating economic strategies have also been advocated by the papal system; for example, Pope Francis, a Jesuit, published a document called, "Joy of the Gospel." Among many other topics, he wrote about economics. One of his statements concerning wealth declared that, "Not to share one's wealth with the poor is to steal from them and to take away their livelihood. It is not our own goods which we hold, but theirs." In fact, Pope Francis flagrantly refutes private property and western economic principles. Applied economic principles give stability and well-being to societies. Thus, factually, the papal system's economics is worse than Marx.

### **In Conclusion, the Lesson to be Learned**

The papal system arose under the Imperial Roman Empire and survived the empire's demise. In 537 A.D., Justinian gave the legal base for it to acquire civil power, which it did throughout the course of the next ten centuries. Its temporal power was arrested by the recovery of the Bible and the Gospel during the Reformation of the sixteenth century. It was held at bay by the Puritans of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Nevertheless, it survived the demise of the Holy Roman Empire to become a "sovereign nation" in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and now set to continue as a major power player in 2015. Currently, Pope Francis is the visible

head of the Roman church; but the papal system is still the power behind the throne. The papal system is nothing less than the satanic counterfeit of the true Christian Church indeed it is the “*mystery of iniquity.*”<sup>11</sup>

The true Christian Church is the great revelation of God, which had its full manifestation in the Person of the Christ of God. Thus, Scripture proclaims, “*God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high.*”<sup>12</sup> Thus it is that the true Christian is focused on the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ and not on any system.

As we behold the power, wisdom, and goodness of the heavenly Father, we also behold the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Lord Jesus Christ; for as the Mediator, He has the nature and perfections of God in Himself. The Lord Jesus Christ alone reconciles us to God by the full, legal satisfaction for our sin made by His substitutionary death on the cross. There is absolutely no church system that can redeem a soul by ritualized, sacramental actions. Nor can we justify ourselves before God by religious works that are always stained by imperfect performance and tainted by self-focused motives. A soul will have no peace with God while striving to save itself by any means that God does not accept. It is only the Lord Jesus Christ’s atoning work of shedding His blood on our behalf that meets the demands of an All Holy God and His perfect law. It is by simply trusting upon Christ as the Lamb of God that we are saved. By believing on Him, we are delivered from the universal penalty of the second death and have assurance before God that we are accepted in Him.<sup>13</sup> This is the only way of salvation that God the Holy Spirit testifies as being validated by Him to the consciences of men.<sup>14</sup> Thus, His Word expresses it, “*Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.*”<sup>15</sup> How trivial and vain are the promises of the papal system compared to the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is revealed as the “*chiefest among ten thousand.*”<sup>16</sup>

Were it not for the recovery of the absolute authority of the Bible alone, and the Gospel of grace in salvation during the Reformation of the sixteenth century, the papal system might still be undetected. . In spite of the papal system being so rampantly displayed in the world today, the Holy Spirit still convicts individual men of their sin before Holy God, sends them repentance unto life in Christ Jesus, “*for by grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.*”<sup>17</sup> The true believer is thus “*accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.*”<sup>18</sup> The frightening words of the Lord in [Matthew 7:21](#) ought to ring in the ears of those who have spent their whole lives believing in the papal religious system, “*not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.*”

No person by merely acknowledging Christ’s authority, believing in His divinity, professing faith in His perfection and in the infinite merit of His atonement, shall have any part with God in His glory, but only he who for salvation solely believes on Jesus Christ. The Lord put the command to believe in a nutshell when He said, “*this is the work of God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent.*”<sup>19</sup> Likewise, the Apostle Paul and Silas declared, “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*”<sup>20</sup> The Gospel of Jesus Christ stands, so also does His call on your life. Do you personally know Christ Jesus? The water of life

is offered to you in the abundance of grace, which far surpasses the evils of sin. Thus, the Lord's call in Scripture says, "*the Spirit and the bride say, come. And let him that heareth say, come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely.*"<sup>21</sup>

Once you as a convicted sinner believe on Christ Jesus alone, by grace alone, through faith alone, as your only surety and refuge before the All Holy God, you find yourself not only freed from your sins, but made to "*reign in life ... for if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.*"<sup>22</sup> Those who receive the abundant grace given by Christ are not only redeemed from the dominion of death, they live and reign with Christ as they are sanctified daily through His Word by the Holy Spirit, and by constant fellowship with Him. With Him, they shall reign forever and glorify Him for all eternity. Believe on Him alone and you will be secure in Him, "*to the praise of the glory of his grace, his free gift to us in the Beloved.*"<sup>23</sup> "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*"<sup>24</sup> ♦

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Thank you

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<sup>1</sup> Vid *In God's Name: An Investigation Into the Murder of Pope John Paul I* by David Yallop

<sup>2</sup> Vid Wylie, *The History of Protestantism*, Vol. I, Book I, pp. 3-14. See also D'Aubigne, Book I, pp.1-34. Historian William Gilly shows that in the early fifth century, Vigilantius, a native of Aquitaine, stood firmly against the developing clerical system.

<sup>3</sup> [1 Peter 1:23](#)

<sup>4</sup> *Catechism* Para 1129

<sup>5</sup> [www.missionsandiego.org/pope-francis-bear-the-fruits-of-membership-in-christ-and-the-church-regina-caeli-message-may-3-2015/](http://www.missionsandiego.org/pope-francis-bear-the-fruits-of-membership-in-christ-and-the-church-regina-caeli-message-may-3-2015/) (Bolding of the names of the sacraments is not in the original.)

<sup>6</sup> From, Vol. I, p. 507.

<sup>7</sup> The Albigenses were a group of Christians, influential for their godly lives, who were condemned by the system of Rome. George Stanley Faber, writing in 1838, provides an example of papal work, "'According to the plan adopted by the Inquisitors of Languedoc, it was morally impossible for any of the accused Albigenses to escape [the charge of Manichèism].

<sup>8</sup> <http://history.boisestate.edu/westciv/babylon/04.htm> 8/29/03

<sup>9</sup> Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma*, Revised by Karl Rahner, B. Herder Book Co., 1957), #469.

<sup>10</sup> See the Video *The Inquisition* at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rx8PdvOELvY>

<sup>11</sup> [2 Thessalonians 2:7](#) b This particular lawlessness arose gradually within the Papal System as the Imperial Roman Empire gave way to what became the Holy Roman Empire.

- [12 Hebrews 1:1-2](#)
- [13 Ephesians 1:3-7](#)
- [14 Romans 5:1](#)
- [15 Psalm 73:25](#)
- [16 Song of Songs 5:10](#)
- [17 Ephesians 2:8-9](#)
- [18 Ephesians 1:6-7](#)
- [19 John 6:29](#)
- [20 Acts 16:31](#)
- [21 Revelation 22:17](#)
- [22 Romans 5:17](#)
- [23 Ephesians 1:6](#)
- [24 2 Corinthians 5:17](#)

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