

Chapter Ten

The “Mary” Connection

As you read through the Old and New Testament, one thing becomes very apparent. Christianity is all about Jesus Christ. “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.”¹ Christianity is all about believing in Jesus alone. It is the Scriptures that testify of the true Jesus. Jesus made this clear:

You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me. But you are not willing to come to Me that you may have life.²

The entire Bible leads us to, testifies of, and focuses on, the one and only Savior of the world.

Philip found Nathanael and said to him, “We have found Him of whom Moses in the law, and also the prophets, wrote—Jesus of Nazareth, the son of Joseph.”³

¹ John 3:16

² John 5:39-40

³ John 1:45

And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, [Jesus] expounded to them in all the Scriptures the things concerning Himself. ⁴

Adding to God's Word or perverting His Word has devastating results. To do so, or follow those who do, is very dangerous. In the very last chapter of the Bible we read this somber warning:

For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life... ⁵

According to the Bible, if you follow a false christ based on unscriptural sources you will end up separated from the true Christ, and spend eternity in hell.

The Catholic "Mary" Points to the Eucharistic Christ

Earlier in this book, quotes were made from an article published by *Zenit* on April 17, 2003. This article reported that Pope John Paul II had called for Catholics to refocus on the Eucharist and Eucharistic adoration from an encyclical that he had written called "Ecclesia de Eucharistia." On the very same day, *Zenit* sent out another news item that was equally important. The title for this article was "Mary Has a Place in Latest Encyclical: Pope Describes Her as a 'Woman of the Eucharist.'" ⁶

The article began the following way: "The last chapter of John Paul's encyclical "Ecclesia de Eucharistia" is dedicated to the Virgin Mary – a surprise in a document dedi-

⁴ Luke 24:27

⁵ Revelation 22:18-19

⁶ <http://www.zenit.org/english/visualizza.phtml?sid=34405>.

cated to the Blessed Sacrament." ⁷ Then this interesting statement from the pope's 14th encyclical: "If the Church and the Eucharist are inseparably united, the same ought to be said of Mary and the Eucharist." ⁸

Then laying a foundation for the Catholic Church that is not found anywhere in Scripture, *Zenit* quoted the pope:

The relationship between the Virgin Mary and the Eucharist is explained by referring to the "Eucharistic faith" that Mary already practiced "even before the institution of the Eucharist, by the very fact that she offered her virginal womb for the incarnation of God's Word." ⁹

The article then concluded with another profound statement made by the pope:

"Mary is present with the Church and as Mother of the Church, at each of our celebrations of the Eucharist. Mary Most Holy, in whom the Eucharistic mystery shows itself more than in anyone else, as mystery of light." ¹⁰

Think about the implications of this statement! According to the head of the Roman Catholic Church, when the ordained priest consecrates the wafer during Mass, not only does "Jesus" appear, but the mother of "Jesus" also shows up. Of course, those who have read the Bible know that only God is omnipresent.

It can be documented that a woman claiming to be the mother of Jesus has been appearing in numerous places all over the world for some time. While I touched on this

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Ibid.

subject in a previous book *New Wine and the Babylonian Vine*, a more thorough and complete exposition of this topic can be found in *Messages from Heaven* authored by Jim Tetlow. This book reveals that the “Mary” of the apparitions, and the Catholic Church, is not the Mary of the Bible. (Refer to the back of this book for more information.)

Those who follow the apparitions are very aware there is a “Mary-Eucharist” connection that is extremely important. The rest of this chapter will document this connection based on information that has been made available from appendix A found in the back of the book, *Messages from Heaven* by Jim Tetlow.

Peace through Eucharistic Devotion

Throughout the world, the apparition of Mary is emphasizing the importance of the Eucharist. With the increasing number of Marian apparitions, there has been a corresponding increase in Eucharistic adoration.¹¹ This is no surprise to the millions who are devoted to the “Blessed Mother.” Those who follow her messages are aware of an interesting prediction made by Catholic Saint John Bosco in 1862.

There will be chaos in the Church. Tranquility will not return until the Pope succeeds in anchoring the boat of Peter between the twin pillars of Eucharistic devotion and devotion to Our Lady. This will come about one year before the end of the [20th] century.¹²

¹¹ Eucharistic Adoration is the worship and prayer offered by Roman Catholics and others to Jesus in the Eucharist, when kneeling in front of the displayed consecrated Communion Host.

¹² Saint John Bosco, 1862. Refer to: members.aol.com/bjw1106/Euchmir.htm.

Many believe that this prophecy is near fulfillment. For instance, in more recent years, the apparition has encouraged the formation of Perpetual Eucharistic Adoration groups. These groups number in the thousands around the world.¹³ Their sole purpose is to worship, adore, and pray to Jesus in the Eucharist around the clock, perpetually.

Eucharistic and Marian Era

Of course, Marian apparitions have always stressed the great importance of the Eucharist. In particular, the Queen of Heaven has repeatedly stated that the Eucharist, once consecrated by a priest, becomes the literal body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus, and is therefore worthy of worship and adoration. For example, "Mary" focused much attention on her Son's true presence in the Eucharist in the now famous apparitions to Catherine Laboure at Rue du Bac, Paris in 1830.

Marian theologians consistently agree that the revelations in Paris in 1830 to Catherine Laboure, officially began an era of Mary. That this apparition had a Eucharistic theme is consistent with the increasing number of apparitions that have appeared in the nineteenth, twentieth and now, twenty-first centuries. In fact, nearly every popular apparition today stresses the importance of the Eucharist. "Mary" emphatically encourages all believers to receive the Blessed Sacrament as often as possible in order to receive the needed graces for salvation. She also stresses the important role that the Eucharistic Jesus will have in the last days.

¹³ "The Real Presence Association: Churches and Chapels that have Eucharistic Adoration," Online posting, http://www.therealpresence.org/chap_fr.htm, cited April 20, 2002. This web site lists over 6,500 adoration sites in the US alone.

In conjunction with these messages, many “Eucharistic miracles” have been reported. These miracles include bleeding and pulsating Communion Hosts, Hosts that do not decompose, Hosts that speak, and Hosts that transform into the image of a man—presumably Jesus. Tests at several apparition sites confirm that the blood emanating from miraculous Hosts is authentic. These miracles are presented as proof by the apparition that Christ is truly present under the appearance of the consecrated Communion wafer.

Our Lady of Fatima Emphasizes the Eucharist

Those who espouse the Marian apparitions are united in their belief that the apparitions have, over the centuries, increasingly pointed to the central importance of the Eucharist. For instance, Dr. Thomas W. Petrisko dedicates his book *Mother of the Secret* to exploring this interesting link between key Marian apparitions and Eucharistic prominence. Below is his summary of the Fatima apparitions:

The Apparitions of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Fatima, Portugal in 1917 to three shepherd children are most remembered for the incredible signs and secrets given there. Yet it must be said that Heaven truly marked the events with a significant thrust to focus the attention of the faithful on the True Presence of Jesus Christ in the Eucharist. ...In 1916, one year before the Virgin Mary’s first apparition, ...the children received an apparition of an angel holding a chalice in his left hand. A Host was suspended above the chalice and some drops of blood from the Host fell into the chalice. Leaving the chalice suspended in the air, the angel knelt down beside the children and told them to repeat three times the following prayer: “O Most Holy Trinity, Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit...I offer Thee the most precious Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ, present in all the tabernacles of the world, in reparation for [sins]..."¹⁴

The Eucharist Holds Center Stage in Medjugorje

There is undeniably a strong devotion to the Eucharist at the Fatima apparition site. However, the Queen of Heaven's Eucharistic emphasis at Medjugorje is arguably greater. Our Lady of Medjugorje has time after time told visionaries to worship and adore Jesus in the Eucharist and to frequently partake in Holy Communion. Medjugorje visionary Vicka Ivankovic tells us what the "Blessed Mother" explained to her about Christ's true presence in the Eucharist:

The Blessed Mother says that during each Mass, Jesus comes in person, in tangible form. We can take Jesus, in physical form, into our body...This is our way to accept Jesus into our heart. Jesus comes alive to us through the Eucharist.¹⁵

Those who have visited Medjugorje or examined Our Lady's messages are convinced that the apparition teaches that the Eucharist is the source and summit of Catholic life. For instance, the late Father Joseph A. Pelletier, A.A., a noted theologian, wrote in his book, *The Queen of Peace Visits Medjugorje*, that the central theme of the Medjugorje apparitions is primarily Eucharistic:

As more and more information has come forth, it has become increasingly clear that the Eucharist holds center stage in Medjugorje and that from the

¹⁴ Thomas W. Petrisko, *Mother of the Secret*, Santa Barbara, CA, Queenship Publishing, 1997, page 113.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, pages 185, 186.

very start Our Lady spoke to the six seers about the Eucharist and its importance with more frequency than was suspected. This helps to understand why the parish has placed so much emphasis on the Mass and public adoration of the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁶

Our Lady of Medjugorje Leads to the Eucharist

Father Rene Laurentin in his book, *Is the Virgin Mary Appearing at Medjugorje?*, concurs with Fr. Pelletier about Medjugorje and the Eucharist. Fr. Laurentin writes:

Our Lady of Medjugorje leads to Christ. When she was asked which prayer is the best, she answered: "It is the Mass, and you will never be able to exhaust its greatness. That is why you should be there humbly and prepared." At Medjugorje the Virgin leads to the Eucharist. The Rosary and the apparition flow into the Mass. Mary has sometimes appeared showing Christ, in His childhood (the first apparition and Christmas 1983) or in His Passion. In showing us Christ, she continues to say, "Do whatever he tells you." (John 2:5)¹⁷

Of course the most important part of the Mass is the sacrifice of the Mass, where Christ is offered in the Eucharist. Not only does Our Lady of Medjugorje encourage the faithful to attend Mass and partake in the Blessed Sacrament frequently, but she also promotes the adoration and worship of the consecrated Communion Host.

Dear children, I am especially grateful that you are here tonight. Adore unceasingly the Most Blessed

¹⁶ Fr. Joseph A. Pelletier, *The Queen of Peace Visits Medjugorje*, Worcester, MA, Assumption Publications, 1985, page 205.

¹⁷ Petrisko, page 187.

Sacrament of the altar. Know that I am always present when the faithful are adoring.¹⁸

Dear children, today I invite you to fall in love with the most Holy Sacrament of the Altar. Adore Him, little children, in your parishes, and in this way you will be united with the entire world.¹⁹

Garabandal Emphasizes the Eucharist

Messages given by the apparition of Mary who appeared in Garabandal, Spain echo those given at Medjugorje.

We must pay visit to the Blessed Sacrament. Many sacrifices must be made. Much penance must be done. But first of all we must be good...If we do not do this, punishment awaits us....²⁰

In his book, *Mother of the Secret*, Dr. Thomas W. Petrisko writes the following regarding the importance of the Eucharist at Garabandal, Spain:

While the alleged supernatural character and prophetic element of the apparitions at Garabandal are noted, its message is interpreted by many experts as being predominantly Eucharistic. This opinion is enhanced by the fact that the visionaries were

¹⁸ Richard J. Beyer, *Medjugorje Day By Day*, Notre Dame, IN, Ave Maria Press, July 18th meditation, Message from Our Lady of Medjugorje given on March 15, 1984.

¹⁹ "Our Lady of Medjugorje," Online posting, <http://medjugorje.org/msg95.htm>, cited Sept. 28, 1998, Message from Our Lady of Medjugorje, Sept. 25, 1995.

²⁰ "Garabandal - Pines Will Enlighten The World," Online posting, <http://here.at/garabandal/pines.htm>, cited May 15, 2000, Message from Our Lady of Garabandal given on October 18, 1961, [error in original quote].

photographed receiving upon their tongues invisible and then visible communion Hosts from an angel.²¹

Ted and Maureen Flynn, in their book, *The Thunder of Justice*, agree that Garabandal has a predominately Eucharistic theme:

Another remarkable event of Garabandal emphasized the importance of the Eucharist. An angel appeared bearing a golden chalice. The angel asked the children to think of the One whom they were going to receive. He taught them to recite the Confiteor, after which he gave them Holy Communion. He also taught them to say the Anima Christi in thanksgiving. These direct interventions occurred regularly whenever the priest from the neighboring village of Cosio was unable to come to Garabandal.²²

Everywhere "Mary" Emphasizes the Eucharist

Apparitions from the four corners of the globe express this common and central theme. The Eucharist has the power to transform the world. The Eucharist should be worshipped. Eucharistic adoration will bring peace and unity. Messages originating from such diverse places as Amsterdam, Holland; Akita, Japan; Rome, Italy; Naju, Korea; Bayside, New York, and Budapest, Hungary all convey this common idea. What follows are a sampling of the numerous messages from apparitions emphasizing the great importance of the Eucharist.

²¹ Petrisko, page 157.

²² Ted and Maureen Flynn, *Thunder of Justice*, Sterling, VA, MaxKol Communications, Inc., 1993, page 164.

Our Lady has been appearing in private to Marisa Rossi in Rome. In June 1993 She asked...that Her messages about the Eucharist be made public....Our Lady says: "I am THE MOTHER OF THE EUCHARIST" and She wants to spread renewed and strong devotion, all over the world, for this great Sacrament.²³

During Consecration I suddenly saw a light coming from the chalice...

When I went to Holy Communion and returned to my place, the Sacred Host began to move on my tongue and I heard the voice of the Lady say, "You have now met the Lord."²⁴

You must firmly believe that Jesus is truly present in the Host as Man and God! You must believe that you really meet Him, and, more than that, unite with Him in the Eucharist.²⁵

My Son will always be there in the Eucharist. A duly ordained and consecrated hand of a legal representative, your priest, will always be able to bring to you My Son's Body and Blood in the

²³ "Our Lady is Appearing in Rome," "Messages of the Mother of the Eucharist," Online posting, <http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/6832/>, cited February 16, 2000. Messages to the visionary Marisa Rossi.

²⁴ Josef Kunzli, editor, *The Messages of The Lady of All Nations*, Santa Barbara, CA, Queenship Publishing, 1996, page 110. Message given on May 31, 1967.

²⁵ Peter Heintz, *A Guide to Apparitions*, Sacramento, CA, Gabriel Press, 1995, page 219. Message from Our Lady to visionary Sister Dolores of Budapest, Hungary.

Eucharist...He comes to you physically and spiritually....²⁶

Do you say well the prayer of the Handmaids of the Eucharist? Then let us pray it together. "Most Sacred Heart of Jesus, truly present in Holy Eucharist, I consecrate my body and soul to be entirely one with Your Heart, being sacrificed at every instant on all the altars of the world and giving praise to the Father pleading for the coming of His Kingdom."²⁷

In these days you will hear of many Eucharistic Phenomena taking place. You will be renewed in your total reverence for my Divine Son in the Blessed Sacrament, and soon the time will come when the Tabernacle is returned to its rightful and proper place in the church.²⁸

I have manifested the images of the Holy Eucharist in various ways so that all my children may understand the importance of the Holy Eucharist. Hurriedly become blazing flames of love, reparation

²⁶ "Our Lady of the Roses - Bayside Prophecies," Volume 1, page 299, Online posting, <http://www.roses.org/prophecy/seqevnt.htm>, cited October 1, 1998, messages from Our Lady of the Roses to Veronica Lueken, Dec. 23, 1974, Bayside, NY.

²⁷ Teiji Yasuda, O.S.V., English version by John M. Haffert, *Akita: The Tears and Message of Mary*, Asbury, NJ, 101 Foundation, Inc., 1989, pages 194, 195. Message from Our Lady of Akita, Japan to Sr. Agnes Sasagawa, July 6, 1973.

²⁸ "Apparitions of Jesus and Mary," Online posting, <http://web.frontier.net/Apparitions/Cain.msgs94.html>, cited February 16, 2000. Messages from Our Lady to Cyndi Cain, USA, Sept. 8, 1994.

and adoration toward the Lord Who is in the Blessed Sacrament.²⁹

The Eucharistic Reign of Jesus

Furthermore, the apparition of Mary explains that the culmination of her apparitions will usher in the Eucharistic Reign of Jesus. To Father Gobbi, the head of the Marian Movement of Priests, she proclaims that the Eucharistic Jesus will soon transform humanity!

Today I ask all to throw open the doors to Jesus Christ who is coming. I am the Mother of the Second Advent and the door which is being opened on the new era. This new era will coincide with the greatest triumph of the Eucharistic Reign of Jesus. For this, I invite you, in this extraordinary year, to make flourish everywhere the cult of adoration, of reparation and of love for the Most Holy Eucharist...Let the Eucharist become the center of your prayer, of your life....³⁰

In fact, the coming of the glorious reign of Christ will coincide with the greatest splendor of his Eucharistic reign among you. The Eucharistic Jesus will release all his power of love, which will transform souls, the Church and all humanity.³¹

²⁹ "The Story of Naju," Online posting, <http://www.nd.edu/~mary/Naju.html>, cited May 15, 2000. Messages from the Blessed Mother to Julia Kim, Naju, Korea, June 27, 1993.

³⁰ Fr. Don Stefano Gobbi, *To the Priests, Our Lady's Beloved Sons*, St. Francis ME, The National Headquarters of the Marian Movement of Priests in the United States of America, 1998, page 676. Message given to Father Gobbi, February 26, 1991, Brazil.

³¹ *Ibid.*, page 640. Message given to Father Gobbi, April 12, 1990, Italy.

The glorious reign of Christ will coincide with the triumph of the Eucharistic reign of Christ...Jesus will be made manifest above all in the mystery of his Eucharistic presence.³²

Establishing the Link

Marian experts agree that the triumph of “Mary’s” immaculate heart, prophesied at Fatima, will be directly linked to perpetual adoration of the Blessed Sacrament. Father Martin Lucia, writing in the journal, *Immaculata*, explains that all the Marian apparitions will victoriously culminate in the Eucharistic reign of Jesus.

The message of all the Marian apparitions, both past and present, is that the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary will culminate in the Eucharistic reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Eucharistic Reign will come through perpetual adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.³³

Not surprisingly, the pope himself alludes to this consummation of apparitions in his encyclical, *Mother of the Redeemer*:

The piety of the Christian people has always very rightly sensed a profound link between devotion to the Blessed Virgin and worship of the Eucharist: This is a fact that can be seen in the liturgy of both the West and the East, in the traditions of the religious families, in the modern movements of spirituality, including those for youth, and in the

³² Paul A. Mihalik, *The Virgin Mary, Fr. Gobbi and the Year 2000*, Santa Barbara, CA, 1998, page 29. Message to Father Gobbi, given on November 21, 1993, Australia, [bold not in original].

³³ Thomas W. Petrisko, *Mother of the Secret*, page 268.

pastoral practice of the Marian shrines. Mary guides the faithful to the Eucharist.³⁴

Eucharistic Miracles

Of course, the humble Mary of the Bible never once referred to the Eucharist. Nor did she ever instruct Christ's followers to worship the Eucharist. However, this survey of messages given by the "Mother of the Eucharist" around the world, shows that the apparition that claims to be Mary consistently directs followers to concentrate on Christ's Real Presence in the Eucharist. And as if to corroborate "Mary's" messages, at many of these apparition sites, Eucharistic miracles, such as bleeding Communion Hosts have occurred.

For example, in Betania, Venezuela, the location of a popular Marian apparition, a bleeding Communion Host was analyzed chemically. The analyzed sample was found to be human blood. Here is a summary of the Betania Eucharistic miracle as recorded in the book, *Cenacle Formation Manual and Prayer Book*. This book is distributed by the Eucharistic Apostles of Divine Mercy, and chronicles many Eucharistic miracles:

All the miracles listed occurred several hundred years ago. But the miracle that occurred during Mass in Betania, Venezuela took place on the feast of the Immaculate Conception in 1991. A Consecrated Host, truly the flesh of Our Lord, began to bleed. A subsequent medical team concluded that the material extruded from the Host was blood of human origin. The local bishop declared it a sign of transubstantiation saying, "God is trying to mani-

³⁴ Pope John Paul II, "Redemptoris Mater, Mother of the Redeemer," *Origins Volume 16*, Washington, DC, March 25, 1987, page 762, encyclical, [bold not in original].

fest to us that our faith in the consecrated Host is authentic.”

Many other extraordinary events have occurred in Betania, including numerous alleged apparitions of the Blessed Mother witnessed by several thousand people, multiple physical and spiritual healings, and a mystic named Maria Esperanza who has the gifts of stigmata, bilocation, and levitation during prayer. The bishop himself has witnessed the phenomena and wrote in a pastoral letter that after careful study, he has declared the apparitions authentic and of supernatural character.³⁵

Many more examples could be cited. For example, in Stich, Germany a bleeding Host that stained the altar cloth was chemically analyzed at the Polyclinical Institute of the University of Zurich. No one at the institute was made aware of the source of the stains. The stains were analyzed by four different methods of chemical identification and in each case the findings were the same—the stains were human blood.³⁶

Apparitions of “Jesus” Confirm the Eucharistic Christ

If “Mary’s” apparitions don’t convince the skeptic, and if miracles aren’t enough to persuade the cynic, then there is an even stronger validation offered by the faithful. Apparitions of “Jesus” himself are appearing. Yes, apparitions of “Jesus” have also been reported worldwide, albeit

³⁵ Bryan and Susan Thatcher; Seraphim Michalenko, M.I.C., *Cenacle Formation Manual and Prayer Book*, Stockbridge, MA, The Association of Marian Helpers, 1999, page 81.

³⁶ “Betania - I come to reconcile them,” Online posting, <http://members.aol.com/bjw1106/marian9.htm>, cited August 28, 1998.

at a much lower frequency, and they too give attention to the true presence of Jesus in the Eucharist.

At St. Andrew's Church, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, after Communion, I could see the Host in the monstrance and then it was quickly covered over. Jesus said: "My dear people, today you celebrate My institution of My Blessed Sacrament by My Presence coming into the bread and wine at the Mass. Believe, My faithful, that I am truly present in the consecrated bread and wine. You have witnessed many miracles of My Real Blood coming forth from the Host as evidence to those unbelievers. I tell you, at every Mass you witness My miracle in the Transubstantiation when the bread and wine are made into My Body and Blood. Take advantage of this time to adore Me in exposition of My Host, for a time is coming when this privilege will be taken away. I recommend to all of you to encourage your priests to have Perpetual Adoration of My Host. I bring many graces to those who can visit Me and give Me praise and adoration."³⁷

Many of the miracles have been proven to be Real Blood by the scientists. Even in the face of reality and technical proof, there are still many who do not believe in My Real Presence. This denial of My Presence is the worst of insults and a disrespect for My Gift of the Eucharist. This is why those same people, who reject My Presence, do not feel it necessary to confess their sins. Those, who teach against My Real Presence, and put down these miracles, are the real blasphemers....Those, who do

³⁷ John Leary, *Prepare for the Great Tribulation and the Era of Peace, Volume VII*, Santa Barbara, CA, Queenship Publishing, 1997, pages 57, 58. Message from "Jesus" to John Leary.

not love My Blessed Sacrament, are the lukewarm
that I will vomit from My mouth. ³⁸

Why the Eucharist?

There are many more Eucharistic messages and reported miracles. But the question we must ask is why? Why does the apparition of Mary encourage the faithful to worship and adore the consecrated Host? Her many messages on the Eucharist have spurred the formation of multiplied thousands of Eucharistic prayer groups and perpetual Eucharistic adoration groups throughout the world. Was this her goal? Obviously yes! But might she have a much greater goal in mind?

In the book *Messages From Heaven*, author Jim Tetlow demonstrates from God's inerrant Word that the apparition of Mary contradicts the Scriptures and offers a false gospel. She, or more accurately it, is not the Mary of the Bible, but rather a satanic counterfeit. Therefore, would a demon endeavor to lead the world to worship and trust the true Jesus of the Bible? Or is it more likely that these impostors would direct the people of the world to worship "another Jesus" or a false christ?

In this chapter we have added another large piece to the overall puzzle. It is apparent that attention to the Eucharistic Christ is being focused not only by the pope, but also from apparitions claiming to be the mother of Jesus. Could their vision of a global move toward the Eucharistic Jesus really occur?

³⁸ Ibid., Volume XI, page 8, [bold not in original].

Chapter Eleven

The Eucharistic Reign of Christ

Jesus Christ can be found throughout the Bible, from Genesis to Revelation. The Old Testament prophesied of the coming Messiah hundreds of years before Jesus was born. The Bible predicted that the Savior would be born in Bethlehem. ¹ He would be born of a virgin. ² He would be fully God and fully Man. ³ He would be of the seed of Abraham. ⁴ He would be a descendant of King David. ⁵ He would live a sinless life. ⁶ He would be crucified and die for our sins. ⁷ He would rise from the dead. ⁸ He would ascend to heaven. ⁹

The New Testament and history confirms that Jesus fulfilled all these prophecies and many more. We are also

¹ Micah 5:2

² Isaiah 7:14

³ Isaiah 9:6-7

⁴ Genesis 12:3; 22:18

⁵ Jeremiah 23:5-6

⁶ Isaiah 53:9, 11

⁷ Psalm 22:16; Zechariah 12:10; Isaiah 52:13-53:12

⁸ Psalm 16:10; 49:15; Malachi 4:2

⁹ Psalm 68:18

told that after Jesus rose from the dead He appeared bodily to His disciples and many others before ascending bodily to heaven:

For I delivered to you first of all that which I also received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He was seen by Cephas, then by the twelve. After that He was seen by over five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain to the present, but some have fallen asleep.¹⁰

And He led them out as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. Now it came to pass, while He blessed them, that He was parted from them and carried up into heaven.¹¹

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight.¹²

The Word of God states that Jesus is currently at the right hand of the Father and that He is coming again:

But this Man, after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at the right hand of God, from that time waiting till His enemies are made His footstool.¹³

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, has in these last days spoken to us by His Son,

¹⁰ 1 Corinthians 15:3-6

¹¹ Luke 24:50-51

¹² Acts 1:9

¹³ Hebrews 10:12-13

whom He has appointed heir of all things, through 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 at the right hand of the Majesty on high.**¹⁴

And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven."¹⁵

Second Coming or Manifestation?

The previous statements about Jesus are all supported by Scripture. However, despite the overwhelming evidence, not everyone who claims to be a Christian agrees with the literal interpretation of these Bible verses. In particular, there are those who believe Jesus will manifest in His Eucharistic presence before He rules and reigns in His glorified body.

In this chapter, we want to examine what role the Eucharistic Christ may play with regard to the Second Coming of Jesus and the last days. The Bible clearly teaches that the Second Coming of Christ will be in a moment of time and that every person on earth will simultaneously witness Jesus return:

Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all

¹⁴ Hebrews 1:1-3

¹⁵ Acts 1:10-11

the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him.
Even so, Amen. ¹⁶

However, teachings associated with the Eucharistic Christ appear to be preparing the world for an alternative Second Coming scenario often called the Eucharistic Reign of Jesus.

Apparitions of "Jesus"

Michael Brown is an investigative journalist. His conversion experience took place in 1983. Since that date he has visited twenty-five sites of alleged Marian apparitions around the world. He has authored numerous books and his articles have appeared in periodicals such as *Reader's Digest*, *New York Magazine*, *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Discover*, and *The New York Times*. ¹⁷

Brown's web site is Spirit Daily. Each day he posts articles that relate to current events and his view of Bible prophecy. Many of his commentaries deal with topics related to Marian apparitions and the role he believes these apparitions play in preparing the world for what lies ahead. Brown also writes extensively on the topic of the Eucharist and conveys the message that we are about to enter into a new era characterized by what is known as the Eucharistic Reign of Christ.

On July 1, 2003, Spirit Daily posted two articles dealing with the subject of Christ and the future. One article was titled "Manifestation of Jesus Could Take Form That's Similar to Full-Scale Apparitions." This is how the article began:

¹⁶ Revelation 1:7

¹⁷ Michael H. Brown, *The Final Hour*, Queenship Publishing, Goleta, CA, 1992, page xii.

It would be something, wouldn't it? A report that Jesus was appearing in some remote place—just as Mary is appearing. We can only imagine the effect that would have. We can only imagine the flood of pilgrims.

Already we know what happened when the Blessed Mother appeared at Fatima, Lourdes and Medjugorje. Thousands and then millions—tens of millions, at each of those places—rushed to feel the grace associated with what theologians classify as first-tier “corporeal” apparitions.

They were not simple visions. They were not fleeting manifestations. They were first-tier apparitions—and how much more grace would there be if there was to be a first-class corporeal apparition of Jesus?

Such has never occurred, not since the Ascension. Yes, there have been many countless visions of the Lord, and He has been seen, allegedly, by countless individual mystics.¹⁸

Brown made his point clear. While Marian apparitions have been common and widespread, not a single “first-class corporeal” apparition of Christ can be documented. As Brown summarized:

No, He has been in the background, waiting for a much larger manifestation. It is like she has been preparing the way. It is like her appearances are a forerunner of how He will one day appear. At the same time we have to be cautious: if there is such an apparition, might it be a deception? Might it be what Scripture warns us about when it says not to

¹⁸ www.spiritdaily.com/manifestation2.htm.

heed those who say Christ is appearing here or there or in the desert? ¹⁹

Manifestations of "Christ"

While Michael H. Brown is obviously aware of the Scriptures found in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew warning about false appearances of Christ in relation to the Second Coming, it appears he does not take these warnings very seriously. On the same day, he posted a second article titled "Predictions Provoke Key Question: Do We Face Second Coming or a Manifestation?" In this article Brown provides an interesting scenario for the Second Coming that clearly points to the Eucharistic Christ:

What might be meant by a "manifestation"? We're prompted to pose those questions due to the flurry of prophecies during the past twenty years and recent predictions that Jesus will soon manifest or even formally return. In our minds the key question: Which is likeliest—a manifestation or His actual Second Coming?...Will there be a multiplication of His alleged apparitions? Will there be an enhanced power (as well as miracles) associated with the Blessed Sacrament? ²⁰

Brown goes on to answer his own question, clarifying how he believes "Jesus" might appear here on planet earth in the future. While up until now, Marian apparitions have been commonplace, he suggests that similar kinds of appearances of Christ could happen in the future. He writes:

Right now such manifestations are mainly associated with the Blessed Mother. Will they soon be

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Michael H. Brown, <http://spiritdaily.com/manifestation.htm>, cited July 1, 2003.

predominately associated with Christ Himself? Will the day come when an image of Christ will miraculously appear (in the same way as the famed image of Guadalupe) or will He appear in the same way that Mary has appeared at places such as Lourdes, Medjugorje, and Fatima – *in apparition*?²¹

According to Brown, manifestations of this “apparitional Jesus” would have a tremendous impact on the world and the world’s religions. Further, he suggests that a Catholic “seer” by the name of Maria Esperanza has predicted that Jesus will come in a form that many do not expect:

Might *this* be what will happen? Will Christ soon appear to people in various parts of the world as He did for those forty days following His Resurrection? We wonder because already there are reports of Muslims receiving dreams of Jesus, and at another Church-approved site, in Venezuela, at Betania (which means *Bethany*), seer Maria Esperanza has recently predicted that Jesus will come in a way that is “very different” than many conceive.²²

Then Brown makes another key point. He clarifies that this “manifestation theory” fits the Catholic position on the Second Coming. This Roman Catholic view rejects the belief held by many Evangelical Christians that Christ will literally return and rule here on earth for one thousand years. Brown writes:

This reminds us of the biblical admonition that He will come as a “thief in the night” – and again hints, perhaps, more at a series of supernatural

²¹ Ibid.

²² Ibid.

manifestations than the Final Coming—contrary to many evangelical beliefs that He will come as an actual flesh-and-blood messiah to literally rule the earth for a thousand years. That conception is rejected by the Catholic Church.²³

Though the literal reign of Christ for 1000 years on earth is rejected by the Catholic Church, the 20th chapter of the Book of Revelation is very clear. The literal millennial reign of Jesus is clearly described in this chapter: “And they [believers] lived and reigned with Christ for a thousand years” (Revelation 20:4).

Eucharistic Manifestations

Sadly, Brown and many others look more to apparitional messages than the Word of Truth. Michael Brown confirms that his manifestation theory is based on apparitional messages. The “Mary” who often calls herself the Mother of the Eucharist, predicts she will herald the coming reign of her son, the Eucharistic Christ. As Brown states:

At Medjugorje the Madonna allegedly told seers on January 8, 1984: “Do not think that Jesus is going to manifest Himself again in the manger; friends, He is born in your hearts.” Does this hint at a Eucharistic manifestation, a spiritual renewal, which is also prophesied (as beginning shortly) by Maria Esperanza? “The same way He resurrected—that is how God is going to appear to you, to me, in that way, as an apparition,” asserts the famous mystic, although we are left to discern if this is a formal coming or, again, a manifestation.²⁴

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ Ibid.

The scenario that Michael Brown proposes regarding the Second Coming of Jesus is not unique. Over the past several years I have discovered there are many others who advocate a similar scenario.

In an article found on the perpetualadoration.org web site, we read that:

Fr. Joseph Iannuzzi, OSJ agrees that Christ will reign gloriously on earth, not physically, but in the Eucharist. In his book *The Triumph of God's Kingdom in the Millennium and End Times: A Proper Belief from the Truth in Scripture and Church Teachings*, he argues from the writings of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, from the Magisterium, and from Sacred Scripture that there will be a flowering of Christ's kingdom on earth which will last for a period of time, not necessarily a literal thousand years, during which Christ will reign gloriously on earth, not physically, but in the Eucharist. During this period he says that the Eucharistic Heart of Jesus will "cultivate in the faithful a spirit of intense adoration and worship never before seen." Perhaps the spread of perpetual adoration we are seeing is a sign of more to come! ²⁵

The World's Greatest Secret Revealed

Thomas W. Petrisko has written a book titled "Mother of the Secret: From Eucharistic Miracles to Marian Apparitions Heaven Has Sought to Illuminate and Defend What Was Once the Church's Greatest Secret." ²⁶ Petrisko's book

²⁵ Online posting: www.perpetualadoration.org/ws2000.htm, cited April 28, 2004.

²⁶ Thomas W. Petrisko, "Mother of the Secret: From Eucharistic Miracles to Marian Apparitions Heaven Has Sought to Illumi-

explains what is meant by the Eucharistic Reign of Jesus. While Petrisko maintains the Presence of Christ in the Eucharist has always been a sacred belief of the Roman Catholic Church, the time is soon coming, he believes, when the entire world will witness Christ's Eucharistic reign.

As an overview, we can examine a statement made on the back cover of Petrisko's book:

In *Mother of the Secret*, Dr. Thomas W. Petrisko traces for us the exciting history of this important part of our faith. And he reveals how what was once the Church's greatest secret is about to become the cornerstone of a glorious new era, an era in which Jesus Christ will soon come to reign throughout the world in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.²⁷

Further, to clarify what Petrisko means by the "glorious new era in which Jesus Christ will come to reign throughout the world in the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist," he states:

Visionaries foretell that mankind will move from a secular agnostic, practically atheistic realm into a world that basks in the reality of God and belief in the presence of the supernatural. The prophets say that mankind will then thrive on secure faith and confidence in this reality, for true peace will rule and the Church will reign supreme. Most notably, many Catholic visionaries insist that the world will at last come to deeply understand the power, the mercy and the grace that is available in the mi-

nate and Defend What Was Once the Church's Greatest Secret," Queenship Publishing Company, Santa Barbara, 1997.

²⁷ Ibid., back cover.

raculous True Presence of Jesus Christ in the Sacrament of the Holy Eucharist.²⁸

Petrisko, like Michael Brown, agrees that “Mary” the mother of Jesus, will play a crucial role in the conversion process that must occur if the world is going to embrace the Eucharistic Reign of Christ. This apparitional woman has been announcing that there is a “new era” ahead in which the Eucharistic Christ will bring peace to the world. Petrisko states:

According to the Virgin Mary, it is particularly the faith in this Eucharistic nourishment which will effect the greatest changes in this new era. Mary says that much of the world will not only come to believe this mystery, but also will partake in it. Indeed, it is said that the Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary during our times will gloriously lead the world into a new era of true peace. At that time, the Holy Eucharist will be better known, appreciated and treasured. It will be a reign not just within the Church and individual lives, but in whole nations. Thus, the infinite power and grace available in the Eucharist will no longer be the world’s greatest secret!²⁹

The New Era

Given Petrisko’s preceding scenario, it is clear that he believes the Eucharistic Christ along with the “Mother of the Eucharist” will soon play a major role in evangelizing the world to the Roman Catholic Church. Petrisko summarizes his vision of the future by quoting a statement made by Father Martin Lucia in an article written for the journal *Immaculata*:

²⁸ Ibid., page xii.

²⁹ Ibid., page xxiv.

The message of all the Marian apparitions, both past and present, is that the triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary will culminate in the Eucharistic reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Eucharistic reign will come through perpetual adoration of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament.³⁰

There are numerous others who support the idea that the Mother of the Eucharist and the Eucharistic Christ will soon manifest and rule and reign over the entire world. Ted and Maureen Flynn are the authors of *The Thunder of Justice*,³¹ which investigates the prophetic side of messages coming from the Queen of Heaven. In their book, they state:

As John the Baptist prepared the way for the first coming of Jesus. Mary prepares the way for His Second Coming. Mary proclaims that a new world and era is upon us, and the triumph of Her Immaculate Heart and the Second Pentecost (the outpouring of the Holy Spirit) will usher in the Reign of the Sacred Heart of Jesus. The Blessed Mother spoke through Father Gobbi on October 13, 1990 about the glorious reign of Jesus and His Second Coming: "The glorious reign of Christ, which will be established in your midst and the Second Coming of Jesus into the world is close at hand. This is His return in glory. This is His glorious return, to establish His reign in your midst and to bring all humanity, redeemed by His Most Precious Blood, back to the state of His new terrestrial paradise. **That which is being prepared is so great that its**

³⁰ Ibid., page 268.

³¹ Ted and Maureen Flynn, *The Thunder of Justice*, MaxKol Communications, Inc., Herndon, VA, 1993.

equal has never existed since the creation of the world.”³²

Global Reign

Is the last sentence of the above quote simply the dream of a few fringe Catholics? Consider the following. Father Don Stefano Gobbi is the head of the Marian Movement of Priests. Over 100,000 of the world’s 400,000 Catholic priests are members of this organization. The Marian Movement of Priests have compiled a book containing hundreds of messages reportedly given to Father Gobbi from “Mary”. Here is one example:

Because in the Eucharist, Jesus Christ is really present, He remains ever with you, and this presence of His will become increasingly stronger, will shine over the whole earth like a sun and will mark the beginning of a New Era. The coming of the glorious reign of Christ will coincide with the greatest splendor of the Eucharist. Christ will restore His glorious reign in the universal triumph of His Eucharistic reign, which will unfold in all its power and will have the capacity to change hearts, souls, individuals, families, societies and the very structure of the world.³³

As we have documented in chapter 4, the Catholic Eucharist is not the Jesus of the Bible. However, these authors, visionaries, and the pope himself, seem to place more weight on apparitions, experiences, and Church traditions, than they do on the Word of God. When we ignore

³² Ibid., page 12, [emphasis in the original].

³³ Fr. Don Stefano Gobbi, *To the Priests, Our Lady’s Beloved Sons*, St. Francis, ME, The National Headquarters of the Marian Movement of Priests in the United States of America, 1998, page 528. Message given on August 21, 1987 to Father Gobbi.

God's warnings and accept extra-biblical revelations without testing them by the Bible, we are vulnerable to all manner of deception.

Bud MacFarlane Jr. is the author of the best-selling Catholic novel *Pierced By A Sword*. In this book, Mr. MacFarlane paints an amazingly detailed picture of end-time events, based not on the Bible, but mainly on apparitions, visionaries, and Church dogmas. Below is an excerpt:

Within one year, on a Thursday, in the mountain village of Garabandal, Spain, a giant cross appeared in the sky above the pines. It was the Great Miracle of Garabandal. Millions present were instantly healed of mental and physical infirmities, as prophesied. The Cross was two stories tall, surrounded by an illuminated cloud, and was suspended thirty feet in the air above a patch of pine trees. Satellite television beamed its image around the world. People could walk up to it, look at it, but could feel nothing when they reached out to touch it.

It was similar to the Cross that every person on the face of the earth had seen during the Great Warning. There was one difference: there was no corpus on the Garabandal Cross. **Suspended above it was a Sacred Host.** Streams of heavenly red and white light came forth from the Host. The Body of the Risen Christ. The misty cloud illuminated the Cross and Sacred Host at night.

The Cross remains there to this day. Over two billion pilgrims came from all over the world to see it in person....**In addition, everyone "met" the Im-**

maculate Conception, Mary, at the foot of the Cross during their Warnings. ³⁴

Similar scenarios are given by scores of apparitions and believed on by millions of followers. Many additional sources could be quoted showing how professing Christians are being misled by apparitional messages, unreliable experiences, and unbiblical teachings.

What Does the Future Hold?

As previously stated in this chapter, the Bible teaches that Jesus is the Son of God. Jesus died on the cross, was resurrected from the dead, and then ascended into heaven to prepare a place for all those who will place their trust in Him alone. While He presently dwells in heaven, He will return. In the Book of Acts we are given details concerning Jesus' bodily ascension from the Mount of Olives into heaven. As Luke recorded:

Now when He had spoken these things, while they watched, He was taken up, and a cloud received Him out of their sight. And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven as He went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel, who also said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand gazing up into heaven? This *same* Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." ³⁵

Note the clarity of the words that are used. This "same Jesus" who departed planet earth for heaven, "will so come in like manner as you saw Him go into heaven." Is there any way the Second Coming of Christ could be con-

³⁴ Bud MacFarlane, Jr., *Pierced By A Sword*, Fairview Park, OH, Saint Jude Media, 1995, pages 552, 553, [emphasis added].

³⁵ Acts 1:9-11 [italics added.]

fused with future “manifestations” of a false christ appearing in churches worldwide?

Jesus Himself stated exactly how He would return. His return at the Second Coming will be seen by all. In Matthew 24 we read:

Then the sign of the Son of Man will appear in heaven, and then all the tribes of the earth will mourn, and they will see the Son of Man coming on the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.³⁶

The apostle John reiterated this truth in the Book of Revelation: “Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him, even they who pierced Him. And all the tribes of the earth will mourn because of Him. Even so, Amen.”³⁷

Notice that every person alive on the planet will witness the glorious appearance and return of Jesus Christ to earth. There is no possible way such a majestic appearance of Jesus Christ at the Second Coming could ever be compared to the so-called appearances of the Eucharistic Christ we are being told will someday transform the world.

Warning of Deception

Only those who rely on apparitions or private revelations or signs and wonders, could be deceived by Eucharistic manifestations. Only those who do not love and know God’s Word, the Word of Truth,³⁸ could be persuaded to believe that Eucharistic manifestations were

³⁶ Matthew 24:30

³⁷ Revelation 1:7

³⁸ Psalm 119:43; 2 Corinthians 6:7; Ephesians 1:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; James 1:18

equivalent to, or would precede His Second Coming. The Bible warns of lying wonders that would occur before Jesus' true Second Coming.

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, **with all power, signs, and lying wonders, and with all unrighteous deception** among those who perish, **because they did not receive the love of the truth**, that they might be saved. And for this reason God will send them strong delusion, that they should believe the lie, that they all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.³⁹

In our concluding chapter we will explain our hope and the reason for writing this book—that you may receive eternal life in Jesus Christ by obeying the true gospel and following the only true God.

And this is eternal life, that they may know You, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom You have sent.⁴⁰

³⁹ 2 Thessalonians 2:9-12

⁴⁰ John 17:3

Chapter Twelve

The Biblical Gospel and the Biblical Jesus

Time will tell whether or not the Eucharistic Jesus will reign in the world. However, the immediate question you must ask is—“Will the Eucharistic Jesus reign in my heart?” Will you trust “another” Jesus because of Rome or because apparitions endorse him? Will you trust “another” Jesus because you have experienced a miracle or felt a presence? Or will you follow the Jesus of the Bible?

Only the Bible, the Word of God, is infallible. ¹ It is truth. ² We know this by its fulfilled prophecies. There are dozens of prophecies concerning Christ alone that were fulfilled. In addition, there are hundreds of prophecies concerning Israel and the Gentile nations that have come to pass. The probability of all this happening by chance is too small to consider.

At least forty men in different countries, at different times, in three different languages, over a period of 1600 years penned the Sacred Word. They had no way of collaborating, yet the Bible has a unified theme. It tells one

¹ 2 Peter 1:20-21

² John 17:17

consistent story. No other book can boast of such intelligent design.

The Holy Bible has endured centuries of efforts to burn and banish it. Yet, as Jesus predicted it has survived.³ In fact it has flourished. Today the Bible is available in over 2300 languages and dialects.⁴ This amazing book records the life of the only perfect Person. No other book and no other man can compare.

There is no risk in accepting the Bible as our final authority.

Faith is not a Feeling

The Bible states simply, “We walk by faith, not by sight.”⁵ The Bible further explains that saving faith in God comes as we hear and obey the Word of God—“faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”⁶ Christians are to follow Jesus Christ alone—who is the very word of God.⁷ We must abide in Him. As the Bible states:

If you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed.⁸

How can a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.⁹

³ Matthew 24:35

⁴ www.biblesociety.org. Portions or all of the Bible have been translated into over 2,300 languages and dialects covering over 90% of the world’s population.

⁵ 2 Corinthians 5:7

⁶ Romans 10:17

⁷ John 1:1, 14

⁸ John 8:31

⁹ Psalms 119:9

From childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.¹⁰

However, the Bible cautions we are not to walk by sight (or appearances or visions or feelings or emotions). We all know that appearances can be misleading. Our senses can be deceived. Jesus warns us, "Do not judge according to appearance, but judge with righteous judgment."¹¹ During the last days seductive deceptions will multiply. Quoting from the Scriptures:

The coming of the lawless one is according to the working of Satan, with all power, signs, and lying wonders.¹²

But evil men and impostors will grow worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived.¹³

Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving (seducing) spirits and doctrines of demons.¹⁴

Feelings, Experiences, and Deceptions

A universal common denominator associated with the Eucharist and the apparitions involves reports of intense encounters and gratifying feelings. Many experience a sense of serenity. Others encounter a spiritual presence or warmth. Some see visions, while others commune with an apparition. However, as the previous Scriptures explain, Satan and his demons can conjure false signs, feelings, and

¹⁰ 2 Timothy 3:15

¹¹ John 7:24

¹² 2 Thessalonians 2:9

¹³ 2 Timothy 3:13

¹⁴ 1 Timothy 4:1

experiences. These experiences can give the recipient a false sense of peace with God, while in reality they are leading the person into a trap.

While the Bible acknowledges that believers experience God in unique and often intense ways, it also warns that feelings, visions, emotions, and experiences can be of the deceptive sort. We are to seek the Lord in His Word. Any experience that occurs must be tested by God's Word. "Test all things; hold fast what is good."¹⁵ If our spiritual filter is not God's law, His testimony, His word, we will be led astray:

To the law and to the testimony! If they do not speak according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.¹⁶

Follow Your Heart or God's Law?

The world tells us to follow our heart—go with our feelings. The Bible, on the other hand, states emphatically—"He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be delivered."¹⁷ Our senses and feelings can direct us on a path that leads to destruction rather than life. We need a new heart—one guided by God and His trustworthy testimony. As the Bible states:

There is a way that seems right to a man, But its end is the way of death.¹⁸

The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?¹⁹

¹⁵ 1 Thessalonians 5:21

¹⁶ Isaiah 8:20

¹⁷ Proverbs 28:26

¹⁸ Proverbs 14:12

¹⁹ Jeremiah 17:9

Cast away from you all the transgressions which you have committed, and get yourselves a new heart and a new spirit.²⁰

God tells us we need new hearts. You may ask, "What's wrong with the heart I have?" Once again, it is God's Word that acts like a divine flashlight showing us the darkness and depravity of our old heart:

For the word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.²¹

For the commandment is a lamp, and the law a light.²²

The Bad News

God tells us that we need new hearts. But how do we receive this new heart? Before explaining God's gracious provision, we must first understand mankind's dilemma. The Bible states that "all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God."²³ Scripture is emphatic—"They have all turned aside, they have together become corrupt; There is none who does good, no, not one."²⁴ This is why we cannot trust our old hearts. Our hearts are inclined to error and sin.

To see if God's assessment is fair and accurate, we need to look at His Ten Commandments (Exodus 20).

²⁰ Ezekiel 18:31

²¹ Hebrews 4:12

²² Proverbs 6:23

²³ Romans 3:23

²⁴ Psalm 14:3

Have you ever used your Creator's name (Jesus Christ or God) in vain, or worse, as a curse word? Think of how offensive this is to your Creator. This is the God who wove you in your mother's womb. He blessed you with eyes that behold His beautiful creation and taste buds that delight in His great variety of foods. Think of the wonder of your ears, and how music can inspire and refresh you. The truth is, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights."²⁵ Do you see why God considers blasphemy very serious?

Have you ever lied? White lies and fibs are lies in God's eyes. We're commanded to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Have you?

Have you ever stolen anything—the value is irrelevant? Cheating on a test or fudging the tax numbers is stealing. Please remember God sees the past as the present. He does not forget.

Have you ever committed adultery? Or have you secretly desired to? Jesus said, "But I say to you that whoever looks at a woman to lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart."²⁶

Have you ever committed murder? Most plead innocent until they realize that hatred in the heart is murder in God's eyes: "Whoever hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him."²⁷ Think of the people you would like to get out of the way. Reflect on the many people who annoy you and those who caused you pain or embarrassment. To hate them in your heart is murder.

²⁵ James 1:17

²⁶ Matthew 5:28

²⁷ 1 John 3:15

If you answered “yes” to these questions, then by your own admission you are a blasphemer, a liar, a thief, an adulterer and a murderer at heart. When we sin, we sin against our Holy Creator. And God warns us that: “The wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23). Sin causes both physical death and eternal death in the lake of fire.²⁸

The Good News

Fortunately this is not the end of the story. The Good News is that “[God] is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). In His great love, God became a man, in the person of Jesus Christ, to fulfill the law and to pay the penalty which our sins demanded. We sinned, yet Jesus died in our place. The Bible declares:

God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.²⁹

The wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.³⁰

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.³¹

Jesus died in our place. He then rose from the dead defeating death. All who will turn (repent) from their sins and place their trust in Him will be saved. This is how we receive a new heart—and eternal life. This is what Jesus meant when He said we must be born again.³² Our spirit

²⁸ Revelation 20:15

²⁹ Roman 5:8

³⁰ Romans 6:23

³¹ John 3:16

³² John 3:3, 7

is made alive when we simply believe in the Lord and His provision.

The Free Gift

It is important to understand that God offers salvation to all as a free gift. Only Jesus could pay the penalty that our sins demanded. We cannot bribe God with our "good works" or church attendance. No ritual or sacrament can appease His divine justice. We must rest fully on the merits of Jesus Christ. The Bible states:

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast. ³³

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ. ³⁴

Then they said to Him, "What shall we do, that we may work the works of God?" Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." ³⁵

The Biblical Jesus

The Roman Catholic Jesus is the Eucharistic Jesus. The Marian apparition's Jesus is also the Eucharistic Jesus. However, the Eucharistic Jesus is not found in the Bible.

John chapter 1 states that Jesus is the Creator of all things. ³⁶ He is eternal. ³⁷ He is sinless. ³⁸ He is immuta-

³³ Ephesians 2:8-9

³⁴ Galatians 2:16

³⁵ John 6:28-29

³⁶ John 1:1-3

³⁷ Revelation 1:8

³⁸ 1 John 3:5

ble—unchanging.³⁹ In Colossians chapter 1, we read that Jesus, the One who made everything, is the One who redeemed us from our sins.⁴⁰ The Word of God also states that Jesus is omnipotent,⁴¹ omnipresent,⁴² and omniscient.⁴³

Isn't it reasonable to ask: how could Jesus, the eternal Creator, be dependent on a Roman Catholic priest to manifest His presence? Nowhere in the Bible does it state that Jesus can be placed and confined in a container made with human hands. Nor is a priest needed to invoke His presence.

Further, the fact that the Eucharistic Jesus is supposedly re-sacrificed at each Mass, demonstrates another major conflict with the Bible. In the Book of Hebrews we read:

But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant,

³⁹ Hebrews 13:8

⁴⁰ Colossians 1:13-18

⁴¹ Philippians 3:21

⁴² Matthew 28:20

⁴³ John 16:30

that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.⁴⁴

According to Scripture, the ultimate sacrifice has been made “once for all”. Jesus has “obtained eternal redemption”. “It is finished,”⁴⁵ as Jesus said. The upper room is vacated. The cross is bare. And the tomb is empty. Jesus has been resurrected. Halleluiaah! He now dwells in the hearts of those who have trusted and believed on Him. Truly, this is reason for rejoicing!

Jesus said, “I am with you always, even to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:20). The apostle Paul tells us that Christ dwells in every believer’s heart.⁴⁶ Christians are the temple of God—the Spirit of God dwells in us.⁴⁷ If ingesting the consecrated bread were the true way to receive Christ, it would only bring His presence for a short time. Only while the bread remained in the digestive tract would Christ be in you. The rest of the time He would be absent. Yet, the biblical Jesus told us, “Abide in Me, and I in you.”⁴⁸ Jesus is always with every believer.

Serious Consequences

The Book of Hebrews appears to include a warning to those who crucify Christ repeatedly and put Him to an open shame. In the sixth chapter we read:

Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doc-

⁴⁴ Hebrews 9:11-15

⁴⁵ John 19:30

⁴⁶ Ephesians 3:17

⁴⁷ 1 Corinthians 3:16

⁴⁸ John 15:4

trine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. And this we will do if God permits. For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted the heavenly gift, and have become partakers of the Holy Spirit, and have tasted the good word of God and the powers of the age to come, if they fall away, to renew them again to repentance, since they crucify again for themselves the Son of God, and put Him to an open shame.⁴⁹

Are you willing to risk the chance of putting Jesus to an open shame by following the Eucharistic Christ? Keep in mind that Jesus was crucified once for sins. He shed His blood on the cross one time for all. The sacrifice has been made. Our sins have been paid in full.

Call Upon the True Jesus

If we will repent of (turn from and forsake) our sins and simply acknowledge what He has done and ask Him to forgive us for what we have done, then we can enter into a relationship with Jesus, our Creator and Redeemer, that will last forever. As Paul wrote to the Romans:

But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon

⁴⁹ Hebrews 6:1-6

Him. For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."⁵⁰

Calling upon the Lord is all that is required. If we come before Him with a sincere heart and ask him to forgive us for our sins, He will.

In the Book of Acts, Luke recorded:

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them, "Rulers of the people and elders of Israel: If we this day are judged for a good deed done to a helpless man, by what means he has been made well, let it be known to you all, and to all the people of Israel, that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead, by Him this man stands here before you whole. This is the 'stone which was rejected by you builders, which has become the chief cornerstone.' Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."⁵¹

It is this Jesus, the Jesus of Nazareth, the "Jesus" Peter spoke about, who is the true Jesus. Let each one of us be sure that we know who He is because we know His word.

Prayer for Salvation

Dear Lord, Your Word says that if I will confess with my mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in my heart that He rose from the dead, I will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

⁵⁰ Romans 10:8-13

⁵¹ Acts 4:8-12

I confess to You my sins and ask for Your forgiveness. I ask You to be my Lord and my Savior. Please guide and direct my life from this point on by Your Holy Spirit. Help me to know You better day by day as I read Your Word.

In the name of Jesus, Amen.