

Crumbs from the Lord's Table

The One Church Christ Built



I am with the church always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.
(Matt 28:20)

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Mother of the Lord, Pray for us



if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. (Matt 18:17)

Archangel Michael
protect us from the evil one



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Contents

1. Introduction – The One Church Christ built	1-3
2. Sola Scriptura of Bible Alone revisited Church is the sole interpreter	3-6
3. Sola Fide or Faith Alone revisited	6-9
4. The One Church built by Christ	9-12
5. Peter the Rock or Stone misconception revisited	12-15
6. What the Bible says of Jesus' Only Church	15-34
1. Church is the Pillar of Truth, Manifold of Wisdom	16-18
2. A Church witnessing unto all nations, so undoubtedly one visible to all	18-20
3. One Single Visible Church in succession till His return	20-22
4. Revelation 12 – Church in the wilderness not an invisible church	22-25
5. No separate invisible church on earth. One general assembly; visible on earth with invisible in heaven	25-29
6. An imperfect Kingdom with good & bad co-existing	29-31
7. The Vineyard appointed to new imperfect servants with successive authority till His return	31-34
7. Church Fathers say their Church is Catholic	34-35
8. What the founder of Sola Scriptura & Sola Fide said of the Catholic Church	35-37
9. Did Luther or any other have the authority from the Lord or His Church?	37-38
10. Who then is the Whore of Babylon	38-41
11. The Catechism of the Catholic Church on the separated communities and their salvation	41-42
12. Various Christian denominations and their evolution	42-43

The One Church Christ Built

*Ga:1:8: **But though we, or an angel from heaven (as individuals), preach any other gospel unto you than that which we (the church) have preached unto you, let him be accursed.***

The Christian scenario is confronted with more than 33500 churches, all claiming to be true churches 'built by Jesus', when Jesus said there shall be 'One fold'. The 'so called churches' all preaching a different thing according to their private interpretation of the same One Bible, when Jesus had said that His disciples 'shall be of One mind'. All this being the after effect of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century that declared that the One and Only church of Christendom till that time, the Catholic church to which the reformers all (Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Huss) belonged to had been taken over by the devil and that the Lord had deserted His Only church somewhere around the 4th or the 7th century. But the Lord had prayed for 'One fold' and promised of His presence 'always' and 'till the end of time' with this church (Matt 28:19, 20). To encounter this idea, the Reformers declared that the church which was promised the Lord's presence 'always' and 'till the end of time' was not a visible one as to be seen but an invisible one and no believer knew if he belonged to it. Only God knew who were His. They claim that this true church remained invisible alongside the Catholic church and that the written 'Word of God', the Holy Bible alone was the rule of faith. A claim for which they have no base or support from the Bible though they all claim to be Sola Scriptura or Bible only believers. **All of the reformers Luther, Calvin, Zwingli, Huss in fact belonged to the Catholic church** and none from any other. The Lord in fact as the Bible in Matt 28:18, 20 says, promised His everlasting presence with a 'witnessing church preaching unto all nations' and so evidently a very visible one. The only church seen doing this from the beginning is the Catholic church. What does the Lord Himself say in the Bible?

TAKE HEED THAT YE BE NOT DECEIVED: FOR MANY SHALL COME IN MY NAME, SAYING, I AM CHRIST; AND THE TIME DRAWETH NEAR: GO YE NOT THEREFORE AFTER THEM. (LUKE 21:8)

To Go after the 'Many' churches and be deceived or to remain with the One and Only from Christ, is for the elect to discern.

Why is it so difficult for the Sola Scriptura or Bible alone believers to discern the true church when the characteristics of the true church is plainly given in the Holy Bible?

A look into what the Bible says about the Lord's church.

Jesus entrusted with the church the mission of preaching, baptizing and making disciples, thus sending out a witnessing church which then ought to be a visible one 'witnessing unto all nations'. He promised his presence 'always' 'till the end of time' to this visible church (Mt 28:19,20).

A 'light of the world' shining before men, whose works can be 'seen by men'. A 'city that is never hid' because the Lord said it 'cannot be hid'. (Mt 5:14-16).

He left His church to the authority of 'servants' who were to take care of it not just for a couple of years or centuries, but 'till His return'. (Mk 13:34-37 & Lk 12:41-46).

He said there shall be 'One' fold and One Shepherd', (Joh: 10:16), then not a variety of 'churches'. And this fold' and the successive generations of this fold' is 'visibly seen & known to the world' as His disciples (Jn 17:20-22). A Single Visible fold of successive generations 'seen & known by the world' as 'His disciples' by their being 'One'.

He promised the presence of the Holy Spirit in the church 'forever' and that the Holy Spirit would 'guide the church into all truth'. (Jn 14:16 & 16:12-14).

The Lord had said that He who hears the church hears the Lord Himself, and he who despises the church despises the Lord Himself and the Father who sent Him. (Lk 10:16)

He also gave the church the authority to treat as heathen or unbeliever, those who did not listen to the church (Mt 18:17).

*The Bible says, Some will leave the church 'to manifest that they did not belong to the church and that divisions and heresies happen in church to **make manifest** the approved ones, not that the approved will go invisible. (1Cor 11:18, 19 & 1Jn 2:18-20).*

The Bible says about those who preach a gospel different from the church of Jesus and the apostles was accursed. (Gal 1:8,9).

Isn't the Catholic church this True, visible witnessing church that is being cared for by those entrusted with the care 'till the lord's return'?

Before a look into the True and the One Church in line of succession with the Only Church of Jesus and His apostles to which the Lord had promised His presence '**always**' 'till the end of the age or end of time', it is worthwhile to look into what the Bible says of the Protestant claim of Sola Scriptura or Bible only and Sola Fide or Faith Alone.

Verses for reference

Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen. M't:28:19, 20

Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven. M't:5:14-16

For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch. M'r:13:34-37

Then Peter said unto him, Lord, speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all? And the Lord said, Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season? Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken; The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him his portion with the unbelievers. Lu:12:41-46

But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed. Ga:1:8,9

And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd. Joh:10:16

Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Joh:17:20-22: (visible throughout the successive generation of believers 'for the world to see')

And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever. Jn 14:16

I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: Joh:16:12-14

He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me. Lu:10:16

And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. M't:18:17

Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. 1Jo:2:18-20

For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you. 1Co:11:18, 19

Sola Scriptura or Bible Alone **revisited**

The Protestant Reformation brought forth the doctrine of Sola Scriptura or Bible alone, the meaning of which is "by scripture alone". The doctrine that the Bible contains all knowledge necessary for salvation and holiness. Consequently, *sola scriptura* demands that only those doctrines are to be admitted or confessed that are found directly within or indirectly by using valid logical deduction or valid deductive reasoning from scripture. But nowhere in the Bible do we see such a rule. This doctrine is purely manmade.

In the Bible in Matt 28:19, Eleven apostles were send out into the world by the Lord with the mission to witness unto all nations and they were joined by Mathias, the apostle replacing Judas, and this mission they did well or the Book of Revelation would not mention the 12 as the 12 foundations of the church.

Re: 21:14; *And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.*

All 12 were the foundations. But we can see that the Bible contains only the works of 5 of them; Mathew, John, Peter, James & Jude. So the works of 5 of the 12 we have in the Bible, then could it be that the rest of the 12 i.e. Thomas, Bartholomew, Andrew, the other James, the other John, Philip, Simon the Canaanite and Mathias, the one who replaced Judas, did these seven not preach? We see that all of them jointly as well as separately received the commandment to preach. And what of the ones who wrote the gospels and the letters, did they just restrict themselves to just a couple of letters? Paul, the apostle who entered the scene later wrote numerous letters. The others must also have written more than a couple of letters. Then why are they not in the Bible? Also St Paul says '*James, Cephas, and John, seemed to be pillars*, (Ga:2:9). But from them as well we see only a couple of letters. Is that all they preached? Also it is hard to believe that Paul wrote this many epistles while the prominent 12 including the 3 pillars wrote only a couple or none. Moreover, in the letter of Paul to the Colossians, he mentions of his letter to the Laodiceans, but we do not see this letter in the Bible

Col: 4:16: *And when this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans; and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea.*

Revelation shows that like Ephesus, Laodicea was also another church

Re:1:11: *Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto **Ephesus**, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto **Laodicea**.*

All the 12 and Paul did preach and did write a lot, but many letters by the apostles have not come to the fore, and also, though they did all preach more, not all of it was written down, as St. John often mentions in his letters

2Jo:1:12: *Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.*

3Jo:1:13: *I had many things to write, but I will not with ink and pen write unto thee:*

From all this it is plainly understood that the written scripture is not complete. More of the preaching was also done orally. Thus Sola Scriptura has no base because not all of scripture or God's word is contained in the books we have in the Bible. But we know that the mission of teaching was entrusted not to the apostles as persons individually but to the church, and as Scripture says, the Word continues with the church in the form of the Spirit who continues with the church, the church that is the pillar and ground of truth. Nowhere in Scripture do we see that the books in the Bible contain all of God's word, but the Scripture says that His church is the Pillar and ground of truth, the church is the manifold of wisdom, it is the fullness of Christ Himself.

1) The church is 'the pillar and ground of the truth' (1Tm:3:15).

1Tim 3:15 But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

2) The mysteries hidden from the beginning of the world has 'now' been revealed by the Holy Spirit to the '**holy apostles and prophets**' (Eph 3:4-5) who are '**the church**', (Eph 3:9), 'the manifold of wisdom'. Revelation is made to the church, similar to as in the Old Testament 'the church receiving the oracles'. (Acts 7:38 & Eph 3:4,5)

Eph:3:4-5: *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;*
Eph 3:9, 10 *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world*

*hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by **the church the manifold wisdom of God**,*

Ac:7:38: This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:

*Mt:13:11: He answered and said unto them, Because **it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven**, but to them it is not given.*

- 3) The church is the 'fulness of Christ Himself'. (Eph:1:22-23).

*Eph 1:22-23 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the **fulness of him that filleth all in all**.*

- 4) Church ministers are the stewards of the mysteries. (1Cor:4:1; Eph 3:4-5).

*1Cor 4:1 Let a man so account of us, as of the **ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God**.*

- 5) The mission to teach was given to the church. (Mt:28:19, 20).

*Mt 28:19, 20 Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world**. Amen.*

- 6) The lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts. (Malachi 2:6-8).

Mal 2:6-8 "True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts."

Church is the sole interpreter

If so, then as Malachi clearly states, isn't the church the interpreter rather than individuals. The mystery that had been hid has now been revealed to the 'church the manifold wisdom of God'. Which church? The visible or invisible? The visible of course, as it is mentioned in the beginning of the verse 'to make **all men see**' so something visible. The visible preaching church. Then interpretation is to be sought from this manifold of wisdom rather than each person doing his own interpretation as a result of which we see the breakups to Luther's church, Campbell's church, Wesley's church, and thousands of other 'man made sects'.

And St. Peter, the chief apostle warns us in advance that;

Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.(2Pet 19-21)

Interpretation of scripture is to be done by the 'holy men of God' i.e. the church, (Eph 3:5 & 10) **moved by the Holy Spirit** and not for private interpretation. Because just as false prophets existed at the time of the prophets, false teachers who '**privily**' or through private interpretation shall bring in damnable heresies. Interpretation is the mission of the church '**moved by the Holy Spirit**'. (2Pet 1:19-21; 2:1-3; 3:16-17). It is to the church that revelation was made, as St Paul says in Eph 3:9-10.

*2Pe:1:19-21; 2:1, 2; 3:16-17: We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.** But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who **privily shall bring in damnable heresies**, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.*

*Eph 3:9-10 And to make **all men see** what is the fellowship of the **mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,***

Interpretation of the Bible into the various ways suited to men is strongly condemned in the Bible. The Bible says 'such are accursed' (Gal 1:8,9).

Now, aren't Christians to live by the unwritten word as well? The Lord has said 'by every word'

Mt:4:4: *But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but **by every word** that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

What the other apostles taught and has been lost was the teaching 'of the church' not of their own personal knowledge. This been transmitted by the church in the form of church traditions and so rightfully said by Paul to hold on to the traditions that 'they' i.e. the church has taught by 'word' or 'epistle' i.e oral as well as written.

2Th:2:15: *Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and **hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle.***

2Th:3:6: *Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after **the tradition which he received of us.***

This 'tradition of the church' is different from 'human tradition or tradition of men' that was much criticized by Jesus. Church tradition is the word of the Holy Spirit because the Lord said that the Spirit who is with the church forever will take it from Him and give to the church.

He also said

Joh:16:12-14: *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but **whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come.** He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you.*

We see this happening in the Acts (Ac:15:28: *For it seemed good **to the Holy Ghost**, and to us; Ac:20:7, 28, 29: Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all **the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood**) and the Book of Revelation. 'what the Spirit saith to the churches' (see Re:2:7, 2:11, Re:2:17, Re:2:29, Re:3:6, Re:3:13, Re:3:22)*

Church tradition is but the fulfillment of the Lord speaking 'forever' through His the Spirit who is with the church forever, as He foretold in Jn 16:12-14. That, *the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things* Joh:14:26, or *'when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come'* (Joh:16:13)

And this is one reason that "Scripture alone" or 'Bible alone' theory of the Pentecostal and Protestant sects is a misconception with no base, because the written Bible is incomplete. While, the church is 'the manifold of wisdom', 'the pillar and foundation of truth', 'the fullness of Christ'.

I put forward this question to any and every believer be it of any sect. To whom do you turn to for as 'the pillar and foundation of truth or the manifold of wisdom to which the hidden truth has been revealed' or for the correct interpretation of the Bible? To your local pastor of course or another teaching authority of the sect. Where did they get their knowhow of the Bible? Not from the true church of course, they are breakaways and in opposition to the 'the pillar and foundation of truth or the manifold of wisdom to which the hidden truth has been revealed' and they preach a gospel different from that of the true church and so the St Paul call such as 'accursed' (Gal 1:8,9). Each sect has a different interpretation.

St Pauls warns believers to keep away from the teaching of 'any man' or 'an angel' other than what 'they' i.e. the church taught.

Ga:1:8, 9: *But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you **than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed.** As we said before, so say I now again, If **any man** preach any other gospel unto you **than that ye have received**, let him be accursed.*

And St Peter also points out the possibility of misinterpretation of Paul's epistles' which are 'hard to understand' in 2Pet 3:15 to 17, that;

2Pe:3:15-17: *And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also **in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.** Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, **beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.***

i.e. in 'all' of Paul's epistles there are 'things hard to understand', 'which the unstable wrest' 'as they do also the other scriptures' 'unto their own destruction'. St Peter continues to say that he is warning the believers before it happens 'lest ye also be led away with the error'.

The Canon of Scriptures (i.e. the set of Books in the Bible) that the Protestants base their belief of Sola Scriptura was ironically decided upon by the council of the Catholic church i.e. by church tradition. They do not believe

in church tradition, but have no alternative but to believe in this tradition of the Catholic Church. Nowhere in the bible can we find any mention as to which of these books are divinely inspired and which not. At the time the canon was decided by the council there were even other so-called gospels and epistles in circulation. Like in the councils seen in the Acts of the apostles, as the apostles did not just use their personal judgment on matters, but took council and decided on it, similarly the Council of the Catholic church met and decided as to which books are inspired and which not, under the guidance of the Spirit. This again affirms the Christ's promise that the Holy Spirit guides the church and that the decisions of the councils are from God, that church traditions are from God. If the scriptures themselves are part of church tradition, then how believe in Sola Scriptura? Also the chapter-wise and verse-wise divisions in the Bible are as well done by men of the church and so church tradition and were not done by the apostles or the ones who wrote the Books.

Sola Scriptura is a doctrine new to the world that emerged only in the 16th century after the protestant reformation. Till then everyone had no problem with following church tradition as well. Till then all including Luther, Zwingli, Hus, Calvin who were themselves devout Catholics, and all Christendom had no problem in following the Catholic church as the pillar and bulwark of truth.

Sola Fide or Faith alone revisited

Protestant Reformation gave rise to another doctrine that is Sola Fide or 'Faith alone is needed for justification before God', teaching that Faith alone was needed for ones salvation and 'works' or 'deeds' were not needed. But this again is the protestant strategy foretold by St. Peter who stressed about persons wrestling with verses from Paul's epistles and confusing the believers.

2Pe:3:15-17: And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction. Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.

This doctrine of Sola Fide contradicts what St James clarifies in his letter. St James in his letter says

Jas:2:17-26: Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

To justify his stand, Luther denied that the epistle of James was the work of an apostle and termed it an "epistle of straw".

In Chapter 2 of his letter to the Romans St Paul himself without doubt clarifies that 'works' or deeds' do matter;

Ro:2:1-12: Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; Who will render to every man according to his deeds: To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life: But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: For there is no respect of persons with God. For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law;

Ro:6:15, 16: What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?

2Co:5:10: For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.

In his letter to Titus as well, the same St Paul writes;

*Ti:2:13, 14: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of **the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.***

St. Peter as well repeats the need for good works.

*1Pe:1:16-19: Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy. And if ye call on **the Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to every man's work**, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear: Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:*

In the Book of Revelation, our Lord Himself declares that everyone will be judged 'according to their works'.

Re:20:12: And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works.

Re:22:12: And, behold, I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be.

What St Paul meant by 'works' that was not needed was the 'works of the law', mainly the much debated circumcision that was not needed anymore in the New Covenant. This mainly because the Jews evidently insisted on obedience to the Jewish Law for all Christians.

*Lu:16:16: The **law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached,** and every man presseth into it.*

*Joh:1:17: For the **law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.***

*Ro:2:29 to 3:1: Thou that makest thy boast of **the law**, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written. **For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law;** but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? For he is not **a Jew**, which is one outwardly; **neither is that circumcision,** which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and **circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter;** whose praise is not of men, but of God. **What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision?***

*Ro:3:28-31: **Therefore we conclude** that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. **Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles?** Yes, of the Gentiles also: **Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith. Do we then make void the law through faith?** God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

*Ro:4:9-11 Cometh this blessedness then **upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also?** for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. **How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision?** Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: **And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith** of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.*

*Ro:9:30-32: What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. **But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness.** Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by **the works of the law.** For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;*

*Ga:2:14-16 But when I saw that they walked not uprightly according to the truth of the gospel, I said unto Peter before them all, If thou, being a Jew, livest after the manner of Gentiles, and not as do the Jews, **why compellest thou the Gentiles to live as do the Jews?** We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, Knowing that a man is not justified by **the works of the law,** but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the **works of the law** shall no flesh be justified.*

*Ga:5:3-6 For I testify again **to every man that is circumcised,** that he is a debtor to do the whole law. Christ is become of no effect unto you, **whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace.** For we through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith. For in Jesus Christ **neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but faith** which worketh by love.*

St Paul concludes his letter to the Galatians in a way surely pointing to the fact that he was debating that the Jewish law was not needed for Christians rather than ‘works of men’.

*Ga:6:11-17 Ye see **how large a letter I have written unto you** with mine own hand. As many as desire to make a fair shew in the flesh, they constrain you to be circumcised; only lest they should suffer persecution for the cross of Christ. For neither they themselves who are circumcised keep the law; **but desire to have you circumcised**, that they may glory in your flesh. But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. **For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God. From henceforth let no man trouble me: for I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.***

All this points to the fact that when St Paul said ‘works of the law’ he meant obedience to the Jewish Law, that was not needed for Christians for salvation. This can be seen in the Acts of the apostles where as well.

Ac:15:1-6; 22-31: And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them, they determined that Paul and Barnabas, and certain other of them, should go up to Jerusalem unto the apostles and elders about this question. And when they were come to Jerusalem, they were received of the church, and of the apostles and elders, and they declared all things that God had done with them. But there rose up certain of the sect of the Pharisees which believed, saying, That it was needful to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.

Acts 15:22-31 Then pleased it the apostles and elders, with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas; namely, Judas surnamed Barsabas, and Silas, chief men among the brethren: And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The apostles and elders and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia: Forasmuch as we have heard, that certain which went out from us have troubled you with words, subverting your souls, saying, Ye must be circumcised, and keep the law: to whom we gave no such commandment: It seemed good unto us, being assembled with one accord, to send chosen men unto you with our beloved Barnabas and Paul, Men that have hazarded their lives for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We have sent therefore Judas and Silas, who shall also tell you the same things by mouth. For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things; That ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication: from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.

Ac:21:20-25: And when they heard it, they glorified the Lord, and said unto him, Thou seest, brother, how many thousands of Jews there are which believe; and they are all zealous of the law: And they are informed of thee, that thou teachest all the Jews which are among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their children, neither to walk after the customs. What is it therefore? the multitude must needs come together: for they will hear that thou art come. Do therefore this that we say to thee: We have four men which have a vow on them; Them take, and purify thyself with them, and be at charges with them, that they may shave their heads: and all may know that those things, whereof they were informed concerning thee, are nothing; but that thou thyself also walkest orderly, and keepest the law. As touching the Gentiles which believe, we have written and concluded that they observe no such thing, save only that they keep themselves from things offered to idols, and from blood, and from strangled, and from fornication.

To sum up the facts, it can be said that the Protestant doctrine of ‘Sola Fide’ or Faith alone is a mere ‘wresting’ of the letters of St Paul, as forewarned by the Chief apostle St Peter.

Even in the Book of Acts which gives us a picture of the true church, we do not see even one instance of ‘Faith Alone’, but we do see Ananias and Sapphira two believers who were part of the church but had their lives taken for just concealing a part of the money they received from selling their possession, though they sold it all because of their faith (Acts 5: 1-10).

Similarly in the parable of the Good Samaritan we see a Levite priest with faith and no works, and a common Samaritan with works as well as faith and the Lord favoured the Samaritan than the priest (Lk 10:30-37).

The doctrine of Sola Fide or Faith alone was not heard of till the 16th century Reformation and we know why. The reason was that this was just a misinterpretation of Martin Luther which he mentions in his ‘Table talks’. This discovery is termed as Luther’s “Tower Experience,” because in one of his “table talks” he mentions that he was studying Romans 1:17 in the heated room (his study) of the tower of the Black Cloister in Wittenberg when the light broke upon him. Luther makes it clear in several places that this (his discovery of the doctrine of Faith alone), not the 95 Theses, was the pivotal event of his life. The most important of these appears in his Preface to the Complete Edition of Luther’s Latin Writings of 1545. Several other mentions of the event are recorded from his “Table Talks,” one from 1532 (LW 54:193-194), one from 1538 (LW 54:308-309), and one from 1542-43 (LW 54:442-443).

The doctrine of Sola Fide was so not part of any church doctrine till Luther had the ‘Tower experience’ in the 16th century.

‘Tower Experience’ References:

Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

<http://www.orldutheran.com/html/tower.html>

The *Internet Modern History Sourcebook*

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/1519luther-tower.html>

Boise State University website

<http://www.boisestate.edu/courses/reformation/luther/05.shtml>

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The One Church built by Christ (which one from the 35,500 or more)

The Protestant Reformation of the 16th century brought about the evolution of newer Christian denominations into the Christian world which was till then dominated by Christianity's only church, the Catholic church. Martin Luther, the father of the Reformation who was himself a Catholic priest posted his 95 theses at the All Saints Church (Castle church) door criticizing the corrupt practice of Indulgences in the Catholic church. The church that produced many a great saints like St. Antony, St Francis, and numerous others and the Saint of our time Mother Teresa, had its own bad times as well with immoral and corrupt among the clergy and even bad and immoral Popes. This led to the evolution of various Christian denominations founded by Luther, Zwingli, Hus, Calvin, etc, all who were devout Catholics. Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, all of them were of Catholic upbringing, and Luther and Zwingli both having undergone Catholic seminary life were Catholic priests who had accepted the vow of celibacy. They were practicing Catholic priests administering the Catholic Sacraments and known for their devotion to the Virgin Mary, till after the reformation. Reformation was called for by Luther to Reform the Catholic church from these practices. On October 31, 1517 Luther nailed his famous Ninety-five Theses challenging indulgences to the All Saints church (Castle Church) door in Wittenberg. This was the customary manner of calling for a debate, but this act was the spark which led to Luther's breakaway from the parent church and the evolution of the Lutheran church. Luther had in fact wanted only to Reform or clean the Catholic church from its corruption, as his 95 Theses shows. The clauses from his theses clearly show that he acknowledged the Catholic church as being the true church, the dignity of the Chair of Peter, the place of the Pope as Peter's successor and the Pope as being guided by the Holy Spirit. Martin Luther founded the doctrines of Sola Scripture (Bible alone) and Sola Fide (Faith alone) which are the two pillars of Protestant doctrine. Martin Luther condemned the doctrinal views of John Calvin and Huldrych Zwingli, two other leading Protestant figures though they all claimed to follow the same Bible. The reformers Luther, Zwingli and Calvin soon disagreed among themselves and divided their movement according to doctrinal differences —first between Luther and Zwingli, later between Martin Luther and John Calvin - consequently resulting in the establishment of diverse Protestant denominations such as the Lutheran, Reformed, Anabaptist, and others. Following Martin Luther's excommunication from the Catholic Church in 1520, which marked the beginning of the Protestant movement, over 35,500 different denominations have been created in about 500 years.

The Holy Bible in various instances talks of the church as thus

Eph 5:23 Christ is the saviour of the church.

*For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and **he is the saviour of the body.***

Mt 28:19,20, Mr 16:15, Lk 24:47 His church is a church 'teaching all nations; witnessing unto all nations' (a visible one among all nations then) and a baptizing and gathering church. He is with this church 'always' 'till the end'.

*Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you **always**, even **unto the end of the world.** Amen. Mt 28:19,20*

*And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.** Mr:16:15*

*And that repentance and remission of sins **should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.** Lu:24:47*

In 14:16 His Holy Spirit is with the church forever.

*And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may **abide with you for ever.***

Joh:16:12-14 His Spirit will guide the church into all truth.

*I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit **when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:***

Mt 16:18 Gates of hell shall not prevail against the church.

*And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build **my church**; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

1Tim 3:15 Church is the pillar and bulwark of truth

*But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in **the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.***

Eph 3:9,10 Church is the manifold of wisdom to which the hidden mysteries from the beginning have 'now' been revealed. For men to 'see'.

*And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in **God**, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that **now** unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by **the church the manifold wisdom of God.***

M't:5:14-16 The church is the light of the world. It cannot be hid. It is to shine 'before men' for the world to see its works.

*M't:5:14-16 **Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.** Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. **Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.***

1 Cor 11:18, 19: Unlike what is taught by the protestants, the true church is not invisible or hidden when corruption creeps in, but 'the true church is made manifest when divisions and heresies spring up'.

*1Co:11:18, 19: For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For **there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.***

Mr 3:27-30 No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder it unless he tie up the strong man.

*M'r:3:27-30: **No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house.** Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewith soever they shall blaspheme: But he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of eternal damnation: Because they said, He (Jesus) hath an unclean spirit.*

M't:13:31, 32: The church sown as a mustard seed grows to become the greatest among herbs and a tree for all to come and lodge in.

*M't:13:31, 32: Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The kingdom of heaven is like to a **grain of mustard seed**, which a man took, and sowed in his field: Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but **when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.***

Lu 10:16 & Mt 18:17 He that hears the church hears the Lord and the Father. He who does not hear is to be treated as an unbeliever.

*Lu:10:16 **He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.***

*M't:18:17 And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but **if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.***

It says this about God's words

*Isa:40:8: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but **the word of our God shall stand for ever.***

M't:24:35: M'r:13:31: Lu:21:33: Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.

And about Jesus Christ it says;

*Heb:13:8: **Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.***

But how sad that with the coming of the Protestant Reformation, these trustworthy words of the Lord are forgotten and the church that the Lord Himself set on earth has been forsaken by the Protestants and other denominations. They claim that true church on earth was taken over by the antichrist and say that a small group of true believers existed alongside the Catholic church, and that this group being persecuted by the Catholic church, practiced their belief in hiding. The reformers to substantiate their stand against Christendoms only church till then, the Catholic church to which they all (Luther, Zwingli, Huss, Calvin) belonged had been taken over by the devil and that the Lord had deserted it from somewhere around the 4th or the 7th century. That the true church is an invisible one and no believer knew if he belonged to it. Only God knew who were His. They

claim that this true church remained invisible alongside the Catholic church. A claim for which they have no base or support from the Bible though they all claim to be Sola Scriptura or Bible only believers.

Yet another claim is that there existed no visible church in that period from the time the antichrist took over the church in the early fourth or seventh century (they are not sure when), but there was a group of true believers who practiced Christianity and were part of an 'invisible church' for a period of more than 1200 years. But from the verses pointed above, this claim is mere imagination. For, the True church does not have these two qualities. Also, the writings of the Church Fathers who were of the apostolic era and who were direct disciples of the apostles, show that the church of that era was one that followed the Catholic ways like devotion to Mother Mary, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, infant baptism, the Primacy of Peter and the Seat of the Pope, only to name a few.

The anti-catholic doctrine that the church of Jesus had gone apostate or taken over by the antichrist implies that;

Eph 5:23 *Christ is the saviour of the church (still He could not save the church that He sent to witness to all nations. The 'saviour' of the church could not save his church when corruption crept into his church. The church failed its mission for around 1200 years.)*

Mt 28:19, 20 *His church is a church 'witnessing unto all nations' and a baptizing church. He is with the church 'always' 'till the end'. (The church deserted its mission to witness unto the world for 1200 years. It went into hiding, it became invisible. No trace of its witnessing was visibly seen or heard of for 1200 years. He who promised his presence 'always' and 'till the end' deserted the church for around 1200 years when corruption crept in).*

Jn 14:16 *His Holy Spirit is with the church forever (The Holy Spirit whom Jesus sent to be with the church 'forever' deserted the church for a 1200 years.)*

Jn 16:12-14 *His Spirit will guide the church into all truth. (The Spirit let the church be guided into error than into all truth).*

Mt 16:18 *Gates of hell shall not prevail against the church (Gates of hell prevailed for more than 1200 years)*

1Tim 3:15 *Church is the pillar and bulwark of truth (Church became the pillar and bulwark of error for 1200 years)*

Eph 3:9-10 *Church is the manifold of wisdom (The church to which the mystery hidden from the beginning was revealed and called to be the manifold of wisdom was for 1200 years or so the manifold of error).*

Mt 5:14-16 *The church is the light of the world. It cannot be hid. It is to shine 'before men' for the world to see its works. (the light failed to shine for 1200 years, The city was hid for 1200 years. No light shone 'before men' for 1200 years)*

Mr 3:27-30 *No one can enter a strong man's house and plunder it unless he tie up the strong man. (Devil entered God's house, tied up the strong man and plundered his house for 1200 or more years).*

Mt 13:31, 32: *The church sown as a mustard seed grows to become the greatest among herbs and a tree for all to come and lodge in. (The Kingdom on earth was left undergrown for around 1200 years).*

Lu: 10:16 ***He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.** (He who does not hear the church is the true believer. He who despises the Father and the Son is the true believer).*

Mt: 18:17 ***And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.** (If he neglects the church He is the true believer).*

And about God's words

Isa:40:8: *The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but **the word of our God shall stand for ever.** (grass withers, flower fades, but the word of God keeps changing).*

And about Jesus Christ;

Heb:13:8: ***Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.** (Jesus keeps changing everyday)*

If this is so, then 'Bible alone believers', why believe in a false Bible. The word of God concerning the church in the above verses were false as per Protestant / Pentecostal doctrine, to them even the 'word of God' has passed and to them Jesus Christ is not the same yesterday, today and forever. That Jesus has lied, and the church He sent out has failed. To them He keeps changing yesterday, today and forever. The Protestants who claim their belief to be based solely on Scriptures then imply that the Bible itself is false. The words in it except a few of them are false.

Then let me ask a Pentecostal or Protestant, if it was that the above is true, then you believe in a failed hope, a failed God whose words have no value. The religion is worthless. The belief is in vain because you believe in a Jesus who is not true to his words. Which of his words can then be trusted and which not? Which of His words will He change next? Protestants and evangelicals believe in a Jesus who breaks promises. They believe in a God who is inferior to the devil and can be subdued by the devil, unlike the God that the Catholics believe in. To the Catholics, all His words are true and so the hope He gives is true. A God who is Almighty, who has let the devil roam for a limited time and will bind him at the appointed time, and a Christ who is true in every word like He said 'Heaven and earth shall pass but the word of God shall stand forever'. To us Catholics He is true to 'every word'. To the True church the Lord Himself blessed, all His words are true. Jesus never fails. His Spirit guides into all truth. Yes, He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is the saviour of His church. He is the Lord Almighty and no one can plunder His house. He is its protector always till the end.

To those claiming to be 'Bible alone' believers, why neglect the verses discussed above and accept only a few verses that suits to their belief and leave out the rest.

The Scriptures every Christian uses, be it from any denomination, this Holy Bible, where did they get it, except from the Catholic church who preserved it from the beginning till now. The same Bible is used by all Bible alone Christians. The Bible given to them by 'the apostate church'.

Peter the Rock or Stone misconception revisited

For those debating the meaning of the word Peter as to rock or stone, must have a look at the Protestant official Bible, the King James version for the usage of the word stone or rock.

Read through the parable of the Sower in the 3 gospels as well as the description of the tomb in which the Lord was buried in all 3 gospels.

Judge yourselves the meaning whether rock and stone mean one and the same to the King James translator(s). Every other protestant translation this same usage is seen.

Parable of the Sower	M't:13:5: <i>Some fell upon <u>stony</u> places,</i> M't:13:20: <i>But he that received the seed into <u>stony</u> places,</i>	Mr:4:5: <i>And some fell on <u>stony</u> ground,</i> Mr:4:16: <i>And these are they likewise which are sown on <u>stony</u> ground;</i>	Lu:8:6: <i>And some fell upon a <u>rock</u>;</i> Lu:8:13: <i>They on the <u>rock</u> are they,</i>
Tomb of the Lord	M't:27:60: <i>And laid it in his own new tomb, which he had hewn out in the <u>rock</u>; and he rolled a great stone to the door of the sepulchre, and departed.</i>	Mr:15:46: <i>And he bought fine linen, and took him down, and wrapped him in the linen, and laid him in a sepulchre which was hewn out of <u>a rock</u>, and rolled a stone unto the door of the sepulchre.</i>	Lu:23:53: <i>And he took it down, and wrapped it in linen, and laid it in a sepulchre that was hewn in <u>stone</u>, wherein never man before was laid.</i>

To mean 'rock', the word 'stone' is used, and vice versa, and thus to the translators, both words mean the same. Then the usage of The word 'Cephas' in John 1:42 would obviously mean 'rock' though the translator mentions it as 'stone', because he (the translator) retains the original Aramaic word 'Cephas' which means rock. In Aramaic the word to denote 'stone' is 'lithos'.

Joh:1:42: *And he brought him to Jesus. And when Jesus beheld him, he said, Thou art Simon the son of Jona: thou shalt be called **Cephas**, which is by interpretation, A stone.*

So the usage of stone by the translator of KJV means rock because he retains the Aramaic Cephas which means rock and not any other. Sola scriptura followers look to out of Bible sources when looking for the meaning of 'Peter' rather than the 'Scripture alone'. The Bible clarifies that its true form is Cephas. And Cephas means rock.

Other instances in The King James version where the original name given by Jesus to Simon is mentioned.

1Co:1:12: *Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of **Cephas**; and I of Christ.*

1Co:3:22: *Whether Paul, or Apollos, or **Cephas**, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours;*

1Co:9:5: *Have we not power to lead about a sister, a wife, as well as other apostles, and as the brethren of the Lord, and **Cephas**?*

1Co:15:5: *And that he was seen of **Cephas**, then of the twelve:*

Ga:2:9: *And when James, **Cephas**, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that was given unto me, they gave to me and Barnabas the right hands of fellowship; that we should go unto the heathen, and they unto the circumcision.*

One other person besides God was given the designation of rock in the Old Testament, in Isaiah 51:1-2, Abraham, the rock on which the nation of Israel was founded.

Isa 51:1,2: *Hearken to me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the LORD: **look unto the rock whence ye are hewn**, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged. **Look unto Abraham your father**, and unto Sarah that bare you: for I called him alone, and blessed him, and increased him.*

Renaming in the Bible has been seen only in the place of significant persons due to certain positions designated by God to these persons Eg.

Abram to Abraham

Ge:17:5: *Neither shall thy name any more be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; **for a father of many nations have I made thee.***

Jacob to Israel

Ge:32:28: *And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: **for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed.***

And similarly, Simon to Cephas or Peter

Mt:16:17-18 *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, **That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;***

Thus we see, that Abram was renamed Abraham because God had made him ‘a father of many nations’, as the name suggests; and Jacob to Israel because ‘as a prince he has power with God and with men, and has prevailed’. Finally, likewise Simon Bar Jona to Peter or Cephas because it was on this Cephas that Jesus was going to build His church.

The first instance of Christ instituting His church on earth we see in Mt 16:19 where He says to Peter,

Mt:16:17 - 19: *And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, **That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church;** and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And **I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.***

Here Jesus renames Simon son of John to Peter and goes on to say, Thou art Peter and on this rock I will build my church. And then gives Peter the keys to the kingdom, and authority to bind and loose on earth as to bind and loose in heaven.

Peter is handed the “Keys to the Kingdom and the authority to open and shut, the same authority of Christ Himself as in Rev 3:7& 8. ‘The key of David’ (Rev 3:7,8). The owner of the ‘key’ Jesus Himself gives it over to Peter in the New Testament. This same bestowal of authority is seen in the Old Testament in Isaiah 22:20 to 24. This key meaning the authority of a Prime Minister or ‘government’, is transferred to the next generations as seen in the Old Testament.

Rev 3:7, 8 *And to the angel of the church in Philadelphia write; These things saith he that is holy, he that is true, **he that hath the key of David, he that openeth, and no man shutteth; and shutteth, and no man openeth;** I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast not denied my name.*

Isa:22:20 – 24 *And it shall come to pass in that day, that I will call my servant Eliakim the son of Hilkiah: And I will clothe him with thy robe, and strengthen him with thy girdle, and I will commit thy government into his hand: and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and to the house of Judah. And **the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder; so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open.** And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his*

father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons.

And at a later period in Mt 18 we see the 12 collectively or 'the church' being given the authority to bind and loose but not the key.

Mt:18:17, 18: *And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican. Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.*

To them he conferred the power to bind and loose, but as a body. With the exception of Peter in chapter 16, They did not receive such authority as individuals. The other eleven received the power to bind and loose only as a body. They must act in unison, at the very least in pairs. How do we know this? Jesus' very next words, "Again I say to you, if two of you agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three are gathered in my name, there I am in the midst of them." Some may claim that this has nothing to do with authority here but something related to forgiving a fellow brother or binding Satan. But the instance in Isaiah 22:20–24 proves beyond doubt that that is not the case.

In Jude 1:9 & Dan 12:1, we see of a chief among the angels, the Archangel Michael, (Archangel meaning chief angel), a chief angel fighting for the Lord's people and Revelation 12:7 calls his team '**Michael and his angels**'.

- 1) Why is there then a doubt about a chief among the apostles, when the Bible clearly defines Peter as being renamed 'Rock' or 'Cephas' and his group often called 'disciples and Peter'(Mt 16:7); 'Peter and they that were with him' (Luke 9:32); 'Peter with the eleven' (Acts 2:14); 'Peter and the rest of the apostles' (Acts 2:37); 'Peter and the other apostles' (Acts 5:29); 'other apostles and Cephas (1Cor 9:5). Nowhere in the Bible do we see the usage 'John and the others', or 'James and the others', or Thomas and the others' or even 'Paul and the others'. Those who object to Peter's primacy, let them look as to why in the Bible this kind of usage is applied only to Peter. The answer is simple. Peter was appointed by the Lord to 'strengthen the others' (Lk 22:32) and also, the Chief Shepherd Jesus had appointed Peter to feed His sheep as well as the lambs (Jn 21:15-17), a duty given to no other.
- 2) Peter's name always appears 'first' in the list of apostles in the gospels and Acts (Mt 10:2; Mk 3:16-19; Lk 6:14; Jn 21:2; Acts 1:13). In the list in Mathew 10:2, the words '**The first**' is added to the name of Peter. And wherever his name appears in the gospels and Acts, the name appears first among the others (Mt 17:1; Mt 17:24; Mt 26:37; Mr 5:37; Mr 9:2; Mr 13:3; Mr 14:33; Lu 8:51; Lu 9:28; Lu 22:8; Ac 3:1; Ac 3:3; Ac 3:11; Ac 4:13; Ac 4:19)
- 3) Peter is seen as the leader by the commoners of the time & Jesus and by the apostles as well (Mt:17:24; Mt 26:40; Lk 22:32; Jn 20:3-6)
- 4) After the resurrection, the Lord appears first to Peter (1Cor 15:5)
- 5) It is Peter who initiates all the ministries and councils (Act 1:15 – 20 the election of another in place of Judas); (Acts 2:5, 14 to 47 & Gal 2:8 initiating the preaching ministry among the Jews); (Acts 3:6 initiating the healing ministry); (Acts 4:6 – 20 first address among the Jewish rulers and elders); (Acts 5:3 to 11 the only one seen to use judgement over the disciples); (Acts 9:32 pastoral visit 'throughout all quarters'); (Acts 9:34 & 40 serving like his Master); (Acts 10:10 to 48 authorised to initiate ministry of salvation to the Gentiles).
- 6) Among the apostles there were ones considered pillars (2Cor 11:5; Gal 2:9).

7) "No other apostle is described in such detail in the Bible".

This sequence of bestowal of authority to Peter as chief and the rest of the twelve as the subordinate authority in the church can be found in the Gospel of Luke as well, in Luke 22:24-32

Lu:22:24-32: *And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall not be so: but he that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but I am among you as he that serveth. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.*

In Luke 22:24-33, Christ defines what it should be 'to be the greatest **among the twelve**' & the 'chief among the twelve', i.e. the greatest and the chief among them should be the one who serves **like Christ is among them as he that serveth**. He then confers the kingdom to the twelve 'just as the Father conferred it to the Son' (the same authority). Then goes on to show that of the twelve, He has prayed for Peter (not said that He prayed for all of them but 'for Peter') that his faith does not fail, and this Simon is the one who should strengthen the brethren once he returns from testing times.

The Kingdom entrusted to the twelve and Peter appointed to be the one who is to 'serve' the rest of them as the chief. And Peter is seen carrying out this duty since the beginning of the ministry Acts 1 by taking the initiative of electing one in place of Judas, in Acts 2 by initiating the preaching ministry, in Acts 3 by initiating the miracle ministry and Acts 10 by extending the ministry to the Gentiles for which revelation was made by God to Peter alone. These being only a few examples. Numerous incidents showing his prominence can be seen in the Bible. Even St Paul when he received his ministry from Jesus, he went up to Jerusalem which was the Holy See then after 3 years for what reason? 'To see Peter'. And he abode with him fifteen days, and goes on to say that 'But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother'. Some may ask, if Peter was the chief, then how is it that Paul rebukes Peter at Antioch (Gal 2:1). A similar instance we can see in 2Samuel 12 where when King David rebuked by Nathan the prophet when David was in the wrong, but it does not mean that David was a commoner does it.

Ga:1:18, 19 *Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days..But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother.*

Christ here does not simply say I appoint to you this generation of the kingdom but 'the Kingdom' as the Father appointed to the Son. Thus the apostolic authority is pertaining to the 'Kingdom'. The kingdom does not end with the death of Peter. Then this authority is continuous to all generations, till the end of the kingdom or 'when He returns' or rather 'Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing'.

This bestowal of authority we can see is the fulfillment of His parables as in

Mt:13:34-37: *For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*

This authority over 'the house' is till the end generation, i.e. till He returns. And thus we see the transfer from one to another, as in the selection of one in place of Judas, and appointing of elders by the apostles or chief elders. 'The house' has both good and bad servants co-existing, i.e. those 'watching' and those neglectful or 'sleeping'. And these again pertaining to a visible kingdom then.

The church built by the Lord on Peter is the One True church. This as all acknowledge, is the Catholic church.

Psalms:127:1: *Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.*

What the Bible says of Jesus' Only Church

Protestants claim that the True church had gone apostate and that a small group of true believers survived alongside the apostate church. Some say that a True church other than the one gone apostate existed all along but in a visible state. Well the Bible does not support this view. This view is against Jesus's own words.

Christ instituted One church and prayed that it remain One throughout successive generations **for the world to 'see & know' that they are His disciples.**

The bible says, the Church or Kingdom on earth is;

1. His church is **the Pillar & Bulwark of truth**, it is **the manifold of wisdom**, it is **the fulness of Christ Himself**. The **gates of hell will not prevail against His church**. His **Holy Spirit is with the church 'forever'**. His **Spirit will guide the church into all truth**. **Jesus is with His church 'always' till the end**. 1Tim 3:15; Eph 1:22-23; Eph 3:9,10; Mt 16:18,19; Jn 14:16; Jn 16:12-14
2. A **church witnessing unto all nations**, so undoubtedly a **church visible to all nations**. This witnessing and gathering church **has the presence of Christ 'always' till the end of the world**. A church visibly **seen and known to the world throughout successive generations** from the time of Jesus. Mt 28:19, 20; Jn 17:20-22; Ro:10:14-18; Mt:5:14-16 ; Joh:13:34-35; Joh:17:20-22; Ph'p:2:15; Mt:10:27, 28; 2Tm:1:7,8; Mt:24:14; Joh:17:18;

3. His church is **One Single Visible Fold** 'seen and known' by the world, in **continuous succession**. Heresies and divisions happen to manifest the approved ones and to manifest **the ones who leave the church as the one who did not belong to the church**. Joh:17:20-22; Eph:4:4-6; 1Co:12:11-13, 20, 25, 28;; 1Co:11:18, 19;; 1Jo:2:18-20; Mt:13:31, 32.
4. The **church in the wilderness** portrayed in Revelation chapter 12 in no way hints to an invisible church as the anti catholic propagate , but to a church living in the direct protection and providence of God as enjoyed by the disciples **in the Acts of the Apostles** similar to **the Old testament church in the wilderness**. Exodus 19:4; Deut 32:11; Isaiah 40:31; Acts 7:38 .
5. **No separate invisible church on earth ; One General Assembly or habitation or family of the imperfect Visible on Earth with invisible in Heaven**. Heb:12:18-24; Eph:2:18-22; 1Co:12:11-13, 20, 25, 28; Re:1:11-20; 1Co:6:13,15-20; Eph:5:23-32;
6. An **imperfect Church with good & bad co-existing. A Kingdom appointed to imperfect servants in charge in succession 'till His return'**. Mt:13:24-30 & 37-41; Joh:15:1-8; M'r:13:34-37; Lu:12:41-46
7. The **Vineyard of the Lord** or the **House of Israel is appointed to new imperfect servants with successive authority 'till His return'**. Mt:21:33-43; Lu:22:24-32; M'r:13:34-37.

The only church that can rightfully claim succession to the church of the apostolic era is the Catholic church. The Reformers also affirmed this fact, but they said that this church had become corrupt, a theory that is against what Christ's promises to His church and against what the Bible teaches about the church. The Bible assures that this church cannot go corrupt.

1. Church is the Pillar of Truth, Manifold of Wisdom

The Bible clearly mentions that the Church is the Ground of Truth, The Manifold of Wisdom. No mention in the Bible that Scripture is the only ground of truth.

Unlike the Sola Scriptura or Bible Alone and forget the Church theory of the anti catholics which is unfounded as per the Bible, the Holy Bible teaches that the '**church** is the manifold of wisdom' to which 'the hidden mysteries are revealed' **for 'all men to see' not a hidden or invisible church then, but one' for all men to see'**.

Mysteries are revealed to **the church**, and the church gives it to us in the written form of the Bible. Similarly in the Old Testament it was the church that 'received the oracles' and 'gave it to us'(Acts 7:38).

The church is also the 'pillar and bulwark of truth'

The church is the 'manifold of wisdom.

'The gates of hell shall not prevail against the church'

'The Holy Spirit is with the church 'forever' and He guides the church into 'all truth'.

1Tim 3:15 Church is the pillar and bulwark of truth

1Tm:3:15: *But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in **the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.***

Eph 3:9,10 Church is the manifold of wisdom to which the hidden mysteries from the beginning have 'now' been revealed. For men to 'see'.

Eph:3:9,10: *And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by **the church the manifold wisdom of God.***

The church is the 'fulness of Christ Himself'. (Eph:1:22-23).

Eph:1:22-23 *And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the **fulness of him that filleth all in all.***

Mt 16:18 Gates of hell shall not prevail against the church.

Mt:16:18: *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build **my church**; and **the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.***

Jn 14:16 His Holy Spirit is with the church forever.

Joh:14:16: *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may **abide with you for ever.***

Joh:16:12-14 His Spirit will guide the church into all truth.

Joh:16:12-14: *I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit **when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth:***

The church being the Pillar of truth, the manifold of wisdom and the 'fulness of Christ Himself', it is the church alone that has the authority to interpret what was revealed to it.

Thus, Peter declares, as like the Old Testament, the church is the sole interpreter of the scriptures. No scripture is for private interpretation. Interpretation done 'privily' leads to damnable heresies. (1Pet 1:19-21, 2:1,2; 3:16,17)

In the Old Testament, it was the church that had the authority to interpret scriptures.

Malachi 2:6-8 *"True instruction was in his mouth, and no wrong was found on his lips. He walked with me in peace and uprightness, and he turned many from iniquity. For **the lips of a priest should guard knowledge, and men should seek instruction from his mouth, for he is the messenger of the LORD of hosts.**"*

Ac:7:38: ***This is he, that was in the church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with **our fathers: who received the lively oracles** to give unto us:*

Mt:23:1-3: *Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:** All therefore **whatsoever they bid you observe, [that] observe and do;** but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*

Mt:9:11: *And they asked him, saying, **Why say the scribes** that Elias must first come?*

Mt:7:29: *For he taught them as one having authority, and **not as the scribes.***

Mt:1:22: *And they were astonished at his doctrine: for he taught them as one that had authority, and **not as the scribes.***

Mt:12:35: *And Jesus answered and said, while he taught in the temple, **How say the scribes** that Christ is the Son of David?*

Similarly, in the New Testament,

Church ministers are the stewards of the mysteries. (1Cor:4:1; Eph 3:4-5).

1Cor 4:1 *Let a man so account of us, as of the **ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.***

Eph:3:4-5: *Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is **now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;***

The mission to teach was given to the church. (Mt:28:19, 20).

*Go ye therefore, and **teach all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.***

Peter, clearly admonishes that just as in the Old Testament, Interpretation of scripture is to be done by the 'holy men of God' i.e. the church (Eph 3:5 & 10) moved by the Holy Spirit, and not for private interpretation. Because just as false prophets existed at the time of the prophets, false teachers who '**privily**' or through private interpretation shall bring in damnable heresies. Interpretation is the mission of the church '**moved by the Holy Spirit**'. (2Pet 1:19-21; 2:1-3; 3:16-17). It is to the church that revelation was made, as St Paul says in Eph 3:9-10.

2Pe:1:19-21; 2:1, 2; 3:16-17: *We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.** For the prophecy **came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.** But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, **who *privily* (private interpretation) shall bring in damnable heresies,** even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction. And many shall follow their pernicious ways; **by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.***

The only church seen and known to accept the Church as the ground of truth and manifold of wisdom and being in succession to the One and only church instituted by Christ Himself is the Catholic church.

2. A Church Witnessing unto all nations, so undoubtedly one Visible to all

*“Joh:17:20-22: Neither pray I for these alone, but **for them also which shall believe on me through their word**; That they all **may be one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe** that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be **one, even as we are one**: I in them, and thou in me, that **they may be made perfect in one**; and that **the world may know** that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.”*

*Ro:10:13-15: For **whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**. How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and **how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?** and **how shall they hear without a preacher?** And **how shall they preach, except they be sent?** as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!*

The church is a visible preaching church send to preach for all to hear. An invisible preaching church is absurd. The Book of Acts presents to us the example of this witnessing church which is fully visible with no clue of any invisibility except that it is in close alliance with the church in heaven.

Jesus entrusted the mission of ‘teaching all nations’, Jesus’s own mission to the disciples who were to exist ‘till the end of the world i.e to the church, Jesus send them with the mission to baptize and teach all nations. And He says He is with this church ‘always’ and ‘until the end of the world. (Mt 28:19). His church is one with the mission of witnessing to the world, a teaching church, a baptizing church, a disciple gathering church is the One church that has the promise of the everlasting presence of Jesus till the end of the world, one that is not an invisible one but a visible one then; a disciple making church baptizing in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; a teaching church, a church with a lot of activity in all the world. An invisible teaching church is absurd. Jesus the Light of the world and the apostles, all showed what a teaching church is. A very visible one. Jesus sent out a visible preaching church to gather a visible people. The church He instituted is a visible one. And to this visible church He promised His everlasting presence ‘always’ and until the end’. No church other than the Catholic church is accepted by history as the one in succession to this church. None other was heard of till the 16th century when men formed their own churches as per their tastes. The reformers themselves acknowledged the Catholic church’s right to this claim. Only that they said this church had gone apostate or corrupt (a claim that is against the Lord’s promises), and they wanted to reform this church. Documents from the Church Fathers who were the direct disciples of the apostles prove that the church of the Bible infact followed the Catholic way in terms of infant baptism, veneration of Mary and the saints, Primacy of Rome, Seat of the Pope, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, and the church being called ‘Catholic’ to mention a few.

*Mt:28:19, 20:Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.***

*Ro:10:14-18: How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and **How shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?** and **how shall they Hear without a preacher?** And **how shall they preach, except they be sent?** as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, **their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.***

The church of Jesus, is said in the Bible as the ‘light of the world’, so as to be seen by the world and acknowledged by the world.

*Mt:5:14-16 **Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid.** Neither do men light a candle, and put it under a bushel, but on a candlestick; and it giveth light unto all that are in the house. Let your light so **shine before men**, that **they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.***

*Joh:13:34-35: A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. **By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples**, if ye have love one to another.*

*Joh:17:20-22: Neither pray I for these alone, but **for them also which shall believe on me through their word**; That they all **may be one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe** that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be **one, even as we are one**: I in them, and thou in me, that **they may be made perfect in one**; and that **the world may know** that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (visible throughout the successive generation of believers ‘for the world to see’)*

*Ph:p:2:15: That ye may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, **among whom ye shine as lights in the world**;*

The 'world', the Lord says will glorify God because of the works of this 'city set on a hill'. A church that 'shines before men' that the world may see the good works and glorify God. The Lord prays also for '**them also which shall believe on me through their word**' i.e. the successive generation of disciples also 'seen & known by the world' and seeing them as one, may believe. (Jn 17:20) He said that by 'seeing their (the apostles and the successive believers) being one, the world may believe', these words again stressing a church witnessing as to be seen & known by the world, and this throughout successive generations. (Joh:17:20-22).

The Church 'seen' or acknowledged by the world as the Christian church in succession to the church instituted by Christ is the Catholic church. The world acknowledges the Catholic church as the only 'city' it had witnessed from the beginning to the reformation. No other existed till the 16th century reformation after which thousands were formed by men to suit to their tastes.

The Lord said this light 'of the world' or this 'city' **cannot be hid**.(Mt. 5:14-16). He is talking of a church that '**cannot be hid**', a church of believers whose good works can be '**seen**' by men or the world, a church whose unity is seen by the world. Or is it that the light went off for a period from the 4th or 6th century to the 16th century without a trace as not to be seen, or has His word failed and the light 'went invisible' where He had said it '**cannot be hid**' i.e. it shall be visible for 'the world' to see and glorify God for what it has seen. The only one church that was never hidden & the work of which was 'seen' by men from the beginning was of course only the Catholic church. Not even a spec of proof of another church that existed before the 16th century reformation is available, or of a generation of elders under whom a devout sect worshipped, or of even places of worship, at a time when even the smallest of pagan sects can be traced out from historical records, artifacts, etc. The words of the Lord clearly states that the Lord talks of a visible church in the world, a witnessing church, a church in the world '**always**' and '**till the end of the world**' and not something invisible. No other church other than the Catholic church & the Eastern Orthodox church that split from the Catholic church ever existed or was seen or heard of till the 16th century Protestant Reformation. The Lord as He said is with His church '**always**' till the end of world. Only one church ever existed '**always**', it has withstood severe persecutions under several beasts of the Roman empire, it has withstood attacks during and after the Reformation and it will exist till the end because it has its foundation in the Lord and the guidance of His Spirit forever. It is God made not man made. The only church seen and acknowledged by the world as the church in continuation with the church founded by Christ is the Catholic church and the Orthodox church that split from the Catholic church on political grounds. There is no evidence of any other that '**always**' existed and still exists.

Other group of protestants claim that a small group of true believers in succession to the apostolic church existed during those times but lived in hiding, persecuted by the Catholic church. But for this again there is first of all no evidence of such a group's existence, and if you look at the Bible, we can see that such a church cannot be the church Jesus instituted. Jesus did not institute a church that was such, but one where preachers are sent out to preach. The Bible says, and **how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?** (Rom 10:14-18). A church that was to preach on the housetops, a church that was not to fear to give testimony of the Lord (2Tim 1:7,8), a church of believers who Christ Himself had insisted that who **confesses Him before men**. And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me. Thus the church of the Lord is a church with a lot of activity before men of the world.

*Mt:10:27, 28: What I tell you in darkness, that **speak ye in light**: and what ye hear in the ear, that **preach ye upon the housetops**. And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: **but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell**;*

*2Tm:1:7,8: For **God hath not given us the spirit of fear**; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. **Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord**, nor of me his prisoner: but **be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel** according to the power of God;*

*Mt:10:33: But **whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven**.*

*Mt:10:38: And **he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me**.*

To the hypocrites He had only one say, and that was:

*But **woe unto you** (Mt:23:13; Mt:23:14; Mt:23:15; Mt:23:16; Mt:23:23; Mt:23:25; Mt:23:27; Mt:23:29).*

So not a hidden church but one with a lot of activity before men or the world is the church of Jesus. We have examples of brave martyrs who gave their lives in preaching without fear. In Revelation we see the First Resurrection of those who lived through the persecutions. The letter of St Peter & the Book of Revelation, etc were written in fact to encourage the believers who faced severe persecution.

St Paul again said, that if he does not preach the gospel, let him be accursed, (1Co:9:16) then, what of the invisible church that was in hiding, which did not do its main task that was to preach to all nations.

Then the two ideas; an invisible only church and a hiding church, do not meet the criteria of the Lord's church. These two cannot be the church send by Jesus.

Mt:10:27: *What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in light: and what ye hear in the ear, that **preach ye upon the housetops.***

Mt:24:14: *And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached **in all the world for a witness unto all nations**; and then shall the end come.*

Mt:16:15: *And he said unto them, **Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.***

Lu:24:47: *And that repentance and remission of sins **should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.***

Joh:17:18: *As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world. (The Father did not send an invisible Jesus).*

Ro:10:14-18: *How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and **how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?** as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things! But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, **their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.***

The only church seen and known to all men, of being in unbroken succession to the One and only church instituted by Christ Himself is the Catholic church. To believe in the word and interpretation of mere men or to believe the church the ground of truth, the manifold of wisdom with the promise of Christ's perpetual presence and promise from the Lord of it's infallibility, it is left to the believer.

3. One Single Visible Church in Succession till His return

There shall be One Fold – One Body

"Joh:17:20-22: Neither pray I for these alone, but **for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe** that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be **one, even as we are one**: I in them, and thou in me, that **they may be made perfect in one**; and that **the world may know** that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. " (visible and one throughout the successive generation of believers 'for the world to see')

Jesus created 'one church'; 'one fold' (Jn 17:20-22). St. Paul spoke of 'one baptism' one lord' one faith, **one body (church)** (Eph 4:4,5). Jesus wanted others to be added to this 'one fold', (Joh:10:16) not create other folds. This fold shall be one throughout successive generations and visible for the 'world to see & know' their oneness and love. St. Paul said 'we are all baptized into **one body** by the same Spirit. That there are many members but **one body**. That there should not be schism or division in this body and that the Lord has set some in this body the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, **helps, governments**, diversities of tongues. (1Co:12:11-13, 20, 25, 28:)

Eph:4:4-6: There is **one body**, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Joh:10:16: And **other sheep I have**, which are not of this fold: **them also I must bring**, and they shall hear my voice; and **there shall be one fold**, and one shepherd.

Joh:17:20-22: Neither pray I for these alone, but **for them also which shall believe on me through their word; That they all may be one**; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: **that the world may believe** that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be **one, even as we are one**: I in them, and thou in me, that **they may be made perfect in one**; and that **the world may know** that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. (visible and one throughout the successive generation of believers 'for the world to see')

1Co:12:11-13, 20, 25, 28: But **all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit**, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as **the body is one**, and hath many members, and all the members of **that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ**. For by one Spirit are **we all baptized into one body**, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free (human views); and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. 20: But now are they many members, yet but one

body. 25: That there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another. 28: And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.

Then, what of those splinter groups who left the parent church?

*1Co:11:18, 19: For first of all, when ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you; and I partly believe it. For **there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.***

They went out *that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*

Not that the approved may become part of an 'invisible church' but that they (the approved) may be made manifest or seen i.e. visible.

'They went' from among us', because they 'were not of us'

*1Jo:2:18-20: Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that **antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists**; whereby we know that it is the last time. They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.*

Then how can there be many different churches and invisible churches.

We know of, and have solid written evidence of, the beliefs of even tiny heretical groups from the first century to the present. These include:

Gnostics - Who believed matter was evil

Montanists - Who forbade marriage and anything worldly

Marcionites - Who rejected the Gospels as false

Monarchianists - Who denied the reality of the Trinity

Arians, - Who said Jesus was not fully God but a creation.

Pelagians - Who denied Original Sin and the need for Salvation

Donatists - Who refused to readmit Apostate Christians

Collyridians - Who sacrificed to Mary

Nestorians - Who said Christ had two personhoods.

Apollinarians - Who said Jesus was not truly human.

And many, many more. **But of any group holding Protestant beliefs we have no trace whatsoever.** And what does the Bible say of these man-made groups or any other group. Any group preaching a gospel different from the One church is accursed. (Gal 1:8,9).

And the fate of the false churches Jesus had foretold in Mt 7:15-20

Mt:7:15-20: Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.

Also,

*Mt:15:13: But he answered and said, **Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up.***

As foretold, the little sects of old times are no more, and the protestant and Pentecostals have reached nowhere but into division and more division. As for the Catholic church, as the Lord foretold of His church on earth in Mt 13:31-32, the Catholic church that was sown a grain grew and has become a tree for all nations to find the love of the Lord.

Mt:13:31, 32: *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The **kingdom of heaven** is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field (the world) : Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but **when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree**, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof. (not something that can be hid)*

Psalms:127:1: ***Except the LORD build the house, they labour in vain that build it: except the LORD keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.***

The only church seen and known to all, of being in succession to the One and only church instituted by Christ Himself is the Catholic church.

What more a sign do we need for to see which is the One True church, than to see for ourselves that the Catholic church there is only one, but churches and offshoots of the churches that went out from the Catholic church we have numerous.

4. Revelation 12 - Church in the Wilderness - not an invisible church

Anti Catholic propaganda claims that the true church was taken over by the Beast , and that this Catholic church is this 'Beast' portrayed in Rev 13, to whom the dragon or satan gives his power. (*Some say this happened in the 4th century through emperor Constantine who decreed the freedom of Christians from the severe persecutions of the Roman empire since the inception of Christianity, while others say this taking over by the devil happened in the 7th century. They themselves are not sure as to when*). This claim of course contradicts the Lord's words as to His presence 'always' and 'till the end' with the church, that His Holy Spirit is with the church 'forever' and will guide the church into all truth, that no one can enter a strong man's house and plunder it unless he tie up the strong man, and that the gates of hell shall not prevail against His church. They say that the church that was taken over by satan came to be called the Catholic church, while the true church was taken into hiding or invisibility which they say is what the Bible terms 'taken into the wilderness', and that a small group of true believers existed alongside the church corrupted by satan. A church invisible whose members themselves did not know if they belonged to it, only God knew. This they say is what is mentioned as the 'church in the wilderness' portrayed in Revelation chapter 12. This for a period from the 4th century to the 16th century reformation. This invisible church 'fled to the wilderness just after Christ was taken up to His throne', Why? Why, just after the ascension? The Acts of the apostles which portrays the events immediate to the ascension of Christ does not give such a picture. The Acts of the apostles which is part fulfilment of the prophecy in Rev 12, give us a direct record of the almost 35 years of the life of the church in the apostolic era immediate to the scenario of the 'child of the woman being taken up to God's throne'. In the Acts, we see nothing even similar to what the anti catholics claim. But we clearly see that just after the child of the woman was caught up to God and to his throne', at Pentecost the arrival of the Comforter and the continued presence and providence enjoyed by the church. A church going through a desert experience persecuted time and again by the Jews and Romans, but enjoying the comfort, providence and care of God's Holy Spirit. A situation similar to the providence enjoyed by the '**church in the wilderness**' in the Old Testament (Acts 7:38), that was also '**carried on eagles wings**' (Ex 19:4) similar to the church in the wilderness portrayed in Revelation 12, that is given the '**wings of an eagle**' (Rev 12:14).

Exodus 19:4 *Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and **how I bare you on eagles' wings**, and brought you unto myself.*

Acts 7:38 *This is he, that was in the **church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us:*

Well, looking at the sequence of events in Revelation Chapter 12& 13, we can clearly see that the woman is taken to the 'wilderness' or the church on earth becomes corrupt just after Jesus is caught up unto God and his throne (His ascension), and satan is thrown out of heaven. Satan goes to the Beast (catholic church) after this. If the wilderness event means the take over of the church by satan, then how is it that the Beast comes to the scene only later. Then, a corrupt church and then another church which is the Beast?

The sequence of events makes this clear.

- 1) Ascension of Christ and satan kicked out from heaven and the wilderness event of the church (the so called anti catholic claim of the take over of the church by satan).
- 2) Satan enraged and after corrupting the Lord's church, goes to the Beast who makes his entry. (actually Beast refers to the Roman empire that persecutes the church; anti catholics say the Beast as the catholic church,

and that satan goes to the catholic church that is to say that just after Jesus ascended to heaven, the true church was corrupted by satan and satan then goes for help to the catholic church which makes it to seem that the catholic church existed before the corruption of the true church).

So, the wilderness effect or the anti-Catholic claim of the so called 'take over of the church by satan' comes before the Beast (Catholic church) enters the picture, and then meaning that there was one church corrupted by satan alongside another church the Beast or Catholic church, while the true church is taken into invisibility. Three churches at that time. So, the false claim that verses 12:6 & 14 point to moral corruption of the church to form the Catholic church, and that the true church was taken up to heaven is all just misconceived propaganda to confuse the elect. The life of the church in the Act of the apostles clearly explains this. Anticatholic propaganda would mean then that the 'church in the wilderness' of the Old Testament mentioned in Acts 7:38 was also a corrupt church? The verses only mean what we actually see in the Acts of the apostles which is again the fulfilment of the prophecy in Revelation 12, that during the severe persecutions by the agents of the dragon immediate to Christ's ascension, the church going through an 'out of the world' experience is cared for and protected by God Himself and kept away from the attacks of satan, a situation similar to the Old testament 'church in the wilderness (Acts 7:38). In the Old Testament the 40 years in the desert under the direct protection and providence of God Himself, is termed by the Bible as the 'church in the wilderness'. The same is in the New Testament as well, the church experience an 'out of the world' experience under the direct providence of Christ and the comfort of the Holy Spirit from the day of His ascension. As portrayed in Acts 9:31.

Ac:9:31: Then had the churches rest throughout all Judaea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, were multiplied.

A look at the verses dealing with the 'church in the wilderness'.

Re:12:1: And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; **a woman clothed with the sun**, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head **a crown of twelve stars**: Re:12:2: And **she being with child cried, travailing in birth**, and pained to be delivered. Re:12:3: And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold **a great red dragon**, having seven heads and ten horns, and seven crowns upon his heads. Re:12:4: And his tail drew the third part of the stars of heaven, and did cast them to the earth: and **the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born**. Re:12:5: And **she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron**: and her **child was caught up unto God, and to his throne**. Re:12:6: And **the woman fled into the wilderness**, where she hath a place prepared of God, **that they should feed her there** a thousand two hundred and threescore days. Re:12:7: And there was war in heaven: **Michael and his angels fought against the dragon**; and the **dragon fought and his angels**, Re:12:8: And **prevailed not**; neither was their place found any more in heaven. Re:12:9: And **the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan**, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him. Re:12:10: And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, **Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down**, which accused them before our God day and night. Re:12:11: And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death. Re:12:12: Therefore rejoice, ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and of the sea! for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. Re:12:13: And when **the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman** which brought forth the man child. Re:12:14: And **to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished** for a time, and times, and half a time, **from the face of the serpent**. Re:12:15: And the **serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman, that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood**. Re:12:16: And **the earth helped the woman**, and the earth opened her mouth, and **swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth**. Re:12:17: And **the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed**, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ.

Sequence of events

- 1) Woman with child travailing in birth (the church of the OT; OT Israel).
- 2) A great red dragon (Satan)
- 3) Dragon stood before the woman to devour her child as soon as it was born – Heord, satan's agent
- 4) Woman brought forth a man **child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron – Christ born**
- 5) Child caught up unto God and **to his throne – Christ ascended**
- 6) The woman fled into the wilderness – The persecuted church fleeing to the protection and providence of God.
- 7) Satan defeated by the victory of the cross, and consequently the proclamation in 12:10 -12
- 8) The dragon seeing himself cast out of heaven, persecutes the woman (the church; the new Israel).
- 9) The woman is given wings ; is protected from the face of satan.
- 10) Satan fills the world with his flood of persecution to cause the church to get carried away by this flood of confusion.
- 11) The earth helped the woman; the church by its ways of carrying off the persecution.
- 12) The serpent goes after the rest of the seed of this church (individual believers).

- 13) The dragon gives his power to the beast (Roman emperors Nero, Diocletian and others like he used Herod, etc) as Daniel 7 points to, for further persecution (Revelation Chapter 13).

Nowhere in Revelation chapter 12 do we see a picture of the church being deserted by Christ, or of a church taken over by Satan, as the anti Catholics teach which is against what the Bible teaches. All the while we see the Lord protects it from the face of Satan, with His direct providence similar to how He protected the 'church in the wilderness' in the Old Testament. We read in Exodus 19:4 "Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself." These wings represent the divine assistance of God. The Old Testament church under the direct providence of God Himself is called in the Bible as 'the church in the wilderness'. (Acts 7:38: This is he, **that was in the church in the wilderness** with the angel which spake to him in the mount Sina, and with our fathers: who received the lively oracles to give unto us).

The arrival of the beast and the antichrist all happen after the church is '**given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness**, into her place, **where she is nourished** for a time, and times, and half a time, **from the face of the serpent**' not prior to it. i.e. the church goes through the wilderness experience first and later only does the Beast come in the picture.

As the devil continues to pursue the woman we read that he pours out water like a flood (by the word "flood" St. John indicates the strength or the might of the waters) after the woman and yet the earth opened its mouth to swallow the water. The waters here refer to many people as we read in Apocalypse 17:15 that waters refers to "peoples and nations" which have always sought to destroy the Church (See also Isaiah 8:8, Ezekiel 29:3).

The waters pouring forth from the mouth of the devil explains the constant persecution that the Church of God shall receive from her numerous enemies who throughout every generation seek to conquer her. We also note that the waters pour forth from his "mouth" that is, the water from his mouth is, a representation of all the lies and heresies that he (the devil) introduces in order that Christ's Kingdom may not endure. For He (the Devil) is a liar and the Father of lies. In Acts we also see how the earthly forces (in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament) are used by God to help the church in its time of persecutions.

The concluding words of St. John that the dragon "went to make war with the rest of her seed, who keep the commandments of God and have the testimony of Jesus Christ". Although the church is protected by God's special providence ([Rev 12:16](#)), the individual Christian is to expect persecution and suffering.

Anti Catholic propaganda leaves some questions unanswered such as,

The invisible church then 'fled to the wilderness just after Christ was taken up to His throne', Why? We do not see such a scene in the Acts or the epistles that were written only nearly 35 years after the ascension. But we clearly see in Acts and the epistles, the Catholic view that the church on earth faced severe persecution from the Roman empire soon after the ascension of Christ, and that it (the church) experienced the Lord's direct providence similar to the 'church in the wilderness' in the Old Testament. We see the disciples scattered throughout the Roman empire and all of them facing severe persecution and experiencing the providence of God.

If the woman portrayed is the Invisible church, it is said to be 'kept away from the face of Satan for a period'? How & where to was it taken away from Satan? The members were all on earth and in the sight of Satan.

The woman is taken away and the remnants left behind and persecuted by Satan. Then Remnants persecuted by Satan, are they another group of the invisible church left out to face Satan?

Woman and remnant then 2 separate entities?

Anticatholics or Sola Scriptura believers (Bible only followers) though they claim to follow 'only the Bible', they look to outside sources looking for the meaning of this context when the Bible clearly defines what it is and shows us plainly how it was in the first years of the church. In the Bible, we cannot find any mention of these views propagated by the anti Catholics. The Book of Acts and the epistles which picture the happenings in the church for at least till around 35 years after the ascension of Jesus do not show anything of the church being kept away for a period from Satan after the ascension or so, but affirms the Catholic teaching that these refer to the persecutions faced by the church, and the Divine providence it experienced from God.

Footnotes from the USCCB New American Bible clearly define the understanding of Revelation Chapter 12.

<http://www.usccb.org/nab/bible/revelation/revelation12.htm>

Footnotes

¹ [12:1-14:20] This central section of Rev portrays the power of evil, represented by a dragon, in opposition to God and his people. First, the dragon pursues the woman about to give birth, but her son is saved and "caught up to God and his throne" (Rev 12:5). Then Michael and his angels cast the dragon and his angels out of heaven (Rev 12:7-9). After this, the dragon tries to attack the boy indirectly by attacking members of his church (Rev 12:13-17). A beast, symbolizing the Roman empire, then becomes the dragon's agent, mortally wounded but restored to life and worshiped by all the world (Rev 13:1-10). A second beast arises from the land, symbolizing the antichrist, which leads people astray by its prodigies to idolize the first beast (Rev 13:11-18). This is followed by a vision of the Lamb and his faithful ones, and the proclamation of imminent judgment upon the world in terms of the wine of God's wrath (Rev 14:1-20).

² [1] The woman adorned with the sun, the moon, and the stars (images taken from Genesis 37:9-10) symbolizes God's people in the Old and the New Testament. The Israel of old gave birth to the Messiah (Rev 12:5) and then became the new Israel, the church, which suffers persecution by the dragon (Rev 12:6, 13-17); cf Isaiah 50:1; 66:7; Jeremiah 50:12.

³ [2] Because of Eve's sin, the woman gives birth in distress and pain (Genesis 3:16; cf Isaiah 66:7-14).

⁴ [3] Huge red dragon: the Devil or Satan (cf Rev 12:9; 20:2), symbol of the forces of evil, a mythical monster known also as Leviathan (Psalm 74:13-14) or Rahab (Job 26:12-13; Psalm 89:11). Seven diadems: these are symbolic of the fullness of the dragon's sovereignty over the kingdoms of this world; cf Christ with many diadems (Rev 19:12).

⁵ [5] Rule . . . iron rod: fulfilled in Rev 19:15; cf Psalm 2:9. Was caught up to God: reference to Christ's ascension.

⁶ [6] God protects the persecuted church in the desert, the traditional Old Testament place of refuge for the afflicted, according to the typology of the Exodus; see the note on Rev 11:2.

⁷ [7-12] Michael, mentioned only here in Rev, wins a victory over the dragon. A hymn of praise follows.

⁸ [7] Michael: the archangel, guardian and champion of Israel; cf Daniel 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 1:9. In Hebrew, the name Michael means "Who can compare with God?"; cf Rev 13:4.

⁹ [9] The ancient serpent: who seduced Eve (Genesis 3:1-6), mother of the human race; cf Rev 20:2; Eph 6:11-12. Was thrown down: allusion to the expulsion of Satan from heaven; cf Luke 10:18.

¹⁰ [10] The accuser: the meaning of the Hebrew word "Satan," found in Rev 12:9; Job 1-2; Zechariah 3:1; 1 Chron 21:1; he continues to accuse Christ's disciples.

¹¹ [14] Great eagle: symbol of the power and swiftness of divine help; cf Exodus 19:4; Deut 32:11; Isaiah 40:31.

¹² [15] The serpent is depicted as the sea monster; cf Rev 13:1; Isaiah 27:1; Ezekiel 32:2; Psalm 74:13-14.

¹³ [17] Although the church is protected by God's special providence (Rev 12:16), the individual Christian is to expect persecution and suffering.

¹⁴ [17(18)] It took its position: many later manuscripts and versions read "I took my position," thus connecting the sentence to the following paragraph.

5. No separate invisible on earth ; One General Assembly: Visible on Earth with invisible in Heaven

No separate invisible church on earth. One Single Family – Imperfect on Earth & Perfect in Heaven

This church on earth of imperfect members is part of the church in heaven, as it is said in Heb 12:18-24.

Heb:12:18-24: *For ye (Hebrew members) are not come unto the mount that might be touched, and that burned with fire, nor unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, And the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard intreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: (For they could not endure that which was commanded, And if so much as a beast touch the mountain, it shall be stoned, or thrust through with a dart: And so terrible was the sight, that Moses said, I exceedingly fear and quake:)* **But ye (Hebrew members) are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.**

Here the Hebrew believers to whom this letter is addressed (not just to those saved in God's sight, but as the letter discloses, this church is a church with weaknesses and infirmities) is also said to have come to 'Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the **general assembly and church of the firstborn** who are registered in heaven, to God the Judge of all, to the spirits of just men made perfect, to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaks better things than that of Abel'. Paul acknowledges that they 'are not come unto the mountain that might

be touched' but the members of the Hebrew church had come to the heavenly church. The visible imperfect church on earth is the one that is in direct fellowship with the church in heaven. There is no separate invisible church on earth.

Thus a general assembly consisting of the visible Hebrew church with the invisible assembly in heaven.

In Eph 2:18-22 he says,

*Eph:2:18-22: For through him **we both (Jews & Gentiles)** have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore **ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;** And are **built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:** In whom **ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.***

This body or church, is 'the fullness of Him (Christ)'. In the above passage, it is again beautifully stressed that the members of the church in Ephesus (to whom this letter is addressed to) were 'by the one Spirit made fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, and built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, that they are 'no more strangers or foreigners but fellowcitizens with the saints of the household' and that, in Christ both the visible imperfect church of Ephesus and the saints in heaven or the invisible are 'builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit'. St. Paul does not address his letter to the elects but as the letter suggests, to the whole congregation which had their infirmities and weaknesses, and to us as well.

And again, in his letter to the Corinthians he says,

*1Co:12:11-13, 20, 25, 28: But **all these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit**, dividing to every man severally as he will. For as **the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.** For **by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body,** whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether **we be bond or free** (human considerations); and **have been all made to drink into one Spirit.** 20: But **now are they many members, yet but one body.** 25: That **there should be no schism in the body;** but that the members should have the same care one for another. And **God hath set some in the church,** first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, **helps, governments,** diversities of tongues.*

1Cor 12:5 to 14:40 talks of the visible physical church administration, **a single body by one Spirit** are we all baptized into one body' 12:13 'with no schism' 12:25 'that 'God hath set some in the church, prophets, apostles, governments, etc' 12:28 : with gifts of tongues, prophecy, etc'.

The members of the church in Corinth whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free are baptized into one body by the same Spirit. It is not said that 'some of you may have been baptized into one body by the Spirit as to denote that nobody knew who belonged, but said that 'all of them' were given the same Spirit to drink' and so are baptized into one body. Is it then that the Spirit brings into one body those in heaven, and into another body those on earth? Then that would mean two bodies. But the Bible talks of one body not two. It is this One Spirit that brings all the members into that one body. The church is the body of Christ. To say Christ has two bodies amounts to blasphemy. The Bible in fact does not talk of an invisible and a visible church as two distinct bodies. In the Acts of the apostles, when Saul persecutes Christians, the Lord appears to him and asks, 'Saul, Saul, why do you persecute **'me'**, **I am Jesus whom thou persecutest?** (Ac:9:4-5; Ac:22:4, 7-8; Ac:26:11, 14-15). The church on earth is Christ Himself.

Chapter 1 of Revelation presents to us the Heavenly Kingdom where Jesus is seen **'in the midst of the seven candlesticks (seven local churches; imperfect churches'**

Re:1:11: Saying, I am Alpha and Omega, the first and the last: and, What thou seest, write in a book, and send it unto the seven churches which are in Asia; unto Ephesus, and unto Smyrna, and unto Pergamos, and unto Thyatira, and unto Sardis, and unto Philadelphia, and unto Laodicea.

*Re:1:12, 13: And I turned to see the voice that spake with me. And being turned, I saw seven golden candlesticks; And **in the midst of the seven candlesticks (seven local churches; imperfect churches) one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot, and girt about the paps with a golden girdle.***

Re:1:20: The mystery of the seven stars which thou sawest in my right hand, and the seven golden candlesticks. The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches: and the seven candlesticks which thou sawest are the seven churches.

The Son of man in the midst of these local imperfect churches admonishing them and no separate invisible or distinct church then, but seven imperfect churches that are part of the Single church with both visible of the present and the invisible of the past being members). One church with both qualities.

*1Co:6:13,15-20: Meats for the belly, and the belly for meats: but God shall destroy both it and them. Now **the body is not for fornication, but for the Lord;** and the Lord for the body. **Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ? shall I then take the members of Christ, and make them the members of an harlot? God forbid. What? know ye not that he***

which is joined to an harlot is one body? for two, saith he, shall be one flesh. But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit. Flee fornication. Every sin that a man doeth is without the body; but he that committeth fornication sinneth against his own body. What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

The physical body of every baptized believer is joined to Christ and forms His body the church. The physical body is also the member of Christ's body. This surely denies the protestant doctrine that the true body of Christ the church is invisible only.

The church on earth in the imperfect stage, is the one for which Christ gave Himself so that '**He might** sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that **he might** present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish' (Eph 5:23-32). The words '**that he might** present it to himself a glorious church' shows that the perfect is not yet but it is in the stages of purification. Members of this church is said to be 'members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones'. The imperfect church becomes a glorious church in the end when it is presented as the Bride to the Lamb without spot or wrinkle as said here and in Revelation (Rev 21:2).

Eph:5:23-32: *For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That **he might** sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, **That he might** present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For **we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.** For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and **they two shall be one flesh.** **This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.***

Though the reformers claimed there existed 'another church' other than the Catholic church, all the way through the centuries, consisting of true believers, not even one of these leaders of the reformation were part of that church because these leaders, Luther, Hus, Zwingli were ordained priests of the Catholic church who had done years of seminary life, accepted the vow of celibacy, and administering the 7 sacraments, Prayers for the dead, prayers to saints (Luther himself having decided to become a monk on the mediation of St. Anna, as his life history shows), devotion to the Mother of God (which is evident from their writings), and of course the devotion to the Eucharist (on which subject Luther and Zwingli later differed as to the real meaning). Calvin also was a devout Catholic who wanted to become a priest but later turned to law instead. They were all Catholics. Above all they were all celibate till then. Catholic priests serving the catholic church for years till the reformation and Luther's intention was to cleanse the Catholic church from clerical corruption within the church rather than to form a new one and that was the reason to nail his 95 theses to the Castle church door at Wittenberg. They were then not in succession to any of the heretical primitive sects of Christianity as well. They were all Catholics. Moreover, all three, Luther, Calvin, Zwingli and others had a variety of doctrines, while if they were successors of the True church, they would have had a uniform doctrine because the True church of course did not have varying doctrines. They were all part of the only church ever instituted by Christ, the Catholic church. Till their time there existed only this One church, the Catholic church. The others who formed later churches such as the Revivalists, Pentecostals all belonged to one or the other breakaway sects. None came from a church that existed from the beginning or a church in succession to the first and only church.

By their claim that the True church had gone apostate at some period of time, it can be obviously seen that then this church that had gone apostate was the church in line with the One, True church that existed. That is, this apostate church was the church Christ instituted, but it had gone apostate. And, their intention was to 'Reform' or cleanse this church back to what they felt was the true doctrine. But the Bible clearly affirms that the Church cannot go corrupt. The Bible shows that the church of God is infallible, i.e it cannot go corrupt doctrinally. From Jesus's own words

Mt:23:1-3: *Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, Saying, **The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat:** All therefore **whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do;** but do not ye after their works: for they say, and do not.*

Joh:11:49-51: *And one of them, named Caiaphas, being the high priest that same year, said unto them, Ye know nothing at all, Nor consider that it is expedient for us, that one man should die for the people, and that the wholenation perish not. And this spake he not of himself: **but being high priest that year, he prophesied that Jesus should die for that nation:***

Mt:16:18: *And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*

Joh:14:16: *And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever;*

*Joh:14:26: But **the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost**, whom the Father will send in my name, **he shall teach you all things**, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.*

*Joh:15:26: But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even **the Spirit of truth**, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me:*

*Joh:16:13: Howbeit when he, **the Spirit of truth**, is come, **he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak**: and he will shew you things to come.*

*Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and **he is the saviour of the body**.*

*M't:28:20: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, **I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world**. Amen.*

*1Tm:3:15: But if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in **the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth**.*

Though the Jewish authorities of then were corrupt even intending to kill the Lord's Christ, their doctrine was said to be infallible. Jesus tells disciples to follow the doctrine of the Scribes and Pharisees though the scribe and pharisees themselves did not live by it. And later, the High priest Caiaphas is seen prophesying though he was also corrupt. He is said to be prophesying because he was the High priest that year.

Jesus promises that the **gates of hell shall not prevail** against the church. He says the Comforter, the Spirit of truth who will **'abide with the church forever'** will **guide the church into 'all truth'**. **He is the Saviour of the church**. He is **with the church always till the end**, **the church is the pillar and ground of truth**. Then the church is infallible.

Protestant and Pentecostal churches came into existence after the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. And these churches were formed by rebel Catholic men like, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Hus and a lot of others. The rest being the offshoots of these mainline sects. Not even one of them being part of their self claimed 'other true church'. They were all devout Catholics.

Pentecostals and protestants though there are 35,500 or more of their sects, all of them say they are the true church, though they all were formed by men and not Jesus himself. And all these so called churches attack the Catholic church and this is foretold by Jesus Himself,

*M't:10:25: It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his lord. **If they have called the master of the house Beelzebub, how much more shall they call them of his household?***

And again we have the words from the Lord's mouth stressing that Evil cannot prevail in the Lord's church unless the devil first bind up the strong man of the house and then plunder. Jesus in the gospels (M't:12:29; M'r:3:27) said that **No man can enter into a strong man's house, and spoil his goods, except he will first bind the strong man; and then he will spoil his house**. Jesus had said this in M't:12:29; M'r:3:27 because the Pharisees said He (Jesus) has an unclean spirit, when in truth it was by the Holy Spirit that Jesus drove out demons. How is it different when the anti-catholics say that the church built by Christ and with the presence of the Holy Spirit 'forever' by whom all are baptized into one body, has been subdued by the devil. Christ says there is never forgiveness for such blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, but eternal damnation.

Protestants believe in a weak God who is subdued by the devil who enters God's house and plunders it, while Catholics believe in the Almighty ever living God who is the same yesterday, today and forever and He is True to every word He said.

In spiritual terms, the hatred for the Catholic Church is inevitable since hell is attempting to prevail against it. Just as Jesus' physical body was spit upon, scourged, beaten and pierced, so too the Body of Christ, his bride, his Catholic Church, is maltreated. Yet he himself has told us that the gates of hell will not prevail against it, and we who are Catholics believe him.

If there ever existed another group of believers other than Catholics, why is it that they cannot produce a copy of a Bible that they used, containing only the books of the Protestant canon. Instead, Luther played with the Bible of the Catholic church and removed the deuterocanonical books and then played with the New Testament by removing and later placing them last the book of James, Hebrews, Revelation, 2Peter, etc., that was part of the church from the beginning.

The book of Revelation he said

'it makes me consider it to be neither apostolic nor prophetic' and . 'I can in no way detect that the Holy Spirit produced it'.

Luther's words on the Book of James

Martin Luther, Preface to the New Testament, 1522: "Therefore St. James' epistle is really an epistle of straw, compared to these others, for it has nothing of the nature of the gospel about it." I do not regard it as the writing of an apostle; and my reasons follow. In the first place it is flatly against St. Paul and all the rest of Scripture in ascribing justification to works.

The Book of James did not agree with his theory of Sola Fide or Faith alone. These books were though later reinstated, thus proving that till then they had no set canon of their own or were not sure of which books to follow till Luther set it forth.

The oldest extant Bibles also disprove the Protestant canon, but prove a set either the same canon of the Catholic church (Latin Vulgate) or one closer to it (Codex Sinaiticus, Codex Alexandricus). Protestants ironically hold on to the Book they received in the 16th century from the Catholic church as their true word of God without doubt and hold it as the true Word of God. They believe that Jesus's words (the Holy Bible) were safe in the hands of the Catholic church though the church went corrupt. That the Bible was infallible in the hands of the church taken over by corruption.

Protestants claim that though they be of the variety of sects with the variety of doctrines, and even though these different sects interpret the Bible in their own different ways with different meanings (then, not knowing what the Lord is actually telling to them through the Bible), they are the true church of believers, from among which only God knows who will be saved. That is to say that even if they belong to churches with different doctrines the selection of God will be from among them. But the Bible in the gospel of Mathew, Jesus Himself says that 'he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad' (M't:12:30). And through St. Paul plainly denies this and curses such sects. He says,

*Ga:1:8, 9: But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, **let him be accursed**. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you **than that ye have received**, let him be accursed.*

The Bible says there should uniformity in doctrine or else they are accursed, even if it be an angel or an apostle. When St. Paul stresses thus, how then can a group of churches with distinct doctrines be part of Christ's church.

Believers with varying belief under one roof? A supermarket with a choice of beliefs at discounted rates. One church says Jesus was God alone, another says no he was both. One acknowledges infant baptism other says no, one acknowledges divorce other says no. Churches acknowledging homosexuality, abortion of fullborn fetuses are also said to be part of God's church? A church in confusion and chaos. Then why not include the church of satan also to the fold? God forgive.

St. Paul himself criticized the believers at Corinth who, even when they having a common doctrine but followed their preachers Apollos, Cephas, and Paul himself. And we know that Paul or Peter or Apollos all preached the same thing, the same doctrine (1Cor 1:12-31). If Paul criticized those who had the same doctrine but followed their preachers rather than the church (they did not have the written Bible at the time) how can those of varying doctrines be treated as under one roof in God's sight?

And further Jesus had said that,

*Lu:10:16: **He that heareth you heareth me; and he that despiseth you despiseth me; and he that despiseth me despiseth him that sent me.***

And

*M't:18:17, 18: And if he shall neglect to hear them, **tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican.***

Which church does the protestant or Pentecostal believer have to 'hear' from among the 35,500 sects?

The only church or Pillar seen and known to all, of being in succession to the One and only church instituted by Christ Himself is the Catholic church.

6. An Imperfect Kingdom with Good & Bad Co-existing

An imperfect Church with good & bad co-existing. A Kingdom appointed to imperfect servants in charge in succession 'till His return'.

Did the Lord intend His Kingdom on earth, His church on earth to be pure and without sin, or is it that as the Protestants claim, He deserted the church because of corrupt practices? The answer is found in the parable about the 'Kingdom of heaven' in 'the field' or 'the earth', with the seed sown by God and the weeds/ tares sown by the enemy growing side by side. And when the servants ask the Lord (the householder) if they shall gather up the tares, to which the Lord's reply was to 'Let both grow together till harvest (end of the world) when the reapers (angels) will gather the tares first to burn them, and then gather the wheat 'out of His Kingdom' into the barn. Likewise in the parable of the Vine and its branches. Jesus is the Vine and the Father the husbandman. The vine has both fruitful and fruitless branches. The fruitful branches the Father 'purgeth' that it may bear more fruit, while the fruitless branches He taketh away and men gather them to be cast into the fire and burned. So this is all foretold, then why so much confusion?

Mt:13:24-30 & 37-41: *Another parable put he forth unto them, saying, The **kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed** in his field: But while men slept, his **enemy came and sowed tares** among the wheat, and went his way. But when the blade was sprung up, and brought forth fruit, then appeared the tares also. So the servants of the householder came and said unto him, Sir, didst not thou sow good seed in thy field? from whence then hath it tares? He said unto them, An enemy hath done this. **The servants said unto him, Wilt thou then that we go and gather them up?** But he said, Nay; lest while ye gather up the tares, ye root up also the wheat with them. **Let both grow together until the harvest: and in the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them:** but gather the wheat into my barn. He answered and said unto them, He **that soweth the good seed is the Son of man; The field is the world;** the good seed are the children of the kingdom; but the tares are the children of the wicked one; The enemy that sowed them is the devil; **the harvest is the end of the world;** and the reapers are the angels. As therefore the tares are gathered and burned in the fire: **so shall it be in the end of this world.** The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather **out of his kingdom** all things that offend, and them which do iniquity;*

Joh:15:1-8: *I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. **Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit.** Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. **I am the vine, ye are the branches:** He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit: for **without me ye can do nothing.** If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples.*

Similarly, the parables of the Kingdom as a net with good and bad fish; and the sheeps and goats.

In the Lord's Kingdom, both good and bad will co-exist till harvest, those that do not abide in the vine are gathered and burned, not that the Lord did not know so. And these also pertaining to a visible kingdom.

Then, what of 'the servants He has given authority over His house to feed those of the household'? Are they also to be pure and without sin?

Mt:13:34-37: *For **the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of the house cometh,** at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: **Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping.** And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.*

His house has both watchful and lazy servants, good and bad servants co-existing.

Lu:12:41-46: *Then Peter said unto him, Lord, **speakest thou this parable unto us, or even to all?** And the Lord said, **Who then is that faithful and wise steward, whom his lord shall make ruler over his household, to give them their portion of meat in due season?** Blessed is that servant, whom his lord **when he cometh shall find so doing.** Of a truth I say unto you, that he will make him ruler over all that he hath. But and if that servant say in his heart, **My lord delayeth his coming; and shall begin to beat the menservants and maidens, and to eat and drink, and to be drunken;** The lord of that servant will come in a day when he looketh not for him, and at an hour when he is not aware, and will cut him in sunder, and will appoint him **his portion with the unbelievers.***

The servant whom the Lord shall make 'ruler over his household' is one He shall find so doing 'when the Lord returns' as well. So, successive servants till the Lord's return. It is worth mentioning that it is Peter who asks the Lord as to whom this parable is applicable to, to which the response he gets is of a faithful and wise servant 'whom his lord shall make ruler over his household' and 'whom the lord shall find so doing 'when he cometh', i.e. this servant to be seen doing till the Lord's return. Then Peter's Office was also one that had to be 'till the Lord's return'. The Council at Jerusalem and the decree passed we see the elders appointed in succession by the apostles also taking their parts, initiating the beginning of the apostolic succession.

Ac:15:6: *And **the apostles and elders came together for to consider of this matter.***

Ac:15:22: *Then pleased it the **apostles and elders,** with the whole church, to send chosen men of their own company to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas;*

Ac:15:23: *And they wrote letters by them after this manner; The **apostles and elders** and brethren send greeting unto the brethren which are of the Gentiles in Antioch and Syria and Cilicia:*

Ac:16:4: *And as they went through the cities, they delivered them **the decrees for to keep, that were ordained of the apostles and elders which were at Jerusalem.***

The letters in the Bible are addressed to members of local churches and to us readers of the Bible and so members of the imperfect visible church. Members who are said to be 'being saved' (Acts 2:47); 'whom God has called to belong to Him' (Rom 1:6); 'whom God has called to be His own people' (Rom 1:7, 1Cor 1:2, 2Cor 1:1, Eph 1:1, Phil 1:1, Col 1:2, 1Thess 1:1, 2Thess 1:1). Likewise the Book of Revelation was to the seven local churches, with a call 'to repentance', and so again the imperfect congregation. The content of these letters and Revelation are words of encouragement, admonition as well as calls to refrain from sinning, and so to an imperfect congregation. Each verse is then addressed to the imperfect reader or hearer as unto us of this era as well. Even St Paul acknowledges his infirmities and says he strives to reach the goal (Phil 3:12-16). It is this imperfect people who are called a holy nation, etc. St. Paul, Peter, John, James, Jude all address their letters to the local congregations under them and also to us i.e. every Christian on earth', a visible people. They do not say, 'some of you' are baptized by the One Spirit and part of His body, or some of you have come to the church of the firstborn, or some of you are a royal priesthood, but that all are part of His body the church, and have to run to reach the prize. It is from this congregation that the beast attracts followers and deceives them. It is to them from among these that is said 'who overcomes will receive the promises of the Lord (Rev 2:7, 11, 17, 3:5, 12, 21, 21:1). All are members of the church that is the congregation of those called by Him which in the end is purged and presented as the Bride of the Lamb. As He said in the parable of the Kingdom that 'many are called, but few chosen'. And we see that many are part of the 'invited' and few are chosen from among those who were invited or called'. Similarly said in Eph 5:23-32.

The only church seen and known to all men, of being in unbroken succession to the One and only church instituted by Christ Himself is the Catholic church. To believe in the word and interpretation of mere men or to believe the church the ground of truth, the manifold of wisdom with the promise of Christ's perpetual presence and promise from the Lord of it's infallibility, it is left to the believer.

7.The Vineyard appointed to new imperfect servants with successive authority till His return

Isa:5:7: For ***the vineyard of the LORD of hosts is the house of Israel***

In His parable, Jesus talks of His Kingdom as a Vineyard a householder planted and let it out to husbandmen (OT authorities) who later became unworthy and persecuted the householder's servants (OT prophets) and killed His only Son (Jesus). So, He says His Father will destroy those wicked men and let out His vineyard unto other husbandmen (Christian church authorities). To clarify this, He goes on to say 'The Kingdom of God' shall be taken from you (OT authorities) and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof (i.e. Christians).

Mt:21:33-43: *Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and **went into a far country**: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise. But **last of all he sent unto them his son**, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And **they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him**. When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, He will miserably destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, **The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof**.*

So, this One Kingdom of God is a successive one from the time of the Old Testament and is transferred on to the new authorities in the New testament. This Kingdom is one that will exist at the time the 'Lord returns' i.e. the end time as well. The 'servants in authority over the house are called to be watchful at the time of 'His return' as well. The authority given is then successive till the Lord's return. (Mr 13:34-37). Who are the Reformers or Revivalists to claim that the church has gone corrupt when the Lord has said that He has entrusted the church ***'to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof'*** and thus not to some authority that is to go corrupt. He says, He takes the Kingdom away from the unworthy and gives it over to the trustworthy.

This bestowal of authority we see in Lk 22:24-32

Lu:22:24-32: And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest. And he said unto them, The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and they that exercise authority upon them are called benefactors. But ye shall **not be so**; but he that is **greatest among you**, let him be as the younger; and **he that is chief**, as **he that doth serve**. For whether is greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? is not he that sitteth at meat? but **I am among you as he that serveth**. Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations. And **I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me**; That ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel. And the Lord said, **Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you**, that he may sift you as wheat: **But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not**; and **when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren**.

And again,

Mt:13:34-37: For **the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch**.

In Luke 22:24-33, Christ defines what it should be 'to be the greatest **among the twelve**' & the 'chief among the twelve', i.e. the greatest and the chief among them should be the one who serves **like Christ is among them as he that serveth**. He then confers the kingdom to the twelve 'just as the Father conferred it to the Son' (the same authority). Then goes on to show that of the twelve, He has prayed for Peter (not said that He prayed for all of them but 'for Peter') that his faith does not fail, and this Simon is the one who should strengthen the brethren once he returns from testing times.

The Kingdom entrusted to the twelve and Peter appointed to be the one who is to 'serve' the rest of them as the chief.

The Lord's True church is then the one in succession to the Vineyard the householder planted and one with the servants authorised or appointed by the Lord. A church visibly seen and acknowledged by the world. The only such church known to the world and in succession to the church instituted by the Lord Himself (the reformers all acknowledge that the Catholic church is the one in succession) is the One True Church, His Holy Catholic church. Others preaching doctrines different from this church is accursed as the Bible says in Gal 1:8,9.

The Kingdom or the vineyard is taken from the husbandmen of the Old Testament i.e. the Jewish authorities after the crucifixion of the Son of the Householder and given to the New Testament nation (Christians) of husbandmen 'bringing forth fruits thereof'.

Where in the picture do the Pentecostals or Protestants who left the Vineyard and formed other breakaways come in?

This is clearly mentioned in the Bible (1John 2:18-20) about them that 'went out from us'. i.e. they were also part of the catholic church but later 'went from the church'. 'They went' because they were not of us'. Again said, 'they went that they might be made manifest (or clearly shown) that they were not of us'. The same thing repeated in 1Cor 11:18,19.

'They went' from among us', because they 'were not of us'

1Jo:2:18-20: Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that **antichrist shall come, even now are there many antichrists**; whereby we know that it is the last time. **They went out from us**, but **they were not of us**; for **if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us**; but **they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us**. But ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things.

Ac:20:30-31: Also **of your own selves shall men arise**, speaking perverse things, **draw away disciples after them**. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years **I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears**.

'They went out' that they which are approved may be made manifest among you'.

Not that the approved may become part of an 'invisible church' but that they may be made manifest or shown out.

Co:11:18, 19: For first of all, when ye come together in the church, **I hear that there be divisions among you**; and I partly believe it. For **there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you**.

St. Pauls says two things specifically concerning those who divide the church;

Mark them; avoid them; reject.

Rom:16:17: Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Ti:3:10: A man that is an heretick after the first and second admonition reject;

Anyone, be it an apostle or even an angel, come with a gospel different from the preaching of the church, they are accursed (Gal 1:8,9)

Ga:1:8,9: But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, **let him be accursed.**

And St. John's words;

He that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

2Jo:1:7-11: For many deceivers are entered into the world, **who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh.** This is a deceiver and an antichrist. Whosoever transgresseth, and **abideth not in the doctrine of Christ,** hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son. **If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed:** For **he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.**

Interpretation is for the Holy men of God and not for the Private. False teachers shall come who 'privily' i.e. through private interpretation, shall bring in damnable heresies, ; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of. Interpretation is for the church guided by the Holy Spirit.

2Pe:1:19-21; 2:1, 2; 3:16-17: We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts: **Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation.** For **the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.** But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, **who privily shall bring in damnable heresies,** even denying the Lord that bought them, and **bring upon themselves swift destruction.** And many shall follow their pernicious ways; **by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.**

Accidental or mere coincidence; same as then, likewise now. They (the false teachers) 'wrest, 'all' Paul's epistles as they do also the other scriptures.

2Pe:3:15-16: And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; **even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction.** Ye therefore, beloved, **seeing ye know these things before,** beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness.

2 Peter chapter 1, 2 & 3 deal with false prophets and their private interpretation. Like that time, the protestants of now **'wrest, all Paul's epistles as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction'**. For which Peter had forewarned saying 'Ye therefore, beloved, **seeing ye know these things before,** beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own stedfastness' (3:16).

Though Protestants claim to be 'Only Bible' believers, they do not follow the whole Bible. They are restricted to a few verses only or rather 'Certain Scriptura' than 'Sola Scriptura'. And when discussing a matter they play around and try to refute one silly matter and leave out the rest even if there are 70 to refute.

Of all the religious sites on the web there are more catholic bashing sites than any other. No other Christian group is more attacked than the Catholic church. Hundreds of sects against the One. The persecuted church,

1Jo:4:1-4: Beloved, **believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world.** Hereby know ye the Spirit of God: **Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God** (those who believe He was flesh & blood; of course from that of Mary) **And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist,** whereof ye have heard that it should come; and **even now already is it in the world.** Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: **he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.**

Anyone teaching 'Jesus came in the flesh' acknowledges that He was the flesh and blood of Mary. He became flesh in Mary's womb, He is 'the fruit of her womb' ; her offspring as the Bible says (Lk 1:42 & Gen 3:15). Hebrews 2:14-16 says Jesus, like every children are partakers of flesh and blood, took human form i.e. He

partook His the flesh and blood of whom? Mary of course, who else? He was the flesh and blood of Mary. Mary is then not just an eggshell as protestants teach.

Heb:2:14-16: *Forasmuch then as the **children are partakers of flesh and blood**, he also **himself likewise took part of the same** (from his mother of course); **that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham** (human flesh & blood).*

The only church accepting that Jesus came in the flesh through the flesh of Mary is the Catholic church. The only church seen and known to all, of being in succession to the One and only vineyard of the Lord is the Catholic church.

Church Fathers say their church is Catholic

Material available from the Church Fathers of the apostolic era say that their church was Catholic.

They believed in One, Visible and Catholic Church.

They believed in 'The Real Presence' of the flesh & blood of the Lord, in the Eucharist.

They believed in the Primacy of the Church in Rome, Peter & the Pope

They believed in Apostolic Succession.

They practiced Infant Baptism

They practiced the sacrament of Confession before a priest

They had Priests to administer the services.

They believed Mary was the Mother of God, she was Ever Virgin, etc

They prayed to saints

They prayed for the dead.

They believed in Purgatory.

They practiced only what the Catholic Church preached then and the same that is practiced now by the One Catholic Church.

The "The Church is Catholic, Visible, ONE and uncorruptible"

Ignatius of Antioch (AD 110)

Follow your bishop, every one of you, as obediently as Jesus Christ followed the Father. **Obey your clergy too as you would the apostles; give your deacons the same reverence that you would to a command of God. Make sure that no step affecting the Church is ever taken by anyone without the bishop's sanction. The sole Eucharist you should consider valid is one that is celebrated by the bishop himself, or by some person authorized by him.** Where the bishop is to be seen, there let all his people be; just as, wherever Jesus Christ is present, there is **the Catholic Church** (Letter to the Smyrneans 8:2 [A.D. 110]).

In like manner let everyone **respect the deacons as they would respect Jesus Christ**, and just as they respect the bishop as a type of the Father, and the presbyters as the council of God and college of the apostles. **Without these, it cannot be called a Church.** I am confident that you accept this, for I have received the exemplar of your love and have it with me in the person of your bishop. His very demeanor is a great lesson and his meekness is his strength. **I believe that even the godless do respect him** (Letter to the Trallians 3:1-2 [A. D. 110]).

The Martyrdom of Polycarp (AD 110)

When finally he concluded his prayer, after remembering all who had at any time come his way – small folk and great folk, distinguished and undistinguished, and the whole **Catholic Church** throughout the world – the time for departure came. So they placed him on an ass, and brought him into the city on a great Sabbath (The Martyrdom of Polycarp 8 [A.D. 110]).

Irenaeus (AD 189)

The **Catholic Church** possesses one and the same faith throughout the whole world, as we have already said (Against Heresies 1:10 [A.D. 189]).

Since therefore we have such proofs, **it is not necessary to seek the truth among others which it is easy to obtain from the Church; since the apostles, like a rich man [depositing his money] in a bank, lodged in her hands most copiously all things pertaining to the truth: so that every man, whosoever will, can draw from her the water of life.** For she is the entrance to life; **all others are thieves and robbers.** On this account **we are bound to avoid them,** but to make choice of the things pertaining to the Church with the utmost diligence, and to lay hold of the tradition of the truth. For how stands the case? **Suppose there should arise a dispute relative to some important question among us. Should we not have recourse to the most ancient churches with which the apostles held constant intercourse, and learn from them what is certain and clear in regard to the present question?** For **how should it be if the apostles themselves had not left us writings? Would it not be necessary [in that case] to follow the course of the tradition which they handed down to those to whom they did commit the churches?** (ibid. 3:4).

Tertullian (AD 200)

Where was Marcion then, that shipmaster of Pontus, the zealous student of Stoicism? Where was Valentinus then, the disciple of Platonism? For it is evident that those men lived not so long ago – in the reign of Antoninus for the most part – and that **they at first were believers in the doctrine of the Catholic Church, in the church of Rome** under the episcopate of the blessed Eleutherus, until on account of their ever restless curiosity, with which they even infected the brethren, they were more than once expelled (On the Prescription Against Heretics 22,30 [A.D.200])

Cyprian (AD 251, 253, 256)

"The spouse of Christ cannot be adulterous; she is uncorrupted and pure. She knows one home; she guards with chaste modesty the sanctity of one couch. She keeps us for God. She appoints the sons whom she has born for the kingdom. Whoever is separated from the Church and is joined to an adulteress, is separated from the promises of the Church; nor can he who forsakes the Church of Christ attain to the rewards of Christ. He is a stranger; he is profane; he is an enemy. He can no longer have God for his Father, who has not the Church for his mother. If any one could escape who was outside the ark of Noah, then he also may escape who shall be outside of the Church. The Lord warns, saying, 'He who is not with me is against me, and he who gathereth not with me scattereth.' Cyprian, On Unity, 6 (A.D. 251).

Peter speaks there, on whom the Church was to be built, teaching and showing in the name of the Church, that **although a rebellious and arrogant multitude of those who will not hear or obey may depart, yet the Church does not depart from Christ;** and they are the Church who are a people united to the priest, and the flock which adheres to its pastor. Whence you ought to know that the bishop is in the Church, and the Church in the bishop; and if any one be not with the bishop, that he is not in the Church, and that those flatter themselves in vain who creep in, not having peace with God's priests, and think that they communicate secretly with some; while **the Church which is Catholic and one, is not cut nor divided, but is indeed connected and bound together by the cement of priests who cohere with one another** (Letters 66 [A.D. 253]).

"Separate a ray of the sun from its body of light, its unity does not allow a division of light; break a branch from a tree,--when broken, it will not be able to bud; cut off the stream from its fountain, and that which is cut off dries up. Thus also the Church, shone over with the light of the Lord, sheds forth her rays over the whole world, yet it is one light which is everywhere diffused, nor is the unity of the body separated. Her fruitful abundance spreads her branches over the whole world. She broadly expands her rivers, liberally flowing, yet her head is one, her source one; and she is one mother, plentiful in the results of fruitfulness: from her womb we are born, by her milk we are nourished, by her spirit we are animated." Cyprian, Unity of the Church, 5 (A.D. 256).

What the founder of Sola Scriptura & Sola Fide said of the Catholic Church

Martin Luther, the father of the Reformation was himself a Catholic celibate priest ordained to the priesthood in 1507, administering the Catholic sacraments and acknowledging Mary as the 'Mother of God'. With the posting of his '95 theses' in 1517 (after 10 years of practicing Catholic priesthood) he had in fact wanted only to Reform or clean the Catholic church from its corrupt practices, as his 95 Theses shows. The clauses from his 95 theses clearly show that he acknowledged the Catholic church as being the true church, the dignity of the Chair of Peter, the place of the Pope as Peter's successor and the Pope as being guided by the Holy Spirit. He also acknowledged the Catholic church's claim of being the true church. Excerpts from the 95 Theses he posted at the Castle church door;

5. The pope has neither the will nor the power to remit any penalties **beyond those imposed either at his own discretion or by canon law.**
6. **The pope himself cannot remit guilt, but only declare and confirm that it has been remitted by God;** or, at most, **he can remit it in cases reserved to his discretion.** Except for these cases, the guilt remains untouched.
9. **Accordingly, the Holy Spirit, acting in the person of the pope, manifests grace to us,** by the fact that the papal regulations always cease to apply at death, or in any hard case.
20. Therefore **the pope, in speaking of the plenary Remission** of all penalties, does not mean "all" in the strict sense, **but only those imposed by himself.**
26. **The pope does excellently when he grants remission to the souls in purgatory on account of intercessions made on their behalf,** and not by **the power of the keys** (which he cannot exercise for them).
38. **Yet the pope's remission and dispensation are in no way to be despised,** for, as already said, **they proclaim the divine remission.**
41. **Papal indulgences should only be preached with caution, lest people gain a wrong understanding,** and think that they are preferable to other good works: those of love.
50. Christians should be taught that, if the pope knew the exactions of the indulgence-preachers, he would rather **the church of St. Peter** were reduced to ashes than be built with the skin, flesh, and bones of the sheep.
51. Christians should be taught that the pope would be willing, as he ought if necessity should arise, to sell **the church of St. Peter,** and give, too, his own money to many of those from whom the pardon-merchants conjure money.
53. **Those are enemies of Christ and the pope** who forbid the word of God to be preached at all in some churches, in order that indulgences may be preached in others.
61. For it is clear that **the power of the pope suffices, by itself, for the remission of penalties and reserved cases.**
69. **Bishops and curates, in duty bound, must receive the commissaries of the papal indulgences with all reverence.**
70. But they are under a much greater obligation to watch closely and attend carefully lest these men preach their own fancies instead of **what the pope commissioned.**
73. In the same way, **the pope rightly excommunicates those** who make any plans to the detriment of the trade in indulgences.
74. **It is much more in keeping with his views to excommunicate** those who use the pretext of indulgences to plot anything to the detriment of holy love and truth.
75. It is foolish to think that papal indulgences have so much power that they can absolve a man even if he has done the impossible and violated **the mother of God.**
76. We assert the contrary, and say that the pope's pardons are not able to remove the least venial of sins as far as their guilt is concerned.

77. When it is said that **not even St. Peter, if he were now pope, could grant a greater grace, it is blasphemy against St. Peter and the pope.**
81. **This unbridled preaching of indulgences makes it difficult for learned men to guard the respect due to the pope against false accusations,** or at least from the keen criticisms of the laity.
88. Again: **Surely a greater good could be done to the church if the pope were to bestow these remissions and dispensations, not once, as now, but a hundred times a day, for the benefit of any believer whatever.**
90. These questions are serious matters of conscience to the laity. **To suppress them by force alone, and not to refute them by giving reasons, is to expose the church and the pope to the ridicule of their enemies, and to make Christian people unhappy.**

While maintaining his new (and heretical) views on Indulgences and Penance, **Luther claims “that the Roman Church has always maintained the true faith, and that it is necessary for all Christians to be in unity of faith with her.”** (Dr. Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. 7, p. 366.) That means that, even after having been summoned to Rome to answer for his new ideas, Luther professes that the Roman Church (the Roman Catholic Church) has the true faith.

Despite his commitment to his new ideas, Luther declared the following at one of these interviews: “The notary read out a declaration on behalf of Luther, **that as far as he could remember he [Luther] had never taught anything against Holy Scripture, the doctrines of the Church, the Papal decretals** [decrees of the popes], or sound reason. But as he was a man subject to error, he submitted himself to the decisions of the Holy Church and to all who knew better than he did.” (Dr. Ludwig Pastor, *History of the Popes*, Vol. 7, p. 373.)

Not even once do we see Luther mention of another invisible church or another true church.

Once again, we see that Luther claims fidelity to papal teaching and to all of Catholic doctrine. He also appeals specifically to the pope, and expresses his willingness to retract if the pope decided against him (Ibid., pp. 375, 377).

Not long after his meetings with the Pope’s legate, in November of 1518, Luther’s views underwent another significant development. He came to the conclusion that the pope, to whose decrees he had just claimed submission, is the antichrist. He writes: “I send you my trifling work that you may see whether I am not right in supposing that, according to Paul, the real Antichrist holds sway over the Roman court.” (De Wette, I., 192; Enders I., 317; Pastor, Vol. 7, pp. 378-379.) Numerous utterances from this time show that Luther had “fully formulated his proposition that the pope was antichrist.”

Yet, at this very time that he was calling the pope “the Antichrist,” Luther appealed to a general council from the pope (Luther’s works, Weimar ed., II., 36 seq.). In other words, Luther considered the decisions of general councils to be definitive and authoritative. and even when he first called the pope the Antichrist and was appealing to a general council.

Luther’s other references to the Pope as the antichrist;

"Heretics are not to be disputed with, but to be condemned unheard, and whilst they perish by fire, the faithful ought to pursue the evil to its source, and bathe their heads in the blood of the Catholic bishops, and of the Pope, who is the devil in disguise." [Martin Luther, Riffel, Kirchengeschichte]

"Jews and papists are ungodly wretches; they are two stockings made of one piece of cloth." [Martin Luther, Table Talk]

"Antichrist is the pope and the Turk [Muslim] together. A beast full of life must have a body and soul. The spirit or soul of Antichrist is the pope, his flesh or body the Turk." [Martin Luther, Table Talk]

Did Luther or any other have the authority from the Lord or His Church

As said in Mk 13:34-37, the apostles received their authority from the Lord and passed it on to successive generations to care for the church till ‘the master of the house returns’

Mt:13:34-37: *For the Son of man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye therefore: for ye know not when the master of*

the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning: Lest coming suddenly he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you I say unto all, Watch.

Jesus who was 'send' by the Father, appointed the Kingdom to the apostles 'as the Father appointed it to the Son'

Lu:22:29: *And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me.*

Then, from where did the Reformers get their authority? Some may justify the authority of Luther by claiming that he was a priest of the Catholic Church, and so he had power and commission from the Catholic church to preach the true doctrine contained in the Scripture. But then, either they are affirming that the Catholic Church was at that time the true Church. If she was then the true Church, it was unlawful for Luther to separate from her, and she could not give him a commission to preach a doctrine contrary to her own; but if she had ceased to be the true Church, then she was not qualified to give any commission at all. In the Bible St Paul specifically foretold that even if an angel had to come and preach a gospel different from the one 'we' i.e. the church taught, let him be accursed. Then all protestant preaching is accursed preaching.

St. John in his epistle asks every believer 'not to believe every spirit' but to 'discern every spirit whether they are of God' because many false prophets are gone out into the world'.

1Jo:4:1-4: *Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the spirits whether they are of God: because many false prophets are gone out into the world. **Hereby know ye** the Spirit of God: Every spirit that confesseth that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is of God And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world. Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. **Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error.***

Anyone teaching 'Jesus came in the flesh' acknowledges that He was the flesh and blood of Mary. He became flesh in Mary's womb, He is 'the fruit of her womb' ; her offspring as the Bible says (Lk 1:42 & Gen 3:15). Hebrews 2:14-16 says **Jesus, like every children are partakers of flesh and blood, took human form.**

Heb:2:14-16: *Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; And deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. For verily **he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham.***

i.e. He partook the flesh and blood of whom? Mary of course, who else? He was the flesh and blood of Mary 'like every children are partakers of the flesh and blood of their mothers' as the Holy Bible proclaims. Mary is then not just an eggshell as protestants teach.

The Catholic church acknowledges Mary as the 'Mother of the Lord' just as Elizabeth of whom the Bible testifies as 'was of the daughters of Aaron and the wife of a Jewish priest, and that ' they were both righteous before God, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless' (Luke 1:5,6). Well, this Elizabeth 'filled with the Holy Spirit had proclaimed.

Lu:1:41-43: *And it came to pass, that, when Elisabeth heard the salutation of Mary, the babe leaped in her womb; and **Elisabeth was filled with the Holy Ghost: And she spake out with a loud voice, and said, Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb.** And whence is this to me, that **the mother of my Lord** should come to me?*

The Catholic church has continued proclaiming Mary's blessedness throughout all generations in fulfillment of Mary's proclamation in Lk 1:48.

Lu:1:48: *For he hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden: for, behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed.*

Who then is the Whore of Babylon?

In her was found the blood of prophets and of the saints, and of all who have been killed on the earth." (Revelation 18:24);

for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem. (Lu:13:33)

It has been part of the Protestant propaganda to spread that the 'Whore of Babylon' mentioned in the Book of Revelation is the Catholic church. Well, what does the Bible say in fact;

Revelation mentions '**The woman you saw**' is 'the **great city**' that rules over the kings of the earth." (Revelation 17:18)

Also said about 'the whore' is that;

*In her was found the **blood of prophets and of the saints**, and of all who have been killed on the earth."* (Revelation 18:24);

and after the destruction of the 'whore' it is said;

*Re:18:20: Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and **ye holy apostles and prophets; for God hath avenged you on her.***

Revelation mentions the 'great city' as '**where also the Lord was crucified**'

*Their bodies will lie in the street of the **great city**, which is figuratively called Sodom and Egypt, **where also their Lord was crucified.*** (Rev 11:8)

Then '**the whore**' is

- 1) the Great city
- 2) in her was killed the prophets and saints
- 3) it is where also the Lord was crucified.

Then it is beyond doubt that the 'whore' referred to in Revelation is none other than the 'disobedient Jerusalem'.

Instances showing the whore to be Jerusalem can be seen in the gospels and the letters of St. Paul as well.

Mt:22:1-14: *And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said, The **kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son, And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come. Again, he sent forth other servants**, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage. But **they made light of it, and went their ways**, one to his farm, another to his merchandise: And **the remnant took his servants, and entreated them spitefully, and slew them.** But when the king heard thereof, **he was wroth: and he sent forth his armies, and destroyed those murderers, and burned up their city.***

Servants sent forth are the prophets. 'those bidden and would not come, and who ill treated the servants' are the Jews. The ill treated servants are the prophets. **Thus He let 'their city' be burned up** (Mt:22:7). "Their city" being **Jerusalem**.

And in Luke Jesus says;

*Nevertheless I must walk to day, and to morrow, and the day following: **for it cannot be that a prophet perish out of Jerusalem.*** Lu:13:33:

So, no prophet was killed 'outside Jerusalem'.

Jesus says the same about Jerusalem in Mt 23:34-39

Mt:21:33-45: *Hear another parable: There was a certain householder, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and digged a winepress in it, and built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a far country: And when the time of the fruit drew near, he sent his servants to the husbandmen, that they might receive the fruits of it. And the **husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another. Again, he sent other servants more than the first: and they did unto them likewise.** But **last of all he sent unto them his son**, saying, They will reverence my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir; come, let us kill him, and let us seize on his inheritance. And **they caught him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.** When the lord therefore of the vineyard cometh, what will he do unto those husbandmen? They say unto him, **He will miserably destroy those wicked men**, and will let out his vineyard unto other husbandmen, which shall render him the fruits in their seasons. Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvelous in our eyes? Therefore say I unto you, The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof. And when **the chief priests and Pharisees had heard his parables, they perceived that he spake of them.***

‘Mt:23:34: Wherefore, behold, **I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify;** and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: **That upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation. O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets,** and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! **Behold, your house is left unto you desolate.**

Lu:11:49: Therefore also said the wisdom of God, **I will send them prophets and apostles, and some of them they shall slay and persecute:**

Lu:19:41-44: And when he was come near, he beheld **the city**, and wept over it, Saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, **at least in this thy day**, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes. For the days shall come upon thee, that **thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keep thee in on every side, And shall lay thee even with the ground,** and thy children within thee; and **they shall not leave in thee one stone upon another; because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.**

Lu:23:27-31: And there followed him a great company of people, and of women, which also bewailed and lamented him. But Jesus turning unto them said, **Daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves, and for your children.** For, behold, the days are coming, in the which they shall say, **Blessed are the barren, and the wombs that never bare, and the paps which never gave suck.** Then shall they begin to say to the mountains, **Fall on us; and to the hills, Cover us. For if they do these things in a green tree, what shall be done in the dry?**

And St Paul's words;

1Th:2:14-15: For ye, brethren, became followers of the churches of God which in Judaea are in Christ Jesus: **for ye also have suffered like things of your own countrymen, even as they have of the Jews: Who both killed the Lord Jesus, and their own prophets, and have persecuted us;** and they please not God, and are contrary to all men:

We have the testimony in the Old Testament prophets;

Isa:1:21: **How is the faithful city become an harlot!**

Isa:23:16: Take an harp, go about **the city, thou harlot that hast been forgotten;**

Jer:2:20: For of old time I have broken thy yoke, and burst thy bands; and thou saidst, I will not transgress; when upon every high hill and under every green tree thou wanderest, **playing the harlot.**

Jer:3:1: They say, If a man put away his wife, and she go from him, and become another man's, shall he return unto her again? shall not that land be greatly polluted? but **thou hast played the harlot with many lovers;** yet return again to me, saith the Lord.

Jer:3:3: Therefore the showers have been withholden, and there hath been no latter rain; and **thou hadst a whore's forehead, thou refusedst to be ashamed.**

Jer:3:9: And it came to pass **through the lightness of her whoredom, that she defiled the land, and committed adultery with stones and with stocks.**

Jer:13:27: I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, **the lewdness of thy whoredom,** and thine abominations on the hills in the fields. **Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem!** wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?

Jer:3:6: The LORD said also unto me in the days of Josiah the king, Hast thou seen that which backsliding **Israel** hath done? she is gone up upon every high mountain and under every green tree, and there **hath played the harlot.**

Eze:16:2: Son of man, **cause Jerusalem to know her abominations,**

Eze:16:15: But thou didst trust in thine own beauty, and **playedst the harlot** because of thy renown, and pouredst out thy fornications on every one that passed by; his it was.

Eze:16:35: **Wherefore, O harlot, hear the word of the LORD:**

Eze:16:41: And they shall burn thine houses with fire, and execute judgments upon thee in the sight of many women: **and I will cause thee to cease from playing the harlot, and thou also shalt give no hire any more.**

Eze:23:2-4: Son of man, there were **two women, the daughters of one mother:** And they committed whoredoms in Egypt; **they committed whoredoms** in their youth: there were their breasts pressed, and there they bruised the teats of their virginity. And the names of them were Aholah the elder, and Aholibah her sister: and they were mine, and they bare sons and daughters. Thus were their names; Samaria is Aholah, and **Jerusalem Aholibah.**

Ho:2:5: **For their mother hath played the harlot: she that conceived them hath done shamefully: for she said, I will go after my lovers, that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink.**

Ho:3:3: **And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee.**

Ho:4:15: **Though thou, Israel, play the harlot, yet let not Judah offend; and come not ye unto Gilgal, neither go ye up to Beth-aven, nor swear, The LORD liveth.**

Na:3:4: **Because of the multitude of the whoredoms of the wellfavoured harlot, the mistress of witchcrafts, that selleth nations through her whoredoms, and families through her witchcrafts.**

Then the whore refers to apostate Jerusalem, as told in the book of Isaiah, Ezekiel, etc.

In Revelation, apostate Jerusalem or the harlot is destroyed and in the next scene we see the New Jerusalem being presented without spot or wrinkle, the new bride (Rev 17; 18;19;2; 20:9; 21:1,2).

Re:19:2: **For true and righteous are his judgments: for he hath judged the great whore, which did corrupt the earth with her fornication, and hath avenged the blood of his servants at her hand.**

Re:19:7,8: **Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints.**

The **Whore** (Old Jerusalem) is destroyed and the **Bride of the Lamb** whom Revelation calls 'The New Jerusalem' is brought forward. And the new Jerusalem again is introduced as 'the Great city'

Re:21:2: **And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.**

Re:21:9: **And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife.** Re:21:10: **And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God,**

And what more proof do we need when Revelation tells that (Re:17:3: the whore sat upon a scarlet coloured beast, **full of names of blasphemy**), while the Catholic church was the protector and not a blasphemer who preserved the true scriptures, the Bible from corruption from the time it was written and still spreads the same true scriptures.

From all this it is plain that, it is mere protestant propaganda to defame the Catholic church. It is hell's attempts of trying to prevail against the Lord's church. Like the Lord reminded His believers, 'If they have called the Master of the house Beelzebul, what will they call His disciples.'

The Catechism of the Catholic church on the separated communities and their Salvation

Wounds to unity

817 In fact, "in this one and only Church of God from its very beginnings there arose certain rifts, which the Apostle strongly censures as damnable. But in subsequent centuries much more serious dissensions appeared and large communities became separated from full communion with the Catholic Church - for which, often enough, men of both sides were to blame."²⁶⁹ The ruptures that wound the unity of Christ's Body - here we must distinguish heresy, apostasy, and schism²⁷⁰ - do not occur without human sin:

Where there are sins, there are also divisions, schisms, heresies, and disputes. Where there is virtue, however, there also are harmony and unity, from which arise the one heart and one soul of all believers.²⁷¹

818 "However, one cannot charge with the sin of the separation those who at present are born into these communities [that resulted from such separation] and in them are brought up in the faith of Christ, and the Catholic Church accepts them with respect and affection as brothers . . . All who have been justified by faith in Baptism are incorporated into Christ; they therefore have a right to be called Christians, and with good reason are accepted as brothers in the Lord by the children of the Catholic Church."²⁷²

819 "Furthermore, many elements of sanctification and of truth"²⁷³ are found outside the visible confines of the Catholic Church: "the written Word of God; the life of grace; faith, hope, and charity, with the other interior gifts of the Holy Spirit, as well as visible elements."²⁷⁴ Christ's Spirit uses these Churches and ecclesial communities as means of salvation, whose power derives from the fullness of grace and truth that Christ has entrusted to the Catholic Church. All these blessings come from Christ and lead to him,²⁷⁵ and are in themselves calls to "Catholic unity."²⁷⁶

"Outside the Church there is no salvation"

846 How are we to understand this affirmation, often repeated by the Church Fathers?³³⁵ Re-formulated positively, it means that all salvation comes from Christ the Head through the Church which is his Body:

Basing itself on Scripture and Tradition, the Council teaches that the Church, a pilgrim now on earth, is necessary for salvation: the one Christ is the mediator and the way of salvation; he is present to us in his body which is the Church. He himself explicitly asserted the necessity of faith and Baptism, and thereby affirmed at the same time the necessity of the Church which men enter through Baptism as through a door. Hence they could not be saved who, knowing that the Catholic Church was founded as necessary by God through Christ, would refuse either to enter it or to remain in it.³³⁶

847 This affirmation is not aimed at those who, through no fault of their own, do not know Christ and his Church:

Those who, through no fault of their own, do not know the Gospel of Christ or his Church, but who nevertheless seek God with a sincere heart, and, moved by grace, try in their actions to do his will as they know it through the dictates of their conscience - those too may achieve eternal salvation.³³⁷

848 "Although in ways known to himself God can lead those who, through no fault of their own, are ignorant of the Gospel, to that faith without which it is impossible to please him, the Church still has the obligation and also the sacred right to evangelize all men."³³⁸

Various Christian denominations and their evolution

All of the protestant or Pentecostal churches in the present world are not more than 400 years old, while the Catholic church is more than 2010 years old.

Waldensians started with **Peter Waldo**, a Catholic lay preacher who began to preach on the streets of Lyon in the **12th century**.

Lutheran church founded by **Martin Luther**, an ex- monk of the Catholic Church, in the **16th century**.

Church of England; Anglicans, was founded by **King Henry VIII** in the **16th century** because the Pope would not grant him a divorce with the right to remarry.

Presbyterian, was founded by **John Calvin** in Switzerland. in the **16th century**.

Congregationalist, was originated by **Robert Brown** in Holland in the **16th century**.

Baptists founded by **John Smyth**, who launched it in Amsterdam in the beginning of the **17th century**.

Dutch Reformed church, has **Michaelis Jones** as founder, originated it in New York in the **17th century**.

Mennonite (Amish): Menno Simons, in Holland in the **17th century**.

Friends (Quakers): George Fox, England in the **17th century**.

Protestant Episcopalian, an offshoot of the Church of England founded by **Samuel Seabury** in the American colonies in the **17th century**.

Methodist, was launched by **John and Charles Wesley** in England in the **18th century**.

Shakers: Ann Lee, in the **18th century**, England

Unitarian, Theophilus Lindley founded it in London in the **18th century**.

Church of Christ ; Christian Churches/Disciples of Christ. (Campbellites, Disciples): They all emerged from the same roots. The Stone-Campbell movement began as two separate threads, each without knowledge of the other, during the Second Great Awakening in the early 19th century. The first, led by Barton W. Stone began at Cane Ridge, Bourbon County, Kentucky. The group called themselves simply *Christians*. The second, began in western Pennsylvania and Virginia (now West Virginia), led by Thomas Campbell and his son, Alexander Campbell. Because the founders wanted to abandon all denominational labels, they used the biblical names for the followers of Jesus that they found in the Bible.

Mormon (Latter Day Saints), by **Joseph Smith** in Palmyra, N.Y., in the **19th century**.

Adventists (Seventh Day Adventists, Branch Davidians): William Miller, 19th century, United States

Salvation Army, began with **William Booth** in London in the **19th century**.

Christian Scientist, Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy as its founder in the **19th century**.

Jehovah's Witnesses: Charles Taze Russell, in the **19th century,** United States

Pentecostal (Assembly of God): Charles Parham, 19th century, United States

Unification (Moonies): Sun Myung Moon, 1954, Korea

Roman Catholic, year 33 by **Jesus Christ the Son of God,** and it is still the same Church.