

**Essay 12 - Did I Really Leave the Holy Catholic Church:
The Journey into Evangelical Faith and Experience**

(William Webster)

Pages 268-293 in the Book *Roman Catholicism*

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Introduction

[i] The Roman Catholic Church (RCC): The One True Church?

The RCC claims that it is the true church est. by JC and has an unbroken succession of apostolic authority. Therefore, it is the Protestant church that is a heretical sect that has departed from the true faith.

"Quite the contrary, the claims of the Church of Rome are not justified in light of a careful study of church history. It is the Roman Catholic Church, not the Protestant, that has departed from the faith once delivered to the saints." [268]

[ii] The liberalized attitude of the RCC toward evangelicals post Vatican II

Yet, the evangelical church has continued to grow en masse from converts from Rome. Karl Keating admits that the figure approaches hundreds of thousands who have left Rome.

[iii] William Webster - one of those who left Rome for Evangelicalism (former Altar Boy)

I. Truth: The Defining Issue (269)

A. Webster's reading of Karl Keating's "Catholicism and Fundamentalism"

1. Keating raises issues of truth: What is truth? How do you know?

His accusation is that Protestants think of truth as one-dimensional: sola scriptura (SS). For the Roman Catholic (RC) the church is ultimate truth and authority, not Scripture. This is Keating's argument in his book.

- a. Keating's book and the challenges of modern day Roman Catholic Apologists (RCA) challenged Webster to study church history

"It is important to note that the Reformers advanced their arguments as diligently on historical grounds as on theological. They knew church history, the church Fathers, and the major theologians of the church throughout the Middle Ages. An example of what I mean can be seen in John Calvin. In his *Institutes*, he quotes from no less than thirty-seven major church Fathers of the Patristic Age, not to mention many scholastic theologians, popes, and church councils." [270]

Through his study, Webster could confidently say that he is a Protestant by conviction on the basis of the truth of both Scripture and history.

B. The RCC claims to be the one truth church with a 2,000 year consensus for its teachings (called "the unanimous consent of the Fathers")

1. The RCC anathematizes anyone who disagrees - but what does the RCC mean by "anathema?"

- a. Webster's footnote #2 (page 288):

"*The Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: Universal Knowledge Foundation, 1912) gives the following background and definition for the term anathema:

'To understand the word anathema . . . we should first go back to the real meaning of *herem* of which it is the equivalent. *Herem* comes from the word *haram*, to cut off, to separate, to curse, and indicates that which is cursed and condemned to be cut off and exterminated. . . . In the New Testament anathema no longer entails death, but the loss of goods or exclusion from the society of the faithful. . . . But he who is separated from God is united to the devil, which explains why St. Paul, instead of anathematizing, sometimes delivers a person over to Satan (1 Tim. i.20; 1 Cor., v.5). . . . Anathema remains a major excommunication which is to be promulgated with great solemnity. . . . In passing this sentence the pontiff takes his seat in front of the

altar or in some other suitable place, and pronounces this formula of anathema which ends with these words: "Wherefore in the name of God the All-powerful, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, of the Blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and of all the Saints, in virtue of the power which has been given to us of binding and losing in Heaven and on earth, we deprive N____ himself and all of his accomplices and all his abettors of the Communion of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, we separate him from the society of all Christians, we exclude him from the bosom of our Holy Mother the Church in Heaven and on earth, we declare him excommunicated and anathematized and we judge him condemned to eternal fire with Satan and his angels and all the reprobate, so long as he will not burst the fetters of the demon, do penance and satisfy the Church; we deliver him to Satan to mortify his body, that his soul be saved on the day of judgment. "" (I:455-56)

- C. But do the historical facts support the RCC's contentions including the so-called "unanimous consent of the Fathers?"

II. Scripture and Tradition (271)

A. The RCC teaches that the doctrine of SS is unscriptural

1. Yet the RCC is completely wrong on this issue

a. Webster's footnote #6 (page 289):

"Scripture is described as being pure, perfect, eternal, sure, truth, forever settled in heaven; it sanctifies, causes spiritual growth, is God-breathed, authoritative, it gives wisdom unto salvation, makes wise the simple, is living and active, is a guide, a fire, a hammer, a seed, the sword of the Spirit; it gives knowledge of God, is a lamp to our feet, a light to our path, produces reverence for God, heals, makes free, illuminates, produces faith, regenerates, converts the soul, brings conviction of sin, restrains from sin, is spiritual food, is infallible, inerrant, irrevocable, searches the heart and mind, produces life, defeats Satan, proves truth, refutes error, is holy, equips for every good work is the final judge of all tradition, is the Word of God (Heb. 4:12; Psa. 119:9-11, 38, 105, 130, 133, 160; 19:7-11; 111:7-8; Isa. 40:8; Eph. 5:26; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Jer. 5:14; 23:29; Matt. 13:18-23; Eph. 6:17; Psa 107:20; Titus 2:5; 1 Peter 1:23, 2:2; Acts 20:32; John 8:32, 10:35; 17:17; Matt. 15:2-9). Where are we told these things about tradition?"

b. Scripture was the ultimate authority for Jesus' personal life and ministry

- (1) He always referred to the written Word of God to settle disputes, never to oral tradition
- (2) When He refers to the Word of God He always means the recorded Scripture
- (3) For Jesus, the Word of God is the final judge over all tradition
- (4) He virtually has nothing good to say about tradition (cf. Matt. 4:4; 5:17-19; 15:2-9; 22:29-32)

B. The RCC teaches that SS is unhistorical

1. Webster's citation of Cyril of Jer

"The more I have searched for the truth regarding these Roman Catholic believers, the more I have been compelled to conclude that the facts will not support this claim. *Sola Scriptura* was the universal teaching of the church Fathers and for the church as a whole through the later Middle Ages. Cyril of Jerusalem (AD 315-386) is reflective of the overall view of the Fathers (note that Cyril was a bishop of one of the most important sees of the church and responsible for instructing catechumens in the faith):

'Concerning the divine and sacred Mysteries of the Faith, we ought not to deliver even the most casual remark without the Holy Scriptures; nor be drawn aside by mere probabilities and the artifices of argument. Do not then believe me because I tell thee of these things, unless thou receive from the Holy Scriptures the proof of what is set forth: for this salvation, which is our faith, is not by ingenious reasoning, but by proof from the Holy Scriptures. . . . In these articles we comprehend the whole doctrine of faith. . . . For the articles of the Faith were not composed at the good pleasure of men, but the most important points chosen from all Scriptures, make up the one teaching of the Faith. . . . This Faith, in a few words, hath enfolded in its bosom the whole knowledge of godliness contained both in the Old and New Testaments. Behold, therefore, brethren and hold the traditions (2 Thess. 2:15) which ye now receive, and write them on the table of your hearts. . . . Now heed not any ingenious view of mine; else thou mayest be misled; but unless thou receive the witness of the prophets concerning each matter, believe not what is spoken; unless thou learn from Holy Scripture . . . receive not the witness of man.'" [272. Webster cites as his source, *The Catechetical Lectures* IV.17, V.12, XII.5, in *A Library of the Fathers of the Holy Catholic Church* (Oxford: Parker, 1845)

- a. For Cyril, tradition is simply the teaching of the church that is to be in accordance with the Scripture and subservient to it
2. As one reads the writings of the Fathers it becomes clear that Cyril's statements are representative of the church as a whole

"The clearest token of the prestige enjoyed by [Scripture] is the fact that almost the entire theological effort of the Fathers, whether their aims were polemical or constructive, was expended upon what amounted to the exposition of the Bible. Further, it was everywhere taken for granted that for any doctrine to win acceptance, it had first to establish its Scriptural basis." [J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Doctrines* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1978), 46.]

- a. Sola Scriptura was the affirmation of the early church, not some novel doctrine
- b. When the Fathers refer to a tradition handed down from the apostles independent of Scripture, they are referring to ecclesiastical customs and practices, never to doctrine
- c. The Fathers rejected the teaching of an apostolic oral tradition independent of Scripture as a Gnostic heresy (they believed that apostolic tradition was completely contained in the N.T.)
- d. Irenaeus states:

"We have learned from none others the plan of our salvation, that from those through whom the gospel has come down to us, which they did at one time proclaim in public,

and, at a later period, by the will of God, handed down to us in the Scriptures, to be the ground and pillar of our faith." [Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* III.1.1]

(1) The historical circumstances behind the words of Irenaeus are important:

"He was writing against the Gnostics who claimed to have access to an oral tradition handed down from the apostles, which was independent of the written Word of God. Irenaeus, as well as Tertullian, refutes such an idea." [274]

(a) Confirmed by Ellen Flesseman-Van Leer:

"For Irenaeus, the church doctrine is never purely traditional; on the contrary, the thought there could be some truth transmitted exclusively *viva voce* (orally) is a Gnostic line of thought." [Ellen Flesseman-Van Leer, *Tradition and Scripture in the Early Church* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1953), 133]

3. The church as a whole up to the 13th c. never viewed tradition to be a source of revelation

a. Brian Tierney affirms this:

"Before the thirteenth century, there is little trace in the works of the medieval theologians of the view that Tradition constituted a source of divine revelation separate from Scripture and little inclination to set up a distinction--still less an opposition--between scriptural revelation and church doctrine. . . . For twelfth century theologians (as for the Fathers themselves), church and Scripture 'coinhered.' This seems true in the sense that the teaching of the church and the teaching of Scripture were conceived of as essentially one. 'The men of the middle ages lived in the Bible and by the Bible.' When twelfth century theologians observed--as they sometimes did--that many things were held by the church that were not found in Scripture they seem to have had in mind only liturgical customs or pious practices. An extra-Scriptural source of faith like the Apostles' Creed (which was commonly regarded as a work of the apostles themselves) was held to define various tenets of Christian doctrine with absolute finality; but it was not considered to be a body of revealed truth supplementary to sacred Scripture. Rather, the Creed could be called in the twelfth century a 'summary' of the contents of Scripture. In this view Scripture recorded divine truth once and for all, and the living voice of the church, guided by the Holy Spirit, interpreted that truth and proclaimed it anew to each succeeding generation." [Brian Tierney, *Origins of Papal Infallibility, 1150-1350* (Leiden: Brill, 1972, 16-17.)]

C. What about Paul's use of "tradition" in 2 Thess. 2:15?

The word is not used in the same sense that RC uses it. The word simply means "teaching." Not some separate source of revelation apart from and equal in authority to Scripture.

III. The Canon (275)

A. The claims of the RCC that they established the canon

1. Not according to the facts of history

a. The N.T. books were recognized before the Western councils of Hippo and Carthage

- (1) These were provincial councils that had no authority for the church universally and their decrees on the Apocrypha were not accepted by the church universally

TAB: I would add that it is anachronistic to say that the Roman Catholic Church as it is today (or since the latter middle ages) is the same church of the first few centuries.

b. The church adopted the views of many of the Eastern Fathers such as Origin and Athanasius and Western Fathers such as Jerome (in rejecting the Apocrypha)

Therefore it is troubling that the RCC would later add these books into the canon. What authority did they have to do this?

(1) Jerome wrote:

"As, then, the Church reads Judith, Tobit and the books of Maccabees, but does not admit them among the canonical Scriptures, so let it also read these two volumes for the edification of the people, not to give authority to doctrines of the Church. . . . I say this to show how hard it is to master the book of Daniel, which in Hebrew contains neither the history of Susanna, nor the hymn of the three youths, nor the fables of Bel and the Dragon." [page 276]

(2) The New Catholic Encyclopedia:

"For the Old Testament, however, Protestants follow the Jewish canon; they have only the Old Testament books that are in the Hebrew Bible." [276]

(3) Even Pope Gregory the Great (590-604) rejected them

(4) John Cosin, in his book *A Scholastical History of the Canon*, documents some 52 major ecclesiastical writers and theologians from the eighth to the sixteenth centuries who held the view of Jerome

(5) Cajetan (Luther's opponent) rejected them (as Webster documents on page 276)

- (6) The New Catholic Encyclopedia affirms that Jerome rejected the Apocrypha and that the Councils of Hippo and Carthage did not establish the O.T. canon

"According to Catholic doctrine, the proximate criterion of the biblical canon is the infallible decision of the Church. This decision was not given until rather late in the history of the Church at the Council of Trent." [New Catholic Encyclopedia, II:390, III:29]

2. The first general council of the Western church to decree the Apocrypha canonical was the 16th c. Council of Trent - this contrary to the "universal consent of the Fathers" and the Jews and the church up to that time - and to top it off the RCC had the gall to proclaim anathemas on anyone who disagreed with their decision to add to God's infallible Word!

IV. On the Papacy (277)

A. Pope Boniface VIII in 1302 made an ex cathedra statement in his bull *Unam Sanctum* that submission to the Bishop of Rome was necessary for salvation

1. This doctrine was later reaffirmed by subsequent popes and councils, such as Vatican I

B. The doctrine of the papacy as substantiated by Peter's confession in Matthew 16

1. The unanimous consent of the Fathers rejects such an interpretation in favor of:

- a. The Rock is Christ
- b. The Rock is Peter's Confession
- c. The Rock is Peter in his confession which stands representative of the entire church or all of the Apostles together

2. Augustine's interpretation is typical of that of the Fathers:

"Because thou hast said unto Me, 'Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God;' I also say unto thee, 'Thou art Peter.' For before he was called Simon. Now this name of Peter was given him by the Lord, and in a figure, that he should signify the church. For seeing that Christ is the rock (Petra), Peter is the Christian people. For the rock (Petra) is the original name. Therefore Peter is so called from the rock; not the rock from Peter, as Christ is not called Christ from the Christian, but the Christian from Christ. 'Therefore,' he saith, 'Thou art Peter; and upon this Rock' which thou has confessed, upon this rock which thou hast acknowledged, saying, 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God, will I build my church.' I will build thee upon Me, not Myself upon thee. . . . For men who wished to be built upon men, said, 'I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas,' who is Peter. But others who did not wish to be built upon Peter, but upon this Rock, said, 'But I am of Christ.'" And when the Apostle Paul ascertained that he was chosen, and Christ despised, he said, 'Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?' And, as not in the name of Paul, so neither in the name of Peter; but in the name of Christ; that Peter might be build upon the Rock, not the Rock upon Peter." [Augustine, *Sermon XXVI.1-2*, Series Two, vol. VI, of Schaff and Wace, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 340]

- a. Yet Rome goes against the revered Augustine who writes after nearly 5 centuries of church history

Here is Matthew 16 - Rome's most essential verse of Scripture in sustaining their case for a continuing papacy - and their interpretation is in direct contradiction to the Fathers "consensus." And

then Vatican I blindly states that there exists a unanimous consensus of interpretation of the meaning of Matthew 16!

3. John Chrysostom (344-407) of the Eastern Church agrees with Augustine:

"And I say unto thee, Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my Church; that is, on the faith of his confession." [279]

4. Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger (one of the most renowned RC historians of the 18th c. who taught church history for 47 years) concurs with the Fathers against Vatican I:

"Of all the Fathers who interpret these passages in the Gospels (Matt. 16:18, John 21:17), not a single one applies them to the Roman bishops as Peter's successors. How many Fathers have busied themselves with these texts, yet not one of them whose commentaries we possess--Origin, Chrysostom, Hilary, Augustine, Cyril, Theodoret, and those whose interpretations are collected in catenas--has dropped the faintest hint that the primacy of Rome is the consequence of the commission and promise to Peter! Not one of them has explained the rock or foundation on which Christ would build His Church of the office given to Peter to be transmitted to his successors, but they understood by it either Christ Himself, or Peter's confession of faith in Christ; often both together. Or else they thought Peter was the foundation equally with all the other Apostles, the twelve being together the foundation-stones of the church (Apoc. xxi.14). The Fathers could the less recognize in the power of the keys, and the power of binding and losing, any special prerogative or lordship of the Roman bishop, inasmuch as--what is obvious to anyone at first sight--they did not regard the power first given to Peter, and afterwards conferred on all the Apostles, as any thing peculiar to him, or hereditary in the line of Roman bishops, and they held the symbol of the keys as meaning just the same as the figurative expression of binding and loosing." [page 279, Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger (one of the most renowned RC historians of the 18th c. who taught church history for 47 years) in *The Pope and the Council* (Boston: Roberts, 1869), 74]

*TAB: See also Peter De Rosa's book, **Vicars of Christ: The Dark-Side of the Papacy**, where he gives the same arguments.*

RCA's have charged that the Protestant exegesis of Matthew 16 grew out of the Reformers need to legitimize their opposition to the papacy and so they invented a novel interpretation that contradicted the traditional view of the church. The facts reveal just the opposite!

"The Roman Catholic interpretation is in fact, a direct contradiction of the decrees of Trent and Vatican I, which state that it is unlawful to interpret Scripture in any way contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers." [279]

5. Not to say that there was never a pro-papal interpretation given to Matthew 16:18-19:

"Beginning in the fourth century we find a papal interpretation promoted by the bishops of Rome. Leo I, in the first century, is the first to combine Matthew 16 with Luke 22 and John 21 to promote the theory of papal rule, but not the teaching of infallibility." [280]

C. The early church never viewed the bishop of Rome as being endowed with supreme authority to rule over the universal church

1. Pope Gregory the Great (AD 590-604) rebuked the bishop of Constantinople for attempting to arrogate to himself the title of 'universal bishop' and he insisted that such a claim was unlawful in the church of Jesus Christ:

"Now I confidently say that whoever calls himself, or desires to be called, Universal Priest, is in his elation the precursor of Antichrist, because he proudly puts himself above all others. Nor is it by dissimilar pride that he is led into error; for, as that perverse one wishes to appear as God over all men, so whoever this one is who covets being called sole priest, he extols himself above all other priests. . . . Certainly Peter, the first of the Apostles, himself a member of the holy and universal Church, Paul, Andrew, John--what were they but heads of particular communities? And yet all were members under one Head. And (to bind all together in a short girth of speech) the saints before the law, the saints under the law, the saints under grace, all these making up the Lord's Body, were constituted as members of the Church, and not one of them has wished himself to be called universal. Now let your holiness acknowledge to what extent you swell within yourself in desiring to be called by that name by which no one presumed to be called who was truly holy." [280, Webster's citation being: *Epistles of St. Gregory the Great*, Book VII, Epistle 33, and Book V, Epistle 18, Series Two, vol. XII, of Schaff and Wace, *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, 226, 167.]

D. Webster claims that not one Father, doctor, theologian, or canonist of the church for the first 12 centuries interpreted Matthew 16:18; Luke 22:32; and John 21:15-17 the way the RCC has contended

1. The Patristic exegesis of Luke 22:32 was that Christ's prayer for Peter was a guarantee that Peter's faith will not ultimately fail, not that he would be infallible

a. The patristic writes viewed Peter as representative of the church, the bride whom Christ will not allow to fall away

2. The patristic interpretation of John 21:15-17 saw Peter as a representative of all pastors of the church

3. The universal position of the church was that the bishops of Rome were fallible

Brian Tierney writes: "The theologians of the thirteenth century could not possibly have taken the doctrine of papal infallibility from the canonical tradition of the church because the doctrine simply did not exist in the writings of the canonists." [281]

E. Pope Honorius as an example of a pope condemned as a heretic (by the 6th ecumenical council of III Constantinople, AD 680-81)

1. The council was confirmed by Pope Leo II

V. On Scripture Interpretation (282)

- A. The RCC teaches that she alone has the authority to interpret the Scripture and that she can do so infallibly

"How can it be an infallible interpreter of Scripture when its interpretation of Matthew 16:18, Luke 22:32, and John 21:15-17 contradicts the interpretation given by the Fathers who make up the magisterium (which, from a Roman Catholic position, is itself an infallible interpreter of Scripture)." [282]

1. Yet the church at Trent and Vatican I has bound itself never to interpret Scripture contrary to the unanimous consent of the Fathers

"It claims, amazingly, that all of its teachings can be verified by such consent. . . . None of the church's teaching in its tradition can claim a *unanimous* consent and much of its interpretation of Scripture, such as the papal passages, *contradicts* the unanimous interpretation given by the Fathers of the church." [282]

VI. On Mary (282)

A. Rome's teaching regarding Mary is necessary to be believed for salvation

1. Doctrines including her immaculate conception, perpetual virginity, assumption, status as co-mediatrix

B. The Immaculate Conception

1. The origin of Mary's immaculate conception originated in the 5th century with the heretics Pelagius and Celestius
2. It was universally rejected by the Fathers of the early church, as well as Augustine, Gregory the Great, Anselm, Bernard of Clairveaux, and Thomas Aquinas

a. Webster's footnote on page 292 (footnote #34):

"Pelagius and Celestius used Mary, the mother of Jesus, as an example of one born free of original sin. Vincent of Lerins points out the origin of the teaching of the Immaculate Conception with these words: 'Who ever originated a heresy that did not first dis sever himself from the consentient agreement of the universality and antiquity of the Catholic Church? That this is so is demonstrated in the clearest way by examples. For who ever before the profane Pelagius attributed so much antecedent strength to Free-will, as to deny the necessity of God's grace to aid it towards every good in every single act? Who ever before his monstrous disciple Celestius denied that the whole human race is involved in the guilt of Adam's sin?' (Vincent of Lerins, A Commonitory, 24.62, Series Two, vol. XI, of Schaff and Wace, ed., Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, 149-50)

3. The dogma of the Immaculate Conception was also a matter of violent dispute between the Franciscans and Dominicans

C. The Bodily Assumption

1. None of the Fathers address the end of Mary's life
2. The first Father to promote the teaching of her assumption was Gregory of Tours in 590
 - a. He based his teaching on an apocryphal gospel found in the *Transitus* literature (the *Transitus beatae Mariae* of Pseudo-Melito)
 - b. The doctrine was deemed heretical and condemned by two popes (Gelasius and Hormisdas) in the late 5th and early 6th centuries

"These popes placed this doctrine, its authors and the contents of their writings, as well as all who follow their teachings, under an eternal anathema."

* Webster's footnote on this point reads (footnote 39 on page 292):

"In his decree, *Decretum de Libris Canonicis Ecclesiasticis et Apocrypha*, which was later affirmed by Pope Hormisdas, Gelasius lists the Transitus teaching by the following title: *Liber qui appellatur Transitus, id est Assumptio Sanctae Mariae* under the following condemnation: "These and writings similar to these, which . . . all the heresiarchs and their disciples, or the schismatics have taught or written . . . we confess have not only been rejected but also banished from the whole Roman and Apostolic Church and with their authors and followers of their authors have been condemned forever under the indissoluble bond of anathema." (St. Gelasius I, Epistle 42; taken from Henry Denzinger, *The Sources of Catholic Dogma* [London: Herder, 1954], 69-70).

Webster concludes: "Thus, the early church viewed this doctrine not as the pious expression of the faith of the faithful but as a heretical doctrine that probably originated from gnostic sources." [283]

D. Other Marian doctrines

1. Mary is a mediatrix and even co-redemptrix with Christ and that grace cannot be applied to man except through her

a. Footnote #40 on page 292:

"Popes Leo XIII and Benedict XV make these statements:

"When Mary offered herself completely to God together with her Son in the temple, she was already sharing with him the painful atonement on behalf of the human race . . . (at the foot of the cross) she was a co-worker with Christ in His expiation for mankind and she offered up her Son to the divine justice dying with him in her heart (*Jucunda semper*). . . . Thus she (Mary) suffered and all but died along with her Son suffering and dying--thus for the salvation of men abdicated the rights of a mother toward her son, and insofar as it was hers to do, she immolated the Son to placate God's justice, so that she herself may justly be said to have redeemed together with Christ the human race." [*De Corredemptione*; cited by Carol, ed. *Mariology*, 1:383, 37]

- b. This is totally non-supported by the writings of the Fathers and is certainly blasphemous biblically

2. Queen of Heaven

Conclusion

[i] Example of the ignorance of RCA:

" . . . I heard Scott Hahn make an unbelievable statement (on tape) before a predominantly Roman Catholic audience that no bishop ro Rome has ever been accused of heresy." [284]

[ii] The claims for RC authority cannot be supported by the facts of history - even knowledgeable RC authorities admit this:

"Sometimes, then, the Fathers speak and write in a way that would eventually be seen as unorthodox. But this is not the only difficulty with respect to the criterion of orthodoxy. The other great one is that we look in vain in many of the Fathers for references to things that many Christians might believe in today. We do not find, for instance, some teachings on Mary or the papacy that were developed in medieval and modern times." [Patrologist Boniface Ramsey, cited on page 285]

[iii] Rome's false gospel

[iv] The excommunication of Johann Joseph Ignaz von Döllinger

"Döllinger was one of the most celebrated Roman Catholic historians of the last century. Just before Vatican I, which convened to discuss the issues of papal rule and infallibility, he coauthored a book under the pseudonym, Janus, titled *The Pope and the Council*. In it he appealed to this council, in light of the facts of history, not to pass decrees that would contradict the truth. His pleas fell on deaf ears. He refused to recant his position and was later excommunicated from the church he loved. His commitment to truth exacted an enormous price. When asked why he would not repudiate his intellect and reason for the sake of communion with Rome, he stated,

'Because . . . if I did so in a question which is from the historical eye perfectly clear and unambiguous, there would then be no longer for me any such thing as historical truth and certainty; I should then have to suppose that my whole life long I had been in a world of dizzy illusion, and that in historical matters I am altogether incapable of distinguishing truth from fable or falsehood.'" [286, Webster cites Döllinger as cited by W.J. Simpson, *Roman Catholic Opposition to Papal Infallibility* (London: John Murray, 1909), 234.]

[v] Webster's pleas for RC's to come out from Rome to the true gospel - salvation is through Christ not a church

[vi] The Reformation was one of the greatest revivals in all history