

Pillar and Ground of Truth

Catholics sometimes quote I Timothy 3:15 which states, "...The church of the living God, the pillar and mainstay of the truth" to prove that the church is invested with authority to legislate in divine matters. (See Father Smith Instructs Jackson, p. 35; The Question Box, p. 96).

The phrase "pillar and ground of the truth" does not mean that the church is the originator of truth or that it can make or change the laws of God. It simply means that it is the upholder, defender and proclaimer of the truth. The apostles often praised churches for proclaiming the truth, "for from you the word of the Lord has been spread abroad" (I Thess. 1:8). They commended them for defending the truth, "partakers with me . . . in the defense and confirmation of the gospel" (Phil. 1:7). However, there is not a single verse in all of the Holy Scriptures which indicates that the church has the authority to originate truth or to decree laws for God.

The apostles and prophets (and they alone) were commissioned by the Lord, not to originate truth but to reveal the truth. "For ever, O Lord, thy word is firmly fixed in the heavens" (Psalm 119:98 Catholic Edition RSV). Their task was once and for all completed for they gave us the written New Testament of Christ.

The responsibility of the church today is simply to follow, defend and proclaim the truth which they revealed. The Catechism for Adults, page 54 says, "The Catholic Church alone has the authority to rule and to teach." However, the authority is not in the body, but in the Head (Eph 1:22,23; Col. 1:18). The ruling is not in the kingdom, but in the King (Heb. 7:1 2; Rev. 1:5 6). The authority is not in the church, but in Christ (Matt. 28: 18; 1 Pet. 3:22). The church is not the Savior, but simply the body of the saved (Acts 2:47; Eph. 5:22-24).

- by **David J. Riggs**

All Mothers Are Working Mothers

Did you know, ladies, that by the time a mother of three rears her children to age eighteen that she will have put in more than 18,000 hours of child-generated work? That's work you wouldn't have to do if you had no children.

The mother who invests her time and talents in the rearing of her own children is too often unappreciated by the man and children she tries so desperately to serve. How could a little four-year-old girl or boy understand the importance of what Mommy is trying to do? We can only hope that each passing year and the maturity it brings will help children to understand. And we can only pray that a man who finds himself so fortunate will express his love and appreciation for such a wife,

We wish that every mother could understand how precious the days they invest in child-rearing really are. No job anywhere could be any tougher; no job anywhere could be more important!

- by **Mark White**

Science and the Bible

The claim that science and the Bible do not agree should disturb no one. What is called "science" is not static. Each generation brings new light; most of the old theories have been exploded by scientists themselves. Yet, each generation of scientists boldly announces that science has disproved the Bible.

But it can as easily be proved that science has disproved itself. With all their dogmatism about the Bible and science, there are few theories that real scientists are willing to take their stand upon and say: "Here is the ultimate truth; no future discoveries will contradict this." So long as they cannot afford to affirm that they have arrived at ultimate truth, how can they with honor say that science disproves the Bible?

Besides, if the Bible fully agreed with the theories of one age, it would not agree with the theories of the next age. The Bible is unchangeable and cannot keep up agreement with that which constantly changes.

Some of the foremost scientists recognize the limitations of science and are firm believers in the Bible. Preach the Word! No known truth contradicts the Bible.”

- by R. L. Whiteside
from Kingdom of Promise and Prophecy

Are We Really ‘Together’ In The Virtual World?

During the coronavirus pandemic, some congregations have opted to suspend all assemblies while encouraging their members to join in virtual, online activities. This, of course, is a valuable option for Bible study, class instruction, etc.

However, the question is: do these online sessions constitute a “coming together into one place”. This was the terminology that Paul used when describing the observance of the Lord’s Supper in 1 Corinthians 11:20. Clearly, the “one place” was a specific geographical location. The saints literally, not virtually, assembled to participate in the communion.

The argument has been made that such physical assembling was the only choice available in those primitive times. There was no way to “come together” other than being gathered in one particular spot. But for us, there are other possibilities. The Internet provides unique opportunities to ‘assemble’ online. Paul and the Corinthians could never have imagined such a thing (or so we are told) and therefore the virtual “coming together” is a reasonable adaptation for these times. Are you sure?

In reality, folks even 2,000 years ago understood the notion of being ‘together’ even when separated by vast distances. The ‘virtual assembly’ advocates need look no further than the same epistle to see Paul describing such. In chapter five of 1 Corinthians he urged the church to address the matter of an immoral brother. Concerning this he said: “For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already judged him who has so committed this, as though I were present. In the name of our Lord Jesus, when you are assembled, and I with you in spirit . . . to deliver such a one to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (5:3,4).

Do you see it? Paul said he was “with them” in this essential activity even though he was not in that same physical location. But – and here is the important contrast - when referring to observing the Lord’s Supper (in the same epistle), he specified “coming together in one place” as a required condition. We conclude that anything less than physical presence (even though Paul understood the concept of ‘remote’ presence) would not have been acceptable in the 1st Century church. Think!

- by Greg Gwin