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THE REVIEW

Practical Preeminence

By Pastor Mark Strangman, Moderator IBFNA

"Mark, the three most important things in ministry are your hermeneutic, your hermeneutic, and your hermeneutic!" I can still hear my dear friend and mentor, Dr. Clay Nuttall, saying these words from the front seat of the car. We were driving to a regional IBFNA meeting in Hopewell, NJ in the mid 1990's. The three of us in the car were discussing a particular volatile issue in the church, and his advice was crystal clear. Everything in our ministries (and essentially our lives) boils down to having the correct understanding of God's Word to apply in each situation.

Just the other evening my wife and I spent the better part of two hours reaching out and caring for a beloved couple in ministry who were being mistreated and abused by the elder board of their church. I shared with them, in a somewhat "tongue-in-cheek" fashion, that this was one of the main reasons I was a Baptist - because of the misinterpretation of some churches concerning church leadership. Though some may not like my frankness of speech, we are a Baptist fellowship, and the identification of two biblical offices (pastor and deacon) is one of the foundational standards of Baptist polity, according to Dr. L. Duane Brown's *Bible Basics for Baptists*.

Please do not misunderstand me. I have seen plenty of problems in multiple ministries from church boards (deacons, trustees, etc.) over the years, as you have. The situation with this brother was not necessarily because it was an elder board, but rather because it was a board acting unbiblically. Without going into private details, when the Scripture was applied to their situation, they would not accept it because they were not in line with it. Everything rests on a correct hermeneutic and the correct application of Scripture to the situation.

How many theological issues do we encounter that affect our ministries? Take, for example, the problem with supersessionism (replacement theology) and the nation of Israel. In order to accept this misinterpretation of Scripture and rejection of systematic dispensationalism, you have to spiritualize many passages in the prophetic books, including much of the book of Ezekiel. And doing so, you end up with a warped view of the book of Revelation and a practical apathy toward current events in the nation of Israel. Some may say I am simplifying the point, but this is an issue that separates our churches and even causes division in the political structure of our nation.

Why do we have these struggles in the church? Permit me to remind you that these same struggles were present in the early church, and much of our New Testament epistles were written in reaction to hermeneutical problems. Paul tells us that the Lord gave



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PART ONE

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the church leaders, especially pastors, to train and teach the brethren. Pastors are to minister “for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ” (Eph. 4:12-13). He instructed Pastor Timothy to “rightly divide the word of truth” in 2 Tim. 2:15. Our biblical hermeneutic is of the highest importance. I would suggest to you that it is of such importance that it is essentially linked to our understanding of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

In Paul's epistle to the church at Colossae, he established the foundation for a correct hermeneutic in the first chapter. While addressing the saints there, he was taking on the heretical doctrine of Gnosticism and the rejection of the true deity of the Lord Jesus. To instruct them in this battle against false doctrine, he first established a clear understanding of exactly who Jesus Christ is. The climactic point in this passage of Scripture is Paul's declaration of the preeminence of the Lord Jesus: “that in all things He might have the preeminence” (1:18). But what exactly does this mean to us and to the doctrinal purity of our churches?

Christ's Preeminence is Established

Over the course of describing the Lord in such vivid detail, Paul proves His preeminence in three areas.

(1) His preeminence over each born again believer. Paul's majestic declaration of Christ's work in us (Col. 1:13-15) reveals our positional placement into Christ's kingdom. Using the aorist tense, Paul demonstrates that this is a spiritual transformation that has occurred at salvation and will one day culminate in our literal dwelling with the Lord in His physical kingdom. This is accomplished by Christ's redeeming work through the payment of His blood for the forgiveness of our sins, placing Him over us in position and authority as our sovereign Lord.

(2) His preeminence over all creation. In verses 16-17 of the passage, Paul continues his declaration of the authority and importance of the Lord Jesus by presenting Him as the Creator of everything. He includes all things physical and spiritual, no matter their rank or importance. All things that are part of creation were made by Him and for Him.

Stop here and meditate on this truth for a moment. No matter what it is, when it existed, or what its purpose is, it was created for Him, and He has the right to do with it as He sees fit. As I write this article, we are on the brink of a monumental presidential election. When you read this, the election will be over (I hope!), and things will move on. No matter the outcome, it is for His purpose and by His will. That we can rest upon with 100% confidence!

Paul continues this thought by stating that Christ existed before any of His creation and that all things consist by His power. The word translated *consist* is the Greek word *sunistao*, from which we get the idea of *sustaining power*. Only infinite power and wisdom could keep all things moving correctly according to His appointed time. When He sees fit, He will remove His sustaining hand, and the elements will melt with a fervent heat as He makes all things new (2 Pet. 3:10-13).

(3) His preeminence over the church. This third and final point in Paul's declaration of the preeminence of Christ is His authority and rank as the Head of the church. As He is the firstborn over all creation in the redemptive process, He is especially the firstborn over all things pertaining to the church. He is to be followed in all things as the head of the body, being the beginning and the firstborn in the resurrection.

At this point Paul uses an interesting grammatical tool. He states “that in all things He might have the preeminence” (v. 18). A casual glance at this phrase might lead some to think that this is a weak statement, and they may even doubt whether it is true. However, the verb used is an aorist subjunctive. The aorist tense denotes simple action, but in the subjunctive mood it presents a possible contingency. It communicates what is true while implying that some may be doubtful of the fact.

This is what I would term the challenge of “practical preeminence.” Paul has already established the preeminence of Christ, but do each of us in the church always practice it? Are we living our lives and conducting our ministries under the authority of the preeminence of the Lord Jesus Christ? He is the All-Preeminent One in actuality, but is He in practice? This I would suggest is the underlying issue of a poor hermeneutic. Paul now continues his doctrinal teaching with another practical point.

The Heavenly Father is Pleased

Paul states that the Father is pleased to have in the body of the Lord Jesus Christ the fullness of the Godhead dwelling (Col. 2:9). This was done to accomplish the reconciliation of all things back to Himself, especially the individuals who place their faith in the His Son. We were once strangers and enemies of God, having been condemned because of our sin to eternal hell. But through the death of Christ and His resurrection from the dead, we have been reconciled to the Father. As we consider this fact, pleasing the Father becomes extremely practical as Paul concludes his teaching on preeminence.

We are Presented by Christ to the Father

What is the propositional intent of the Apostle Paul to the brethren at Colossae? (As my dear pastoral theology professor, the late Dr. Carl Bollinger, used to say, "Men, if you don't have a propositional statement in your sermon, what's the point?") Paul's concluding point is that the preeminence of Christ should lead us to a practical presentation to the Father. Here we must be absolutely sure that our hermeneutic is correct.

In verse 23 Paul uses a conditional statement, showing that this main point can only happen if certain things are true. He wants to present us holy, unblameable, and unreprouvable. We are commanded to be holy, so this is clear. *Without blame* signifies our being right with God and not identified with the world. We see this in Paul's teaching concerning the Lord's Table in 1 Cor. 11:29-32. *Unreprouvable* is the quality of our relationship with the Lord in sweet fellowship and access to His throne, having our sins confessed before Him. Jesus desires to be able to present us in this manner to the Father. It is the wonderful condition of being crucified with Christ and led by the Holy Spirit.

But some may misinterpret this passage in relation to the timing of this presentation. By referring it to the future when we stand before the Lord, some have attempted to use this passage to prove that one can lose his salvation. But a solid hermeneutic for handling the word correctly discovers this verb to be an aorist infinitive, which does not designate a certain time in the future, but simply that the action has occurred. This is something that should always be the case in our lives. At any time, the Lord Jesus should be able to present us to the Father and declare

us to be His good and faithful servant! We are reminded of the case of Job and the Father's asking Satan to consider him and his faithfulness. Can God use us as an example of what Jesus paid so dearly for?

The Conditions

What are the conditions for this possible presentation? As we understand the preeminence of Christ and all its practical repercussions for our walk with Him, Paul gives us two criteria to concentrate on as we continue in our faith.

(1) We are to be grounded and settled, having a sure foundation from which we cannot be moved—God's word. The practical preeminence of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Living Word of God, is really an embrace of the preeminence of the written word of God in our lives. The two are perfectly linked, one guaranteeing the other. To have Christ in His proper place is to have a clear understanding of Scripture. To have a clear understanding of Scripture is to keep Christ in His proper place as the All-Preeminent One.

Are our lives based upon a sure foundation of God's word, having our faith fixed upon it solidly? Do we have a clear understanding of its proper interpretation, studying and applying it carefully and completely? There are many false teachings in churches today, but having a clear, normal interpretation of God's word will allow us to see and expose them for what they are. Whether it is in confrontation with open theism, replacement theology, improper church polity, or any other issue, having a normal hermeneutic of understanding the language and its grammar, the historical and cultural context, and the clearest sense of the text will lead us to the truth of God's word.

(2) We are to be solidly fixed upon the hope of the gospel. No matter what may happen in the presidential race of 2020, the outcome of the covid-19 pandemic, or any other situation that may arise, we can be absolutely certain that the Lord Jesus will return for His own. We are so blessed to be God's children and to be waiting for that "Blessed Hope" when we shall forever be with the Lord (Tit. 2:13).

Remember the words of Paul to the church at Ephesus: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind

of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. But speaking the truth in love, may [we] grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. 4:14-16).

As Paul continues his teaching to the Colossians, he shares with them the same practical point concerning the preeminence of the Lord Jesus: "holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and

bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God" (Col. 2:19).

Keeping Christ in His preeminent place requires holding fast to Him and His word. As we do so, He will nourish us and keep the body of Christ knit together. We will have a pure hermeneutic in harmony with our All-Preeminent Sovereign Savior, and He will grow us with an increase that comes only from Him. May the Lord bless you and your ministry as you continue to strive to be holy, unblameable and unreprouvable, while considering the "practical preeminence" of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Confronting Roman Conquests - Part One

By Pastor Kevin Hobi

On September 13th of this year, Mark Galli, a former Presbyterian pastor and more recently the Editor-in-Chief of *Christianity Today*, left his Anglican church to become a Roman Catholic. The Religious News Service reported that Galli made his decision to become a Catholic the same week that a Pennsylvania grand jury issued a report identifying over 1000 cases of sexual abuse in that state, committed by 300 predator priests over seven decades [<https://religionnews.com/2020/09/10/mark-galli-former-christianity-today-editor-and-trump-critic-to-be-confirmed-a-catholic>].

Galli's conversion to the Church of his early youth reminded many of other high-profile evangelical conversions to Roman Catholicism. In the middle of his term as the 58th President of the Evangelical Theological Society, Francis Beckwith resigned his position of influence in May 2007, one week after his confirmation. A former professor at Southern Evangelical Seminary, the Roman Catholic Beckwith now works as Professor of Philosophy and Church-State Studies at the Southern Baptists' Baylor University.

Local churches that preach the true gospel often feel more pain over families and friends with whom they once worshipped, who have inexplicably turned to Rome, though these tragedies are less publicized.

My first encounter with painful reversals of personal Protestantism happened while I served the Lord as an assistant pastor at another local church. A young wife and mother, who had grown up in our church and attended a Christian college, where she

found her future husband, converted with her beautiful family to Roman Catholicism. Prior to their marriage, this couple had ministered at our church on the same ministry team from their evangelical school. As we heard them sing of the Protestant themes of grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone, and Scripture alone, none of us could anticipate their eventual embrace of Rome alone. Her parents were heartbroken.

How these conversions can happen is perhaps best answered in a 2016 book titled *Evangelical Exodus: Evangelical Seminarians and Their Paths to Rome*. Edited by Douglas Beaumont and published by Ignatius Press, the book contains the testimonials of ten former Southern Evangelical Seminary students, including the book's editor and Francis Beckwith. The book explains that twice as many examples of the same conversion experience could fill two additional volumes (209; fn. 1). The back cover of the book describes what truly can be labeled an "Evangelical Exodus," with its mention of dozens of SES students and faculty over a single decade who converted to Roman Catholicism (see also p. 20).

To one degree or another, most of these testimonials credit an emphasis on Thomas Aquinas in the Apologetics courses of the Seminary as a catalyst for the journey from SES to Rome. The Seminary's president, Norman Geisler, has authored books against Roman Catholic dogma (including *Is Rome the True Church?*, co-authored by Joshua Betancourt, one of these ten testifiers who converted to Catholicism within months of his book's publication; 18), but the

testimonies in this new book highlight Geisler's claim to be the "Evangelical Thomist" (13). Some fundamental separatists, who have a long history of warning new evangelicals about the compromise of Evangelist Billy Graham with Roman Catholicism, will believe that the connection of this school's founders with the Graham Crusades of the past may be related to the tragic apostacies described by the book. The repudiation of biblical separatism by one generation always inflicts grave consequences on the generations that follow (2 Chron. 21:1-6).

Thankfully, one need not digest the teachings of *Summa Theologiae* or speculate about the Graham-connection to understand what brought these gifted theological students to submit to the Vatican. They explain their decisions in theological detail. Although a personal testimony is always in some measure unique to an individual, common themes from these stories form a structured polemic against Protestantism in favor of Roman Catholicism.

The polemic charges Protestantism with violating the unity for which Jesus prayed in John 17, and it asserts on the basis of Matt. 16:18 and 1 Tim. 3:15 that, because the Roman Catholic Church is both insulated from the gates of hell and the pillar and ground of truth, this Church could not have apostatized into error. The polemic here claims that the dogma and authority of the Roman Catholic Church are necessary for determining the biblical canon, defining essential orthodoxy, interpreting Scripture, and correctly understanding the role of faith and works in salvation.

Their argument directly attacks Protestantism. In the face of *solus Christus*, it advocates veneration for Mary; in the face of *sola scriptura*, it advocates the infallibility of the Church's Magisterium; in the face of *sola gratia* and of *sola fide*, it advocates justification by both faith and works of love as gifts of grace. Like those experienced by our Lord in the wilderness (Matt. 4:6), these temptations to error make thorough use of Scripture. In part one of this article, I would like to redress these interpretations of John 17, Matt. 16:18, and 1 Tim. 3:15. In part two of the article, I hope to defend *solus Christus*, *sola scriptura*, and *sola fide* against the polemics of the book.

John 17

References to our Lord's high priestly prayer for His people factor largely into the conversion

experiences of many of these authors. The comments of the book's editor, Douglas Beaumont, are representative: "Moreover, I was finding that the Bible-alone approach I had been taught generated more disunity than I realized. . . . Christian disunity is clearly sinful according to Scripture. Although there are only a few biblical examples or principles concerning 'proper' division, there are numerous exhortations to maintain unity from several authors The issue of division bothered Jesus so much that he specifically prayed for unity in his last major prayer" (31). Beaumont goes on to criticize Protestantism as this bothersome form of division: "Division has been (and remains) the causal factor behind Protestant denominations (each one convinced that it has Christianity right)" (34).

Michael Mason agrees: "As I considered the fact that Jesus and the apostle Paul taught that the unity of the Church is a visible reality . . . I began to question seriously whether Protestantism could provide a way to unite Christians" (127). The visibility of this unity is a key point for these converts: "This unity is not only a spiritual reality but a physical one as well, for Jesus taught that the oneness of the Church would be a witness to the world (Jn 17:23)" (249).

A casual reading of John 17, however, immediately alerts the reader of these testimonials that there is much truth in the prayer of our Lord for His people that they ignore. His prayer for unity builds on a couple of prior prayer requests. First, Christ prays for His own glorification (vv. 1-5). Next, He prays for something foundational to Christian unity. That request is summarized succinctly in verse 17, "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth."

In verse 11 Christ prays for the unity of those who have kept God's word (v. 6) and those who know God's words (vv. 7-8). The unity for which Christ prays is for those with the ability to know and keep God's word. This knowing and keeping God's word is associated closely in the doctrine of our Savior here with the necessity for Scripture to be fulfilled, which He mentions in His prayer (v. 12). Scripture must be fulfilled because it is God's word, that which God's people know and keep (Luke 24:27). So whereas the book's evangelical converts to Roman Catholicism complain that His people's knowing and keeping God's word leads to their disunity, Jesus's prayer indicates that their knowing and keeping God's word, and that alone, can directly sanctify His people to make their unity possible.

This sanctification of God's people by God's word is necessary because their unity is a holy unity. The Lord prays, "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are" (v. 11). Jesus prays for a unity that is accomplished by God's name, "Holy Father," and many (not few as claimed by the book's editor) passages of Scripture explain how important separation from unbelief, error, and disobedience is to this unity based on the holy fatherhood of God (2 Cor. 6:14-7:1). False gospels, false spirits, false Jesuses, false apostles, and false brethren must be avoided to experience this unity (2 Corinthians 11). Undoubtedly, these falsehoods would form false churches as well. From its inception, Christianity has always had its visible imposters, wolves in sheep's clothing.

In addition, the unity for which Jesus prayed is spiritual, not physical. It is invisible, not visible. In one of the verses cited by the book to advocate a visible universal church, Jesus prays, "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" (v. 23). Contrary to the conclusion drawn by these authors, this oneness of believers, created by the indwelling Christ, is as invisible as the oneness of Christ with the Father. These parallel oneness-realities of the text share the same spiritual, non-physical nature. While the oneness of believers in Christ is necessary to our visible witness, it accomplishes this witness by displaying our common interest in the Father's unfailing love for Christ and us, not by promoting the often divided Roman Church as the standard of unity.

Matt. 16:18 and 1 Tim. 3:15

Building on the false assumption that the Roman Catholic Church is the visible universal church of Christ, the authors next argue for this Church's infallibility from Matt. 16:18 and 1 Tim. 3:15. It is reasoned: "[The Church] could not fulfill her role if she fell into religious error—to do so would be to fail as the Church. Jesus, however, promised that his Church would not fail (Mt 16:18)" (244). And then the book concludes: "Furthermore, the Scriptures do not teach that the Bible is the pillar of truth; rather, the Church is called the 'pillar and bulwark of the truth' (1 Tim 3:15)" (251).

Related to this advocacy of Church infallibility is the dogma of papal infallibility. Only the latter can make the former workable in a practical way:

"Although this infallibility can and has been exercised through various means, there seems to remain a need for a single, infallible, apostolic office behind it all to provide an objective standard when necessary. Specific predictions and promises made to Peter, as well as the subsequent history of his successors, point to the office of the Bishop of Rome as the best fit for the 'last line' of infallible doctrinal defense. Thus can the Church's infallibility be grounded in both theory and practice" (246). Expressed this way the doctrine of papal infallibility fails to account adequately for Pope Francis's recent call for homosexual civil unions, reversing the position of previous popes on that matter. Inconsistencies like this throughout Rome's history are made to fit into this doctrine of infallibility, like square pegs in the same round hole.

In addition, the passages of Scripture in question are pulled out of context and given meaning not intended by Christ or Paul. The New Testament speaks not only of *church* in the singular, but also of *churches* in the plural (Acts 9:31, 15:41, 16:5). The local churches of the New Testament did not see themselves as mere segments of a visible institution called a church administered by a Roman pope, but rather as multiple visible institutions in the plural that were complete churches in their own right. The connection between these churches is spiritual, not institutional. The plural of *church* appears nowhere in the ecclesiology of this book about conversions to Roman Catholicism. The denial of the biblical doctrine of the authority of local churches (Matt. 18:15-20) is an important step along the path to Rome.

In 1 Timothy Paul writes so that believers, whom he hoped to visit soon, would know how to behave in their local church (1 Tim. 3:14-15a). When he uses the word *church* in this passage, he is talking about an assembly he hoped to visit in a specific locality. In this context, it is the same church that a pastor can care for only if he is the kind of man who has his own house in order (v. 5). Paul does not envision in this passage leaders who oversee a universal church stretching from Rome to Jerusalem and beyond. He enumerates qualifications for the local pastors and deacons he had ordained in each local church, who were to care for the blood-purchased flock of God, among whom the Holy Spirit had made them overseers (Acts 14:23, 20:28).

When Paul describes the local church as "the pillar and ground of the truth," he is comparing its ministry to that of the tabernacle of the Old

Testament, which was the meeting place of the summoned assembly of Israel and the dwelling place or house of God. He has in mind especially the wooden pillars and brass sockets that held up the curtain around the tabernacle, keeping people from entering God's presence except through the authorized gateway (see Stephen F. Olford, *The Tabernacle: Camping with God* (Neptune, NJ: Loizeaux Brothers, 1971), 59-60). The curtain had many pillars grounded in sockets to hold up curtains and communicate this truth.

As the pillar and ground of truth, each gospel-preaching local church is commissioned to point to Christ as the only way into the presence of God (Matt. 7:13-14, John 10:7-9, 14:6, Acts 4:12). This analogy does not guarantee infallibility for a local church any more than it teaches that the ministry of the tabernacle was incorruptible (remember Eli's sons). Instead, just like every believer is a witness (Acts 1:8), although many at times fail to witness (1 Cor. 15:34), so also every local church of believers is the pillar and ground of truth, although many at times fall into error (Revelation 2-3). In 1 Tim. 3:15, Paul gives the believers he is writing their mission. He does not guarantee they would do it flawlessly.

Nor in Matthew 16 is there any guarantee of the doctrinal infallibility of the Roman Church, only the promise that Christ would build His invisible church in this age and not allow hell to prevail ultimately against her. This church is built on Peter, although the context forcibly discounts any notion of his infallibility: "But [Jesus] turned, and said unto Peter, Get behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men" (v. 23). Even after Pentecost's outpouring of the Holy Spirit, fallible Peter was prone to error in matters of faith and in need of correction at times (Gal. 2:11). Clearly, Peter's ministry to the Gentiles did not rise to the level of Paul's (Gal. 2:8). Paul is not thinking of Peter as "the 'last line' of infallible doctrinal defense" in these passages.

What makes Peter foundational to Jesus's building of the invisible church in this age is not his official infallibility, but rather his role as the conduit of New Testament special revelation (v. 17). It was because the Father in heaven had revealed to Peter the truth, which he had confessed in verse 16, that Jesus said in verse 18, "On this rock I will build my church." As conduits of New Testament special revelation, the New Testament apostles and prophets

form the foundation of the invisible church in this age (Eph. 2:19-22), which is made visible through the multiplication of local churches throughout the world (Acts 9:31). Therefore, the Scriptures of inspired apostles and prophets are not built upon the Roman Church. Instead, local churches everywhere must be built on the Scriptures of the New Testament God gave us through them. The nation of Israel was built in the same way at Sinai, upon the foundation of a written revelation through the inspired prophet.

Conclusion

In his two-volume work on the history of theology, David Beale notes one of the many details of church history not found in these testimonials, which undermine their confidence in both the unbroken apostolic succession of infallible bishops from Peter to Francis and the infallibility of the Church of Rome as a whole. He explains, "Meanwhile, lack of leadership and extreme provincialism had turned Rome into an intellectual backwater, cut off from the depth and richness of the theological language and culture of the East. During the great creed-producing era of the seven ecumenical councils ([A.D.] 325-787), when Greek theologians were condemning heresies, affirming truth, and contributing definition and refinement to the Trinitarian and Christological discussions, not one bishop from Rome attended these councils. Roman delegates, when they were sent, often arrived late and seldom participated because they could not follow the discussions in Greek" (*Historical Theology in Depth: Themes and Contexts of Doctrinal Development since the First Century* (BJU Press, 2013), 1:498).

Praise the Lord that the resting place of our faith is not in a Roman creed nor its fallible device, the Church of Rome. The resting place of the believer's faith is the Living Word whose Spirit gave us His written word through apostles and prophets kept free from error: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness; that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work" (2 Tim. 3:16-17). No Roman Church comes between the man of God and the Scriptures God has given him. This Timothy understood from his childhood, having been taught to know and keep God's word by his mother and grandmother (vv. 14-15; 1:5). No Roman bishop was needed then. Like Timothy, may we continue in the things we have learned apart from Rome.

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