

NO SUBSTITUTE FOR CHRIST

By Roelf L. Ruffner

“Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there come a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; Who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Thes. 2:3,4).

Next week the head of the Roman Church will be visiting the United States. His name is Jorge Maria Bergoglio or “Pope Francis,” originally of Argentina. He is the first of the Jesuit Order (Society of Jesus) to become Pope or Pontiff Maximus and took the name “Francis” from “Saint” Francis of Assisi, a medieval, ascetic monk.

I have no personal animosity towards Francis but I do feel revulsion toward the religious system he heads. It falsely claims to be the church Jesus built. It is a forgery at best and an enslaver of men’s souls. It has been a constant foe of the Bible, Christ’s brethren and the Truth for centuries.

The Pope is a very charismatic figure. The press adores him. He constantly expresses his concern for the poor and downtrodden. But this Prince of Vatican City presides over a vast multi-billion dollar empire with banks, real estate, hospitals, schools, businesses and priceless works of art. Yet the authentic head of the church of Christ said, “The foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head” (Mat. 8:20). Yet the Roman Church claims that Francis is the “Vicar of Christ” or Christ’s representative on Earth.

As a religious institution the Roman Church is in serious trouble. Instead of turning to the New Testament as a guide for change Francis embraces Liberation Theology. This is a neo-Marxist teaching which seeks to incorporate the teachings of the father of communism (Karl Marx) with the teachings of Christ. It was popular in the Latin American church during the 1980s but was repudiated by Francis’s predecessors. On his way to the U.S. he will be visiting communist Cuba and its Marxist dictator Raul Castro. Francis’s supporters say he rejects the Marxist brand of Liberation Theology. Yet His rhetoric says otherwise, railing against capitalism or free enterprise and

“consumerism.” But Jesus never said to rob the rich to give to the poor or “social justice” (cf. Acts 20:35).

This Pope is also a devotee of “Saint” Therese of Lisieux, a 19th Century French Discalced (“barefoot”) Carmelite nun and mystic, as was John Paul II. Her bones are “venerated” by the Roman Church and millions pray to her. Yet the New Testament says we must pray to the Father through the Son, not a dead human being, however pious (John 16:23, 24). The Roman Church is deeply involved in mindless meditation and repetitive prayer or “vain repetition” (Mat. 6:7).

Francis also participates in “inter-faith dialogue” or ecumenism. As with recent Popes he meets and fellowships Jews, Muslims, Hindus, and even atheists. In an interview he claimed that non-believers are “all redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ.” That is the false doctrine of universalism or the idea that all sinners were saved by Christ at Calvary, with or without faith. “But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him” (Heb. 11:6).

Friends, there is no substitute for Jesus Christ. From the Bible we can KNOW Jesus Christ (John 8:31, 32), and the Pope is not Jesus. I have pointed out only a few of the many differences. Jesus is the head of the one, true Church, the church of Christ (Col.1:18). He died for my sins, not Mr. Bergoglio. He purchased us, the church of Christ, with His own blood (Acts 20:28). Let us think upon these truths this week as the Pope visits. Let us also show our friends from their Bibles that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God (Mat. 16:13-20).

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pope_Francis as of September 18, 2015

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Th%C3%A9r%C3%A8se_of_Lisieux as of September. 18, 2015.

<http://marksilk.religionnews.com/2015/07/13/pope-francis-liberation-theologian/> as of September 15, 2015.