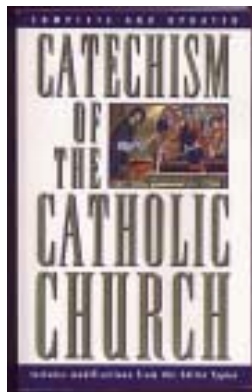


# **The Greeson-Rutland Radio Debate on “Is Roman Catholic Tradition Our Authority For Faith & Doctrine?”**



**The Scripture & Catholic Tradition or Only the Scripture?**

**A radio debate between  
Wayne Greeson and Bill Rutland**

**held on  
May 7, 8, 9 & 11, 2001**

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*Wayne Greeson (left) and Bill Rutland (right)  
outside the KURM radio station in downtown Rogers, Arkansas*

## **Introduction**

Wayne Greeson, a preacher for the church of Christ, hosted a Bible call-in radio program called *Searching Daily* four days a week in Northwest Arkansas. Bill Rutland, is the Education Director for the St. Vincent De Paul parish of the Roman Catholic church located in Rogers, Arkansas.

Mr. Rutland heard Mr. Greeson speaking on the radio program appealing to the sufficiency of the Bible for our religious authority. Mr. Rutland contacted Mr. Greeson and argued that the Bible was not sufficient authority but that we needed the Roman Catholic Church to properly understand and obey the will of God.

Mr. Greeson asked Mr. Rutland if he would be willing to debate this issue on the radio program and Mr. Rutland agreed to do so.

The debate was held on May 7, 8, 9 and 11, 2001, on KURM radio which broadcasts to the northwest corner of Arkansas and reaches into northeastern Oklahoma and southwestern Missouri.

The proposition for the first two days was: "The Scriptures and "Apostolic Tradition" as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine."

### **Affirm**

Bill Rutland, Education Director for the St. Vincent De Paul parish of the Catholic Church in Rogers, Arkansas

### **Deny**

Wayne Greeson, preacher for the East 102 church of Christ located in Bentonville, Arkansas

**Monday, May 7, 2001**

Good morning this is Wayne. We're glad that you have tuned in. The program today, "Searching Daily," is a special program. We're here for the purpose of a religious discussion. We're going to be discussing the proposition: "The Scriptures and 'Apostolic Tradition' as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine." Bill Rutland. A member of the Catholic Church here in Rogers is joining me. He is going to affirm that proposition. Myself, I will be denying it. And the way our format starts out, Bill will be the one who begins speaking. And I'm going to turn the microphone over to him and we'll engage in this particular discussion.

### **First Affirmative: Bill Rutland**

Thank you very much Wayne. I appreciate you having me here. First off, before we start, I would like to, say that I am representing myself and not any particular Catholic church. And, also too, I would like to say that I'm not here to bash anyone's faith, but simply to have an enlightened discussion about these topics. And so if anyone would like to reach me, they can reach me at my email address.

To start off with, I think that we should anytime speaking about scripture or anytime that we speak about any subject, we need to establish our authority base. That's what I would like to do this morning. And I would like to establish from scripture why I believe that the Roman Catholic Church is in fact the true church. And saying "true church" that's not implying that other churches are false churches, but that the Roman Catholic Church is the church that was established by Jesus Christ and as such

has apostolic authority.

I'd like to begin with the book of Hebrews. At the very beginning, the writer of Hebrews says this: "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe." So the writer of Hebrews here tells us that in the past that God spoke in many various ways through the prophets and in these last times he spoke to us through his Son.

So that when we say the "Word of God" ultimately what we are meaning is not a written document, but a person. John 1:1 says, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." So ultimately our authority as Christians is the Word of God, that is Jesus Christ.

But when Jesus left this world, he delegated his authority to the early church. I would like to read very quickly from John Jesus' high priestly prayer. He is fixing to be crucified and he prays for his apostles and this is found in John 17:13-23. He says, "I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, that I am coming to you, Holy Father. Protect them by the power of your name – the name you gave me – so that they may be one as we are one. And as I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe in that name you gave me. And not one has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled. And I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have a full measure of joy within me. I have given them your word and the world has hated them, for they are not of this world any more than I am of this world. And My prayer is not that you take them out of this world but that

you protect them from the evil one. They are not of this world, even as I am not of this world. Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified. My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in their message, that all those may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us that the world may believe you and that you are the one that has sent me. I am with you and you are in me. May we be brought to complete unity that the world may know that you sent me and have loved me even as you have loved them."

The early reformers struggled with trying to define what are the marks of the true church. And Martin Luther said, the true church is anywhere where the sacraments are authoritatively ministered and where the Word of God is rightly preached. Which really did nothing but remove that question to what is the gospel "rightly preached" and what are the sacraments "authoritatively administered." But Jesus tells us here the mark of the true church is unity.

First off he prays that the apostles should be unified. He says, "so that they may be as one as we are one." Then he says that he's not only praying for the apostles but for those "that would believe on them" or believe in their message, the church that would come after them. He says, "my prayer is not for them alone, I also pray for them that will believe in their message that they all may be one." And thirdly, Christ says that this unity will be a sign to the world of the true church, "that they may be brought to complete unity" to "let the world know that you sent me and that you have loved them even as you love me."

Now we see here that Jesus is not establishing some mystical body in Christ but he is establishing an organic visible church. And we see this also in Matthew the sixteenth chapter. Jesus is speaking and He says, excuse me, Matthew is speaking and he says of Jesus, "That when they came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do men say that I am?' And (of course some replied, well you're), John the Baptist: (others replied, well they think you're), Elijah; (or) Jeremiah, or some other prophet." And then Jesus asked them the question that he asks all of us, the eternal question, "'But whom say ye that I am?' Simon Peter (speaks up and Peter says) 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'" Jesus says to him "Blessed are you, Simon, son of Jona: because flesh and blood hath not revealed this to you, but my Father in heaven. Therefore I say unto you, 'That you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell will not prevail against it. And I will give you the keys of the kingdom: that whatever you bind on the earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven."

So in this, in response to Peter's inspired words, "You are the Christ," Jesus then turns to Peter and says "And you are the rock and it is upon this rock" not Jesus speaking of himself; we're not speaking of some confession that Peter has made, but he says, "on this rock" on Peter, "I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it." And this term "gates of hell" shows us two things. First off, "the gates of hell" were the place of the dead. Jesus is showing us that death, that is the death of Peter, will not stop his church, that there will be successors. Secondly, "the gates of hell" is the place of the evil one, the Father of lies. And so he's telling Peter and giving him the assurance that the Father of lies will not pollute the Christian faith, the

pure gospel that has been handed down to him and through him.

Later on we see in John 21, after the resurrection and Jesus is speaking to Peter and three times he tells him, he says "feed my sheep," "feed my lambs" and "take care of my sheep." And so the good shepherd, Jesus, is bestowing his divine shepherdhood onto Simon Peter, who will then be the visible representative of Christ on earth, the visible head of the visible and organic church.

I would just like to end this affirmation by reading a quote. This quote is from an early church father by the name of Irenaeus. Now Irenaeus was the bishop of Lyons in 178. He was a disciple of Polycarp, who in turn was a disciple of the apostle John. Listen to what he writes, within the lifetime of the apostles. He says, "Since, however, it would be very tedious, in such a volume as this, to reckon up the successors of the Churches, we do not put into confusion all those who, in whatever manner, whether by an evil pleasing, by vainglory, or by blindness or perverse opinion, assemble themselves in unauthorized meetings; [we do this, I say,] by indicating that tradition derived from the apostles, of the very great, the very ancient, and universally known Church founded and organized at Rome by the two most glorious apostles, Peter and Paul; also [by pointing out] the faith preached to men, which comes down to our time by means of the succession of bishops. For it is a matter necessary that every Church should agree with this Church, on account of its preeminent authority, that is, the faithful everywhere, inasmuch as the apostolical tradition be preserved continuously by those [faithful men] who exist everywhere. The blessed apostles, then, having founded and built up the Church, committed into the hands of Linus the office of the episcopate. And of Linus, Paul makes

mention in the Epistle of Timothy. And his successor Archacalus; and after him, the third place of the apostles, and Clement was then bishop of Rome. And this man, had been sent by the blessed apostles, and had been conversant with them, that it might be said that their preaching was still ringing [in his ears], and their traditions before his eyes. Nor was he alone [in this], for there are many still remaining who had received instructions from the apostles."

And so we see here that Jesus established a visible organic church with a visible head, Simon Peter. And so the Catholic church, 265 popes later, are in direct succession to that apostolic authority.

### First Negative: Wayne Greeson

I appreciate those comments Bill. I'll begin my denial of that proposition. The proposition is "The Scriptures and 'Apostolic Tradition' as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine."

It's important to establish exactly what I am denying in this proposition. The proposition I am denying is not that the Scriptures are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine. Bill and I agree that the Scriptures are authoritative. I do not deny that the teachings the apostles of Jesus Christ "handed down" are authority. What I am denying specifically are the traditions "as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church" are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine.

Much of what Bill has said in his first speech here, I agree with. I agree with Hebrews 1:1. I agree that the authority began with Jesus Christ who was God's spokesman, "who in these last days he has spoken through his son, Jesus Christ." I agree with John 17:13-23 that Jesus Christ

delegated authority to his apostles and he sent them forth. The idea of an apostle is "one who is sent forth." And I agree with what was said there that the "Word (of God) is Truth" John 17:17. And I also agree that we are to believe in their message.

Now, we come to the point of disagreement and the point of disagreement came at the conclusion of his particular speech or lesson. He established or tried to establish in Matthew 16<sup>th</sup> chapter that Peter was the rock upon which Jesus built his church. In fact, what he said specifically was that Jesus was trying to say that on Peter "I will build my church." The passage does not say that. What Jesus' says is "You are Peter and upon this rock I will build my church." Bill pointed out that Peter is a name that refers to a "rock." And then Jesus goes on and says "upon this rock." So Bill tries to associate the apostle Peter with the rock upon which Jesus would build his church.

Actually the scripture is quite clear in the Greek language. It very clearly tells us that there is a difference between Peter, that is the name that the Lord refers to Peter which is in the masculine form, *Petros*, and "this rock." *Petros* refers to a small stone, such as what one would hold in their hands. Whereas, "upon this rock" is a different word. It is the feminine form of the word, which is *petra*, and it refers to that which is a large foundation. We know later on in the Scriptures that "there is no other foundation other than that which is laid, Jesus Christ." Jesus Christ is the foundation, as we find out in the Scriptures in 1 Corinthians 3:11.

However, what we need to understand is what Jesus was establishing here. He was going to build his church and what he was going to build his church upon was that which was revealed by the Father to the apostle Peter. Jesus said, "Flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my Father

which is in heaven." What is the fact or truth that was revealed? "Peter said, 'Thou art the Christ, (or the Messiah) the Son of the Living God.'" This was the "rock" the foundation truth upon which Jesus would build his church. To assert that it was going to be built upon Peter is to detract from Jesus Christ and his authority and the immediate significance of the declaration of the apostle Peter. The rock that Jesus built his church upon was the foundation fact, the established fact, the revealed fact from the heavenly Father that Jesus Christ, was the Christ, the Son of the living God.

The language does not allow for Peter, masculine, *Petros*, to be the same as *petra*, feminine form. And notice in the English translation it is clear that it is "this rock." Jesus did not say, "Peter, I'm going to build my church on you." He said "I'm going to build it upon "this rock" *petra*, feminine. If it was upon Peter, it would have been masculine; it would have been a different word. They are two different words that are used there in the text. It's important to understand that.

Bill went on to suggest that there was a succession of bishops. It's interesting that he began his affirmative speech by saying he was going to establish authority for the Roman Catholic Church from the Scriptures. However, at the conclusion of his talk, he departed from Scriptures and he began quoting from Irenaeus, who was not a writer of scripture, he did not profess to be inspired, nor did he profess to write any writings that were guided by the Holy Spirit. And yet, that was Bill's proof or his evidence for the authority for the succession of Roman popes, as he called it, or Roman bishops. Bill, you did not establish from the Scriptures any succession of bishops.

Jesus built his church, we agree with that. He built his church upon the founda-

tion of the fact that he was the Messiah, the Son of the Living God.

Now, I think it's important to understand that what we are talking about are the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. What I am denying is that the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church are authoritative for Christian faith and doctrine. And the reason is they are not scriptural nor the succession of bishops or the succession of popes, as Bill has tried to establish, is it is not based in scripture. It was established in reading an uninspired man, subsequent to the close of the New Testament writings, the Scripture, that was given authoritatively by the apostles of Jesus Christ.

They are neither scriptural, the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, nor are they apostolic. I believe in the apostles of Jesus Christ, the apostles of Jesus Christ that I can read about in the New Testament. Yes, I believe exactly what John 17 says about them. Jesus gave them guidance. He gave them instruction. In fact, Jesus promised them that the Holy Spirit would guide them into "all Truth." That's exactly what the Holy Spirit did. In 2 Peter 1:3, the apostle Peter himself said, "he has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness."

If the apostles of Jesus Christ, Peter, being one among those apostles, said that we have received "all things that pertain to life and godliness" then why is it that we have the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church which came many years after? Now of course those traditions have accumulated some 2,000 years since. But the apostle Peter said, "he has given us all things that pertain unto life and godliness." And those things that were delivered were delivered to them, the apostles of Jesus Christ, just as he promised. And since they received all truth, they delivered all truth to us.

The traditions of the Roman Catholic Church are not based in Scripture. There are traditions that are plainly contrary to the plain teaching of the Scriptures and of Jesus Christ and his apostles. We find that the Roman Catholic Church allows adoration or worship through images and by images contrary to Exodus 20:4-5, where we are instructed not to use images or have any type of worship of images. Jesus condemns a hierarchy in Matthew 20:20-28 and yet the Roman Catholic Church has an extensive hierarchy. Jesus talks about those who would dress differently to distinguish themselves in Matthew 23:5-6 and yet the Roman Catholic church as a variety of clerical dress, and differences in and distinctions among men. Jesus speaks and says, "Call no man your father upon earth," Matthew 23:9. And yet Roman Catholic, not only Roman Catholic, but other religions use the term "father" to refer to a spiritual attachment (distinction).

There are a number of doctrines that are contrary to what the Scriptures say. The point is these are traditions and Jesus specifically condemns the traditions of men. I accept the traditions that were given by the apostles of Jesus Christ that are found and given to us in the Scriptures. The Scriptures are the sacred writings that have been delivered. But I do not accept and I condemn, just as Jesus condemned the traditions of men in Matthew 15 and Mark 7, the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

What we should go by and what we should accept is the authority of the Scriptures. Therein is the Word of God. Therein are "all things that pertain to life and godliness" and they "make the man of God perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work." That's our authority and not the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

Now, while we reset our watch and get things ready for the next round. We're going to have a four minute rebuttal by Bill and we'll conclude and I'll have four minutes after he speaks. Our proposition again is "The Scriptures and 'Apostolic Tradition' as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine." Bill Rutland is affirming and he has four minutes for rebuttal

### **Second Affirmative: Bill Rutland**

Thank you Wayne. There are several things that I'd like to point out. First off, I also accept the authority of the Bible. The position that I question is the sole authority of Scripture.

I also want to clear up, I guess you seem to be having the common misunderstanding between apostolic tradition and ecclesiastical tradition. Ecclesiastical tradition are those things which the church has set in place for church government, such as clerical garb, such as you just mentioned. Apostolic tradition is that tradition that was handed down by the apostles themselves and that is what is authoritative in our lives. The Catholic Church does not believe in a progressive revelation. She teaches that all revelation ended at the death of the last apostle.

I would like to also return, just for a moment to Matthew the 16<sup>th</sup> chapter. The accusation that Jesus is calling Peter a small stone and himself a big stone is a common misunderstanding of the Greek text itself. The fact is if Jesus was wanting to call Peter a small stone, he would have used the Greek word *lithos*. The word or the name "Peter" *Petros*, is sometimes referred to as a small stone in Classical Greek, but the New Testament is not written in Classical Greek. The New Testament is written in Koine or Common Greek. And there, there is no



incidence where that word is used for a small stone, *lithos* is used for a small stone.

So let's look for just a moment, you were very correct in pointing out that when Jesus said "on this rock," *petra*, that that is in the feminine form. And then he turns to Peter and he calls him *Petros*, which you are right is the masculine form. But Jesus is not trying to show some theological fact here. He is simply following good Greek grammatical structure, because you cannot name a man, male, with a feminine name, and that is why Jesus changes the gender distinction from feminine to masculine when he is speaking to Peter.

Also to, it is commonly and almost universally accepted by Bible scholars that Jesus, when he was speaking with his apostles, did not speak Greek but spoke Aramaic. And in Aramaic there is no gender distinction. The word is *kepha* for rock which is where we get our English word "Cephas" for Peter. And so Jesus says, "And I tell you that you are *kepha* and upon this *kepha* I will build my church and the gates of hell will not prevail against it."

So very clearly Jesus is not speaking of himself. He is not speaking of Peter's confession. The church is not built on confessing, confessions, it is built on confessors. And so he is saying, Peter, you are the rock, on which I will build my church.

Many other things you said there, that we could speak about and hopefully we'll have the opportunity as time goes by, but I see that my time is now up.

### **Second Negative: Wayne Greeson**

Bill, I appreciate your willingness to have this discussion and I always want to represent you accurately. As I said, I agree, we both agree that the Bible is authoritative.

Our only point of disagreement is whether or not the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church are authoritative or not. And that's what we're pointing out.

Since we both agree on the authority of the Scriptures, then, that's why I believe Bill has gone to the Scriptures and that's why I've gone to the Scriptures. What we're trying to do is see if those traditions of the Roman Catholic Church are in agreement with what the Scriptures say. If the Scriptures are the Word of God, as Bill says that he affirms, and I affirm that, then the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, if they're authoritative also, then they must be in agreement with what we both agree in, the Scriptures.

Now Bill has made a distinction between what he calls "apostolic tradition" and "ecclesiastical tradition." I would make a distinction too. I believe the Bible speaks of the traditions that were given by the apostles. Those traditions were delivered to us by the apostles of Jesus Christ. And they were written down. The apostle Paul specifically makes mention in Ephesians 3:4-5, the things that he wrote, he said, "when you read, you can understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." We can read what was revealed to them, the truth.

I am surprised that Bill said that there is no progressive revelation. Ecclesiastical tradition is either: from God from the apostles or it is from men. And Jesus specifically condemned the traditions of men: the clerical dress, the calling of men "father," the traditions, the primacy of Peter, calling various individuals saints instead of all Christians as 1 Corinthians 1:2 says. Having a particular individual as identified as a "priest" as an intermediary, which is contrary to the Scriptures, specifically the apostle Peter who wrote in 1 Peter 2:5 and 9, when he was writing to Christians, that

“you are a holy priesthood.” And yet in the Roman Catholic Church, the ecclesiastical traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, whatever you call them, are contrary to the Scripture. They have a separate priesthood, not a priesthood of all who are Christians.

Now, whatever you call it “progressive revelation” or whatever, either it is from Jesus Christ, by his apostles as the Word of God and written down in Scripture, that contains the Truth, or it is the traditions of men. Jesus said, “In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.” If ecclesiastical tradition comes from men then Jesus condemns it as nullifying the Word of God. And the passage I am referring to is Matthew 15:9.

The same problem that we have today with Roman Catholicism, was a problem Jesus faced in the first century. The Pharisees came along and they had all sorts of traditions. If you want to call them “ecclesiastical” or oral traditions, the fact is Jesus says that those doctrines were the doctrines and commandments of men and they nullified or rejected the commandment of God “to keep (their) own tradition” Mark 7:9.

What Bill mentioned as far as the matter of Peter, I’m glad that he recognizes that there is a distinction made in the Greek. He tries to say that in the Aramaic there’s no distinction and Jesus possibly spoke in Aramaic. 1 Corinthians 3:11 says, “There is no other foundation than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.” And yet in the Roman Catholic Church their tradition and interpretation of that passage is to try to suggest that Peter is the foundation, that Peter is the rock. If there was no distinction in the Aramaic, the Holy Spirit had Matthew, the apostle of Jesus Christ, make the distinction in the Greek text, which was what he wrote in and what is given to us. And therefore the argument falls.

We appreciate very much this time and opportunity. Bill, I appreciate this discussion. We look forward to continue this discussion tomorrow when we’ll have more time. I think Bill has found out that ten minutes and four minutes are not a lot of time. But we’re glad for the time. We appreciate that you have tuned in and come back tomorrow and we’ll continue this discussion, this very interesting and important discussion on matter of religion. Thank you and good day.

**Tuesday, May 8, 2001**

This is Wayne. We’re glad that you have tuned in. The program is “Searching Daily” and we have a special program today. We’re continuing our discussion on the proposition, “The Scriptures and ‘Apostolic Tradition’ as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine.” Bill Rutland is with us this morning, as he was yesterday morning and he is affirming that proposition. I will be denying and we’re going to turn the microphone and the first ten minutes over to Bill so he can affirm, “The Scriptures and ‘Apostolic Tradition’ as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our authority for Christian faith and doctrine.” Bill...

**Third Affirmative: Bill Rutland**

Thank very much Wayne. It’s good to be back with you today. And I would like to pick up where we left off yesterday. I affirm that the Scriptures along with apostolic tradition as put forth by the Roman Catholic Church are our sole authority in Christian faith and practice.

As of yet Wayne, you have done nothing to disprove that proposition. Yesterday, I showed from Matthew 16:13-19 that Jesus very clearly says that he will build his church on the apostle Peter. Yet you stated

that the interpretation is prohibited in the Greek text. When I pointed out that gender change in the Greek, from "Peter" which is masculine, to "rock" which is feminine, was nothing more than the use of good Greek grammar, you never addressed my point. As your whole argument hinges on your mistaken view of the gender change in this passage in Matthew that the gender change has some type of theological meaning, failing to address this point.

You also failed to address my assertion that it was Peter, Peter, not Peter's confession, but Peter on whom the church was built. Your assertion that the gender change between the word *Petros*, Peter, and the word *petra*, rock, that Jesus is trying to make some kind of distinction between Peter and the rock and it runs counter to the bulk of Biblical scholarship. If you would allow me just to cite one example of this. I would cite James B. Shelton, he's the associate professor at the school of Theology in Missions at Oral Roberts University. Certainly not a person who you could say was a Catholic sympathizer, but let's listen to what Mr. Shelton said, he says, "When using both the masculine and feminine forms of a word, however, Matthew is not trying to distance Peter, *Petros*, from this rock, *petra*. Rather the evangelist changes the genders simply because Simon, a male, is given a masculine form of the feminine noun." Therefore my argument still stands. It is on Peter, the chief apostle, that Jesus builds his church.

Yesterday you also cited 1 Corinthians 3:11, "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one that has already been laid in Jesus Christ." But Wayne this is also a logical fallacy because what you are making a false, either or distinction. Yes, Paul says, no other foundation can be laid than that which is in Jesus Christ, but in this same text, the verse before Jesus, excuse me, Paul says "but by the grace of God I have laid a

foundation as an expert builder." Romans 5:20, Paul says, "It has always been my ambition to preach the gospel where Christ was not known, so

I would not be building on someone else's foundation." 1 Timothy 3:14-15, "Although I hope to come to you soon, I am writing you these instructions so that if I am delayed you would know how people ought to conduct themselves in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and the foundation of the truth." I think it is evident from these examples that Paul is in no way using the term "foundation" in the exclusive way that you are.

Next I would like to address the fact that you said that my citation of the early church father, Irenaeus was somehow inappropriate because he is not an inspired writer. Yet if you dismiss the testimony of the early church writers you are casting Scripture in an ahistorical light. You say that the early church fathers did not teach Catholic doctrine yet here is an early example of an apostolic father who teaching "apostolic tradition," the primacy of the bishop of Rome and apostolic succession.

It is my position that the Roman Catholic (Church) teaches authentic truth, just as the apostles did in the early church. Although it is necessary for anyone who holds the sole authority of Scripture to have an ahistoric view of Scripture because for the first 1550 years the Church, until the Reformation, there is no mention of this doctrine.

Let's now return to Matthew 16. After Jesus tells Peter he will build his church on him, "I will give you the keys of the kingdom and whatever you bind on earth, will be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven." In Matthew 18, Jesus will give all of the apostles the authority to bind and loose but it is only

to Peter that he gives the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

The early church fathers as well as modern scholars see this as clear reference to Isaiah 22:15-24. In this God removes the evil chief steward of the king, Shebna, and replaces him with the godly Eliakim, And Shebna was a chief steward and prime minister of the king and he is deposed from his office and replaced by Eliakim. And Eliakim is given the key to the house of David to signify his authority as second in command to the king. And Isaiah says, "he will be a father to those who live in Jerusalem."

Our Lord is likewise is giving Peter the keys of the kingdom because Jesus is soon to die, he is soon to rise and he is soon to ascend back to heaven. And so he says to Peter, you have the keys to the kingdom, whatever you bind on earth, will be bound in heaven, whatever you loose on earth, will be loosed in heaven.

Lastly, in the short time I have remaining I would like to reference Acts 15. This is where Peter stands up before the other apostles and tells them that they have to replace Judas as an apostle. Why? Because Peter here clearly sees, clearly sees that the position that Jesus gave to Judas as an apostle, he did not bestow on the man, but he bestowed as an office. Peter says, "Let another his bishopric take." That is let another his place of authority or office of authority.

Wayne, you have to at least realize here that Peter stands up, quotes from Isaiah in a completely novel way and uses that novel interpretation to then assert that they have to replace Judas as being an apostle. And the astonishing thing about this is is none of the 120 stop Peter and question his interpretation. Why? Because Peter is given the

authority to bind and to loose, that is to authentically interpret what Scripture says.

Wayne you've used Mark 7:4 to try to say that Jesus condemns apostolic tradition, when Jesus said that you let go of the commands of God and are holding to the traditions of men. This is not what this passage says. You are going farther than the text to interject your own opinion that Catholic tradition is a tradition of men.

You say that Jesus says "call no man 'father'" yet I call my own male parent "father" as I'm sure you do. You accuse Catholics of worshiping statues, yet Catholics don't worship statues any more than you worship your Grandfather when you hang his picture over your mantle at home.

You assert that apostolic tradition is not a tradition of man but of God. I further assert that no apostolic tradition disagrees with the Word of God cause God cannot contradict himself. Wayne, it is your burden to show that the Catholic apostolic tradition is not of God and the only way that you can do that is by your own very fallible interpretation of certain Scriptures. In fact, without an authoritative interpreter you really have no way to know for sure that you are correctly interpreting the Bible. On what authority do you say, this is what the Bible says. In fact without the authority of a Roman Catholic council in the year 382 you would not even know what the Scripture is and what Scripture is not.

### **Third Negative: Wayne Greeson**

We'd like to turn our attention and consider the things that Bill had to say here. He again focuses and returns back to Matthew 16<sup>th</sup> chapter and makes his argument that the church is (built) on the apostle Peter. He responded to my argument with regard to gender change and says the argu-

ment is wrong. And he made a couple of arguments about this on yesterday's program. I think Bill understands and he made this very clear that he understands that there is clearly a change in the language.

Let me illustrate this difference by putting it into English that would help illustrate that the rock Jesus is going to build his church on is not the apostle Peter. And the way we can do that is by demonstrating the difference, as Bill acknowledges, between the masculine and the feminine form. Jesus said, "Thou art Mr. Rock and upon Mrs. Rock I will build my church." That's a way to express the difference between the masculine and the feminine form. It's important to understand that difference. Yes, the word "rock" is used in both places but they are two different words and they are used differently in the text.

Bill acknowledged yesterday that it was different in the Classical Greek. He suggested that it was not different in the Koine Greek but provided no evidence of that, just simply an assertion. It is obviously evident in the Classical Greek, whether or not there is not a distinction in the Koine Greek is an assertion not proved. But Bill does recognize that there are two different words, two different forms of the word. There is clearly a distinction. One cannot address Peter and "Mr. Rock" and then turn around and say upon "Miss Rock" or "Mrs. Rock" the feminine form and be referring to Peter as that same rock. It would be a ludicrous statement. It would be ridiculous.

For him to suggest that it runs counter to scholarship is quite an argument. The argument is that somehow scholarship disagrees and suggests that Peter is the rock upon which Jesus built the church. Let me address another argument that he made yesterday to tie into this. He suggested that the Lord spoke Aramaic and there is no

distinction in gender in the Aramaic. That is not true Bill, there is a distinction. The distinction is between *kephas* and *kepha* and the same play on words would be made in the masculine and the feminine. There is a masculine and feminine form of the words that are used there making the same distinction that we're talking about.

However, with respect to the matter of "what does scholarship say?" Let's refer to those early church fathers that you like to quote. We need to understand that the early church fathers were certainly not in agreement. In fact a majority of them did not take the position that Peter was the rock that Jesus built the church upon. Let's refer specifically to St. Augustine when he said, "Thou art," and this is quoting from St. Augustine, "It was not said to him, 'Thou art a rock (*petra*),' but, 'Thou art Peter' and the Rock was Christ" ('Retract.,' i.21). Augustine said that the Rock was Christ. He did not say it was Peter. Not that's your early church authority, who specifically is one of the pillars or foundations of the Roman Catholic Church. But he did not believe Peter was the Rock, but Christ.

And we can add to that St. Chrysostom said, "Upon this rock, that is, on the faith of his confession. Hereby he signifies that many were not on the point of believing and raises his spirit, and makes him a shepherd" (*Homilies of St. John Chrysostom, "Homily LIV" on Matthew 16:13, Sec. 3*). The confession is the rock, according to Chrysostom. And the same could be said of Hilary, Ambrose, Jerome, Gregory Nyssa and Cyril.

And we could go on and point out that the early church fathers had no unanimous consent or thought that Peter was the rock upon which Jesus built his church. Now Bill those are your Catholic authorities. Those are your early church fathers. And so we need to understand very clearly that the

rock here that Jesus built his church on was not Peter. Augustine, Chrysostom, Gregory, we can go on and on and point out they did not understand or teach it your way.

The point I made yesterday agrees with Augustine when he wrote that Christ is the Rock and Peter is not. In fact he acknowledges the difference in the Greek language, when he makes a distinction that Peter was called *Petros* by the Lord and not *petra* but rather Christ is the Rock. Now whether I agree with the specifics of the way they interpret it, all of these “fathers” I refer to, did not believe Peter was the rock upon which Jesus built the church. Yet these are the very church authorities and traditions that you say we’re supposed to put in a historical light. And you accuse me of being ahistorical and that I don’t want to put Matthew 16 in a historical light?

No, my point is very simple Bill, these early church fathers were not inspired writers. The Scriptures were written by inspired writers. The things that they wrote, the traditions that you refer to whether it be Irenaeus, whether it be Augustine, whether it be any of those that we have referred to, Bill, they were not inspired writers, they did not claim to be writing by the guidance of the Holy Spirit, they did not claim to be writing Scripture, nor did they claim that their works were authoritative.

Now Bill referred to Irenaeus yesterday and suggested that I am rejecting the historical light. My point is very simple. Irenaeus did not declare himself to be an apostle. Irenaeus did not establish or decide authoritatively that there was an “apostolic succession” or that there was a primacy of a pope in Rome. Irenaeus never referred to any one as a “Pope.”

Irenaeus in his *Against Heresies* was writing and describing and trying to refute

the false doctrine of the Gnostics. And one of the points that he made was that the tradition, he was referring to the fact of the succession of those who were the bishops in Rome, that the succession showed that the doctrines and the teachings that they believed were true were more authentic and traced back to the apostles as opposed to the doctrines of the Gnostics. He was not trying to prove the primacy of the pope or the primacy of the bishop of Rome. That was not his purpose.

As a matter of fact, after that particular chapter, which is a very short chapter in which he makes that argument, he then goes on and spends numerous chapters dealing with a scriptural refutation of the doctrines of the Gnostics. His reliance was upon the Scriptures, not upon historical succession or historical argument. And yet you go back and try to use him, an isolated church father, and try to use him as a matter of trying prove things that are not provable from the Scriptures which he relied upon!

Time and time again, through the early church fathers, from the time of the close of the inspired writings all the way up through, well the church fathers of the first few centuries, they always appealed to the authority of the Scriptures. They didn’t appeal to a church tradition. The reason you went to Irenaeus is because he is the one exception, in one particular paragraph or a couple of paragraphs that he refers to church tradition or church succession. But his argument was not to establish the authority of the Roman Catholic Church or the authority of the church at Rome. As a matter of fact, he talks about the succession of several churches and not the primacy of the church at Rome, only in the sense that it was the capital of the Roman Empire.

Let’s talk about the keys. Bill, I don’t have a disagreement that Jesus gave the

apostle Peter the “keys of the kingdom of heaven.” And he exercised that particular authority. The “keys” is the idea of opening the door, not in declaring things in a legislative manner. He opened the doors of the kingdom in Acts 2 by standing up and preaching the gospel and declaring Jesus Christ to be the Son of God. He did so also in Acts 10. Peter stood in the place of opening the doors by having the keys to the kingdom.

If I accept all that you say, that Peter is the rock upon which Jesus built his church, that still doesn’t prove that there was a succession of men that followed Peter. There is no succession in the New Testament. I accept the authority of Peter and the rest of the apostles.

I do not have any problem with apostolic tradition, that is that which came from the apostles. But, it is very clear, it is very clear from Irenaeus, it is very clear from Augustine, it is very clear from all the early church fathers that they considered the apostles, the apostles we read about in the New Testament. They didn’t consider any apostles or apostolic succession as you have to argue to establish the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and the Catholic bishop or Pope today. That is completely contrary to all historical early church father writings and it is contrary to the Scriptures which are inspired and come from God.

Now Jesus said very clearly, “Call no man your ‘father’ upon earth.” He was talking about a spiritual relationship and giving some spiritual significance or relevance to someone as a spiritual father. And he said “because you have one Father.” That is just an example of one of thousands of Catholic traditions that are contrary to what the Bible and the Scriptures teach.

I’ll take a breath here. I have a lot to say

and little time to say it. We’re going to turn the microphone back over to Bill and he’ll have four minutes and then I’ll have four minutes following that. Bill...

#### **Fourth Affirmative: Bill Rutland**

First let me return back to Irenaeus for just a moment. Because Irenaeus’ argument is important for us here, not for what it says, but for what it assumes. You see Irenaeus felt no compulsion to defend the fact that there was apostolic succession. What he did was use the fact of apostolic succession to establish the authority of the church in Rome over against the Gnostic heretics. In saying that his primary purpose was in writing against the Gnostic heretics you are very, very correct.

Secondly, returning back to Matthew 16 and not to dwell on the Greek here forever and ever but your use of the Greek language here is simply incorrect. You are drawing assertions from the Greek text which simply are not there.

In your reference to Augustine, Augustine clearly sees, as we see from some of his other writings, that Peter is the rock on which the church was built. But he also sees that ultimately that Peter gets authority from Jesus Christ himself and that’s what he is trying to point out. Augustine also said, “I would have not believed that the Scripture” oh excuse me “that the gospel was the Word of God, if the church did not tell me so.” Augustine was clearly on the side of the authoritativeness of the church.

The keys as simply opening the door to the Gentiles, yes, that was part of it. But Jesus told Peter, “what you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, what you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” And he was referring back to the prerogative that was taken by the Pharisees in which they had the

authority to legislate, not only to open or close, but to legislate. So Peter now is given the authority to legislate within the church.

To say that the gospel or the book of Acts in no way implies successors is simply illogical. Why would Jesus establish his church and establish a visible head of his church, Simon Peter, if he then was going to take Peter out of the way. It would have thrown the church into complete anarchy and would have produced that exact same thing that we're seeing in Protestantism today in that we now have almost 30,000 Protestant denominations worldwide. Why? Because of this doctrine the sole authority of Scripture and because of the doctrine of private interpretation of Scripture.

Also to, I want to address this issue of where Wayne do you get your authority? How can you say this Bible that I hold in my hands is in fact Scripture? For the first 400 years of the church there was not unanimous consent as to what the New Testament was. And so at a church council it was established what writings were Scripture and what writings were not Scripture. It was done so on the authority of apostolic tradition. It was done so on the authority of Catholic bishops at Catholic council.

### **Fourth Negative: Wayne Greeson**

Thank you Bill for that. Well, we turn again to Irenaeus and my point is a very simple point. And I will repeat it again. He was not inspired, he did not claim to be inspired and we cannot quote him as authoritative.

You suggest that it shows a historical argument. It shows a historical argument about what he believed, it does not show or prove what the Lord did. We have to go the Scriptures for that. Quoting Irenaeus in 178 AD does not show apostolic succession.

And Bill, Irenaeus did not try to prove apostolic succession. The Catholic Church misuses and you have misused what he wrote to try to assert apostolic succession because you can't find it in the Scriptures and so you go to him and try to prove it. He was showing a succession or line of those who were bishops in Rome. He was not showing the primacy of Rome, he was simply arguing their doctrine went back to the apostles and he was correcting and refuting Gnostic doctrine.

I'd like to know where you got the quote that Augustine thought that Peter was the rock. He did not. In his sermons he very clearly said and made the distinction and said, "Christ is the Rock." And he had reference to, in his sermon, the passage we are speaking of, Matthew 16.

But the point of any of these early church fathers is that they did not take the position that their writings were authoritative. Yet you take the position that because they wrote that the Catholic church can pick and choose, such as one statement out of Irenaeus, and can make that an authoritative establishment of apostolic succession.

They didn't think that of their writings. Their authority was the Scripture. Time after time after time, they would say, "The Scriptures say..." "This is what the Scriptures say..." and yet you go to these early father and try to prove your points from what they say. And they didn't claim to be Scriptures and they didn't claim to be apostles either.

There are no apostles after the writings and the close of the New Testament. The early church fathers are virtually unanimous, if not unanimous, I haven't checked every one. But you recognize or should recognize that the early church fathers realized that the apostles that wrote the New Testament, that heard the Lord, were



not those men who followed after them, they were different. There were no successors to those apostles.

Whatever authority was given to Peter and the apostles, and they did have authority, they had authority as the ambassadors of Christ. That was the authority that was clearly given to them by the Lord and the early church fathers recognized that and so should you.

The authority was not given to some man living some 2,000 years later claiming that he is a successor to the apostle Peter. There is no successor to the apostle Peter. Peter was the one who got the keys, not the Popes since then nor the Pope today.

The successors that you make mention of, you suggest that we need to accept the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and you suggest that we wouldn't even know what the Bible was without the Catholic Church. I thought we understood, your proposition says you accept the Scriptures as authority, now you believe that there is something in addition to the Scriptures but you accept the Scriptures as authority?

Now what you are telling me is that the Catholic Church is the one who gave us the Scriptures. You are making the argument Bill, that you disavowed to me personally, that the Catholic Church is a superceding authority which tells us what the Scriptures are and that's why you accept them.

Now you've got a problem. You say it's the fourth century that the Catholic Church gave us the Bible. Bill, you recognize and you understand that it was not until the 16<sup>th</sup> century at the Council of Trent that Scripture and Tradition were declared authoritative. Which council do you accept? Do you accept the council in the 4<sup>th</sup> century or the council in the 16<sup>th</sup> century, because they

made two different declarations with regard to Scripture. Which Scripture are we going to accept? And are we going to accept the declaration in the 4<sup>th</sup> century? Or are we going to accept the traditions that are mentioned by the Council of Trent in the 16<sup>th</sup> century?

I'm out of time. We're just about out of time. Just about enough time to talk a little bit further about our program for tomorrow.

### **Closing Comments**

We're going to be continuing this discussion and we're going to turn to what Bill started to talk about it at the end of his particular talk, about the idea of what he calls *Sola Scriptura*. Which is basically "the Scriptures only." My proposition will be the Scriptures are our only authority for Christian faith and doctrine. That's what I will be affirming tomorrow at 11:30 on "Searching Daily" and, in turn, Bill will be denying that. And like I said, he started to talk about that a little today and we're going to be talking about what is our authority. I'll be saying that the Scriptures only are our authority and we'll be discussing that tomorrow.

We appreciate very much that you have tuned and joined with us and we invite you to come at 11:30 tomorrow, if the Lord wills and we'll be continuing this discussion. Thank you and good day.

The proposition for the second two days of the debate is: "The Scriptures teach that the Scriptures are our only authority for Christian faith and doctrine."

### **Affirm**

Wayne Greeson, preacher for the East 102 church of Christ located in Bentonville, Arkansas

### **Deny**

Bill Rutland, Education Director for the St. Vincent De Paul parish of the Catholic Church in Rogers, Arkansas

## **Wednesday, May 9, 2001**

Good morning, this is Wayne, we're glad that you've tuned in to the program *Searching Daily*. We are engaged this week in a religious discussion. I have with me Bill Rutland who is a member of the Catholic Church and we are discussing the subject of the Scriptures and the authority for matters of faith and doctrine. The affirmative I'll be taking today. We are discussing the proposition "The Scriptures teach that the Scriptures are our only authority for Christian faith and doctrine." And we'll begin...

### **First Affirmative: Wayne Greeson**

Paul wrote and told Timothy in 2 Timothy 3:15-17, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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 all good works" (2 Tim. 3:15-17).

The first thing that we learn from Paul's instruction to Timothy are the Scriptures make one wise unto salvation through faith;

not by the uninspired writings of the early church fathers, Bill; not the religious councils convened by men; not the religious traditions of men, whether called ecclesiastical, holy, apostolic or otherwise; and not the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church. It is the Scriptures that make one wise unto salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Second of all, Paul's instructions let us know that the Scriptures can be known and understood even from childhood. Paul contradicts and denies the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church and that which Bill described yesterday, that one cannot know and understand the Bible without the official interpretation of the Catholic Church. Paul told Timothy, "you have known from a child the Holy Scriptures" and that knowledge was able to make him wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

The Scriptures are readable and they are understandable. Paul wrote in 2 Corinthians 1:13, "For we write nothing to you that you do not read and understand." Paul said in Ephesians 3 that we can read and "understand (his) knowledge in the mystery of Christ." In 19<sup>th</sup> Psalm, verse eight, "The law of the Lord is perfect, refreshing to the soul." In the 119<sup>th</sup> Psalm verse 130, "The revelation of your words sheds light, giving understanding to the simple" (Psalm 119:130).

The third thing of what we can understand, of what Paul told Timothy, is that the Scriptures contain everything necessary to equip and perfect or complete Christians for doctrine, for instruction in righteousness and every good work. There is not one doctrine necessary for the faith and salvation of a Christian that the Scriptures do not provide or else the man of God could not be perfect. Yet the Catholic Church, through her councils of men, the papal decrees from

men, the ecclesiastical traditions of men and much, much more provides hundreds of doctrines outside of and in contradiction to the Scriptures.

There is not any instruction necessary for the faith and salvation of a Christian that the Scriptures do not provide or else, contrary to what Paul says, the man of God could not be perfect. Paul said, "all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, (or complete) thoroughly (equipped or) furnished unto all good works."

There is not a single good work that a Christian can do which is not provided in the Scriptures. If men are doing things which are not revealed in the Scriptures, they cannot be good works in God's sight. This includes all the so called "good works" set forth by the Roman Catholic Church by her councils, decrees, catechisms, traditions or whatever else you want to call them. It is the Scriptures which equip the man of God to perfection and to all good works.

Paul's own writings, from the New Testament are described as "Scripture" as Peter describes in 2 Peter 3. And I understand that Bill accepts that the New Testament is the Scriptures that come from God.

The Scriptures are what give us salvation, are understandable, are what provide us for all things to equip and perfect us. Bill, therein is my proposition, "The Scriptures teach that the Scriptures are our only authority for Christian faith and doctrine." If the Scriptures are inspired of God, if they are the Word of God, if they thoroughly equip and furnish and provide us unto all good works and make the man of God complete or perfect, then there is no other authority, there is no other source that we

can receive for faith, doctrine, instruction or good works. And that includes the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

We need to understand what our Lord and Savior thought about the Scriptures. The Roman Catholic Church believes that you cannot understand the Scriptures without their interpretation, without their traditions. And yet Jesus thought otherwise. Jesus said, in John 5:39, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

Yet, the Catholic Church tells us we cannot search the Scriptures, nor can we understand them, nor can we receive their testimony of Jesus, nor can we receive eternal life without the interpretation and authority of the Pope. Bill, if I can't understand the Scriptures and the words of Jesus, how am I possibly going to understand the interpretations of the Pope?

I have a copy of the Vatican II which is a book filled with authoritative Catholic doctrine and pronouncements. You know this book is far larger and more complicated than the Scriptures, the Word of God and yet I am supposed to accept this as authority for my faith and doctrine? It isn't so Bill.

Jesus constantly appealed to the Scriptures to settle all doctrinal questions and issues. And he expected those who he discussed with and talked with to read and accept the authority of the Scriptures. He asked numerous times "Have you not read?" Such as on the Sabbath issue in Matthew 12:3, 5. In Matthew 19 on the question of divorce and marriage, he asked, "Have you not read?" On the prophecies of the Messiah he said, "Have you not read?" (Mt. 21:16, 42). On the question of the resurrection with the Sadducees, "Have you not read?" (Mt. 21:31).

He was asked by a certain lawyer, "What must I do to inherit eternal life." And he returned that with a question, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" And you know what answer the lawyer gave him? He quoted verbatim from the Scriptures. Word for word, he gave him what the Scriptures said. And Jesus commended him and he said, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live" (Lk. 10:25-28).

Bill, I can do the exact same thing that that man did. If I want to know how I can have eternal life, I can go to the Word of God, I can go the Scriptures, I can read it and I can do exactly what it says and Jesus will commend me and he will say, "You have answered rightly, this is what you have done, and you will live."

Jesus quoted the Scriptures as the final source of authority. And to those who would not accept the Scriptures, he said "You err, not knowing the Scriptures" (Mt. 22:29) in his controversy with the Sadducees. And, he told those who made void the word of God through their traditions, he said, "You set aside the commandment of God to hold to you traditions" (Mk. 7:8).

Now it's very important to understand Jesus believed and taught that we can study and understand and do what the Bible says without the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church, without the interpretations of the Pope. Jesus also condemned the traditions of men.

In Matthew 15, the scribes and Pharisees came to Jesus and they wanted to know "Why do thy disciples transgress the tradition of the elders?" (Mt. 15:2). The Pharisees had the same problem that the Roman Catholic Church has today. They said that Moses gave an oral tradition and they were

keeping that oral tradition and they put it beside the Word of God. Jesus condemned them and said, "Why do ye also transgress the commandment of God by your tradition? For God commanded..." and he quoted from the Scriptures, "Honour thy father and mother: and, He that curseth father or mother, let him die the death. But you say..." (Mt. 15:3-5) and then he gave their tradition.

Jesus said, "You, by your commandment, made the commandment of God, by your tradition, of none effect... well did Isaiah prophesy of you, saying, 'This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me. But in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men'" (Mt. 15:6-9). If it is not contained within the Word of God in Scripture, Jesus said it was a doctrine of men. Jesus quoted directly from the Scriptures and that's what we need to do.

We must accept and set aside any and all of the traditions of men. We spoke a little bit the other day and noted the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church are not found within Scripture. They are not based in Scripture. And many traditions are contrary to the plain teaching of the Scripture and the teaching of Jesus Christ and the apostles.

The apostle Paul said in 2 Thessalonians 3:14 "And if any man obey not our word by this epistle, note that man, and have no company with him, that he may be ashamed." In 1 Corinthians 14:37, "If any man think himself to be a prophet, or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things that I write unto you are the commandments of the Lord."

And yet we started to make mention of a number of those traditions of the Roman Catholic Church which are not found in

Scripture. We are to follow and accept the Scriptures. That is our only authority. That is the authority to which Jesus Christ, the Son of God, appealed to. That is the authority to which he pointed us to and that is the authority that which we are to accept and which we are to follow. Not the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church; not the interpretations; not the doctrines of the early church fathers, but the Scripture and only the Scripture is from God and is given by God and is what we are to follow if we are to be acceptable to God.

We now have the conclusion of my time and we're going to turn the microphone over to Bill and he'll have ten minutes to deny the proposition.

**First Negative: Bill Rutland**

Thank you very much. First off I would like to correct you Wayne on one point. The Catholic Church does not teach, nor has it ever taught that we cannot understand what Scripture says. But there are some places in Scripture where good honest people come to a disagreement. Despite what you say, there are some scriptures that are very hard to understand. The apostle Peter says himself in speaking of Paul in 2 Peter 3:15, "Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation, just as our dear brother Paul wrote you with the wisdom that God gave him. He writes the same way in all his letters, speaking in them of these matters. His letters contain some things that are hard to understand, which ignorant and unstable people distort, as they do the other Scriptures, to their own destruction."

So the apostle Peter notes that he even has a problem sometimes understanding some of what Paul wrote. So the Catholic church is in no way saying that we cannot read the Scriptures and understand what they're saying, but, there has to be a final

arbitrator when we disagree upon what Scripture means.

We can take the same Scripture and some come up and say, "Once you're saved, you're always saved." Others say, "No, you can lose your salvation, you can fall from grace." One of these men clearly is wrong. Both of them cannot be right.

I also affirm that the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura*, as the reformers called it, or the doctrine of the sole sufficiency of the Scripture is not taught within the Word of God. For a working definition of what this doctrine of sole sufficiency of Scripture is, let's go to the "Westminster Confession" that was made in 1646. It says, "The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His glory, Man's salvation and faith and life is either expressly set down in the Scripture or by good and necessary consequence, may be deduced from Scripture, under which nothing at anytime is to be added whether by new revelation of the Spirit or the traditions of men."

The "Westminster Confession" says that in order for us to know from Scripture that something is doctrine that it must "expressly set down in the Scripture or" it may be "deduced from Scripture" "by good and necessary consequence." I will show that Scripture neither expressly nor necessarily deduces the doctrine of sole sufficiency of Scripture. I will show that Scripture itself points to oral tradition, along with Scripture as the divine sacred norm of God's revelation.

Wayne, you brought up 2 Timothy 3:16-17. So let's go back and look at that for just a minute. It says, "All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work."

This so called proof text, like many others, can only be made to teach sole sufficiency of Scripture if we divorce and separate it from it's context.

Number one, Paul tells young Timothy that "All Scripture is God-breathed." Now the first assumption that the Scripture only position takes is that the term "all Scripture" means all of the Bible that we have today. Yet, the immediate context of this verse shows what Paul means by Scripture. Verse fourteen and fifteen say, "But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus."

The Scripture Paul is speaking of here is the Scripture Timothy has known from infancy. What Scripture is that? Well, the "necessary deduction," to use the words of the "Westminster Confession" is that this is the Old Testament because the New Testament was not even in existence when Timothy was an infant.

To project what Paul says, in using the term "all Scripture" on to the New Testament is to go further than the clear intent of the text. Is the New Testament Scripture? Absolutely. Is it inspired by God? Yes. But to say that Paul's use of the term here means Old and New Testament is a contextual fallacy.

The interpretation is strengthened by the literal Greek because it does not say "all" but "every." The Greek word *pas* used here is used without an article therefore it cannot mean "all" it must mean "every." And in saying every one of a certain class, pointing back to those Scriptures that Timothy had known from infancy the Old Testament and not the New.

Number two, Paul says Scripture is "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." Now if Paul were trying to teach the Scripture only position it's strange that he would use such weak word to describe Scripture. If the Bible only doctrine is correct it seems that Paul would have used the word, "sufficient" which the Greek language is more than adequate to set forth. But it seems strange that Paul did not use the word "sufficient" but opted for a lesser and weaker word that had less impact.

Number three, Paul tells Timothy that the Scriptures are "useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." The assertion that you have just made, Wayne, is that Paul says that the man of God is thoroughly equipped, this shows that the Bible is thoroughly sufficient. That is not what Paul is saying. That is not what this text says.

A study of the Greek here again shows that what is thoroughly equipping the man of God is not the Scripture but the "teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness" of which Scripture is a useful aid. The emphasis here is not placed on the Scripture. The emphasis here is placed on "teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness." And yes, Scripture is useful in doing those things, but it is not solely sufficient. The man of God must be sufficient by "teaching, rebuking, correcting and training" and that comes through the full counsel of God, both written and oral tradition.

One of the many errors of the Bible only camp is that they think that the Bible, when they read "Bible," is the same as the term "Word of God" yet the Bible itself makes no distinction. At its core the Word

of God is not a teaching, but a person as we looked at in John 1:1. John 21:24-25, "...the disciple says who testifies of these things... who wrote them down. We know his testimony is true. Jesus did many other things.... If every one of them were written down, I suppose that not even the whole world would have room to contain the books that would be written." Even the apostle John, the last writer to write, tells us that the testimony given in written form is in complete. In fact he says that if we wrote down everything that Jesus did, he doubts that the whole world could contain the books.

Acts 20:35, Paul is speaking to the Ephesians, he says, "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work that we must help the weak, remembering the words that the Lord Jesus himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" Yet we search that gospels in vain for this statement of Jesus. Wayne, where did it come from? Clearly, it came from oral tradition.

First Corinthians 11:2, "I praise you for remembering me in everything and holding to the traditions, just as I passed them on to you." Second Thessalonians 2:15, "So then, brothers, stand firm and holding to the traditions we passed on to you, whether by word of mouth or by letter." Second Thessalonians 3:6, "In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, we command you, brothers, keep away from every brother who is idle and does not live according to the traditions you received from us." Second Timothy 1:13-14, "What you have heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound words, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you and guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit...." Second Timothy 2:2 "And all these things you have heard in my presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will

be qualified to teach others."

Jesus never wrote a book. Jesus never told anyone to write a book with the possible exception of the apostle John, the book of Revelation. But Jesus says, "All authority...on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all me, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I commanded you." Wayne that everything we know from Scripture and from history is that things that were written down and the oral traditions that were passed on by the apostles of our Lord.

### **Comments**

I'll have four minutes to rebut and Bill will have four minutes following.

### **Second Affirmative: Wayne Greeson**

Bill the Catholic Church does teach and you did say the other day that we cannot understand the Bible without the official interpretation of the Catholic Church. The fact is that Jesus not only taught but expected those, that he talked to, to read and understand. He said, "What does you law say? What do you read?" And when the answer was given exactly from the Scripture, Bill, not oral tradition, Jesus said, "You have answered rightly."

Jesus condemned the tradition of men. Those traditions were what they claimed were oral traditions. And they were wrong. Jesus said, "God commanded this" and he quoted from the Scriptures, not from oral tradition. And he said, "You have made the commandment of God of none effect by your tradition."

God did not entrust his Word in the matter of oral tradition to be handed down.

He put it down and it was written in the Word of God and in the New Testament, Jesus quoted the Scripture and said, "What is written?" And so should we Bill.

Now you referred to the idea of the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* and you quoted the "Westminster Confession of Faith." Bill, I do not accept the "Westminster Confession of Faith." I reject it as a doctrine, a council, as a doctrine that comes from men. What you need to deal with is what the Scriptures say. Now you can quote from all sorts of councils but that is not the Scriptures. I don't care whether it is a Protestant council or a Protestant doctrine or statement of faith, it is of men.

Our authority is the Scriptures. And I think it is contradictory for some men to get together and have a confession of faith and say that we have to rely only upon the Scriptures for our doctrine. So I reject the "Westminster Confession of Faith" just like I do the Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church, the Vatican II, the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church because they are not inspired, they are not Scripture.

Now you tried to make several arguments with regard to 2 Timothy 3:15-17. What you suggested was here, first of all, that you agree that the New Testament is Scripture. So the whole argument trying to suggest that context there that it is only referring to the Old Testament is meaningless, it doesn't mean anything. If you accept that the New Testament is Scripture, then that passage refers just as much to the Scripture of the New Testament as it does to the Old Testament.

You suggested that Paul uses a weak word there. Paul was an inspired writer, you are not Bill. He used the words that the Holy Spirit gave him. He was a prophet and an apostle of Jesus Christ and so his words

are adequate and they convey that meaning quite clearly.

You suggest that "thoroughly equipped" is not the "thoroughly equipped" that is provided by the Bible but rather the teaching, rebuking and training. The teaching, rebuking and training come from the "Holy Scriptures which are able to make you wise unto salvation." Now, you suggested, that we have in addition to that, in addition to what the Scriptures are, which means the holy writings, is oral tradition. Now Bill, that's what the Catholic Church says, that's not what the Bible says.

You suggested that the Bible is not the complete Word of God and you began to give various passages which are in reference to that. And you gave a passage in John the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter "Jesus did many other things which are not written" but the apostle John does refer to the fact that "the things which are written" are things which we can believe and receive salvation. They are sufficient, what was written.

And the fact is that there are traditions that were given to us, in fact I began this debate by pointing out I accept apostolic tradition. But the fact is that those traditions that were given by the apostles were written down. And then, that which was written down is what we are to follow.

### **Second Negative: Bill Rutland**

Again, I'd like to say that the Catholic Church in no way says that we cannot, as Scripture says, "Study to shew ourselves approved." Obviously, we should do that. The Catholic Church runs many seminaries and many colleges where, that's exactly what they teach people to do, to study the Word of God.

Yet, there are some things in Scriptures



that are hard to understand as I just pointed out that the apostle Peter said. And for the things that are hard to understand, there must be a final interpreter. There must be a final word.

What would happen to the United States of America if we had a Constitution and it was thrown out and the founding fathers said, "Let the spirit of George Washington guide you all." We would have a country full of anarchists. The founding fathers of our country had the foresight to establish a final court of appeals, a Supreme Court. And as sinful and fallible men can see the need for this certainly our Lord Jesus Christ could see the need for it also.

The fact is there are some things in Scripture that are hard to understand. And the fact is that the Scriptures say that the prophecies of the Scriptures are of "no private interpretation."

Wayne, you say that you do accept the tradition of the apostles. So do I Wayne, that is why I am a Roman Catholic. The thing that you do not accept the traditions that the Roman Catholic Church has preserved since the very first century are the traditions of the apostles. And clearly history does not show you to be correct and history shows that there is an unbroken succession all the way back. The first three centuries of the church can be demonstrated that every single doctrine that the Roman Catholic Church teaches today was existent then. I'm talking about apostolic tradition.

The fact is if we hold the Bible in our hands and we say "This is the Word of God" whether we like it or not we are depending on Catholic apostolic tradition. Wayne there is a tradition that I hold and there is a tradition that you hold that is not found in Scripture and, in fact, it is the only Roman Catholic doctrine that is not found in

Scripture and that is the table of contents for the Bible. No where in the Bible is there an inspired table of contents. No where does each book say, "This book is Scripture."

Some books don't even seem terribly inspiring. Take some of the letters of the apostle John. But we know that it is the Word of God because in the fourth century, a Catholic council, using Catholic apostolic tradition, looked at over 250 books that were all claiming inspiration or apostolic authority and laid out which books are in fact the New Testament and which are in fact not. And then did something incredible, they claimed that the canon of Scripture was closed. So I ask, just to leave this with you, what, Wayne, if you had to decide for yourself without the Catholic tradition how would you decide?

### **Tuesday's Closing Comments**

I wish I could respond but we're out of time. You've been listening to "Searching Daily" and we'll be back on Friday if the Lord wills.

### **Friday, May 11, 2001**

Good morning this is Wayne. We are glad that you have tuned in. The program is "Searching Daily" and we're here and involved in a religious discussion or debate. With me is Bill Rutland, a member of the Catholic Church. And the proposition that we are discussing is, "The Scriptures teach that the Scriptures are our only authority for Christian faith and doctrine." I will begin...

### **Third Affirmative: Wayne Greeson**

This is what the apostle Paul taught in 2 Timothy 3:15-17, "And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation

through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 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 all good works." This passage proves the proposition.

This is exactly what Jesus taught. In face of the oral traditions of the Jews that they claimed to be handed down from Moses, Jesus quoted the Scriptures and said in John 5:39, "You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me."

Jesus settled doctrinal questions and issues by asking, "Have you not read?" and "What is written?" When Jesus was asked, "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" He asked in return, "What is written in the law? What is your reading of it?" The man answered by quoting the Scriptures. Jesus commended him and he said, "You have answered rightly; do this and you will live" (Lk. 10:25-28).

Jesus Christ the Son of the Living God, my Lord and Savior, used the Scriptures as the final and complete authority on faith and doctrine and he taught me to do the same. He did not teach or use the traditions of men. He did not use oral traditions. He did not use the traditions of the Roman Catholic Church or establish that as authoritative, nor the interpretations of a Pope in Rome.

If Jesus used and taught his disciples to use the Scriptures as authoritatively and rejected all the oral traditions of God's people in his day, in the first century, then why would anyone claiming to be the disciple of Jesus Christ today follow oral traditions?

Jesus lived under the Law of Moses but

in fulfillment of the Scriptures he came to bring a New Covenant and a New Law based upon better promises. In order to reveal this New Covenant to men, Jesus chose men as his apostles and prophets and promised to give them the Holy Spirit that would quote: "guide them into all truth" (Jn. 16:13). The apostle Peter said that that's exactly what happened, Jesus gave us "all things that pertain to life and godliness" (1 Pet. 1:3). Bill, the "faith was one time for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3).

Their word was confirmed by God, Hebrews 2:1-4. "Therefore we must give the more earnest heed to the things we have heard, lest we drift away. For if the word spoken through angels proved steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard Him, God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?" (Heb. 2:1-4).

During the lifetime of those inspired apostles and prophets, they preached the Word of God, the revelation that they had received from the Holy Spirit. Bill on Wednesday gave us a list of passages to prove Jesus Christ's apostles preached the revelation that they received all over the known world. Bill, I agree with that. I don't have any doubt that they preached.

But Bill calls their preaching of the gospel "oral tradition" and suggests that what they preached is not contained within the Scriptures. It is interesting that in order to prove "oral tradition" Bill has to cite and to read from the Scriptures, the written Word of God. Bill, every time you cite and read a Bible passage you prove my proposition, that the Scriptures are our only author-

ity for Christian faith and doctrine and you undermine your assertion that we need something else outside of and in addition to the Scriptures.

Even Bill's so-called "oral traditions" are not "oral" at all, but are a collection writings of uninspired men. He cannot point to one oral tradition, all of it is written down. He will either go to the writings of the uninspired men of the early church fathers or he will go the Catholic catechism, which contains some 2,800 various paragraphs. These are all written. Or the Vatican II which is a written book containing page after page after page of Catholic Church traditions. They're not the oral traditions of the apostles. They're the written traditions of men that they claim come from the apostles.

But Bill, the Word revealed to the apostles and prophets of Jesus Christ did not remain in spoken form, but it was committed to writing to remain authoritative. This is exactly what the apostle Peter wrote in 2 Peter 1:12-15. "For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth. Yes, I think it is right, as long as I am in this tent, to stir you up by reminding you, knowing that shortly I must put off my tent, just as our Lord Jesus Christ showed me. Moreover I will be careful to ensure that you always have a reminder of these things after my decease."

How did he do that Bill? By writing it down.

The word of the apostles and prophets was written down for us to read and to understand and to believe and obey. Paul said, "...that (the) revelation He made known to me...when you read, you can understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ" (Eph. 3:4). And again, "If anyone

thinks himself to be a prophet or spiritual, let him acknowledge that the things which I write to you are the commandments of the Lord" (1 Cor. 14:37).

Now the point and the problem that Bill has is Bill wants to go beyond the written Word. And the reason he wants to go beyond the Scriptures is because that the doctrines and the traditions of the Catholic Church are not found in the Word that was given to us by the apostles.

But this is what the apostle Paul wrote to us in 1 Corinthians 4:6. He said, "...brethren, ... you (need to) learn in us not to think beyond what is written, that none of you may be puffed up on behalf of one against the other" (1 Cor. 4:6). He encouraged the disciples to take the letters he had given them and read them, Colossians 4:16 and 1 Thessalonians 5:27. "I charge you by the Lord that this epistle be read to all the holy brethren."

Yes, the word was delivered at first in oral form only. But then it was oral and written, during the lifetime of the apostles as they continued to preach and then they committed it to writing. When the apostles and prophets passed from this earth, when Peter put off his tent, their inspired writings became the only source of authority in religion. The apostles and prophets, and they alone, were the Lord's chosen ambassadors to deliver God's word to mankind (2 Cor. 5:20; Eph. 3:3-5). They were selected to deliver "the faith" and it has once and for all and it has been delivered (Jude 3). And We are to receive their word as the word of God and their message (1 Thess. 2:13; 1 John 4:6).

The Scriptures are the completed revelation of Jesus Christ of all truth. The apostle Paul said, "I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). The apostle Peter said, He "has

given to us” past tense “all things that pertain to life and godliness” (2 Peter 1:3).

The apostle Paul says, “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 complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work” (2 Timothy 3:16-17).

The inspired writings, therefore, are the only infallible succession that we have from the apostles and prophets. We do not rely upon fallible history. We do not rely upon uninspired and fallible men, such as the writings of the early church fathers.

The things contained in Scriptures include all things which are necessary to teach us what is for salvation and the thing that Jesus did (Acts 1:1-2). “All that Jesus began to do and teach...” is what Luke wrote. They contain the certainty of his action and his teaching Luke 1:3-4. The things that are “written, (are) that (we) might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name” John 20:30-31.

The Scriptures contain the commands of the Lord, 1 Corinthians 14:37. They tell us the proper conduct that we are to have. Paul wrote in 1 Timothy 3:14-15, “but if I am delayed, I write so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.”

The Scriptures give us protection against sin, 1 John 2:1. There John writes, “I write to you, so that you may not sin.” The Scriptures give us assurance of eternal life 1 John 5:13. They are the standard by which teachers are to be tested, Acts 17:11. We are to, “search the Scriptures daily to find out whether these things were so.”

The Scriptures are the standard by which we cannot go beyond, 1 Corinthians 4:6. It is going to be the standard by which we will be judged.

The word of the Lord that was delivered to the apostles, that was written down and it is our authority.

We’ve had ten minutes of the affirmative on the proposition that, “The Scriptures teach that the Scriptures are our only authority for Christian faith and doctrine.” And now we’ll have ten minutes by Bill Rutland to deny that proposition.

### **Third Negative: Bill Rutland**

Thank you once again Wayne on this very rainy day in the last day of our discussion.

As we pointed out in the very beginning of this discussion I am not denying the authority of the Word of God. I am only denying that the Word of God is our sole authority.

Also to I am not denying the value of Scripture; the value of learning Scripture; the value of going to Scripture to be taught about Jesus and his Word. But what I am questioning is that you say that although that Scripture is authoritative, yes we both agree, you say that the Word of God says that it is our only authority and it simply does not say that.

You say that at the very beginning when the apostles first spoke, that Word of God did exist in both oral and written form. But that after they died everything that they wanted us to know about Jesus, about his Word, about his church, about Christian faith and doctrine was written down. Wayne, you accuse me of going beyond the Bible. Wayne, the Bible does not say that.

Again you go to 2 Timothy 3:15-17 and as I pointed out already, it does not say in the Greek, “All Scripture is inspired....” It says “Every Scripture....” So that if I take your interpretation and if your interpretation is right, then it proves too much Wayne, because the Greek says, “each and every scripture is inspired....” So therefore what I have is not just *Sola Scriptura* but I have *Sola* Matthew, *Sola* Mark, *Sola* Luke and John. So if that interpretation you give, which I have already shown to be incorrect, is in fact correct, it proves far too much and goes much further than you are willing to go.

The question we are dealing with here is one of authority. I have asserted that the doctrine of *Sola Scriptura* or the sole authority of Scripture is self defeating. First and foremost it is self defeating on the basis that I have already demonstrated that it cannot be demonstrated from the Scripture. It would seem that if the doctrine of the sole sufficiency of the Scripture was as foundational as you say, Wayne, that Scripture would be replete with references. Yet you have demonstrated that you cannot come up with one clear verse to support this doctrine. This is not surprising because the doctrine that teaches that every authentic doctrine must come from Scripture itself is nowhere to be found in Scripture.

You have claimed that Jesus only appealed to Scripture but in Matthew 23:1-4 shows that Jesus also appealed to Old Testament oral tradition. Matthew tells us, “Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his apostles, ‘The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees sit on Moses’ seat, so you must obey them and do everything that they tell you. But do not do what they do because they do not practice what they preach. They tie up heavy loads and put them on men’s shoulders but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them.’” We

can search the Old Testament, Wayne, from front to back, and we find no reference to the “seat of Moses.” Where does it come from? Jewish oral tradition. Yet Jesus says that it is authoritative, quote, “you must obey them and do everything that they tell you.” Jesus’ problem is not with tradition, but with the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees because quote, “they do not practice what they preach.”

Secondly, the doctrine of the sole sufficiency of Scripture fails because one of the most important doctrines of Scripture itself cannot gotten from Scripture. This doctrine is the table of contents of the New Testament. How do we know that the 27 books of our New Testament are in fact Scripture? How do we know that some uninspired book was not slipped into our Bible or maybe was left out. The fact is Scripture is silent on this point. Whatever standard we use, whether it is the universal consensus theory or any other is of necessity an appeal to extra biblical authority.

Wayne, if we lived at the time that Jesus crucified, buried, resurrected and ascended back to heaven, it would be 60 years before the New Testament would be completed. The fact that the New Testament was very slow coming into acceptance because the bulk for almost 400 years until the canonization of the authority, came not from Scripture but from apostolic tradition.

Many have claimed, Wayne, as you have claimed, that the New Testament was established by consensus of the early church. Although this theory is still appealing to extra biblical authority it fails on the basis of historical fact. A.D. 90 through 160, the four gospels were widely accepted, the Pauline epistles were rarely considered as Scripture. As we move through, 160 to 250, the Gospel and Acts were accepted, the Pauline epistles are accepted with some

people rejecting them. Second Timothy, Philemon, 1 Peter, 1 John, James, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Jude and Revelation all were questioned. The epistle of Barnabas and Shepherd of Hermes as well as the Teaching of the 12 Apostles were considered by many in the church to be scriptural authority.

A.D. 250 to 325, the gospels and the Pauline epistles were finally accepted. Hebrews, James, 2 Peter, 2 John, 3 John, Revelation only had limited acceptance. The epistle of Barnabas. The Shepherd of Hermes, First Clement, Second Clement were also accepted as Scripture.

If this all sounds confusing it is. That is why it was necessary in 382 for the council of Rome to establish what was Scripture and what was not Scripture. Under the guidance of Pope Damasus, a council of Catholic bishops was convened at Rome and faced a momentous task. Of the more than 250 books in circulation claiming inspiration or apostolic authority, they had to determine what was Scripture and what was not.

How did they do it? By the Holy Spirit and by appealing to apostolic tradition. Of all the material they had before them, they defined that 27 books, that now comprise our New Testament, to be Scripture and rejected all others. Then they did something extraordinary. They declared that the Bible was a closed canon and that no other inspired book would ever be written or ever be added.

Wayne, when you say Scripture only, you do not realize that what is between you and your Bible is the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. What if it was you and your Bible in the fourth century? The problem would be that you would have hundreds of writings that all clamored for authority that were written in Greek, Hebrew and Aramaic. And even if you knew

these languages, it would be because you learned them from a Catholic scholar. Of the hundreds of texts before you, would you be sufficient to discern what was Scripture and what was not. No and neither would I. We would be dependent on Roman Catholic Church and her bishops.

Look at your Bible. How did you get it? It was translated by Catholic monks by candlelight; it was protected and preserved by Catholic blood so you and I could come on the radio today and debate it. And what if you lived in the Middle Ages? What if you had been one of the lucky ones that knew how to read from Catholic monks? Could you afford the three year's wages that it would take to buy your own copy of the Bible? And what if you couldn't read or afford your own copy of the Bible? How would you know it? You would hear it read Sunday at a Catholic mass.

Wayne, you say the Bible only but you do not realize that you and your Bible sit with Catholic scribes and translators on your left and the authority Catholic councils on your right. The Bible that you hold in your hands is quite simply a Catholic book.

In the time remaining I would like to address the claim that was made on this program that the Roman Catholic Church has two different Scriptures, canons of Scripture. Wayne you said on this program that the list from the fourth century and the Council of Trent are quote, "two different lists." This is simply not true.

As I have noted, the first authoritative canon to be listed from the Council of Rome was the Council of Rome at 382. It was later ratified at the Council of Hippo in 393 and the three Councils of Carthage 393, 397 and 419. And these canon lists are identical with the ones affirmed at the Council of Trent. Wayne you claimed on this program that

the canon list of the fourth century are the same as the Protestant Bible are today. They are not. The fourth century list also includes the deuterocanonical books or what Protestants call the Apocrypha, just as the Catholic Old Testament does today.

You make the oft repeated claim that the Roman Catholic Church added books to the Bible. The truth is Wayne that Martin Luther took books out of the Bible. Martin Luther using a Jewish council convened in 90 A.D. called the Council of Jamnia removed the deuterocanonical books from the Old Testament. Not only did he do that but he even removed the book of James from the New Testament calling it an "epistle of straw" and claiming that some evil Jew had written it to lead Christians astray and it was only put back in after cajoling of the other Reformers.

Let me say it again, the Catholic Church has never added any book to the Old Testament. It was rather the Reformers that removed them. Wayne, you also claimed that the Catholic Church added books to the New Testament at the Council of Trent, yet I hold in my hand a canon list from Trent and the New Testament list is exactly the same as we have today.

The Catholic New Testament is and always has been the same 27 books of the Bible that we have today.

#### **Fourth Affirmative: Wayne Greeson**

Bill, you still have a problem. And the problem is that the list of what you called the "closed canon" is not the same list of the Council of Trent in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. The Council of Trent declared and added additional books. Now they did not add to the New Testament, you are correct in that. They did add to the Old Testament.

Now, you've got a problem. You have asserted the authority of the Roman Catholic Church and the problem is very simple. You have the Roman Catholic Church contradicting itself, which is not the first and only time, but it is obviously very egregious because we're talking about the Scriptures, the Word of God.

I do not hold the Bible in my hand because of the Roman Catholic Church. It is not a Catholic church doctrine. It does not contain the doctrines of the Catholic Church. We started to go into a list of the doctrines of the Catholic Church.

The traditions of the Roman Catholic Church are not scriptural as they are not based in Scripture and Bill knows that very well. They are not based in Scripture and he has to go outside of Scripture and he has to quote Irenaeus and he has to go to the councils and this council and that council. Folks, according to Bill we have to know what, in order to know the truth, we've got to (know) 2,600 paragraphs of the Catholic Catechism; we've got to know the Vatican II which contains hundreds of pages that are in addition to what the Bible says. We've got to know what the Council of Trent says, we've got to know Council of Nicaea, the Council of Jamnia, you can go on and on and on, council after council, papal decree after papal decree, tradition after tradition.

Here are the traditions, some of the hundreds of traditions, that the Roman Catholic Church adds and are contrary to the Scriptures. The Roman Catholic Church has the veneration of images contrary to Exodus 20:4-5. They establish a hierarchy contrary to what Jesus said in Matthew 20:20-28. They establish clerical dress which distinguishes them from men contrary to what Jesus said in Matthew 23:5-6.

They establish calling a man "Father"

in a spiritual sense and yet Jesus said clearly “Call no one your father on earth” Matthew 23:9. And he’s not talking about not calling your parent “father” Bill, that’s a ridiculous argument.

The Catholic Church has a priesthood and it is a special and set apart priesthood but it is not the priesthood described by the apostle Peter in 1 Peter 2:5 and 9. “You ...are a holy priesthood” he’s writing to Christians, not to a special set apart priesthood to be distinguished from the rest of believers.

The primacy of Peter. Jesus Christ himself said in Luke 22, that “the Gentiles, the kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them” and they “exercise authority over them” “But not so among you.” But that’s not what the Catholic Church has.

The Catholic Church as the tradition of confessing to a priest. James 5:16 says otherwise, “Confess your trespasses to one another...” not to a priest.

The problem that we have is in order to prove the Catholic Church and Catholic doctrine, Bill has to go to history, he has to go to early church fathers, he has to go to all sorts of councils and decrees, but the apostle Paul said this, Galatians 1:8-9, “But even if we or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel to you than that which we have preached let him be accursed.” And he repeats himself. In Revelation 22:18-19, “I testify to everyone who hears the prophecy of this book, if anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues which are written in this book. And if anyone takes away from words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life and the holy city and the things which are written in this book.”

Bill, the Catholic church not only adds

to the Bible, the Scriptures, the Word of God, the Book, but it also takes away from it. The traditions need to be cleaned out. Come out of the Catholic Church, come away from the traditions, put aside the history books and go back to the pure unadulterated Word of God.

Bill now has four minutes.

### **Fourth Negative: Bill Rutland**

Wayne, first off I’d like to say that you’re very brave in giving me the last word.

Secondly, I just want to address two points. I hold in my hand the decree of Damasus, which came from the Council of Rome in 382. It includes all of the deuterocanonical books or what you call the Apocrypha. It is the same exact list from the Council of Trent in 1546.

Also too, I would like to remind you that the apostle Paul tells Timothy, that you have not many, “that you have many guides in Christ, but you only have one father” and he tells Timothy “I have become your father in Christ.” And so if it was wrong for any man to be called our father, then certainly Paul was wrong in speaking to Timothy. Certainly Stephen filled with the Holy Spirit was wrong when he addressed the Jewish elders as “brothers and fathers.”

But, in the short time remaining that I have, I would like to depart just a little bit from our format and use this time to publicly thank you for allowing me to come on the air and for allowing me to defend the Church that I love. You told me that I would be treated kindly and that I would be treated courteously and I have been treated that way both on the air and off the air. Wayne, you are a man your word and of the Word. And although I very much disagree



with you, I respect you because you are a man of integrity.

Not too long ago I sat where you sit. As you know, I am a former Evangelical Fundamentalist. I am a ordained Baptist minister and I was faced with the truth of the Catholic Church and it was as it was Jesus himself stood before me asking me to chose between my theology and the truth of God’s Word. It was as if he was saying to me, “See, you are mine and I have written your name in the palms of my hands.” And then he held out those beautiful hands to me. And in them were terrible wounds because you see at age 26 years old I accepted Jesus as my personal Lord and Savior. And he condescended to embrace me and when he embraced me he was pierced and wounded by my sin. For “he was pierced for our transgressions and wounded by our iniquities.” And “the judgment that gave us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed.”

And I promised that day that I would follow him where ever he led. And this is where he has led me to his church, because I knew him, but he wanted me to know more. He wanted me to know his blessed mother, he wanted me to love her, as he loves her. He wanted me to hear her words that she spoke at that wedding feast in Cana, “Do whatever he says to do.” He wanted me to know my brothers and my sisters, my new family in heaven, the saints, who shed their blood so that I might have this Bible, so that I might have this faith.

But more than that he wanted me to know that intimate relationship with him in the Eucharist. Every Sunday morning when I receive the flesh and blood of Jesus, I feel like I am born again. Jesus said, in John 6, “If you do not eat flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you will have no life in you.”

And then he asked me, as he asked the apostles, “Are you offended by this? Are you going to leave also?” and the only thing I could say is the words of Peter, “Lord, to whom shall I go? You have the words of life.”

So, as the prodigal son, he took me back and said, “This is my son, who was lost and is now found, who was dead and is now alive.”

### **Final Comments**

Bill, I thank you for engaging in this discussion. It has been very enlightening. You indicated at the beginning of the week that you wanted to have an enlightening discussion, I think we have. There have been a lot of things that have been said and I appreciate Bill, as he gave a compliment to me I’ll return it to him. I think that this shows that we can disagree yet not be disagreeable. Bill has made some very strong points and so have I. It’s not because we’re mad at each other but because we want to know what the truth is and that’s why we’ve had this discussion.

I want to encourage you, if you are interested in tapes of this discussion, you can call me. I’ll be glad to make copies of the tapes.

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