



## The Burning Bush—Online article archive

### Former Champion of Bible Christianity Falls Victim to Rome's Charms



The Pope  
"Fine Christian gentleman"  
or "man of sin"

On 31st July 1998, at a meeting in Dublin, Mr. J. I. Packer referred to the present pope as "a fine Christian man". Dr. Packer has been the darling of many reformed believers for many years and his books are still avidly read by such. But he has departed from the faith when he extols the Christian virtues of the man the Westminster Confession of Faith labels "that antichrist, that man of sin, and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the church against Christ, and all that is called God." Just look at some of the statements of the pope in the last 18 months and you will see how wrong Dr. Packer is.

Our Protestant forefathers  
knew which!

On 20th March 1998, Pope John Paul II issued a statement to various classes of confessors on the "Purpose and Benefits of Sacramental Penance". In that document he stated: "God's salvific

will ... is carried out in a pre-eminent way in the sacramental ministry of Reconciliation which is the primary objective of the daily service provided by the Penitentiary and the Father confessors".

In stark contrast, the Bible declares: "It pleased God by the foolishness of PREACHING to save them that believe" (1Corinthians 1:21) and this is emphasised again in Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by HEARING and hearing by the word of God."

The Pope went on to say "the sacrament of Reconciliation is such a great concern for the Supreme Pontiff and his brothers in the priesthood because of their office AS MEDIATORS IN CHRIST between God and men".

Paul, writing to Timothy, stated clearly in 1 Timothy 2:5, For there is one God and one mediator between God and men the man Christ Jesus.

Later we read from this 'fine Christian man' how "Sin is the shipwreck from which Baptism and Penance save us ... Obviously the faithful who approach the sacrament of Penance also wish to receive the remission of the temporal punishment due to sin ... In this respect the truth of faith and the practice of indulgences are closely connected with the sacrament of Penance. An indulgence is actually the remission before God of the temporal punishment for sins the guilt of which has already been forgiven".

The Bible says: Not by works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost. Salvation comes through a Sovereign Act of God and not through a Sacramental Act of Man. As for sins being "forgiven" but still subject to "temporal punishment", this idea is rejected under the terms of the New Covenant sealed by the precious blood of Christ, Matthew 26:28. God assures all who are saved by Christ that their sins and iniquities will I remember no more, Hebrews 8:12 & 10:17.



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On 2nd June 1998, we learnt this from the pen of John Paul II - "I urge Catholics to pray for the dead". This message was addressed to the present Abbot of Cluny, one of whose predecessors established "The Commemoration of All the Faithful Departed". The pope also made reference to another agency geared specifically to "praying for the souls in purgatory" and to a 40-year-old "bulletin Lumière et vie which promotes prayer for the dead".

The Pope personally endorsed this wicked and foolish practice. "I therefore encourage Catholics to pray fervently for the dead, for their family members and for all our brothers and sisters who have died that they may obtain the remission of the punishments due to their sins ... my Apostolic Blessing ... I willingly extend it ... to all who pray for the intention of the souls in purgatory, who take part in the Eucharist and who offer sacrifices for the dead".

That Dr. Packer could endorse such statements, for endorse them he does when he calls the author of them a "fine Christian gentleman", shows us the depths of the terrible apostasy that is sweeping the world. Let each one of us take heed to ourselves and cling closely to Christ and His Word from day to day.

The information used in this article is taken from Cecil Andrews, Take Heed Ministries' newsletter, March 1999, Belfast, Northern Ireland, available on [www.come.to/takeheedministries](http://www.come.to/takeheedministries).