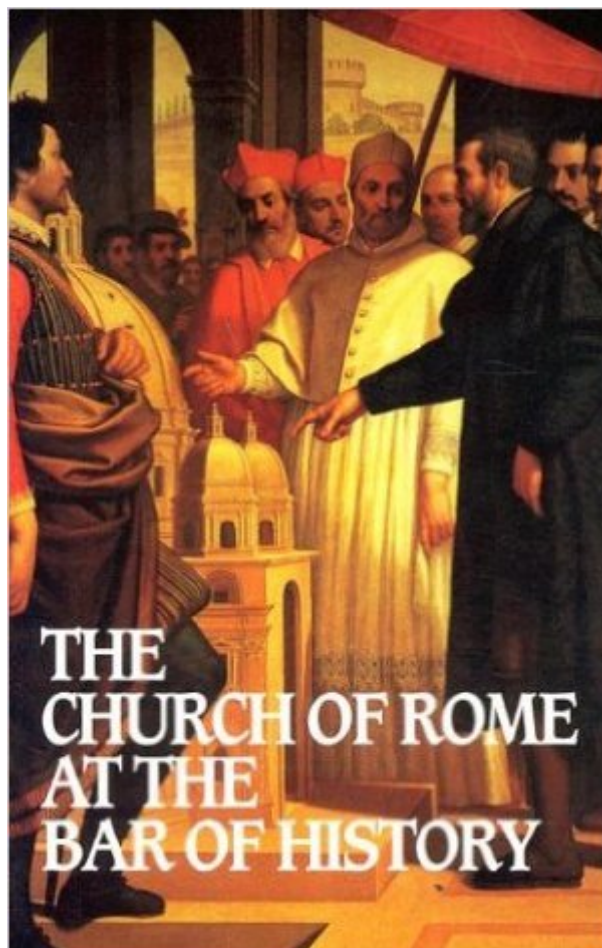


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Church Of Rome At The Bar Of History



Synopsis

Focusing on major issues and in a non-polemical way, William Webster raises questions about doctrines of the Roman Catholic Church that current Catholics claim as part of a changeless creed, but which were not held by predecessors.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

I believe this to be a 5-star book, but I am concerned about who reads it. I can't imagine any Catholic reading this book and believing the material; unless you're a Catholic who is genuinely questioning the authority of your church this will only get your hackles up. Protestants who are strong in their faith don't need historical evidence to be convinced of their beliefs, so I am afraid that this book will only serve to poison your spirit against Catholic brothers and sisters. To those very close to a Catholic: this book is immensely helpful in deciding what to believe. You are bombarded constantly with Catholic claims to "catholicity"; that is, that Christ instituted only one church (naturally, the RCC) and that all Christians everywhere and for all time have believed exactly what the RCC says. Along the same lines, Reformation beliefs are johnny-come-lately's and that Protestants should return to the "real" church. This is the most difficult argument of Catholics to wrestle with, because Bible verses can be interpreted differently as can fruits of the Spirit but history is a fact. Well, Webster blows the "catholic" argument out of the water. He has an easy job, because he doesn't have to show that Church Fathers would have been Protestant, merely that some beliefs of each father go against modern Catholicism. By quoting historical documents (which are extensively referenced), he shows that the early Church contained a mix of "Catholic" and

"Protestant" beliefs (at best) or were entirely opposed to an idea like a papacy at the beginning. He admits that the doctrine of the Eucharist is the best supported historically, but even so, some authoritative writers explicitly supported views more like Calvin's on the topic.

William A. Webster is a former Catholic and is now the pastor of Grace Bible Church (in the Reformed tradition) in Battle Ground, WA, and a founder of Christian Resources, Inc., a ministry dedicated to teaching and evangelism. He has also written *Salvation: The Bible and Roman Catholicism* and *Christian: Following Christ As Lord*. He wrote in the Introduction to this 1995 book, "In this book we want to consider the whole issue of Scripture and tradition. We will review the claim of Scripture to be divinely inspired and the scriptural teaching about tradition. We will then examine some of the Roman Catholic Church's distinctive and traditional doctrines, and in particular, the claim that these doctrines are based on a tradition which has been handed down from the apostles to the bishops in an unbroken succession to the present day, to see if this claim can be verified historically. The ultimate question to be addressed is this: Is Scripture the final authority in matters related to faith and practice or has God also inspired tradition, as the Roman Church claims, as the unwritten Word of God which is to carry an equal authority?" (Pg. x) He states, "the Roman Catholic Church has officially committed and bound itself, through two ecumenical Roman Councils, to the principle of unanimous consent relative to its teachings and to its interpretation of Scripture. This is an authoritative test by which the Roman Church itself can be judged.

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