

# Roman Catholicism

by J.C. Philpot

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*Roman Catholicism is a system that combines truth with error, making it deceptively appealing to many, and leading to a hardening of men's consciences and a lack of discernment.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 7:15, 1 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Corinthians 11:13, Ephesians 5:11, 2 Timothy 4:3, 1 John 4:1

**Topics:** "Roman Catholicism", "False Teachings"

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## Description

J.C. Philpot delivers a sermon exposing the dangers and deceptiveness of Roman Catholicism, describing it as 'the masterpiece of Satan' due to its adaptability to human nature, pride, persecution of believers, perversion of God's word, and promotion of sin. He highlights the alluring aspects of Popery, such as the rituals, miracles, and monastic lifestyle, which are based on a mixture of truth and error to deceive many. Philpot warns against the false teachings of Romanism and the bondage it brings to those who embrace it, emphasizing the need for discernment and spiritual separation from worldly influences.

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## Transcript

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Though we cannot say that we have that extreme dread of the revival and reign of Popery among us which many good men have long felt and expressed, yet we would be second to none in our abhorrence of it. Every effort is now being made to commend the poisoned cup of Popery to the lips, for the Romish harlot, though much battered and worn, especially in her own land and on her own throne, still carries in her hand the golden cup which is full of abominations and filthiness. The piety of her holy virgins in the nunneries of this land, among whom are some of England's noblest daughters; the devotedness of her monks toiling, as in the Charnwood forest, to make the wilderness blossom like the rose; the zeal and earnestness of her priests, serving night and day at her altars; the large amount of almsgiving daily distributed; her ancient and splendid ritual, set off and adorned with all the bewitching accompaniments of music and incense, at once to charm and take captive the three senses of sight, hearing, and smell--these are some ingredients of the drugged wine-cup, which she has for ages presented to the nations, and is now holding to the lips of our wealthy isle. Many have been seduced to drink of this cup, not knowing that to drink was death. It is well, therefore, to tear off from time to time, the veil with which she hides her features and to hold her up in her real colors.

Popery may well be called "the masterpiece of Satan." Its singular adaptation to man's fallen nature, its flexibility, its deceptiveness, its subjecting to its dominion and casting into its peculiar mold every mind which submits to its influence, its pride, prejudice, and bigotry, its persecuting, demoniacal enmity against the saints of the Most High, its perversion of the word of God, its lying miracles, its gaudy pomp and show, its hardening, searing effect on men's consciences, the license it gives to sin, and its undying hatred to the gospel--all these features stamp Popery as the masterpiece of that Enemy of God and man, who combines the subtlest intellect with the most infernal malice.

As a divine influence accompanies the gospel when it is made "the power of God unto salvation," so a Satanic influence accompanies the doctrines and practices of Popery. Of this we see daily instances in those who are justly called perverts. Men of the highest, acutest, and most logical intellect, believe the living legends of Romish saints, invented in the dark ages, and put their pretended miracles on a par with those in the Scriptures. Men, who previously shrank from the least approach to falsehood, no sooner embrace Romanism, than they outvie even Papists themselves in Jesuitical equivocations; and those who once stood forth free men, no sooner crouch at the feet of a priest than they sink into the most abject bondage, not daring to read, or inquire, or examine on which side truth or error lies. All these circumstances show that a peculiar influence accompanies Romanism, which will account both for its daily spread and amazing power.

All error, like common slander, is either based on truth, is mixed with truth, or passes current for truth. It would not otherwise get into circulation. Who would take base coin unless it resembled the true? The way to get a lie believed is to mix a dash of truth with it. A naked lie soon dies of cold and starvation; but a lie clothed with the garment of truth finds many a house to take it in, and almost becomes one of the family before it is exposed and turned out of doors. So with the doctrines and practices of Popery. They are so based on truth, mingled with truth, or dressed up in the garb of truth, that their deceptiveness does not at first sight appear.

Take, for instance, the institution which is making great progress in this country--that of monasteries and convents. On what truth is this institution based? On separation from the world, its ensnaring pleasures and employments, and entire devotedness of body, soul, and spirit to God. What can seem better at the first glance? If the salvation of his soul is and ever must be to the awakened sinner the main concern of life; but if, from the weakness of the flesh, he is overcome by the temptations of the world; if prayer, meditation, searching the Scriptures, Christian conversation, nurture the life of God; if solitude, fasting, hard labor, seclusion, be means of subduing the rebellious lusts of the flesh--if these premises be true, who can well deny the conclusion, that a monastery is the very place where every grace and fruit of the Spirit may best flourish, and sin be most effectually repressed and subdued? It was on these principles, apparently so scriptural and true, yet really involving radical error, that monasteries and nunneries were founded.

See how truth and error are mixed together in these principles. To be separate from the world is good; it is a divine precept and truly Christian practice. But to come out of the world in spirit and to come out of the world in person are two different things. The apostle has settled this point, 1 Cor. 5:10; "for then must you needs go out of the world," which a Christian is not called on to do, but to continue in it in person and calling, though in heart and spirit separate from it. God looks to the heart. One man may go out of the world into a monastery and have his heart full of it, as indeed it must be without the grace of God; another may continue in the world and yet by grace be utterly, in heart and spirit, separate from it. But these blind guides know no other way of coming out of the world than shutting a man up in a monastery, like the

prisoner in a penitentiary, and no other way of crucifying the flesh than spare diet and the whip.

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