

Bruno Bottesin

*I Was Not Antagonistic To The Truth*

I was born in Vicenza, Italy, in 1917. At the age of eleven, I entered the Franciscan College to study for the priesthood. After my ordination, I became the pastor of a small mountain parish of Castagnara. In 1954, I was transferred to a larger parish in the city of Chieti. The Bishop Piasentini then invited me to teach in the seminary in Chioggia, and he also assigned me to a church there.

**Roman Catholic Christians?**

At last, I thought, I had found the right place for my ministry. I was a teacher in the seminary, pastor of a good parish, and had gained the favor of the bishop. I organized a very fine “action group.” With great zeal, I worked day and night for my people, but very soon I began to realize that all my activities and the teaching of the Catechism and Roman dogma were not able to change the lives of my people. They came to church every Sunday—to the sacraments and confession—but they refused to follow the teachings of the Bible. How could I continue to give the sacraments to people who did not want to give up their sins? They pretended to be Christians, but they did the opposite of what Christ told us to do in His Word. Most of my people who did not want to sacrifice for Christ and change their sinful lives began to oppose me, and many of them would say, “What foolish things are being taught. Why should we change our way of life when we already do what the Roman Catholic Church asks us? We receive communion, take our children to the priests to be baptized and confirmed. The priest married us, we abstain from meat on Friday, and we go to church on Sunday. What more does our new pastor want from us? We are Christians because we belong to the Roman Church.”

**Jesus Christ: the Lord Alone**

Someone reported me to the bishop. He called me to his home and told me that I must give up my position as a teacher and a pastor because I was not following the teachings and instructions of the Mother Roman Catholic Church. He said that I was telling people to go to Jesus Christ and depend upon Him instead of telling them to depend upon the saints of the Roman Church, the sacraments, and the priests who had the same power as Christ had to forgive sins. I tried in vain to convince my bishop that I was not teaching heresy but only the Gospel, that they could not be forgiven of their sins unless they repented to God because there is only one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. The bishop became very irritated and removed me from my position as a pastor and teacher. I told him that I was going to appeal to Rome, to the pope; he suggested that I go ahead and do just that.

## **The Grace of God in a Quiet Room**

I left for Rome within a few days after preparing my argument; I next went to the Vatican to present my case to Pope Pius XII. For several days I had no answer. I was soon informed that the pope had no time to hear my case, and I would have to appeal to the Sacred Congregation. At this time, I realized that I was left alone, that even the one who calls himself the Vicar of Christ and the Holy Father had let me down. In short, I was helpless. I began to realize the difference between the Gospel and a church organization. The Gospel is for the people, but the organization of the Roman Catholic Church is not set up for the benefit of the individual but for its political and social leaders.

I left Rome and returned to my people, but when I returned I had no church or teaching position. I did not give up. I remained in town among my people. A friend gave me a room, and there in the quietness of this room, after so many trials and tribulations with the bishop and with Rome, I started to read the Bible for comfort. Never before had I read any book with such interest. To my surprise, I found the answer to the many doubts that I had about some of the teachings of the Roman Church. Very soon, by the grace of God, I began to realize that most of the dogmas and teachings that I as a priest had been urging my people to believe were not in the Scriptures but were man made, even against the Holy Bible. I began to see that for seventeen years I was not a servant of Jesus Christ, nor His priest, but the servant of a powerful organization.

## **Why Seventeen Years to Discover the Truth?**

It may seem surprising that it took so long for me to discover the truth. You must remember that as a candidate for the priesthood one enters the seminary as just a boy and is an adult when he completes his full training. As a result, it is not easy to decide against the Roman Catholic Church. Do you think that all priests believe what they teach? Many of them do not, but they remain in the priesthood because they are afraid to break away. Nonetheless, I could not continue to serve two masters, the pope and Christ.

## **Jesus Christ's Work—Not Ours**

By God's grace, I have placed my faith in Jesus Christ and He has saved me and become my personal Savior. *"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"* (Titus 3:5). I am now preaching the true Gospel with freedom and without restrictions in the same town where I was a priest. Persecutions are many, but the Lord is powerful. Several people have been converted.

Dear priests, if you are reading this, do not be antagonistic to the truth, but seek it and true salvation in the Gospel, and then preach the truth from the Bible. You must not adapt the true Gospel to your Catholic teachings; but you must be changed according to the Gospel. If you do not turn to the Bible's truth, there will be no hope or happiness for you, but only darkness, sorrow, and sin. As Christ said to "the religious men" of His own day, *"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall*

*die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am He ye shall die in your sins” (John 8:24). If you are intent on substituting faith in the Roman Catholic Church for faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, you likewise, in practice, are denying His Person. True Christianity is dynamic. The believer trusts Jesus Christ’s grace and sacrifice based on His written Word in the Bible. His truth rests outside of the sphere of human imagination or religious tradition. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God” (1 Corinthians 2:9). The Lord’s truth that we enjoy in the Gospel message is simply that, “Salvation is of the LORD” (Jonah 2:9). In the Bible, types are unveiled; mysteries are made plain, prophecies interpreted, and the counsels of God are laid open. It is in the Scripture that the wisdom of God is made manifest to His people. If you reject Scripture, as God’s truth and sufficiency for our relationship with Him, you reject His Holy Spirit, and that is the most serious of all sins. “Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest, lest any man fall after the same example of unbelief. For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Hebrews 4:11-12).*