

**Grace to You :: *Unleashing God's Truth, One Verse at a Time***

## **Exposing the Idolatry of Mary Worship: What the Bible Says**

Scripture: Selected Scriptures

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We have been looking at the subject of the idolatry of Mary worship in what is really a study of false religion, Roman Catholicism, and its worship of Mary. Interestingly enough I, this past week, had the opportunity to be on the Larry King Show, some of you probably saw it, with a whole group of Roman Catholics and several priests. And in the green room there were some Catholic apologists, and Catholic media people, and Roman Catholic publicity people, and there were some young men from the Vatican Seminary and the usual Father Manning. I was checking on my facts, as I had the opportunity to do that in talking to them about things, and it was affirmed to me that the very things that we are talking about in this study of Mary are the things to which they are truly and genuinely devoted. We've spent three weeks discussing what the Catholic Church essentially says about Mary. We've talked about their devotion to Mary. We've talked about their doctrine regarding Mary. In the end, when all is said and done, the very obvious dominant perception is that they worship Mary. In fact, on a pragmatic basis they worship Mary far more than they worship even the Lord Jesus Christ, and far more than they worship the true and living God.

It is idolatry in the clearest form. And to deal with this we need only really to do two things, biblically. One is to see what the Bible says about idolatry, and the other is to see what the Bible actually says about Mary. And then, we will clearly understand that they have invented a goddess to worship who has no relationship to the true Mary, the mother of Jesus revealed in Scripture, the historical Mary.

I want to begin, however, with Psalm 115, and I want you to turn to Psalm 115 because I want what the Psalm says to be fixed in your mind. Psalm 115, and I think it will be helpful for us just to listen to this Psalm or to follow it along in the Bible as I read it. Psalm 115: "Not to us, O Lord, not to us, but to Thy name give glory because of Thy loving-kindness, because of Thy truth. Why should the nations say, 'Where, now, is their God?' But our God is in the heavens. He does whatever He pleases. The idols are silver and gold, the work of man's hands. They have mouths, but they cannot speak; they have eyes, but they cannot see; they have ears, but they cannot hear; they have noses, but they cannot smell; they have hands, but they cannot feel; they have feet, but they cannot walk; they cannot make a sound with their throat. Those who make them will become like them, everyone who trusts in them. O Israel, trust in the Lord. He is their help and their shield. O house of Aaron, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. You, who fear the Lord, trust in the Lord; He is their help and their shield. The Lord has been mindful of us. He will bless us. He will bless the house of Israel. He will bless the house of Aaron. He will bless those who fear the Lord, the small together with the great. May the Lord give you increase, you and your children. May you be blessed of the Lord, maker

of heaven and earth. The heavens are the heavens of the Lord; but the earth He has given to the sons of men. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any who go down into silence. But as for us, we will bless the Lord from this time forth and forever. Praise the Lord.”

Now, I want you to know the singularity of that call to praise. The Lord alone is to be glorified. The Lord is the source of loving-kindness. The Lord is the source of truth. The Lord is to be trusted. He is our help and our shield. The Lord alone is to be feared. He again is our help and our shield. The Lord does not need to be reminded about us, He is mindful of us, He will bless us. He is to receive all our praise. In Psalm 116: “I love the Lord because He hears my voice and my supplications. Because He has inclined His ear to me, therefore I shall call upon Him as long as I live.” I don’t need another God. I don’t need a mediator. I don’t need an intermediary. I don’t need someone to plead my case before God. Even in the direst circumstance, verse 3, “The cords of death encompassed me, the terrors of Sheol came me. I found distress and sorrow. Then I called upon the name of the Lord: ‘O Lord, I beseech Thee, save my life.’” You will remember that Pope John Paul II when he was shot kept crying, “Mary, save me. Mary, save me. Mary, save me.”

And why call upon the Lord? Verse 5, “Gracious is the Lord and righteous. Yes, our God is compassionate. The Lord preserves the simple; I was brought low, and He saved me. Return to your rest, O my soul, for the Lord has dealt bountifully with you. For Thou hast rescued my soul from death, my eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before the Lord in the land of the living. I believed when I said, ‘I am greatly afflicted.’ I said in my alarm, ‘All men are liars.’ What shall I render to the Lord for all His benefits toward me? I shall lift up the cup of salvation and call upon the name of the Lord. I shall pay my vows to the Lord. O may it be in the presence of all His people. Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of His godly ones. O Lord, surely I am Thy servant, I am Thy servant, the son of Thy handmaid. Thou hast loosed my bonds. To Thee I shall offer a sacrifice of thanksgiving, and call upon the name of the Lord. I shall pay my vows to the Lord; O may it be in the presence of all His people. In the courts of the Lord’s house, in the midst of you, O Jerusalem. Praise the Lord.”

Psalm 117, “Praise the Lord, all nations; laud Him, all peoples, for His loving-kindness is great toward us, and the truth of the Lord is everlasting. Praise the Lord.” Psalm 118, “Give thanks to the Lord for He is good. For His loving-kindness is everlasting. O let Israel say, ‘His loving-kindness is everlasting.’ O let the house of Aaron say, ‘His loving-kindness is everlasting.’ O let those who fear the Lord say, ‘His loving-kindness is everlasting.’”

The Roman Catholic view of Mary calls into question the compassion, the sympathy, the loving-kindness of God. It places in the people’s minds doubt about God’s care, concern, sympathy, compassion, and interest in their plight. Nothing could be further from the truth. The Bible ends in the 22nd chapter of Revelation with John having heard the amazing revelations, and in this particular case from an angel, when he heard, verse 8 of Revelation 22, it says, “I fell down to worship at the

feet of the angel who showed me these things. And he said to me, 'Do not do that/ I am a fellow servant of yours and of your brethren, the prophets, and of those who heed the words of this book. Worship God.'" In another scene in the book of Revelation there is an angel, an everlasting, flying through heaven with an everlasting message, "Worship God. Worship God," who is to be worshiped as our Redeemer, our Benefactor, our Comforter, our Sympathizer, our Deliverer.

The Lord is the object of all our worship. The Lord is the object of all our thanksgiving. The Lord, the triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, He alone is to be worshiped, He alone is to be venerated, He alone is to be adored, He alone is to be supplicated, He alone is to be petitioned. There is no need for any other person to intercede. You can go directly to God. The Old Testament makes it abundantly clear, and in the New Testament, we go directly to God the Son, and by God the Son directly to God the Father. We are drawn to God the Son by the Spirit, and we are given access to God the Father by the Son. That's why 1 Timothy 2:5 says, "There is one God, and one Mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." There is one Mediator and it is the man, Christ Jesus. Not angels, not saints, and not Mary. All our burdens, all our prayers, all our requests go directly to God through our relationship with Jesus Christ.

John 14:13, "'Whatever you ask,' Jesus said, 'in My name that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son.'" If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it. God is not reluctant to hear our prayers; nor is Jesus reluctant to hear our prayers, so that we need to go to the mother of Jesus who supposedly can soften up Jesus who then can soften up God to show some interest in our dilemmas. And John again writing in 1 John 5 and verse 14 says, "This is the confidence which we have before Him that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us and we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, and so we know that we have the request which we have asked from Him." We go directly to God, directly by the prompting of the Spirit to God the Son, and through God the Son to God the Father.

We ended our discussion of the Catholic view of Mary last time by talking about the fact that they teach that Mary is the Co-Mediatrix. That is, along with Jesus she is the mediator of all graces. She is the channel of all graces. You remember statements made like this, "Mary is the mother of all graces. Mary is the source of all mercies. No grace is conferred on anyone without her mediation, and intercession, and cooperation. All graces come to us through Mary's hands. Mary is the direct intercessor with Christ who receives from Christ all graces and dispenses them to us, and therefore our prayers should be directed at Mary." All of that, of course, is lies and deception, and again strikes a blow at the nature of God as one who is loving, kind, compassionate, sympathetic, and caring. It strikes a blow against the mediatorship of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only one we need to go to to be taken directly to the Father.

Neither is Mary Co-Redemptrix, as the Roman Catholic Church says, and this was one of John Paul II's big issues. I quote from him, "Mary participates in our redemption." And, of course, he is

borrowing language from Pius XI who said, "Mary participates in the redemption achieved by her Son and all graces are granted only through her intercession. She participated with Jesus Christ in the very painful act of redemption." They have Mary in her pain giving up her Son, participating in some form in our redemption so that Christ is not the one mediator, nor is He the one and only Redeemer.

We closed our session last time talking about the fact that the Roman Catholic Church teaches that Mary had more righteousness than she needed to get into heaven. She had more merit than was required and so her excess merit was deposited in what is called The Treasury of Merit, and you can take the merit that Mary gained and deposit it there and have it applied to your life as a Roman Catholic so that it can shorten or eliminate earthly discipline. Or more importantly, it can shorten your time in Purgatory. This is the doctrine of The Treasury of Merit, the doctrine of Indulgences, or Absolution. You receive a certain amount of forgiveness by the merit or the righteousness of Mary being imputed to you in life and in Purgatory. Her good works, the good works of the Blessed Virgin, are in the Treasury of Merit. Roman Catholic theology, you'll remember, says that Treasury of Merit includes the good works of the Virgin, immense and unfathomable, and pristine in their value before God.

Inventing this goddess who has nothing to do with the true Mary of actual history, the mother of Jesus, inventing this goddess and giving her powers of mediation of all graces, giving her powers of redemption, and giving her powers of imputed righteousness to the accounts of those who appeal to her is a fabrication. It is, as I said, the inventing of a goddess by the mingling of paganism and Gnosticism with Christianity. It really all is paganism, and all is Gnosticism; only the name Mary is borrowed from Christianity.

This is pretty consistent with a lot of other Gnostic belief, even the "Da Vinci Code" pulls up one of the old Gnostic heresies regarding Mary Magdalene. The idea in the "Da Vinci Code," borrowing that old Gnostic heresy, is that Mary Magdalene was supposed to be the queen of the church. She was supposed to be head of the church and the apostles were upset at that, and they got rid of her, and Peter usurped the place of Mary Magdalene in an act of overt male chauvinism, a kind of male coup, and took over the church. Of course, the roots of that kind of teaching and belief are found in ancient feminism, which has its roots in goddess worship which goes way back into Babylon. It was a satanic ploy from the very beginning as Satan endeavors to counterfeit and upset the divine order and male headship. So, what you have with Mary is just another form of paganism that swept into the church, mixed itself with Christianity. It is nothing but goddess worship.

Now, in conclusion, and we have just some time to conclude, I just want to talk about three things to kind of pull it together in three conclusions. One, I want to talk about the blaspheming. This entire concoction is blasphemous. That is to say, it is an assault on God. It is a full-blown assault on God. It is an assault on God the Father, it is an assault on God the Holy Spirit, and it is an assault on God the Son. And we've already indicated that in the introductory words, but let me just kind of unfold it for

you.

First of all, the worship of Mary is an attack on God Himself. Mary becomes the mother of the Son of God. Mary becomes the mother of God, in their language. She is called the Queen of heaven, and therefore she is the rival of the King of heaven, the sovereign God Himself. As we have learned, she is granted sovereignty. She is worthy of worship, worthy of praise. She demands if you want salvation, that you adore her, that you love her, that you enthrone her because she is loving, gracious, merciful. She is all-knowing, all seeing, and all powerful. De Liguori in "The Glories of Mary," page 566, quote: "At the command of Mary all obey, even God." Blasphemy against God.

This goddess worship is also blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Mary is the comforter. Mary is the sympathizer. Mary is the helper. Mary is the empowerer. Mary is the advocate. Mary is the encourager. Mary is even the sanctifier who works to make her children pure.

This goddess worship is also an attack against the Son. She becomes a counterfeit savior: born sinless, without the stain of original sin, living a sinless life. She is called the all-holy child. She becomes redeemer, provider of salvation, dispenser of forgiveness, source of all blessing, from salvation to glorification. She is called the all-holy one, clearly a title belonging only to God. And if you've been with us for the last three weeks, you have felt the heat of the blasphemy. So, the blaspheming is the first thing to understand in conclusion. Secondly, let's call it the comparing. We need to do a little comparing here. What does Scripture say about Mary? What is the real story of Mary?

All right, get your Bible. I've been waiting a long time for this. And I just want to give you a real quick rundown, a little bit of a Bible study here. Here just a quick one. Turn to Matthew 1. This is going to go quickly, so you need to move with us. Verse 16, we're introduced to her in the lineage from David, down to Mary and Joseph. Mary is introduced in Matthew 1:16 simply by these words, "To Jacob was born Joseph, the husband of Mary, by whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ." The Bible discreetly never calls her the mother of God which is a very misleading title, always the mother of Jesus. And so we meet Mary, she is the wife in the genealogy of a man named Joseph. Both of them are in the Messianic line coming down through David; two different families, but all ancestors go back to David so that He is royal in blood from the mother, and royal in right from the father where the right to rule is passed. We see her again in verse 18. She is betrothed. This is a formal engagement to Joseph, and she is found to be with child before they have had any physical relationship at all. Joseph is a righteous man, doesn't want to disgrace her, and so he decides to divorce her secretly because divorce is a righteous thing to do if your wife has been unfaithful, even in the period prior to the consummation of the wedding. And then, of course, an angel comes and says, "Don't be afraid," verse 20, "to take Mary as your wife, for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." And so, he keeps her, verse 25, as a virgin until she gave birth to a Son and he called His name Jesus.

This is a young girl, 13, 14 years old, in that environment. She is told by an angel she is going to have a child without a man. This child will be God with us, Emmanuel, and God tells her husband and the child is born, and that's the story. There it is. Chapter 2, they come into the house, they see the child with Mary, His mother. She appears again briefly in chapter 2. She is mentioned in verse 14. "He arose," being Joseph, "took the child and His mother." She's not named, but referred to there. And in verse 21, "After having taken the child into Egypt," verse 21, "he arose and took the child and his mother, came into the land of Israel." Already, her name is disappearing from the narrative.

That's all we have until we get to the first chapter of Luke. Luke, chapter 1. And down in verse 26, "The angel Gabriel is sent from God to a city in Galilee called Nazareth to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph." Same basic information. The virgin's name is Mary. And coming in the angel says, "Hail, favored one, the Lord is with you." It must have been an interesting response if an angel showed up and greeted her in that way. She was consequently greatly troubled, kept wondering what was going on. The angel said, "Don't be afraid, Mary, you found favor. You'll conceive in your womb, bear a son, it will be Jesus," and he goes on to say he'll be the Son of the Most High, the Lord God will give Him the throne of His father David. He'll be the Messiah. He'll be the Son of God.

How's it going to happen? Verse 35, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you. The power of the Most High overshadow you. For that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." Mary responds to this incredible announcement in verse 38 by saying, "Behold the bondservant of the Lord." She acknowledges herself as the what of the Lord? The bondservant. I just want to make sure you understand that. She sees herself as the servant of the Lord, not God as her servant, and she accepts this announcement and says, "Be it done unto me according to Your Word." She's mentioned in verse 39, she goes to see a relative by the name of Elizabeth who is also miraculously pregnant because she was a very old lady when the Lord came upon her, and allowed her with her husband, Zacharias, to conceive a child would be John the Baptist, born a few months before Jesus, and would be the forerunner of the Lord Jesus Himself.

The first time we hear Mary speak and the only time is in verse 46 and Mary said, "My soul exalts the Lord." Now, we could stop there and build a whole lot of theology on that. "My soul exalts the Lord." I mean, let's get it right. Mary submits to God, God doesn't submit to Mary, and Mary exalts the Lord; the Lord doesn't exalt Mary. And furthermore in verse 47, "My spirit has rejoiced in God, my," what? "My Savior." That may be the most definitive thing that ever comes out of the lips of Mary. To acknowledge that God is her Savior is to acknowledge that she is a sinner. And not only that, she is a lowly bondservant, in verse 48, "He has regard for the humble state of His bondservant." Verse 49, "The mighty one has done great things for me and holy is His name." And then this, "And His mercy is upon generation after generation." She identifies God not as harsh, not as indifferent, not as distant, but as what? Merciful. "He's done mighty deeds with His arms," she's reciting history, "scattered

those who were proud in the thoughts of their hearts, brought down rulers from their thrones, exalted those who were humble.” Mary worships God. “He’s filled the hungry with good things, sent away the rich empty-handed, given help to Israel, His servant, in remembrance of His mercy, spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and his offspring forever.” As a young girl, a young Jewish girl, 13, 14 years old, very devout, miraculously, she is to be the mother of the Son of God, and all she can do is acknowledge that she is a humble, lowly servant, and she is rejoicing in a God who is her Savior.

Now, the actual event, chapter 2, she is mentioned in verse 5, because Joseph goes to register, along with Mary who was engaged to him and is already pregnant. They get down there in Bethlehem and the days are completed for her to give birth. In verse 7, she gave birth to her firstborn son. Obviously, the use of firstborn indicates that she had others. The indication that he kept her a virgin until Christ was born is also an indication that he did not keep her a virgin after Christ was born, but then was the marriage and then was the consummation. The language of Scripture is so very clear about all of this.

She gives birth there in verse 7, wraps Him in cloth, lying in a manger, and that’s because there’s no room in the inn. Verse 34, she goes to the temple to go through a purification ceremony. Again, she would do this. This is symbolic of her sinfulness. She goes there to engage in a purification ceremony which was required of all those Jewish women who gave birth under that old covenant. And she goes there, she meets this old saintly man, Simeon, who blesses the little family and said to Mary, His mother, “This child is appointed for the fall and the rise of many in Israel, a sign to be opposed and a sword will pierce even your own soul to the end, the thoughts of many hearts may be revealed.” And there she is mentioned again in that encounter with Simeon.

That’s basically it until a little bit later in chapter 2 but 12 years later in time. She shows up in verse 48. They’re trying to find Jesus. They’ve gone to the Passover, Jesus in His 12th year. They can’t find Him. They leave town in a big entourage heading back to Nazareth in the north when they wake up to the fact that He’s not there. They go back and they look for Him. They find Him, and His mother said to Him, it doesn’t give her name but His mother in verse 48 said to Him, “Son, why have You treated us this way? Behold, Your father and I have been anxiously looking for You.”

Now, you would think in a Catholic context He would say, “O sweet mother, I bow before you.” He doesn’t say that. He says, “Why were you looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father’s house?” What is He saying? He’s saying you have no claim on Me. He has come to the point at this age, He’s really a young adult, and He now knows fully who He is. He’s grown in wisdom and stature and favor with God and man. He’s fully developed in His understanding of who He is. Who He is, is the one who does His Father’s business in His Father’s house. And His Father, the Father of whom He speaks, is God.

Of course they didn't get it, verse 50, didn't understand the statements He made to them, 'cause His father was a carpenter, His earthly father. And when He went down with them and came to Nazareth, He continued in subjection to them dutifully, even though they had been put on notice that this was temporary and His mother treasured all these things in her heart. And He kept on increasing and growing. That's it basically during the childhood of Jesus.

Turn for a moment to John chapter 2. All we know about Mary up to there is what I told you. In John 2 and verse 1, Jesus does His first miracle, and His first miracle is at a wedding in Cana. Cana is suburb of Nazareth, if those kind of places had suburbs. It's a little town next door; I've been there a few times. It's a little walk from Nazareth. And a wedding was going on there. Weddings were big events, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus was invited and His disciples to the wedding because it was in the town nearby, right next to it and they would have known, it would have been extended family, friends, probably people who had attended the same synagogue. They knew everybody. And they were there along with Mary, Jesus, the disciples. They all were invited to the wedding. And when the wine gave out, Jesus, of course, being known by everyone and brought the disciples along with Him, even though they were from other places. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, and this was typical mother, typical Jewish mother, who might say, "Son, they have no wine. They have no wine."

Now, to this point He had not done a miracle. He had not done a miracle. And what that tells me about Jesus was that as children go and young men go, He certainly would have been the most attentive, the most sensitive, and the most resourceful human being who ever lived on the planet. And one can imagine that God, perfect God in human flesh, even though He didn't do anything miraculous, did everything well, and everything right, that never any opportunity for sensitivity, any opportunity for assistance, any opportunity for help, any opportunity to solve a problem, He was there and did it in perfection. This is what she knew Him to be. And so what she is doing is what she probably did her whole life. I mean, I can imagine her saying many times, Son, there's a leak in the roof. Son, I don't have enough food. Son, whatever. My neighbor has a problem. And whatever the problem was, He would have been within the framework of His own perfection, the solver of all problems. And not expecting that she thought He would do a miracle, but that He was so resourceful.

And the response is really amazing. "Jesus said to her, 'Woman.'" "Wow. Not exactly impolite, but really not what you would expect Him to say to His mother if He held her in some awe. And if they were sustaining some kind of relationship where He bowed to her and did everything she asked. "Woman," this has the effect of distancing her, "what do I have to do with you?"

Now, that is harsh. "What do I have to do with you?" In other words, this is a common, in my study Bible I put a note that this is a common Semitic idiom. And there's a couple of places in the Old Testament where you see it, and it is intended as a comment to distance two parties. It even conveys a degree of reproach. Jesus is not rude, but He is very abrupt. And the phrase is simply a way to say,



“What do you and I and what we do have in common?” That’s all in the past. I don’t live there anymore. That’s over. You told Me what to do for 30 years; you don’t tell Me anymore. What have I to do with you? My hour is not yet come. I operate on a completely different timetable under completely different authority. And so, He distances her at the age of 12. He distances her at the beginning of His ministry.

While you’re in the gospel of John, chapter 2, drop down to verse 12. “After this He went down to Capernaum, He and His mother, and His brothers, and His disciples, and there they stayed a few days.” I’m just putting that in because that’s what Scripture says. They took a short trip to Capernaum. You can walk there in a day. They took a short trip to Capernaum. That is all it says. But what it does also say is that He went there with His mother and His what? Brothers. His half-brothers, in reality: the children of Mary and Joseph.

In Matthew, chapter 12, turn to Matthew chapter 12, another very interesting account. Now, we’re past the first miracle; Jesus is out in His ministry. And in Matthew 12:46, by the way, this is also in Mark 3 and also in Luke 8. Three of the gospels give this account. Verse 46, Matthew 12. He was speaking to the multitudes. His mother and brothers were standing outside seeking to speak to Him. I don’t know what the issue was, I don’t know what the problem was, I don’t know what the dilemma was, I don’t know what His mother wanted. You remember, of course, right, that His brothers did not believe in Him. They did not believe in Him until after the resurrection. But anyway, they all showed up. His mother and His brothers are standing outside while He’s in some location speaking. Verse 47, “Someone comes through the mob scene,” and Mark makes it particularly a dense crowd. Mark 3, “Someone says to Him, ‘Behold, Your mother and Your brothers are standing outside seeking to speak to You.’” That would be like me preaching and somebody coming in and saying, “Hey, John, your mother wants you.” Really? This is probably not a good time to go, whatever it is she wants. But that’s essentially what happened. And He responded by this same kind of language that we saw at the age of 12, and at the beginning of His miracle ministry. He answered the one who was telling Him and said, “Who is My mother and My brothers?” Now, He is not just saying, look, you have to understand, I have a heavenly Father and I have to be doing His business. He’s not just saying: I am no longer going to do what you tell Me; He is now saying: you don’t have a singular claim to even being My mother.

Those relationships are really gone. And He stretched out His hand to the disciples and He said, “Behold, My mother and My brothers.” What does He mean by that? He means all those earthly family relationships are over. They’re over. And He goes on to say that. “Whoever,” verse 50, “does the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.” The people who have a relationship to Me are the people who do the will of My Father. And, of course, the will of the Father is that you believe in the Son, right? “This is My beloved Son, hear Him.” Wow.

Mary has gone from the heights of angelic revelation, the heights of virgin birth, to the realization of her own sin in need of a savior, to a ceremony of purification which symbolized her sinfulness and need for cleansing, to being told by Jesus at age 12 that no longer was His family going to have the priority claim on His life; He had a different Father that He was going to serve; to being told you and I really have nothing in common anymore, to being told you do not have a unique relationship with Me at all. That's all in the past.

In the 13th chapter of Matthew and verse 55, we get another glimpse into the life of Mary. When Jesus was teaching, people were saying all kinds of things, verse 55, "Is not this the carpenter's son, is not her mother called Mary and His brothers, James, and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas?" What we get out of that is, I mean, how can He be very special when He has such common family members? Nobody was exalting Mary. In fact, the whole idea here was, "Where," verse 54, "did this man get this wisdom and these miraculous powers when He came from such common people?" He has brothers named James, Joseph, Simon, Judas, and had sisters. And we know them all; they all live around here. Where did this man get all these things? They understood the very common ordinary family.

By the way, the Roman Catholics say that these aren't brothers; these are cousins. They're not sisters; they're cousins, even though the word for cousin isn't used. The word for brother is, *adelphos*, but it doesn't matter what word is used in the Bible because the Church says that, and the Church trumps the Bible in that system. And by the way, you have other indications of Jesus' family in Mark 6 and in John 6: Mark 6:3 and 4, John 6:42.

Now, let's go to the end of the life of Jesus. That's really all we know until we come to the 19th chapter of John. The 19th chapter of John, we are at the crucifixion. And verse 25: they were standing by the cross of Jesus, His mother and His mother's sister, Mary, the wife of Clopas and Mary Magdalene. Mary is a very common name, obviously. "Jesus, therefore, saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved standing nearby," that's John always referring to Himself like that. He said to His mother, "Woman, behold your son," again woman, but maintaining that distance. It's as if Jesus anticipated the bizarre fabrications that would come around this name and this historic girl, Mary, and did everything He consciously do in His ministry to deter that. "Woman, behold your son," He's not pointing to Himself, He's pointing to John, probably nodding with His head since His hands were nailed to the cross. "And He said to the disciple, 'Behold your mother.' From that hour, the disciple took her into his own household." His father, his earthly father, Joseph, was, her husband was probably dead. He disappears from the story at the very beginning, never shows up again. She had nobody to care for her. The care of widows was important. So, He turns her over to John to care for her. From now on, you're her son, she's your mother. Again, the obvious distancing of Himself.

She appears one more time, Acts 1. The disciples, verse 12, returned to Jerusalem from the mount called Olivet near Jerusalem, Sabbath day's journey away. Sabbath day's journey would be a very

short one 'cause you couldn't walk very far on the Sabbath. When they had entered, they went up to an upper room where they were staying. That is, Peter, and John, and James, and Andrew, Phillip, and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew, James, son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, Judas the son of James. Judas Iscariot, of course, is missing now. "These all, with one mind, were continually devoting themselves to prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus and with His brothers." That's good news. His brothers came to believe after the resurrection, and they show up in the upper room on the day of Pentecost in a prayer meeting, along with their mom, Mary. Please notice, they were there devoting themselves to prayer, along with Mary. They were not there to pray to Mary. Her name never appears again anywhere in the New Testament, never ever again.

But there is one other reference that we looked at in the gospel of Luke that's helpful to continue to understand the role that she played. Luke 11, verse 27. Jesus here is teaching, some of you remember this passage in Luke 11, and verse 27, "It came about while He said these things one of the women in the crowd raised her voice and said to Him, 'Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed.'" Sounds like a pre-Catholic Catholic. The Blessed Virgin. "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts at which You nursed." But He said, "No, just the opposite. Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and," what? "Observe it."

This was a perfect opportunity for Him to launch Mary worship. This was a perfect opportunity for Him to set Mary in the priority place in the church. All He had to say was, "You are absolutely right. Don't forget it, and make sure you give her the praise and the worship and the adoration that she deserves." He says nothing of the kind. On the contrary, just the opposite. "Blessed are those who hear the Word of God and observe it." There is clearly, in the life and words of Jesus, a consistent, strong rejection of any special honor to this woman. It is not that He didn't care for her. He showed that He cared for her when He put her in the loving care of His beloved apostle, John. He cared for her, but He would not allow her or anyone else to think that she had some claim on Him, that she had some access that no one else has, that she had some authority that no one else has, some power that no one else has, some entrance that no one else has, some knowledge that no one else has, even blessing that no one else has, even adoration that no one else has. He rejected all of that. And with that, she is gone from the pages of the Bible.

The apostle Paul in the epistles makes reference to the mother of Jesus twice, but never names her. In Romans he says, referring to God's Son, that He was born of a descendent of David, according to the flesh. Again, the distancing is so clear. Paul will not pick her up and elevate her because the Spirit of God would not allow that. Paul would know that. In Galatians, the second time he refers to her, he says, "When the fullness of the time came God sent forth His Son, born of a woman." As far as any explanation of the gospel goes, as far as any explanation of spiritual life goes, Mary plays no role. Paul writes the magnificent treatise on the doctrine of salvation called the book of Romans, and all he can say about the mother of Jesus is "A descendant of David." He writes the great treatise, Galatians, on the pure and true and only gospel, and all he can say is, "He was born of a woman."

Scripture says nothing about her life. It says nothing about her later years. It says nothing about her death. It says nothing about her burial. Although there are reams of Catholic volumes that talk about the life of Mary, the experiences of Mary, the miracles of Mary, the death of Mary, et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. All fabrications, all lies, all either the invention of men or the invention of demons. The Bible gives no description of her character at all, no description of her physical appearance at all. There is no biblical example of anybody praying to her, honoring her, venerating her. When she appears with believers, she's just one among many. And I think it's got to be shocking to Roman Catholics who read the Bible for the first time. And most don't ever read it, but for those who do, how surprising it is that so little is said about Mary, when in the system so much is said about her. So much. There are, and I went through one list today, hundreds and hundreds, if not thousands of websites on Mary, taking you down every imaginable trail into the fantasy of Mary worship.

One other footnote along this line of comparing the Catholic view of Mary with the Bible: Mary is mentioned more times in the Quran than in the Bible. That's an oddity, isn't it? But then, of course, we would understand that Satan, who authored the Quran, would want to make more of Mary than ought to be made of her. That's consistent. Interestingly enough, the Muslims revere Mary.

Some of you will remember, and probably don't want to admit it, Bishop Fulton Sheen. Anybody remember him? Long time ago, it was on television. He was a very polished, refined, articulate Catholic priest who would speak on television in the early years. I remember seeing him as a very young child. Well, this is 50 years ago Sheen was on television. And Bishop Sheen predicted, he predicted that Islam would be converted to Roman Catholicism. He said, quote, "Because of a summoning of the Muslims to a veneration of the mother of God." Rome is making a lot of overtures to the Muslims. The Pope has made them; Pope John Paul was forever trying to bring together the Muslims, and the common element is their reverence for Mary. Mary for the Muslims is actually called the true *Sayyida*, the true lady. And maybe in the end, when there is one great massive world religion, it will be goddess worship that pulls it all together.

Well, we've talked about the blaspheming; we've talked about the comparing. A final third point, the warning. And I can take a few minutes or all night on this one. But, because you're so kind, I'll keep it very brief. Scripture has very much to say about worshiping a false god, right? This is the warning, the condemnation of all who worship a false god, of all who advocate the worship of a false god is all over the Scripture. And it actually starts back, as you know, in the Old Testament. And probably the best place to start is at the clearest articulation of the Law of God in the Ten Commandments, Exodus 20, "Then God spoke all these words saying, 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth, beneath or in the water under the earth. You shall not worship them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God.'"

I just the other day went to visit somebody at St. Joseph's Hospital. I parked my car in Burbank, I walk up toward the hospital and there is a huge idol greeting me. And who is it? Well, it's supposed to be the image of Mary. I walk in the building, and there's another idol. I get in the elevator, I get off the floor, there is another idol. Once in a while, I see an image of Jesus, but He's always limp and dead on a cross. In Deuteronomy and chapter 5, "I am the Lord your God." It's a reiteration, Deuteronomy, the second law, the repetition of the original law of Exodus. "I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. You shall have no other gods before Me. You shall not make for yourself an idol or any likeness of what is in heaven above, or on the earth beneath, or in the water under the earth, you shall not worship them or serve them, for I the Lord your God am a jealous God." Chapter 6 verse 13, "You shall fear only the Lord your God. You shall worship Him and swear by His name. You shall not follow other gods, any of the gods of the peoples who surround you, for the Lord your God in the midst of you is a jealous God, otherwise the anger of the Lord your God will be kindled against you and He will wipe you off the face of the earth. You shall not put the Lord your God to the test." Don't test God's patience with idol worship.

The 18th chapter of Deuteronomy verse 9, "When you enter the land which the Lord your God gives you, you shall not learn to imitate the detestable things of those nations. There shall not be found among you anyone who makes his son or daughter pass through the fire, one who uses divination, one who practices witchcraft, or one who interprets omens or a sorcerer, or one who casts a spell or a medium, or a spiritist, or one who calls up the dead." The worship of Mary is an ill-conceived effort to call up a dead woman. It's also a partner with mediums, spiritists, spell casters, sorcerers, witches, diviners and all the rest. Verse 12, "For whoever does these things is detestable to the Lord, and because of these detestable things the Lord your God will drive them out before you. You shall be blameless before the Lord your God." It strikes you. It should strike you so obvious: there is not one single place in the Bible where it ever suggests we are to worship Mary, and everywhere it is clearly stated we worship God and Him alone. So very obvious.

Look at Psalm 106, and this is very much the same, but I want to give you some Scriptures you can use if you talk to folks about this. Psalm 106 verse 28, "They joined themselves also to Baal-Peor," this is the Baal of a place called Peor. "They worshiped Baal, and they ate sacrifices offered to the dead." Again, this idea that somehow dead people can be worshiped, and can be petitioned. Isaiah, chapter 45, and if you want more of this, just look up idolatry in the topical index in the back of the Study Bible and you'll find many passages. But in Isaiah 45, I want you to get this, verse 20; this really describes the idolatry of Mary: "Gather yourselves," Isaiah 45:20. "Gather yourselves and come, draw near together, you fugitives of the nations, they have no knowledge who carry about their wooden idol," sometimes you see Roman Catholics in parades with a wooden Mary, "who carry about their wooden idol and pray to a god who cannot save. Declare and set forth your case. Indeed, let them consult together. Who has announced this from of old, who has long since declared it? Is it not I the Lord and there is no other God besides Me, a righteous God and a Savior. He is not a reluctant

savior. He is a righteous God and Savior. There is none except Me.” And here’s the call, verse 22, “Turn to Me and be saved all the ends of the earth for I am God and there is no other.” And one would ask the question, how in the world was somebody supposed to get saved before Mary if she is the Mediatrix of all graces? “I am God and there is no other.”

Jeremiah chapter 2, verse 9, and this will be the last one we’ll use in the Old Testament. Jeremiah 2:9, “Therefore I will yet contend with you, declares the Lord. I have an argument with you, He says.” Down in verse 11, “Has a nation changed gods?” Have you changed gods? That’s what Roman Catholicism has done, changed gods. “Have you changed gods when they were not gods?” Have you substituted a non-god for God? “But My people have changed their glory,” God being their glory, “for that which doesn’t profit. Be appalled, O heavens, at this, and shudder, be very desolate, declares the Lord, for My people have committed two evils. They have forsaken Me, the fountain of living waters, to hew for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water.” You abandoned God who alone is the fountain of living waters for goddess, a broken cistern that offers absolutely nothing. Nothing. This is consistent with the New Testament. The New Testament calls for the same complete and total devotion to God. Matthew 4:9, Satan tempting Jesus says, “I’ll give You everything You can see if You fall down and worship Me.” Jesus said to him, “Be gone, Satan, for it is written. You shall worship the Lord your God and serve Him only.” That, from the lips of the Lord Jesus Himself.

Romans 1. Just a few more and we’ll be finished. Romans 1, verse 22. Here’s a description of humanity. “Professing to be wise they became fools. Professing to be wise they became fools and how did their foolishness manifest itself? They exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man, or woman.” That’s exactly what Romanism has done. And so, God gave them over. And this is a divine judgment that falls on that. “God gave them over in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, that their bodies might be dishonored among them, for they exchanged the truth of God for a lie and worshiped and served the,” what? “The creature, a woman, rather than the Creator who is blessed forever. Amen. And for this reason, God gave them over to degrading passions for their women, exchanged the natural function for that which is unnatural, in the same way the men also abandoned the natural function of the woman and burned in their desire toward one another, men with men committing indecent acts and receiving in their own persons the due penalty of their error.” Could pedophilia, and homosexuality, and immorality that runs rampant in the Catholic system be part of the judgment of God on those who have abandoned the true God for the worship of a human being?

In 1 Corinthians, chapter 5, verse 11, “Actually I wrote to you not to associate with any so-called brother.” Now, this gets real personal, folks. “Not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be an immoral person or covetous, or,” what? “An idolater.” People going around today saying, “O our Catholic brothers and our Catholic sisters.” I wish that were true. You can’t associate with them in an affirming, accepting fellowship if they worship idols. Chapter 10 tells us why, 1 Corinthians 10:14, “Therefore my beloved, flee from idolatry.” Idolatry is seductive, poisonous; it’s toxic. You can’t stay

around it. Verse 16, "Is not the cup of blessing which we bless a sharing in the blood of Christ? Is not the bread we break a sharing in the body of Christ?" He's saying, you know, we come together around Christ, we come together to celebrate Christ in His sacrifice and in His death. You can't do that, and then go worship idols. You can't do that. Verse 20, "The things the Gentile sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God. And I don't want you to become a sharer in demons." Idolatry is demon-designed demon worship. "You can't drink the cup of the Lord," verse 21, "and the cup of demons." You can't partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons. You can't worship Mary and worship God, or you will, verse 22, certainly provoke the Lord to jealousy.

Second Corinthians 6 verse 15, "What harmony has Christ with Satan," Belial is a term for Satan. "What harmony has Christ with Satan? What has a believer in common with an unbeliever? What agreement has the temple of God with idols? We are the temple of the living God." You have nothing to do with that. Roman Catholicism has nothing to do with true Christianity, the true church. It is something completely different; it belongs to the kingdom of darkness.

Finally, in Ephesians 5 verse 5, "For this you know with certainty, no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God." If you worship a false God, you have no part in the Kingdom of Christ and the Kingdom of God. No part. And you see, beloved, that is why the Bible says, 1 John 5:21: "Guard yourselves from idols, flee idolatry," as we just read. You can't worship a false god and the true God at the same time.

But we worship the true and living God. I want to close with a glimpse of heaven. Revelation 4, you remember this, Revelation 4:8, "Every being in heaven is saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God, the Almighty who was and who is and is to come.'" And they're all in verse 11 saying, "Worthy art Thou, our Lord, and our God, to receive glory and honor and power for Thou didst create all things and because of Thy will they existed and were created." In chapter 5 verse 9, "And they sang a new song, 'Worthy art Thou,'" speaking of Christ, "To take the book and break its seals, for Thou was slain and did purchase for God with Thy blood men from every tribe and tongue and people and nation, and Thou hast made them to be a Kingdom and priest to our God and they will reign upon the earth." In verse 12, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power and riches and wisdom and might and honor and glory and blessing." And verse 13, "To Him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb be blessing and honor and glory and dominion forever and ever, and all the beings of heaven said Amen. And they all fell down and worshiped." Do you see Mary in there anywhere? What a bizarre deception.

Okay, we will stop at that point, and I do want to do one more thing, not tonight. I hope, next Sunday night, there's one more element of Roman Catholicism that you need to know about, and that's the Mass. So, if the Lord wills, and I can get all the work done while I'm back in Louisville at The Together for the Gospel Conference with Al Mohler, next Sunday night we'll talk about the Mass, 'cause it's a critical area. You've been so patient tonight, like you had a choice.

Lord, bless these precious people and encourage them, because they've been given the knowledge of the truth by Your grace. And help us, Lord, to lead many out of this horrible darkness.

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