

Chapter 1- Popular Religious Beliefs

The following is a list of the popular religious beliefs that will be discussed in this chapter:

1. The followers of Jesus Christ are to eat His body and drink His blood.
2. Bread and wine change into the body and blood of Jesus Christ.
3. Jesus, the Son of God, is not God.
4. Members of the clergy cannot marry.
5. When one dies he goes immediately to heaven, hell, or another place.
6. Infants should be baptized.
7. People may pray to dead relatives and other dead people in heaven.
8. It is all right to kneel or bow down in front of a statue (a carved image) representing a saint while a person prays.
9. The church can do what it wants and it will be bound in heaven.
10. Sins are to be confessed to a priest before sins can be forgiven.
11. There is mortal (large) and venial (small) sin.

12. The worship God commands He is to receive on the Sabbath day has changed to another day.
13. St. Peter and his successors are Christ's substitute on earth.
14. The human spiritual leader of a church is infallible when he speaks on issues of faith or morals.
15. Jesus passed on all of His authority in heaven and on earth to the Apostles and their successors.
16. Whoever rejects the church rejects Jesus and the Father because if one rejects the church he rejects Jesus.
17. The trustworthiness of the Bible depends completely on the trustworthiness of the church.
18. Whatever the church interprets and teaches about the Bible is without error, even if it teaches different from the Bible (God's Word) because of the inherent infallibility authority passed to the church.
19. Religious decrees created by church leaders have the same level of authority as the Bible, the inherent Word of God.
20. Based on Matthew 16:18, 19 Peter is the rock upon which Jesus built His church. Jesus gave the keys to the kingdom of heaven to Peter. He did not give the keys to anyone else.
21. Tradition above the Word of God.

These 21 beliefs are widely accepted throughout the Christian world. They are presented below and compared to their corresponding beliefs in the Bible. To accomplish this comparison God's own given concept is used below to explain (interpret and understand) His words in Scripture, thereby insuring the beliefs presented below from the Scripture in the Bible are correctly imparted. The concept is God's personal instruction for interpreting and understanding what His words say in Scripture. Application of the concept allows the Bible to speak for (interpret) itself and prevents people from privately interpreting the Words of God. The concept is in the book of Isaiah in Isaiah 28:10. In Isaiah 28:10 it says, "For precept *must* be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line, here a little, *and* there a little." The concept means when studying a subject or belief in the Bible one must consider various passages of Scripture (written and located throughout the Bible in different chapters, verses, and lines) that pertain to the same subject or belief. The concept must be applied to obtain the correct interpretation and intent of God's Word.

Applying the concept avoids creating both partial and private interpretation of God's Word. It leads to the intended understanding of a subject or belief in the Bible. It does this by preventing consideration of insufficient information, such as only one or two scriptural passages when there are other passages of Scripture to consider pertaining to the same subject or belief.

God provided His own concept necessary to interpret His Word in Scripture because God does not want anyone to create a private interpretation of what He says in the Bible. A private interpretation leads others astray. This is why in 2 Peter 1:20 no private interpretation of Scripture is permitted by God. In 2 Peter 1:20 it says, "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation."

Immediately following each below underlined popular religious belief is the corresponding belief from the Bible. The corresponding belief was obtained by applying the concept God gives in Isaiah 28:10. Using this concept prevents incorrectly interpreting God's Words.

According to John 6:53, 54 the followers (disciples) of Jesus Christ are to eat His body and drink His blood. In John 6:53, 54 it says, "Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." A review of verses 35 through 66 of John in chapter 6, instead of only verses 53 and 54, reveals it is not Jesus' intent in John 6:53, 54 that His followers eat His actual flesh and drink His blood, as this popular religious belief proclaims. When verses 35 through 66 are considered it reveals verses 53 and 54 should not to be taken literally to mean humans are to eat the flesh and drink the blood

of Jesus. This is because in verses 35 through 66 Jesus is telling a parable. While Jesus is telling the parable He is speaking in the spirit. Jesus reveals this in verse 63 with the words, “the words that I speak unto you, *they* are spirit.” In verse 52 the Jews could not understand what Jesus had said in previous verses 35 through 51 because they were thinking literally, not spiritually. Because they were thinking literally the Jews could not understand what Jesus said in verses 35 through 51 of the parable about how He, to them only the human son of Joseph, was the bread of life come down from heaven one could eat and have eternal life. In verses 60 through 66 many of the disciples listening did not understand what Jesus said because they too took literally what Jesus was saying in the spirit. If what Jesus said in John 6:53, 54 was intended to mean the Jews and disciples were to literally consume His flesh and blood Jesus would not have said in verse 63 that He was speaking in the spirit. Verse 63 tells us Jesus was speaking in the spirit while He was telling the parable to the Jews and disciples. The words Jesus spoke in John 6:53, 54 which say, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you” are part of the parable Jesus was telling to the Jews and His disciples. Verse 63 is clarification from Jesus the reason the Jews and many disciples did not understand what He was saying in the parable was they lacked spiritual

discernment; they could not understand what He was speaking in the spirit. Therefore, the conclusion is John 6:53, 54 should not to be taken literally to mean the flesh and blood of Jesus is to be consumed by humans. Taking literally what Jesus said in the spirit is taking what Jesus said out of context. If this is done it conflicts with the Father's plan expressed in other related Scripture. For example, Isaiah 42:6, 53:5, 53:10, and John 1:29 confirm the body and blood of Jesus would be given up only one time for the forgiveness of sins, not again and again throughout the centuries so His followers can eat His flesh and drink His blood. Teaching Christians a literal interpretation of what Jesus said in the spirit is teaching a misinterpretation of God's Word and teaching untruth, an untruth Jesus does not want His followers to believe.

According to Luke 22:19, 20 bread and wine change into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. During the Catholic Mass celebration the priest calls on God in heaven to change the substances of bread and wine into Jesus' body and blood. It is believed after the priest calls on God, God from heaven changes the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. The bread and wine are then given to those attending Mass so they can eat the body and drink the blood of Jesus Christ. It is believed the authority for the priest to call on God and have God change bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ is Luke 22:19, 20. In Luke 22:19,

20 it says, “And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake *it*, and gave unto them, saying, “This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup *is* the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” The issue here is about the substances or symbols of bread and wine and how they were used at the Last Supper. Throughout His life on earth Jesus used various symbols to represent Him. In the Scriptures quoted below Jesus used the earthly substances of bread, water, vine, and light as symbols to represent Him, yet in reality Jesus was not actually any of these earthly substances, or symbols. There are other times in Scripture where symbols are used to represent Jesus when He was not any of the earthly substances (symbols) used to represent Him, e.g., rock and cornerstone.

At the Last Supper Jesus used the symbols of bread and wine to represent Him just as Jesus used other symbols to represent Him in the four (4) Scriptures of John 4:13, 14; John 6:32, 33; John 8:12; and John 15:1. Here are the four (4) Scriptures:

In John 4:13, 14 it says, “Jesus answered and said unto her, Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” Here Jesus is speaking to a Samaritan

woman at a well. He uses the symbol “water” to represent Himself to express whoever drinks the water He gives (believes in Jesus and does what He says) will spring into everlasting life. While Jesus is talking in this Scripture He is not the symbol or substance, water.

In John 6:32, 33 it says, Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.” Within these verses Jesus used the symbol “bread” to represent Him as being the food of life from heaven intended for the world. Jesus used the symbol of bread to explain He is the spiritual food to believe in to gain eternal life. While Jesus is talking in this Scripture He is not the symbol or literal substance, bread.

In John 8:12 it says, “Then spake Jesus again unto them, saying, I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.” Here Jesus uses “light” as a symbol to represent Him. While Jesus is talking in this Scripture He is not a light one would turn on to see in a dark room. One will have the light of Jesus if he follows the spiritual guidance Jesus gives in the Bible. When one follows His guidance he will not walk in spiritual darkness. Instead, he will walk in the true light of life, Jesus the Light of the world.

In John 15:1 Jesus says, “I AM the true vine, and

my Father is the husbandman.” Here Jesus uses “vine” as a symbol to represent Him. He uses “husbandman” as a symbol to represent the Father. While Jesus is talking in this Scripture He is not the symbol or substance, a vine. Neither is the Father a husbandman.

Notice in Luke 22:19, 20 it says, “this do in remembrance of me.” Using something, in this case bread and wine, to remember someone is not the actual someone, Jesus’ actual flesh and blood. If a person keeps a picture of a deceased friend to help him to remember the friend, the picture is not the deceased friend, his flesh and his blood. This was the case with Jesus at the Last Supper. To take the words, “This is my body” and “This cup is the new testament in my blood” from Luke 22:19, 20 without giving due consideration to the other words, “this do in remembrance of me” causes a misinterpretation of Scripture.

At the Last Supper Jesus used the symbols of bread and wine to represent Him, just as He used the symbols of bread, water, vine, and light to represent Him in John 6:32, 33 and John 4:13, 14 and John 15:1, and John 8:12. Jesus was not any of these symbols He used to represent Him. There is no valid reason to believe in the one instance of the Last Supper the physical symbols of bread and wine became the body and blood of Jesus, yet elsewhere in Scripture where Jesus says He is other physical symbols (e.g., bread, water, vine, and light,) that

the other physical symbols did not also actually become Jesus. At the Last Supper when Jesus distributed the symbols of bread and wine he used to represent Him to the Apostles, His body and blood were still one hundred percent intact on His own person. Therefore, at that moment in time, the bread and wine were not the body and blood of Jesus when He distributed these symbols to the Apostles. In reality bread and wine cannot be changed into the body and blood of Jesus. This fact is supported by the Father's will and plan for Jesus.

It was the Father's will and plan expressed in Isaiah 42:6, 53:5, 53:10, and John 1:29 that Jesus' body and blood be given up only one time for the forgiveness of sins. Neither the Father nor Jesus has authorized the body and blood of Jesus to be given up over and over again so His followers can receive Jesus' actual body and blood at church communion services.

The creation of the popular religious belief that bread and wine change into the body and blood of Jesus Christ is the result of interpreting the Bible without applying God's concept in Isaiah 28:10 to interpret the words of Jesus. It caused a misinterpretation of Scripture and the creation of the popular religious belief that bread and wine actually change into the body and blood of Jesus Christ. Instead of using only Luke 22:19, 20 to determine if bread and wine change into the body and blood of Jesus, the many other related scriptural

passages just discussed should have been considered along with Luke 22:19, 20. Had this been done by past interpreters of Scripture the popular religious belief that bread and wine change into the body and blood of Jesus Christ would never have materialized. The misinterpretation of Scripture that caused the creation of this popular traditional religious belief may have taken place in the early Christian Church after the death of the Apostles, but before the early Christian Church became known as the Roman Catholic Church. Nevertheless, this misinterpretation of Scripture continues to be part of the Catholic faith.