

The Wednesday Word, Sept. 23, 2015: The Pathetic 12-Months of Mercy!

Recently, I was stunned when reading the present Pope's declaration concerning his upcoming 'Year of Mercy'. Accordingly, during that period Pope Francis will give priests a special dispensation of power to forgive those who have committed the sin of abortion.

A line from W.C. Fields sprang to my mind, "Hour of mischief, what kind of skulduggery is this?"

In his statement, the Pope expressed compassion for those who have aborted their babies. Furthermore, during the Holy Year of Mercy, he will permit priests to absolve penitent women of the sin of having had their pregnancies terminated.

How sweet of him, but who in the name of thunder does he think he is to give permission to anyone to forgive sins? Only God can forgive sins...and He doesn't limit His forgiveness to a 12-month window of opportunity.

This entire Papal proposal reeks of arrogance from start to finish. It is another example of how Francis, mild-mannered as he is, assumes the position of God Almighty! How does he take it on himself to allow his priests to forgive a particular sin for a particular period of time?

All sin is sin against God (Psalm 51:4), it's not against Pope Francis. Thus only God, not Francis, can forgive (Mark 2:7). Yet the Pope presumes to give power to his priests to do just that. But then again, there should be no surprise here for Francis claims to be the "Vicar of Christ." That implies that he has the same power and authority that Christ has over the church. Why, in the light of this, do evangelicals in their droves now embrace the Pope as a Christian leader instead of declaring him to be Antichrist? Nary a whimper is to be heard from the pens and sermons of many Bible Believers as Francis perpetrates, perpetuates and promulgates his falsehoods and deceptions upon the gullible and the credulous.

There is only one priest who can deal with sin and his name is not Francis, His name is the Lord Jesus Christ. He is the God-Man. He is able to save to the uttermost all who come to God by Him (Hebrews 7:25).

In contrast to Rome's 12-month period of mercy, the Bible speaks of unlimited mercy found in God. We read in Ephesians 2:4-5, for example, that God is rich in Mercy... literally He's 'plush' with mercy. And what is more, mercy for those who have aborted their babies is not limited to the time frame of one year. The throne of Grace is open to everyone who approaches by faith, at any time, for any sin regardless of the Pope's sell by date. In fact, Hebrews 4:16 urges us to "come boldly unto the throne of grace that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." There is mercy for those who come to Christ. He is the faithful High Priest, no other priest is required.

As I read the Pope's statement, I was also reminded of how some years ago an old lady was lying on her death bed. A local priest came to see her and announced that he was there to absolve her of her sins. "Let me see your hands," she demanded.

"My hands?"

"Yes, your hands."

Reluctantly, the priest proffered his hands for examination. After a minute or so the old lady said; "Sir, I perceive that you are an imposter. The only one who can absolve me has got nail scars in his

hands....Scars that were received at the cross of Calvary.”

Perhaps someone who has had an abortion is reading this. It has deeply troubled your conscience. The guilt pierces you. You believe you are beyond forgiveness. I implore you, therefore, to look to Christ Jesus, plead guilty and throw yourself on His mercy. Your sins and iniquities He will remember no more.

May the Lord grant that you see the mercy and grace that is available to you in Christ Jesus. He is the only priest who can and will forgive sin for He alone is the God/Man!
And that's the Gospel Truth!