

**A  
Record  
of the  
Three  
Mother & Son  
Talks!**

By  
Robert E. Schoenle

# Introduction

## to the three

### *A Mother & Son Talks!*

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After church services one Sunday morning in the spring of 1999, I met a man named Phil and we began to talk. We learned that we had both been raised in Italian families, as Roman Catholics. We soon were laughing loudly as we exchanged stories of what had been said to us by some of our relatives when they learned of our leaving the Roman Catholic religion. Our reason for doing so was the same. We had, by faith alone, come to trust the Lord Jesus Christ as our personal Savior.

Phil had a brother who was a Roman Catholic priest. His brother, needless to say, became very upset to learn of Phil's new biblical beliefs, which conflicted with Roman Catholic teachings and traditions. Phil told me that his mother was surprised to learn that all of the apostles were Jewish and not Italians. She also thought that the Lord Jesus Christ was a Roman Catholic. Phil's mother, like most Roman Catholics and those of other religions, had never read or studied the Holy Bible. Thus, Phil's mother did not know many of the fundamental biblical doctrines and truths it contained.

While walking to my car after talking with Phil, I began to wonder what a conversation would sound like between a man and his mother, after he told her of his new found biblical belief that the Lord Jesus Christ had paid in full, the penalty due for all of the sins he would be guilty of throughout his life on earth. I am so thankful to God that I had a mother with whom I could talk openly and honestly about all things, as in the following three "Mother and Son Talks."

I loved writing the dialogue in these three *talks*, because it allowed me to not only expose a number of false teachings peculiar to the Roman Catholic Church, but to explain from where they had come and why they were not "biblically" true. All manmade religions have spiritual teachings that are in conflict with the Holy Bible! It is due to a lack of historical and biblical knowledge, along with a refusal to believe the Holy Bible to be the infallible *Word of God*, that enables manmade religions to deceive their "faithful" members. What all manmade religions have in common is that none of them have ever been able to support their traditions or doctrines by the "sole use" of the Holy Bible. Thus, all manmade religions must have *extra-biblical revelations*, and writings from their spiritual leaders or self-professed prophets, that supplant the clear teachings of the holy Scriptures.

It should be noted that much of what is shared in these three *Mother and Son Talks* is applicable to all religions. I hope that all who read these three "talks" will compare the doctrines of their own particular religion with those of the Holy Scriptures to learn whether they are in

agreement or not. Unfortunately, few people will attempt to do an in-depth examination of the history, teachings, and traditions of the religion in which they are born and raised. They simply go along with what they grew up with. They usually have to be “born from above” (Mt. 18:3; Jn. 3:5-8) prior to disengaging themselves from what they were born into.

Biblical Christianity encourages all people to question, challenge, and require evidence to support what they are told or have been taught. In contrast, there has never been a manmade religion that has ever encouraged their adherents to ask questions or to challenge its doctrines and traditions, or to require evidence to support what they are told. All of which is necessary to do for anyone to correctly determine what is false and what is true. The importance to do so cannot be over emphasized since, according to the Holy Bible, their *immortal spirit* will spend eternity either in Heaven or in the “lake of fire” based upon whether they have or have not done the “will” of the God of the Holy Bible (Mt. 7:21).

The questions that must be answered by every man and woman are, “Who and what am I going to trust for my eternal destiny?” Will it be the teachings and revelations of a manmade religion or the teachings and revelations that are recorded in the Holy Bible? If there is a conflict between the teachings of a manmade religion and the clear teachings of the Holy Bible, whose teachings are to be believed? The answers given to these questions will determine which way is being taken by each man and woman! The “broad way” or the “narrow way” (Mt. 7:13-14; Jn. 14:6).

My mother’s name was Marie but she was always called Dolly because she was so small, weighing only two pounds, at birth. She was all that a woman and mother should be. My mom was, is, and will always be, my only hero. She went to Heaven on January 5, 2002. I cannot express in words how much I am really looking forward to seeing her again at the “Rapture.” These “mother and son talks” include many things that actually happened to me and some of the things that were said to me. I hope and pray that these *talks* will be a blessing to those who read them. Amen!

# A Mother & Son Talk!

by  
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Son: Mom, I really need to talk to you!

Mom: About what?

Son: About what the Bible has to say about the Lord Jesus, and the apostles, and Mary, and about Heaven and Hell.

Mom: What's there to talk about? I'm Catholic!

Son: I know. But I'm not anymore.

Mom: What are you talking about? How can you not be Catholic anymore? You were born Catholic just like I was and everybody else in the family.

Son: But I have left the Roman Catholic Church.

Mom: Don't be silly. We are born Catholic and we will be Catholics until we die. Your brother Billy is a priest, for God's sake, and my sister Josie is a nun. Who's more Catholic than our family?

Son: I know mom but I left the Roman Catholic Church last year. When I became a born-again Christian.

Mom: A born-again what?

Son: A born-again Christian (Jn. 3:3-8, 14-18).

Mom: Oh my God - you've joined a cult!

Son: No mom. I haven't joined any cult. I simply believe that what the Lord Jesus did while on the cross at Calvary is enough to save me from all of my sins. And because of what He did for me, I now know that I am going to heaven (Rom. 3:24; 4:5; 5:1, 9; 8:34).

Mom: Don't be ridiculous. No one knows for sure that they are going to heaven. In fact, you are guilty of the sin of being presumptuous for saying that. Even the Pope can't say he's going to heaven and be sure of it. ["Church teaching is that I don't know, at any given moment, what my eternal future will be. I can hope, pray, do my very best--but I still don't know. Pope John Paul II

doesn't know absolutely that he will go to heaven, nor does Mother Teresa of Calcutta..." New York's John Cardinal O'Connor, The New York Times, February 1, 1990, pp. A1, B4].

Son: But mom - the Roman Catholic Church may teach that, but the Holy Bible doesn't.

Mom: What do you mean the Holy Bible doesn't teach that?

Son: Just what I said. The Holy Bible teaches just the opposite. In fact, the apostle John wrote in his first letter that what he had written to believers, he had written so that the believers reading it would know that they had eternal life (1 Jn. 5:13). In other words, God wasn't going to let people wonder or be unsure about whether they were going to heaven or not.

Mom: I never heard of such a thing.

Son: Mom, you know how you have always thought that the apostles were Italians?

Mom: Yeah.

Son: Well they weren't. They were all Jewish!

Mom: Are you crazy? You did join a cult didn't you?

Son: No mom. I have simply been reading and studying the Bible.

Mom: Then you should stop it! To say that all of the apostles were Jewish is ridiculous.

Son: But they were Jewish! Just like Mary, Jesus and Joseph.

Mom: I suppose you're also going to tell me that Jesus wasn't Catholic.

Son: That's right mom. The Lord Jesus wasn't a Roman Catholic!

Mom: I think you've gone crazy and you want to make me crazy too. I always said you read too much. Normal boys chased girls. But not you. You would only read.

Son: That's the problem now. Not enough people read the Bible or study it! What they believe is what someone told them to believe. If you asked most people what they believe, they might be able to tell you, but they probably couldn't tell you why they believe it. They were told something by someone and without checking out what they were told, they believe it to be true. You could say they have faith, but it is a blind faith. Now that is what you could call crazy. But almost everyone is guilty of doing that.

Mom: It sounds like you're preaching to me!

Son: I'm just trying to explain to you that almost everything we've been taught by the Roman Catholic Church is not true!

Mom: Bite your tongue. What is the family going to say if they hear you talk like this. Your brother Billy and your aunt Josie will probably try to find an exorcist to bring the evil spirits out of you.

Son: Mom - did I tell you that I love you today?

Mom: No. I think you're trying to drive me crazy.

Son: Mom, I love you with all of my heart. It's because I love you that I'm telling you this. The bottom line is you either believe what the Bible clearly teaches and has to say or you believe what someone else has to say and teach. In your case, it's the Roman Catholic Church. In my case, it's the Bible.

Mom: I believe some of what the Bible says.

Son: That's not good enough! You can't pick and choose what you want to believe in the Bible and what you don't want to believe that's in it. It's an all or nothing decision. Why do you think there are so many different Christian denominations?

Mom: Why?

Son: The reason why is that they don't want to believe all of what the Bible has to say and teach either. Everybody wants to pick and choose what they like and ignore what they don't like. Or they will take some obscure Bible verse and build a whole teaching around it that is absolutely contrary from what clear Bible verses have to say on the same subject. That is how new religions have been started that are supposedly Christian. It's a joke.

Mom: It really sounds like you are preaching to me and I don't like it. Don't forget - I'm your mother.

Son: Mom - how can I explain stuff to you if you're going to get defensive all of the time.

Mom: I'm not being defensive! I'm willing to listen to you. Just don't get preachy or give me a sermon.

Son: That's all I ask of you mom, really. Now what if I told you that Mary had other kids after she gave birth to the Lord Jesus?

Mom: No way! She was a virgin all of her life. Everybody knows that.

Son: Mom, Mary had a lot of kids after the Lord Jesus was born. Joseph was the father of those kids. The Bible doesn't say how many daughters Mary had, or even give any of their names, but Mary's

four other sons are all named (Mt. 1:24-25; 12:46-47; 13:55-56; Mk. 3:31-32; 6:2-3; Lk. 8:19-20; Jn. 2:12; Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 9:4-5; Gal. 1:19).

Mom: I never heard of such a thing.

Son: I know. Mary was an especially good woman. But she was still a woman. And, like all of us, she was a sinner who needed a Savior (Lk. 1:46-47).

Mom: That's heresy - what you're saying about Mary. You could be excommunicated from the Church for saying things like that.

Son: But it's true! The Bible describes how Mary made a sacrifice for her sins after the Lord Jesus was born, just like all Jewish women were to do after they had a baby. The instructions of what women were to do about making a sin offering after having a baby, was given by God to Moses to write down in Leviticus 12:1-8. The reference to this offering being for sin or an atonement is made three times in this passage. In Luke's Gospel, we find that Mary followed God's instructions and made this sacrifice for her own sins (Lk. 2:22-24, 39).

Mom: I can't believe it!

Son: Believe it. Because it's true. God had it all written down and has preserved it in His Holy Bible through all of these thousands of years. We just weren't told or taught any of this stuff because then we would realize that the Roman Catholic Church is built on lies and deception and false teachings. Thank God for the Holy Bible though.

Mom: But how can you trust the Bible so much?

Son: I look at it this way. If God is all-powerful and knows everything, what is the big deal for Him to reveal to mankind, what He would have mankind to know? And then to have what He would have mankind to know, written down by men He chose to do so. And then, be able to preserve what He had written to our very day. Preserving it so well, that there is no change, in the text or message, from when He originally had it written down. That is, if He knows everything and is all-powerful.

Mom: Well - that sounds logical.

Son: Thank you, that's because it is. The problem with people who say they believe in an all-powerful God who knows everything is that they then place limits on what He can do. That to me is illogical. But have you ever considered how remarkable the Bible really is?

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: Well, if anyone seriously considered the Bible and its content, they would have to conclude that it had to come from God, because there is no other way to account for it. What are the odds of any book being written by forty different men, from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures, in five

different countries, using three different languages, over 2,000 years in time? Not only that, but the Holy Bible says things about mankind in general and certain people in particular, that nobody would admit to willingly. The reason why, is because our basic instinct is to try and cover things up that don't make us look good.

Mom: You know that you're getting too deep for me don't you?

Son: I know. But I can't help it, because the Bible and everything about it is so awesome. Did you know that the science of archeology was begun by people whose goal was to prove the Bible wrong? They figured that if they could prove that certain people and places and events that only the Bible speaks of, never existed, that they then would make it impossible for anyone to believe the Bible. But guess what? All archeology has done is prove the Bible to be right about everything it has had to say on any topic or subject. The icing on the cake though, as to whether you can believe the Bible to be true or not, is what it has had to say regarding future events. That's a subject called Bible Prophecy.

Mom: Bible prophecy?

Son: Yep. Bible prophecy which is simply "prerecorded history." Did you know that no, so called holy book, of any of the many religions in the past or present has been willing to foretell the future? Only the Bible. In fact, a third of the Bible was about future events and people when it was written. Much of what was prophetic, when it was written, has already happened exactly as God said it would. What that means, is those prophecies in the Bible that are yet to be fulfilled - will be fulfilled. No doubt about it. Bible Prophecy is so important, that the whole testimony of the Lord Jesus depends upon it (Rev. 19:10b). On top of that, the Bible agrees with itself from Genesis 1:1 through Revelation 26:27. There is no contradiction to be found anywhere in the Bible! The only people who would disagree with that statement are those who cannot or will not allow the Bible to interpret itself or examine the evidence that supports the truth of it. They are completely closed-minded on the subject, because it disturbs the religious beliefs that they have become comfortable with. The truth of the matter is they get uptight, when challenged, because they prefer not to think about it. Since we live in a non-thinking society, you can see why people respond that way.

Mom: Are you accusing me of being closed-minded? Because I'm not!

Son: I know that mom. If you were closed-minded, you wouldn't even be talking to me about any of this stuff.

Mom: That's right. I may think you're crazy and have to commit you to an asylum, but I'm always willing to listen.

Son: I'm glad because there's a lot more to share with you.

Mom: Like what?



Son: Thank you for asking. What if I told you that the Roman Catholic Church began about 300 years after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus? And that the Roman emperor, Constantine the Great, was the man who started it. Constantine the Great was, in fact, the first Pope!

Mom: Now I know, for sure, you're crazy. Peter was the first Pope. Everybody knows that.

Son: That's what we have all been told, Mom. But it's not true. Constantine the Great, the emperor of Rome, was the first pope and since it is a matter of history - that fact can be verified very easily. Constantine simply made Christianity the official new religion of the Roman Empire! The statues that the Romans had grown so used to worshipping remained - but they were renamed for Christian "saints." Another fact, is that the title of "pope" is never mentioned in the Bible. And neither is the office of pope. Peter, being the first Pope, is another joke. The truth of the matter is that it is a fable. A fable that has been told so many times that people assume it is true.

Mom: I remember what you used to say about anyone who assumes. If you assume, you can make an ass out of you and me.

Son: That's so old that everyone knows that one Mom.

Mom: Of course. That's why I know it.

Son: Which makes the point. You don't want to assume that anything is true without checking it out!

Mom: So is there anything else you want to shock me with? Or are you finished?

Son: What if I told you that there is no biblical support for the teaching of the place known as *Purgatory*?

Mom: Now what are you talking about? I've been paying money for years, to the Church, to help pray your father out of purgatory. God knows your father needs all the help he can get, considering the life he led.

Son: I know that's what you've been told about purgatory. But it isn't true. There is no such place as purgatory! It was a teaching someone thought up, to get money out of those who would believe it and be concerned for those they loved and who had died. But the truth is this, you will not find anything about purgatory in the sixty-six books that make up what is called the Canon of Scripture - the Holy Bible. The Roman Catholic Church had to add extra books, called the *Books of the Apocrypha*, to their Bible, in order to support the phony teaching of purgatory (see Unger's Bible Dictionary). But the truth of the matter is that it was nothing but a money making scheme, that has paid off big time, for the Roman Catholic Church.

Mom: Don't tell me that!

Son: I'm serious. The teaching of purgatory didn't even begin until around the year 1438 A.D. Its been a total ripoff all of these years.

Mom: Do you know how I've sacrificed and gone without, in order to pay that money to get your father out of there early? I'm really having a hard time with all that you have been telling me.

Son: I know Mom. But I'm telling you this because I love you. I can't stand the thought of you being deceived any longer.

Mom: But I trust the Church. I was born into it. My mother and father had me baptized when I was a baby. I made my first communion and then my confirmation while a young girl. I got married in the Church by Father Louie. And might I remind you, it was Father Louie who spoke at your father's funeral and said the Mass for him. So can you understand why I'm having such a hard time with this?

Son: Yes, I can Mom. I went through the same thing when I first started learning all of this stuff. Don't forget - I did all of those things too.

Mom: What has Betty got to say about all of what you have been telling me? I suppose that you have told her the same things - haven't you?

Son: Of course I have. At first she thought I was nuts. Then she thought that Satan had gotten hold of me and was trying to get to her through me. But during the last few weeks she has been checking out what I have been telling her. And now she doesn't think that I'm so nuts any more.

Mom: So she now believes what you believe?

Son: I wish. No, she doesn't believe what I believe. But I'm hoping and praying that as she checks out what I've been learning and sharing with her, that she will see that what I've been saying is true. I'm hoping and praying that she will trust the Lord Jesus as her Savior by faith alone and nothing else.

Mom: Well, I don't know about that. I've always been told that you have to live a good life and do certain things in order to go to heaven. I've always trusted my priest.

Son: That's another thing.

Mom: Another thing? What other thing?

Son: The Roman Catholic Church teaches that Christ has ordained certain men, to a ministerial priesthood, to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross. But that is not true, according to the Bible. The Bible teaches that the Lord Jesus has ordained every believer to a holy and royal priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices, the praise of their lips and lives yielded to God (Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15; 1 Pet.

2:5-10). That is why there is no such thing as a clergy class and a layman class in biblical Christianity. And why we don't need a human priest.

Mom: Really?

Son: Really! You also don't have to do penance like you have done all of your life. Did you know that the word penance comes from the Latin word for "penalty." Since the Lord Jesus paid the penalty, for all of the sins that had ever been committed and would ever be committed, we don't need to do penance for our sins or pay a penalty for them.

Mom: You're kidding!

Son: I'm dead serious. In Jerusalem, was the temple, in which the Jewish people worshipped and made sacrifices to God for their sins. These sacrifices were according to the instructions that God had given Moses for the people of Israel to observe and follow. In this temple was a thick curtain that separated two rooms. One of the rooms was called the holy place and the other was called the holy of holies. No one could enter the room called the holy of holies except the man designated as the high priest and he could only enter it once a year while celebrating the feast known as *The Day of Atonement*. It was in the holy of holies that the high priest, while sprinkling the mercy seat of God with the blood of sacrificed animals, begged for the forgiveness of his sins and for the sins of the people of Israel before the LORD (Lev. 16; 23:26-32; Num. 29:7-11). Now this is why all of this is so important and relevant to us today. After, the Lord Jesus gave up His spirit, while on the cross at Calvary, the thick curtain that had divided the holy place from the holy of holies, was torn in half by God. From the top - down (Mt. 27:50-51; Mk. 15:37-38). God did this to signify that a new way was now open, for all believers, to be in His presence, no matter where they might be, with no other sacrifice or priesthood necessary except that of the Lord Jesus Himself (Heb. 9:1-8; 10:19-22).

Mom: I don't understand.

Son: When the Lord Jesus gave up His spirit while on the cross, He opened the way for us to go directly to God, the Father, with our prayers and requests. We can all now just talk to God and confess our sins to Him anytime we want. No matter where we happen to be. He hears and sees everything and knows what each of us are thinking. So we don't have to confess our sins to a priest anymore!

Mom: But I always have!

Son: I know. But you don't have to. If, you are trusting the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior.

Mom: But I do trust Jesus as my Savior.

Son: But what else are you trusting in addition to the Lord Jesus?

Mom: My Church and the sacraments.

Son: That's the problem! You aren't trusting in the finished work of Christ, alone, for your salvation. You are trusting in something else in addition to what He did for you and that is the same mistake most people make. The Bible refers to them as *works*. All religions have them. These are things their followers are told they must do in order to have a shot at heaven. But the Bible teaches that we can only go to heaven by God's grace. In other words: heaven is a gift to bad people - not a reward for good people.

Mom: I never heard anyone say that before. It doesn't sound right.

Son: That's because it is the exact opposite of what all religions teach. Think about it. The Roman Catholic Church, along with every other religion in the world, past and present, all tell their followers they have to do this or they have to do that in order to go to their particular version of heaven. Their followers can never know if they've done enough. They can only hope that they do. Then along come the apostles who tell us that the only way to heaven is by trusting in what God has done for us and not in what we have done or might do or hope to do for Him. It's a total flip-flop. The bottom line is that God does all the giving and we do all the receiving.

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: God, the Father, gave the Lord Jesus Christ to us to act as a substitute sinner for us so that the Lord Jesus could take upon Himself, the judgment we deserved for our sins. What He requires from us is that we simply trust the Lord Jesus as our Savior. By doing that, we don't have to pay the price for the things we have done in our lives that have offended God. The Lord Jesus already paid the price for us! That's why people have called it the *Good News of Jesus Christ*. Is there any news that could be better? And we do it by faith alone. No works (Rom. 4:5; 5:8; 2 Cor. 5:21; Eph. 2:8-9).

Mom: My head is swimming. So all I have to do is trust Jesus as my Savior and I will go to heaven?

Son: That's right. Just like the thief on the cross next to Him. All he did was believe and the Lord Jesus said that he, the thief, would be with Him, the Lord Jesus, in Paradise - that very day (Lk. 23:43).

Mom: I remember that story.

Son: Of course you do and so does everyone else. But what they don't get is the point of it all. That thief on the cross was a very bad man. Also, He was not only a thief but a malefactor (Lk.23:33, 39). That means he probably was a murderer and had tried to overthrow the Roman government in addition to being a thief. But by trusting the Lord Jesus, to be the Messiah, everything he had ever done was forgiven him. When he asked the Lord Jesus to remember him, when the Lord Jesus came into His kingdom, that indicated he had had a change of mind and was trusting the Lord Jesus to save him (Lk. 23:42). That guy didn't have a chance to do anything or give anything in order to make it to heaven. Isn't that something?

Mom: Yes - it is.

Son: There is a reason why good people go to hell and bad people go to heaven (Lk. 18:9-14).

Mom: What reason?

Son: The reason why good people go to hell, is that they don't think they need a Savior. They think they can get to heaven by doing good things and by trying to be good people. In other words - by their own efforts. On the other hand there are people, who know that no matter how hard they try, or what they might attempt to do or give it won't be enough to allow them to live with a perfect and holy God in heaven. They are bad people and they know it. So when they hear that God has provided them with a perfect and holy Savior, whose name is Jesus Christ and who has taken upon Himself the judgment they know they deserve for their sins, they place their trust in Him. By faith alone. What I have been telling people is that if what the Lord Jesus did while on the cross isn't enough to save me - then I am lost. Because there is nothing else that I can add to what He did to save me. If I try to add anything else to what He did, then I am saying that what He did was not enough and He needs me, to help Him save me. Anything else includes being baptized in water or with water or repenting or joining a church or making Him Lord of my life or any other type of work that people have added to His finished work for their salvation.

Mom: It sounds like you're preaching to me. But it's okay.

Son: Thanks mom. I get worked up about it, because there are so many people who have been deceived into thinking that they are saved and they aren't. And the reason why they aren't saved is because someone has told them they have to do something in addition to what the Lord Jesus has done for them. So these people are engaged in a form of religion and they don't even know it. That concerns me very much! There isn't much you can say about the people who deliberately reject God and His Holy Bible and end up in hell. But the person who dies, thinking they are saved, and expecting to open their eyes in heaven and instead find themselves in hell because they had been deceived by false teachings - I cry for.

Mom: So what do you want me to do?

Son: It's not a matter of what I want you to do but a matter of what do you want to do. Everybody has to decide who or what they are going to trust. Do you want to trust your eternal soul on the teachings of an organization that contradicts the clear teachings in the Holy Bible? Or do you want to trust your eternal soul on the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ as taught by the apostles?

Mom: You know it's hard to breakaway from what you are so used to doing all of your life.

Son: I know that mom. It's the same for everyone. We all grow up hearing and learning different things. And we all form our belief system on those things. I heard something a while back that was simple yet very profound. It was this: What we learn today depends upon what we have learned in the past. Isn't that heavy?

Mom: I'll say. I think if this conversation gets any heavier I'm going to have a broken back.

Son: Very funny. You're a real riot. But this is a very serious subject, to say the least and that's why I get so intense about it. The thought of being in heaven without you breaks my heart.

Mom: Don't worry about it.

Son: I don't worry about it - but I am extremely concerned about it. That's why I am trying so hard to make this whole thing clear to you. If I didn't care - I wouldn't share. With you or with anyone else. I know that I come on with too much stuff for a lot of people to absorb. But I can't help it. I figure I only have one chance to tell them some of the stuff I've learned and that's it. It's possible they might not ever hear any of these things again.

Mom: You mean you've only told me some of the stuff you've learned? There's more?

Son: Yeah - why?

Mom: Because you've told me so much already. That's why.

Son: Don't worry - I'm not going to load you up with anything more. You've been pretty good about listening to me about all of these things that I've been telling you about.

Mom: I have - haven't I?

Son: Now you're going to get cute. Aren't you?

Mom: I'm always cute. Why do you think your father was crazy about me. He couldn't help himself.

Son: You're something else mom. That's why I love you so much. So are you going to make a decision to trust the Lord Jesus for your salvation and not your Church or the sacraments and all the other stuff that you've been taught all of your life?

Mom: So how do I do that?

Son: By admitting what we all know about ourselves. You are a sinner who cannot do anything to help save yourself. Then tell the Lord Jesus that you are going to trust that what He did, is enough to wipe away all of the sins you have ever committed and will ever commit. You are going to trust Him and Him alone for your salvation. Nothing else. And you're going to do it by faith alone. That's how.

Mom: That's it?

Son: Yep.

Mom: That seems too easy.

Son: So will you do it now?

Mom: Not so fast. I have to think about it. My head feels like it's ready to explode. Besides, what would your brother Billy and my sister Josie say? They would think that I went crazy - like you.

Son: I know. And it really isn't so easy to believe in what someone else has done for you - is it?

Mom: I guess not.

Son: That's why most people prefer religion rather than true Christianity. They find it easier to follow a list of do's and don'ts from some spiritual leader than to simply believe what God has told us through the writers of His Holy Bible. Churchianity is always more appealing to people than true Christianity!

Mom: Well, we will have to talk again. About all of this.

Son: That's for sure! I love you, mom.

Mom: And I love you, son.

# Another Mother & Son Talk!

by  
Robert E. Schoenle

Mom: Son, I need to talk to you.

Son: What about?

Mom: Remember that talk we had a few months ago? When you blew my mind about not being a Catholic anymore? And all the other stuff you told me about the apostles and Jesus and Mary?

Son: How could I forget? You didn't talk to me for over a month. Then I started to get phone calls from Bill and Aunt Josie telling me I was going to hell unless I came back to Mother Church and confessed the errors of my ways. I even got calls from family members, who hadn't been to church in years, wanting to know what happened to me. It was amazing!

Mom: For that you can blame me.

Son: I figured that when it started.

Mom: I just thought maybe someone could talk some sense into you and you would forget all of that stuff you were talking about.

Son: Actually - I have to thank you.

Mom: Thank me? You're kidding. I heard what some of them said to you. A lot of it wasn't very nice.

Son: I know. Especially from Bill and Aunt Josie. They got pretty nasty. They said I hated Catholics.

Mom: I heard.

Son: But it was okay.

Mom: I don't understand. I heard that they did a lot of yelling and threatening to you.

Son: It's true - they did. But it gave me an opportunity to share things from the Bible that they were unaware of. And to explain to them why I believe what I believe and that it was out of love and concern for them that I was sharing what I was with them. If I didn't love them - I wouldn't bother. Who needs the grief?

Mom: Well, I know you blew some of their minds. Like you did me.



Son: My intention isn't to blow anybody's mind but just to explain to them why I left the Catholic Church.

Mom: Well - your brother Bill and your Aunt Josie don't want to ever talk to you again. That's what they told me.

Son: I'm sorry to hear that. But there's a reason for that kind of reaction.

Mom: What reason?

Son: They feel threatened! They have believed what they were taught in the Roman Catholic Church all of their lives. To the point to where they dedicated themselves to serving it as a full-time vocation. That's why Bill became a priest and Aunt Josie a nun. Now I come along and tell them that they have believed a lot of lies and false teachings. So it's only natural that they would get upset and be mad. I'm shaking their comfort zone and they can't handle it. So instead of checking out what I've got to say - they reject me and what I said out of hand.

Mom: That doesn't seem right.

Son: It isn't. But what can I do? As a Christian, I am supposed to share the Good News of Jesus Christ with other people (Mt. 28:19-20; Mk. 16:15-16). I especially want to share it with the people I am closest with and who I care the most about. That's why I had to talk to you. I love you the most of all.

Mom: You're just trying to butter me up.

Son: No I'm not. I really mean it.

Mom: Well, that's what I wanted to talk to you about.

Son: About what?

Mom: Well, I finally looked up the Bible passages you gave me, about Mary having other sons and daughters. You know, after she had given birth to Jesus (Mt. 1:24-25; 12:46-47; 13:55-56; Mk. 3:31-32; 6:3; Lk. 8:19-20).

Son: And?

Mom: You were right! It's seems pretty clear to me and should to anyone reading it, that she did have other kids after the birth of Jesus.

Son: I know.

Mom: So why does the Catholic Church teach that she didn't?

Son: Maybe it was so they could elevate her to a position of deserving worship.

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: Well, think about it. If she was just an ordinary woman - how could you justify worshipping her? But if you could say of her that she was a virgin all of her life and that she was the mother of God and that she was sinless, then you could make her into a person worthy of worship. Even equal to the Lord Jesus.

Mom: I don't understand.

Son: Would you be willing to worship someone and pray to that someone and give money in the name of that someone if you did not think of that someone in the same way you do with God?

Mom: No.

Son: So maybe that is your answer. I remember what took place when my buddy Bob married his wife Jan.

Mom: Remember what?

Son: What she did after the priest pronounced them man and wife and before they went down the aisle to leave the church.

Mom: What already!

Son: After the priest was through with his part of the ceremony, Jan walked over to the statue of Mary that was at the front of the church and off to the side and knelt down before it and I guess she prayed to it while she was on her knees before it. I never forgot her doing that. And that happened a long time ago.

Mom: So what!

Son: What do you mean, so what? God made it very clear that we are to have no other gods before Him and that we are not to worship or to bow down to any manmade images. It was the Roman Catholic Church that taught Jan to pray to Mary. But according to what God told Moses it was a definite no - no.

Mom: How do you know that?

Son: You can read it for yourself in the Old Testament book of Exodus 20:4-5. And after you read it, you'll have to decide whose instructions are you going to believe and follow. The instructions, given by God, as they are recorded in the Bible, or those of the Roman Catholic Church. What is really interesting though, is that the Catholic Church is not the first false religion to come up with a so-called queen of heaven.

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: Just what I said. The pagan religions have always had their particular version of a queen of heaven going all the way back to Nimrod in the days when the Tower of Babel was being built. You can read about it in a book called *The Two Babylons* by Alexander Hislop (Loizeaux Brothers, N. Y.) If you read that book, you would be amazed at the incredible similarities between the religion of Babylon and the Roman Catholic Church.

Mom: I never heard of that book.

Son: I know, most people haven't. It's considered a classic literary effort what with the documentation of its historical content and the explanation of the teachings of both religions.

Mom: Really?

Son: Really. But if you don't want to read that book but do want to read about another queen of heaven that the Jewish people gave worship to, all you have to do is turn to the Old Testament and read Jeremiah 7:17-18 and Jeremiah 44:15-30. In those Bible passages you will read about a woman, who the people of Judah worshipped and sacrificed to. A woman they referred to as, "the queen of heaven."

Mom: You're kidding!

Son: No. I'm not.

Mom: I never heard of that.

Son: Who has? But the point is that God got ticked off at the people of Judah for doing that and He judged them big time. The people of Judah paid a big price for worshiping and sacrificing to that particular queen of heaven. And so did the people of Egypt for that matter.

Mom: Really?

Son: Yep. And there is a reason why. God describes Himself in the Old Testament as being a jealous God in a number of passages (Ex. 20:5; Ex. 34:14; Dt. 4:24; 5:9; 6:15; Josh. 24:19). The word jealous means that He is unwilling to share His people or the love of His people and their worship with anyone or anything! And that's a fact.

Mom: I'm glad you're not preaching to me.

Son: Here we go again. I'm not preaching to you. But I am trying to teach you some of the stuff I have learned.

Mom: You're sweet.

Son: I don't know if it's you who is now doing the buttering up bit or if you're just trying to aggravate me.

Mom: That's part of what being a woman is all about.

Son: What?

Mom: To keep men confused.

Son: You really are cute.

Mom: I know. But you've really been doing a lot of studying though - haven't you?

Son: Yes. But only because I want to learn.

Mom: So have you told Bob and Jan that what she did was wrong?

Son: Well, yes. But not so as to offend them. I really don't want to offend anyone.

Mom: That's rich. For a guy who doesn't want to offend anyone - you sure do a good job of doing just that.

Son: It's not so much me as it is the fact that the Bible destroys the teachings of all religions! And people can't handle that.

Mom: But remember - what you say is based according to your interpretation of the Bible.

Son: That's the number one cop-out that everyone uses. Especially Roman Catholics.

Mom: What is?

Son: The one you just used that what I am saying is based on my interpretation. The fact of the matter is that there can only be one correct interpretation for anything you read, if you use the "Literal Method of Interpretation!" In most cases, not all, but in most cases the way you read a newspaper or magazine or book is the way you can read and understand the Bible.

Mom: I don't know about that.

Son: It's true! That's why the brush off phrase of "that's your interpretation" is a cop-out for the one who says it. They think that by saying that it gets them off the hook. Because they are not interested enough to check the Bible out for themselves to see if it's true or not.

Mom: I haven't thought of it quite like that.

Son: That just puts you in with the vast majority of people in the world. That's all. I'm not putting

you down mom, when I say that. It's just the way most people are. People are just too lazy to check things out for themselves.

Mom: They're not interested.

Son: You're exactly right! It's amazing the stuff that people will memorize. How many guys have memorized the names and battings averages and other statistics for their favorite baseball team? How about the women who have memorized poems and favorite passages from romantic novels. Kids today can tell you the words to songs that are totally unintelligible to adults. Yet if you asked them something simple about the Bible they don't have a clue.

Mom: You're getting on your soap box again!

Son: I know. So sue me! It really bugs me that most people in this country are so biblically illiterate. There is no excuse for it. Other than the fact that they are just not interested.

Mom: Now don't get all worked up about it.

Son: It's just a shame that people don't see the importance of it all. Life is so short and than it's over. But what happens then? Most people block that thought out because if they think about it they might get scared.

Mom: That's true. When I think about it, dying I mean, I sometimes still get scared.

Son: Just know this - that if you trust the Lord Jesus as your Savior - you won't be afraid of dying. That's why when the Roman Catholic Church had millions of people killed, for trusting the Lord Jesus as their savior, by faith alone, many of them died with a song on their lips as martyrs for their faith in Him.

Mom: When did that happen?

Son: During the time known as "The Inquisition!" You can read about it in various history books. The Roman Catholic Church doesn't want you to know about "The Inquisition" because what was done by their command and authority was horrendous. Only God knows how many millions of Jews and Christians were killed by monks and priests and others who worked for the Roman Catholic Church under orders from Rome. But that is all ancient history and who knows about it today?

Mom: Not me.

Son: Not me either, until I started to search out books that were written about that period of time and what the Roman Catholic Church did to those who would not obey its orders. It was a brutal time that began in 1232 A.D. And it lasted for hundreds of years.

Mom: Really? Hundreds of years?

Son: Yep. You probably think that Don Vito Corleone, of the Godfather, was the one who came up with the idea of making someone an offer they can't refuse. But he wasn't. It was the Roman Catholic Church! You only have to go back a few hundred years to confirm this. It was when the Spanish Conquistadors conquered the Indians of South and Central America. There were priests with them who represented the Roman Catholic Church and they made the Indians an offer they couldn't refuse. Either they believed what the Catholic Church told them to believe or they were killed. Is that a great evangelizing program or what?

Mom: That's ridiculous!

Son: Not to the Indians who were enslaved and murdered for refusing to bow down to the Catholic Church. This is all part of history, mom. You don't have to believe me. If you go to a library you can learn for yourself, what a brutal history the Roman Catholic Church has for itself. Look up topics like, "The Spanish Inquisition" or "The Dark Ages" or the influence of the Roman Catholic Church during the Spanish conquest of South and Central America and of California. It's really quite shocking!

Mom: So how come we don't know about any of this?

Son: Come on, mom. Let's be real. Here we have a conglomerate that likes to project itself as loving and caring and benevolent to all human beings throughout the world. Its chief executive officer is held in awe by the stockholders and even by those who are not stockholders because he is the number one representative of God on the planet. His orders and directives are accepted as if God Himself had given them. To disobey or to disagree with this man is equal to doing the same with God. What isn't known though, to the current majority of stockholders, is the history behind this conglomerate. The fact that it is guilty of all kinds of horrible crimes and atrocities against innocent people who would not believe what they had been told to believe. Now, suppose you were the head of this organization or worked in the upper management level of it. Would you want the new and current stockholders to know all of these things?

Mom: Of course not.

Son: That's right. You would not. And the reason why you would not want your current stockholders to know the history of this organization is that they would probably sell all of their stock in the company because they wouldn't want to have anything to do with a company with such little regard for people. On top of that, those people who might have been interested in buying stock in this company would probably not do so because they wouldn't want to be associated with an organization with such a heinous history. And we know what would then happen to the value of the outstanding shares of this conglomerate. They would drop like a rock in value. Because there would be a flood of sell orders with few buy orders. The result would be a stock market crash for this particular company and the loss of a great amount of money for those who held a large number of shares in it.

Mom: That's an interesting analogy.

Son: I know. It just came to me while we were talking.

Mom: So how does the Roman Catholic Church respond to the crimes of the past when they are brought up?

Son: Well, the crimes of the past are seldom brought up to start off with. You know that people have very short memories. Politicians depend on that fact. That's why they will make promises during an election campaign and then do the exact opposite of what they had promised to do when they are in office. They figure that the majority of people will forget about their promises in contrast with their actions by the time the next election is held. And the politicians are right. Most people do forget. So, to answer your question, the Catholic Church has, through the years, tried to cover its history up. They like to pretend that none of these things really took place or happened. Recently Rome has acknowledged that mistakes had been made in the past but it is not a time to look backward but to look forward. The spin from Rome is that because these things happened so long ago, it shouldn't make a difference to anyone any longer. In other words it isn't really relevant to us today. Love among the supposed brethren is the anthem of today.

Mom: Okay. I get the point.

Son: I hope so, mom. Because few do.

Mom: I have a question that has really bothered me and maybe you know the answer.

Son: What's the question?

Mom: If God loves us so much why did He create hell?

Son: Good question and here's the answer. He didn't create hell for human beings but for those angelic beings who rebelled against Him in heaven under the leadership of Lucifer (Isa. 14:12-14; Mt. 25:41). Afterwards, God changed Lucifer's name to Satan. Actually, the correct name for that place is Hades.

Mom: No kidding.

Son: Yep. Hades now is nothing but a holding tank or way station, for all of the people who lived and died without trusting God alone for their salvation (Lk. 16:19-31). After the 1,000 year reign of the Lord Jesus on earth, He is going to judge all of those people in Hades for rejecting Him and then have them cast into the Lake of Fire where they will be tormented forever and ever (Mt. 13:42; 25:41, 46; Rev. 14:10-11; 20:10, 15).

Mom: That's horrible!

Son: I know.

Mom: You mean they can never get out?

Son: Nope.

Mom: Where is the love in that?

Son: God showed His love by sacrificing a special part of Himself, in the Lord Jesus, who died for each of us because of the sins we commit during our lifetime. The only requirement on our part, today, is to simply believe His Word that the sacrifice of the Lord Jesus is enough to save us. The Historic Christian Doctrine on the subject known as The Atonement is this: The atonement through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ removed forever man's slavery to sin and Satan, brought redemption, and reconciled man with God to all who accept it by faith alone (Lev. 17:11; Jn. 1:29; Ro. 3:25; 5:9; 10:9-10; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14, 20; Heb. 9:22; 13:20; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:24; 1 Jn. 1:7; Rev. 5:9; 12:11). In other words, the atonement was wholly of God, regardless of any argument to the contrary (2 Cor. 5:21), and completely by grace, not by any works (Eph. 2:5-13).

Mom: That's what you said before.

Son: I know. I keep saying it over and over again because it is so tough for people to understand. There is no similarity between man-made religions and God ordained salvation! Man-made religions tell you what you have to do for God while God ordained salvation tells you what God has done for you. It's the difference between heaven and hell and it depends on who you choose to believe. So don't blame God for the people who end up in hell. The Lord Jesus didn't come to earth to condemn anyone but to save those who would trust Him (Jn. 3:16-18). Those who refuse to trust Him, as their personal Savior, by faith alone, condemn themselves.

Mom: Maybe so. But it's still hard to take.

Son: I know. But no matter how much I try not to offend someone it is just a matter of time before the penalty for rejecting God's love gift, has to be brought up.

Mom: I don't like this subject! So lets change it.

Son: Okay. But there will come a time when the subject of eternal punishment will have to be considered and addressed by everyone. Because then they won't be able to avoid it.

Mom: I guess I have no choice but to ask you to explain why you just said what you did.

Son: The word "death" means "separation" and the word "life" means "connection" in the original languages from which they are translated into English. To die physically is to have one's eternal spirit separate from the physical body it dwelled in (Lk. 16:19-31). That is referred to as the first death in the Bible. The second death is when one's eternal spirit is separated from the presence of God. That is referred to as the second death (Rev. 20:11-14). On the other hand, to have eternal life means that one's eternal spirit will forever be in connection to God. In other words, where God is, that human being connected to Him, will be also, forever (Rev. 21:1-4).

Mom: So all of these words have definite and clear meanings?



Son: That's exactly right. What many people don't truly understand is that every human being is an eternal spiritual being housed in a temporary physical body. In other words, every human being is going to live forever! Whether they want to or not and whether they like it or not and whether they believe it or not. But many people think that death means the end of everything. In fact, the most common reason why someone will commit suicide is because they want to cease to exist! Living has become that unbearable to them. They don't understand that they may kill their body but their spirit will continue to live on. So what they hope to accomplish by killing themselves is not going to happen. They will continue to exist - consciously - somewhere. Either in conscious, eternal joy with the Lord Jesus or in conscious, eternal torment without Him. That will be the destiny for every human being. There are no other options or choices. God made a decision to love us even though there is nothing about us that would give Him reason to do so. And because of His love for us He wants us to be connected to Him and not separated from Him.

Mom: But I believe that!

Son: I'm glad to hear that. But remember, we are talking about people who don't.

Mom: I have to admit that was pretty interesting. Now before you go off on another tangent I wanted to ask you about Peter. You said that he was not the first pope.

Son: That's right.

Mom: So why should I believe you?

Son: Would you believe the Bible?

Mom: I think so.

Son: Well, if you read the 15th chapter of Acts you would find that there was a major dispute concerning whether it was necessary or not for all men to be circumcised in order to be saved. In reading this account you will notice that Peter isn't the man in charge of this council attended by believers and the apostles and elders of the church (Acts 15:4). The man in charge of this council is James, the son of Mary and Joseph, the half-brother of the Lord Jesus (Mt. 13:55; Mk. 6:3; Gal. 1:19). This man James became a believer in the Lord Jesus after His resurrection from the dead (Acts 1:14; 1 Cor. 15:7). James became the leader of the Jerusalem church (Acts 12:17; 15:13; 21:18; Gal. 1:19; 2:9, 11-12). Not Peter! And it was this same James who wrote the Letter of James. So the question that needs to be answered is this: If Peter was the first pope, why wasn't he in charge of the Jerusalem Council?

Mom: I don't know.

Son: It's because he wasn't the first pope. He wasn't a pope. There wasn't any such thing as a pope during the first three hundred years after the resurrection of the Lord Jesus!

Mom: It's really tough to deal with the thought that I've been taught to believe lies by people I have always trusted. You don't know how bad it was for me, to think about all of the things you told me the first time.

Son: I know, mom. How about this one. You've also been told that Peter was never married. Isn't that right?

Mom: Well, of course. Everybody knows that the pope, like the priests, are not to marry.

Son: Well, if you read Matthew 8:14-15 and Mark 1:29-31 and Luke 4:38-39 you will learn that Peter was married and that the Lord Jesus even healed Peter's mother-in-law when she was sick.

Mom: No way!

Son: All you have to do is read it for yourself.

Mom: So what's to be made out of all of this?

Son: You've been lied to and taught a lot of religious junk. It's that simple.

Mom: You're doing it to me again. You do know that - don't you?

Son: What?

Mom: Blowing my mind.

Son: I love when you use those old sayings!

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: When you say things like blowing my mind or get out of town and groovy.

Mom: So what do you want to make out of it?

Son: Nothing. It's just kind of funny the expressions you use.

Mom: You're driving me crazy and you think I'm funny.

Son: Don't get offended. It was just an observation.

Mom: So I use old expressions and I'm funny. Is there anything else?

Son: You're very combative.

Mom: I didn't use to be. But with the garbage I had to put up with from your father and his mother, God rest their souls, it was either fight back or become a permanent doormat.

Son: I know. You had to become a tough broad.

Mom: That's right. And I did.

Son: I know. Remember. I was there to see a lot of it take place. Besides, you've told me about it a thousand times.

Mom: You wouldn't be getting smart with your old mother, would you?

Son: Me? Smart? Never!

Mom: I raised a wise guy.

Son: But you still love me!

Mom: Of course. And I'm very proud of you.

Son: Of me? What for?

Mom: For being willing to put up with all the grief the family has been giving you. Especially Bill and Josie. They say that you're unloving - judgmental - a bigot - and into Catholic bashing.

Son: I make it a point not to take it personally. They just don't understand. I keep hoping that one of these days, they will check out some of this stuff and come to understand it. But if they do end up in hell, and I pray they don't, they won't have anyone to blame but themselves. Because they have been told. I hope you can see how serious all of these different things we've talked about are.

Mom: Oh, I know how serious they are. That's why it could drive me crazy. My friend Sue says that we all come back in different lives until we attain perfection.

Son: That's called reincarnation. It's a teaching from eastern religions and it's just another Satanic lie to fool people into believing that they will have another chance after this life.

Mom: Why do you say that?

Son: Because the Bible says that it is appointed unto man ONCE to die, but after this the judgment (Heb. 9:27). Do you get it? Once to die - not many times to die.

Mom: I get it. So should I tell Sue?

Son: Of course! Tell Sue to read Hebrews 9:27 and then explain it to her.

Mom: You want me to be like you?

Son: With all of my heart! I want you to go to heaven with me.

Mom: What makes you think that I won't?

Son: I'm not supposed to judge whether someone is going to go to heaven or not. No one is. What I and everyone else am supposed to judge though, are the teachings, of those who profess to know the way to get there (Jn. 5:46-47; Acts 17:10-12). That includes all religions. And the reason why we can do that is because we have the completed Word of God, known as the Holy Bible (2 Tim. 3:16; 2 Pet. 1:21; Jude 1:3; Rev. 22:18-19). We are not to look for the writing of or the giving of any additional Scripture! False Christian religions usually rely on additional revelations and writings, other than the Bible, to support their teachings and beliefs. But anyway, when you can tell me that you are trusting the Lord Jesus as your personal Savior and nothing else. No Roman Catholic Church. No Sacraments. No Mary. No water baptism. No good works. No giving money. No priest. No Mass. No Holy Communion. No nothing. But simply trusting in the finished work of the Lord Jesus, alone, for YOUR salvation. Then you will know for sure, that you are going to heaven and you will tell me so. With assurance and confidence (1 Jn. 5:11-14a).

Mom: We'll see.

Son: It's what I pray for.

# The Last Mother & Son Talk!

by  
Robert E. Schoenle

Son: Hi - mom.

Mom: Hello - son.

Son: How have you been?

Mom: Fine. And you?

Son: Okay. Are you feeling all right?

Mom: As well as can be expected. Considering everything. How about you? How do you feel?

Son: Kind of tired. I'm looking forward to getting some rest soon.

Mom: Me too. Have you heard from Betty?

Son: No. Have you?

Mom: Not a word.

Son: Does she know the situation?

Mom: Of course. Your brother Bill told her.

Son: So what was her reaction?

Mom: Well, according to Bill, she said that she was sorry to hear the news, but since her divorce from you, she has gone on with her life and she doesn't see any reason to talk to you. Bill thinks she is bitter.

Son: That's too bad. Being bitter I mean. That's the one thing that I would not allow myself to do, after our divorce. Because I knew that if I allowed myself to get bitter, it would hurt me more than anything else. Not only psychologically, but physically as well. Bitterness can eat you up and I forced myself to say no to it.

Mom: Well, Betty hasn't and there's nothing you can do about it.

Son: I never blamed her for the divorce. I blamed myself. Let's face it - I made the decisions that eventually cost us everything we had. Including our home.

Mom: I know. I tried to tell you but you wouldn't listen.

Son: Betty told me too. But what can I say? I didn't make the wrong decisions because I wanted to. Who does? Let's face it, the decisions we make are made because we think they are the right thing to do at the time they are made. But how many times does it turn out to be the wrong thing? But however it turns out, we have to live with the consequences of our decisions.

Mom: I know. But you had everything.

Son: I know. The loving wife, the family, the dog, the house with the white picket fence, a successful business, respect, prestige, money and now it's all gone.

Mom: I loved Betty. She was like a daughter to me. Her divorcing you really hurt me.

Son: It crushed me! But I think she felt betrayed by me. I was her hero. Her knight in shining armor. And then when I turned my back on everything because I thought that I was going to serve the Lord Jesus and help save the world - well I think that over the course of time she came to feel that I didn't love her or care about her or her feelings. None of that was true, of course, but that is probably the perception she had. There is no question that I was insensitive to her and to her needs. But we all get too smart too late. Her thing with her parents didn't help either, of course. But that's beside the point. I made the decisions and we all paid the price for my being wrong.

Mom: I've always thought that you've been too hard on yourself. After all, there's always two sides to a story. When things were going good, you were a hero. And when they went bad, you became a bum. Where's the loyalty?

Son: How do you spell that word - loyalty? I really don't see much of it today. The marriage vows are now in health - not sickness. In richer - not poorer. Until divorce - not death - do we part. The honor and obey part isn't even included anymore. It's another one of those very unfunny jokes. The amazing thing is that if I say this, I am perceived as being bitter - when I'm not. I'm just making a realistic and accurate statement on how things are today!

Mom: I know. I get pretty depressed about it all some times.

Son: So did I. But one night during a Bible study, at a church in Bensenville, I heard the pastor say that he had visited many mental institutions and had never met anyone who was suffering from depression, who was thankful about anything. It was his opinion that if you are thankful, you cannot be depressed.

Mom: That seems pretty simplistic.

Son: I know. But he believed that depression was caused by focusing on ones self. In other words, depressed people had the "you" bug. They were dwelling solely upon themselves and no one else. We all do it at one time or another. For example, what you once had and would like to have again. What you never had but would like to have. What someone else has and you don't. The point being that your thoughts are centered on "you" and if that is the case you will be depressed. You might be famous, rich, beautiful, handsome, powerful or successful. It won't make any difference. Because your thoughts are focused on "you," depression will be the end result. People like to dwell on the past and what they have been through and the loss of loved ones. If they do this, they will become depressed! We usually call it a "pity party."

Mom: So how do you overcome it? The depression I mean.

Son: By being thankful for what you have!

Mom: You mean like Pollyanna? I think she played the “glad game” in that movie. If I remember it right.

Son: Something like that. We all have many things to be thankful for. We simply need to focus on them. That becomes positive thinking in contrast to feeling sorry for ourselves that leads to negative thinking that leads to depression. That’s why when Christians are facing death, they can still be positive. Because they know that it is only a temporary separation from those they love. If those they love are also Christians, that is (1 Cor. 15:42-44, 51-57; 1 Th. 4:13-18). If I know that I’ll be seeing you again in heaven, why would I be depressed, even when death is staring me in the face? If you read "Fox’s Book of Martyrs" you’ll see what I mean. It’s all about people who were killed for their faith in Christ as their personal Savior. We have a hope in the Lord Jesus that those who don’t, cannot understand, no matter how much they might try. And that’s a fact!

Mom: I know. I do thank God for that hope.

Son: Another way to avoid depression is to focus on others and try to help them. No matter how bad we might think we have it, there is always someone else who is a whole lot worse off.

Mom: That is so true.

Son: Anyway, I could really relate to what the pastor said that night about depression and I have applied what he said to myself ever since. So even with what has happened in my personal life, I have an awful lot to be thankful for. Your decision to trust the Lord Jesus as your Savior, by faith alone, for example.

Mom: I know. Billy and Josie couldn’t believe it. They think you brainwashed me. Funny isn’t it?

Son: Hilarious. As if I could ever convince you to do something that you didn’t want to do.

Mom: I know.

Son: If anyone is brainwashed - it’s them. They won’t even check out anything we’ve told them.

Mom: That’s true. You would think that they would. Out of curiosity, if for no other reason.

Son: Or to prove us wrong.

Mom: But they won’t.

Son: I think that they are afraid to. But maybe they will one of these days.

Mom: I’m not going to give up on them. I’m going to do with them the way you did with me. And that is share biblical truths with them whenever I have an opportunity to do so.

Son: That’s all you can do. So what’s new with my big brother Bill?

Mom: Not much. He thinks that what is happening is judgment from God for leaving the Catholic Church. Can you believe it?

Son: You're kidding.

Mom: I'm not kidding. That's what he said.

Son: He can be such a jerk at times. Well, the next time you see him, tell him that I miss and love him very much.

Mom: He knows that. It's too bad that he has a hard head. It runs in the family. But I'll remind him of it.

Son: Thanks. At least he is still speaking with you.

Mom: That's true. But - I am his mother.

Son: But I'm his brother and he still won't talk to me.

Mom: He feels its all your fault and has washed his hands of you. He blames my change of mind about Roman Catholicism on you. According to him, you have poisoned my mind.

Son: It's too bad he won't take the blinders off his eyes and really examine the evidence. And seriously think about the practices of Roman Catholicism that are so obviously contrary to biblical teachings.

Mom: I know. That's what I did. I sat down one day and picked up our family Bible and looked up the Bible verses that you had given me to check out. It took me quite a while because I had never really studied the Bible on what it said about anything. I didn't know where all the different books were located and then to look up specific verses was really tough for me to do.

Son: But you did it!

Mom: Yes. I did! With all of the stuff you had told me, I finally had to find out for myself. Of course the more I did it the easier it became. Not that it was easy mind you. You know what I mean?

Son: Yes. I do. You know I've never asked you what finally made you search the Scriptures to see if what I was saying was true or not. So what was it?

Mom: When you said the Lord Jesus had been sacrificed one time, for all time, for men and women who would trust Him as their personal Savior (Heb. 10:10, 12, 14, 17).

Son: So why did that bother you so much?

Mom: Because of the Mass.

Son: The Mass?

Mom: Yes. The Mass. You know what I mean! All Roman Catholics are taught that the Mass is an unbloody sacrifice which atones for the sins of the living and the dead. And that each sacrifice of the Mass appeases God's wrath against sin. The Mass makes Christ literally and actually present in His death and sacrifice. That happens thousands of times each and every day throughout the world.



Son: It's all quite incredible and ridiculous when you compare the Mass with the Bible - isn't it?

Mom: Yes. It's like being on opposite sides of a big room. There is no similarity between the teachings. The Bible tells me that the once-for-all sacrifice of the cross fully appeased God's wrath against sin (Heb. 10:10-18) and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 9:22). And that the Lord Jesus should not be presented in His death and sacrifice any longer, because He has risen and is "alive forevermore" (Ro. 6:9-10; Rev. 1:17-18).

Son: Now that your eyes have been opened to the truth don't you find it amazing that you never looked into the teachings we all took for granted? I know I am.

Mom: I know what you mean. But why would we? We're taught it and we accept it. Like everything else for that matter. I think the attitude of most people is that one religion is as good as another.

Son: I know. I used to say that. And actually that is a true saying. Because every religion will send you straight to hell. People don't know that God hates religion! Everything that God has done, through the Lord Jesus, is in direct conflict with all religions. Think about it. Who had the Lord Jesus crucified? It was the Jewish religious leaders of His day. Those guys should have received Him (Jn. 1:11) with open arms. And the reason why I say that is because they knew the Old Testament like the back of their hands. They knew the prophecies of the Messiah whom God would one day send to them. But they refused to receive the very One the Scriptures told of and taught about (Lk. 24:25-27, 44-45; Jn. 5:45-47). They preferred their religion over Him.

Mom: But you can say that now because your eyes have been opened to the truth of the Bible.

Son: That's right. That's why I don't get smart about people who refuse to listen. I just say to myself, there go I, but for the grace of God. I didn't get saved because I was so smart and looking for God. The fact is He came looking for me. You know that picture of the lamb being carried by the Lord Jesus?

Mom: Yes. I do.

Son: Well, I always think of myself as being that lamb. Lost and defenseless and stupid. But the Lord Jesus, being the Good Shepherd, went looking for me because He knew I was lost and in big trouble. I always marvel at the thought that God really loves and cares about me personally.

Mom: I know what you mean. But I want to tell you what turned me around and caused me to search the Scriptures. It wasn't any brain-washing technique that your brother Billy thinks you used on me. It was the Mass. Because at each Mass, the priest presents to the Father, the sacrifice of Christ. But the Bible says that Christ presented the sacrifice of Himself, once, to the Father (Heb. 9:24-28). Roman Catholics are taught that the Sacrifice of the Mass is the Sacrifice of the Cross. It is only the manner in which it is offered that is different. The Bible, however, teaches that the sacrifice of the cross, was an historical event that occurred once about 1,969 years ago outside of Jerusalem (Mk. 15:21-41). The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated in the *Sacrifice of the Mass*. The Bible teaches that the sacrifice of the cross is finished (Jn. 19:30). Roman Catholicism teaches that the sacrificial work of redemption is continually carried out through the sacrifice of the Mass. The Bible teaches that the sacrificial work of redemption was finished when the Lord Jesus gave His life while on the cross (Eph. 1:7; Heb. 1:3).

Son: So that is what got you to start thinking?

Mom: Yes. But there is a lot more.

Son: I'm listening.

Mom: Another false teaching regarding the Mass is that the faithful receive the benefits of the cross in fullest measure through the Sacrifice of the Mass. But the Bible teaches that believers receive the benefits of the cross in fullest measure in Christ through faith (Eph. 1:3-14). Roman Catholicism teaches that the Church is to continue the sacrifice of Christ for the salvation of the world. But the Bible says that the church is to proclaim the Lord's death for the salvation of the world (Acts 4:1-2, 10-12, 20).

Son: Wow. I am impressed. You really have been doing your homework - haven't you?

Mom: Yes. I have. And I don't ever want to stop learning.

Son: I feel the same way.

Mom: I have to believe that one of these days, your brother Billy and my sister Josie are going to ask me a question. And I want to be ready to give them the correct answer.

Son: That's what we're supposed to be able to do (1 Pet. 3:15).

Mom: Unfortunately, they aren't asking yet. But maybe one of these days.

Son: It's frustrating. Isn't it?

Mom: Very.

Son: All you can do mom, is pray for them and continue to witness to them.

Mom: That's what I intend to do! You they could cut out of their lives. Me they can't.

Son: Have you explained to them how ridiculous the teaching of the transubstantiation of the bread and the wine is?

Mom: Of course. Only I try to be more tactful than you would be.

Son: Tactful - she says.

Mom: Yes. Tactful. Since trusting the Lord Jesus to be my personal Savior, by faith alone, I always add, I have found it necessary to increase my vocabulary and communication skills.

Son: Do tell.

Mom: Don't be sarcastic. I even signed up for several English classes at Daley.

Son: You never told me.

Mom: I didn't tell anyone! I thought the family would think I was going high class or something. On top of becoming a Jesus freak like my youngest son. Imagine. Me going to college in my old age.

Son: I think it's great!

Mom: Really?

Son: Of course. It just proves that you are not satisfied with what you already know but want to increase your knowledge. But that was proven when you went out of your way to check out what I had told you about regarding Roman Catholicism and the Holy Bible. You made the effort necessary to reveal the truth of the Lord Jesus to you. Most people won't do that.

Mom: I suppose so. I am amazed at what I've learned though.

Son: Like what?

Mom: Well, the teaching of the transubstantiation of the bread and the wine for instance. The Roman Catholic Church taught us that the *Last Supper* was a real sacrifice in which the blood of Christ was poured out for us in the cup. But the Bible teaches us that the Last Supper was a Passover meal (Mt. 26:17-29; Mk. 14:12-25; Lk. 22:17-20) and that the blood of Christ was poured out for our sins on the cross (Heb. 9:12; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2:24). Roman Catholics are told that the bread and wine become the real and actual body and blood of Christ during Holy Communion. And we believed it! Meanwhile, according to the Bible, the bread and wine used during the Passover meal are to be *symbolic* of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus (Jn. 6:48-59, 63; 1Cor. 11:23-25). Rome teaches that the consecrated bread and wine are heavenly food that help one to attain eternal life. The Bible teaches that the bread and wine are symbols that help one to remember the Lord Jesus (Lk. 22:19).

Son: It's like a magic act that people are told to believe is really true when it's really not - isn't it?

Mom: Absolutely! When I think of how all of my life, I blindly believed that the body and blood of Christ existed wholly and entirely in every fragment of consecrated bread and drop of wine, in every Roman Catholic church, throughout the world, I can't believe it. I find it hard to believe that I could be so gullible. Especially when the Bible tells us that the Lord Jesus is presently in heaven - bodily (Heb. 10:12-13).

Son: I know.

Mom: I came across an old poem on the subject of transubstantiation that is just great. I have to read it to you.

Son: Go ahead. I'm all ears.

Mom: The author of this poem is unknown. The title of it is, "A Roman Miracle?" Here goes:

A pretty maid, a Protestant, was to a Catholic wed;  
To love all Bible truths and tales, quite early she'd been bred.  
It sorely grieved her husband's heart that she would not comply  
And join the Mother Church of Rome and heretics deny.

So day by day he flattered her, but still she saw no good  
Would ever come from bowing down to idols made of wood;  
The mass, the host, the miracles, were made but to deceive;  
And transubstantiation, too, she'd never dare believe.

He went to see his clergyman and told him his sad tale  
"My wife's an unbeliever, sir, you can perhaps, prevail;  
For all your Romish miracles my wife has strong aversion,  
To really work a miracle may lead to her conversion."

The priest went with the gentleman - he thought to gain a prize.  
He said, "I will convert her, sir, and open both her eyes."  
So when they came into the house, the husband loudly cried,  
"The priest has come to dine with us!" "He's welcome," she replied.

And when, at last, the meal was o'er, the priest at once began  
To teach his hostess all about the sinful state of man;  
The greatness of our Saviour's love, which Christians can't deny  
To give Himself a sacrifice and for our sins to die.

"I will return tomorrow, lass, prepare some bread and wine;  
The sacramental miracle will stop your soul's decline."  
"I'll bake the bread," the lady said, "You may," he did reply,  
"And when you've seen this miracle, convinced you'll be, say I."

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The priest did come accordingly, the bread and wine did bless.  
The lady asked, "Sir, is it changed?" The priest answered, "Yes,  
It's changed from common bread and wine to truly flesh and blood;  
Begorra, lass, this power of mine has changed it into God!"

So having blessed the bread and wine, to eat they did prepare;  
The lady said unto the priest, "I warn you to take care,  
For half an ounce of arsenic was mixed right in the batter,  
But since you have its nature changed, it cannot really matter."

The priest was struck real dumb - he looked as pale as death.  
The bread and wine fell from his hands and he did gasp for breath.  
"Bring me my horse!" the priest cried, "This is a cursed home!"  
The lady replied, "Begone; tis you who shares the curse of Rome."

The husband, too, he sat surprised, and not a word did say.  
At length he spoke, "My dear," said he, "The priest has run away;  
To gulp such mummery and tripe, I'm not, for sure, quite able;  
I'll go with you and will renounce this Roman Catholic Fable."

Son: That is so great!

Mom: I know. I just love it.

Son: All Roman Catholics should have a copy of it and read it every day until the blinders fall off of their eyes.

Mom: That would be nice.

Son: That poem just proves how great the "Protestant Reformation" was.

Mom: What do you mean.

Son: Well, think about it. A no-name Christian wrote this poem in the distant past. It obviously had to have been written after the *Protestant Reformation*. And it is obvious that the writer was solidly grounded in the correct biblical teaching concerning salvation and therefore able to defend their faith in a very creative way.

Mom: That's true.

Son: Now contrast the no-name writer of that poem with the evangelical Christian leaders of today whose favorite title is "doctor." The impression seems to be that if you're not a doctor of theology in Christendom today, you haven't the right to challenge the false teachings of those who are doctors. What is amazing is that is the very same attitude the religious leaders in the city of Jerusalem had with the apostles (Acts 4:1-13). Those who are doctors of theology, today, seem to have forgotten that all of the scribes and pharisees were doctors of theology also.

Mom: You're about to get worked up and I don't want you to.

Son: I always get worked up whenever I think about these clowns with their doctorate degrees who have compromised the historic Christian doctrines that were the foundation of the "Protestant Reformation". I don't think any of these people have ever read the letter of Jude. That's why a movement like "Promise Keepers" is a total joke.

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: This is a so-called Christian movement that crosses all denominational lines. It's part of the ecumenical movement that believes all Christians should be united as one body regardless of doctrine. The word "discernment" cannot be used in any way, shape or form when it comes to a movement like "Promise Keepers" or for the entire ecumenical movement for that matter.

Mom: So why do you call it a joke?

Son: Because the people behind the ecumenical movement cannot allow anyone to focus on biblical "Christian Doctrine." If they did they would be unable to unite all professing Christians into the movement. The reason being that their doctrines are incompatible with each other. So to accomplish the objective of uniting all Christians into one body, the movers and shakers behind the ecumenical movement decided to stress "Christian Experience." Isn't that wonderful? In effect, these people are saying that "Christian Experience" is more important than "Christian Doctrine" (Ro. 16:17-18).

Mom: That doesn't seem right!

Son: That's because it isn't. To say that "Christian Experience" should be emphasized over historic "Christian Doctrine" is ludicrous and completely unbiblical! If someone like me says this though, I

am labeled as being unloving and divisive and judgmental and un-christlike. The thing that really gets me though, is the number of high profile Christian teachers and pastors who have been on the board of "Promise Keepers." I mean these guys should know better. I just don't get it.

Mom: What don't you get?

Son: I know that none of these men, who have been willing to be a board member of Promise Keepers, would be willing to participate in the marriage of a Christian and a non-Christian! They would use 2 Corinthians 6:14-16 as their reason. You know, that's where we are told that we are not to be unequally yoked together with unbelievers. The amazing thing about that passage of Scripture is that it is speaking specifically of ministry - not marriage. It is applicable to marriage and to business partners, for that matter, but the passage itself, in its entirety is specifically in regards to ministry. If you really wanted to know what God's viewpoint is on marriage you would go to 1 Corinthians 7.

Mom: So what's your point?

Son: The point is that these guys, who are not willing to participate in a marriage between a Christian and a non-Christian, see nothing wrong with joining hands with people who deny the historic Christian doctrines concerning salvation and justification. Those teachings being that we are saved by the grace of God through faith alone, in the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ alone, for our eternal salvation. So every time there is a "Promise Keepers" gathering or Billy Graham has a crusade in conjunction with the Roman Catholic Church or an ecumenical meeting is held - they are all in total opposition to the clear teaching of 2 Corinthians 6. And most of these guys are doctors in theology. Where is there a real doctor when you need one?

Mom: I think that was a sermon.

Son: I think you're right. I'm sorry for going off on you like that. But I just get so aggravated about it all. The word protestant means "under protest." The question of the day is who the heck is protesting anymore about the many so-called Christian teachings that are false and that have deceived so many? It sure isn't most of the morons that are on television and radio.

Mom: I know. Well calm down now. And I'm glad you liked the poem. But I want to get back to the final reason that caused me to leave the Roman Catholic Church. Have you cooled off yet?

Son: I'm getting there.

Mom: Good. Anyway, the last straw for me was when I learned that God forbids us to worship any object. Even those intended to represent Him (Ex. 20:4-5; Isa. 42:8). I know that you had told me that, but I had to read and study that for myself. Roman Catholicism, on the other hand, teaches that God desires the consecrated bread and wine to be worshipped as divine.

Son: So you've been telling the family all of this?

Mom: Yes! Now they say I've become you.

Son: God answered my prayer, didn't He?

Mom: It would seem so.

Son: Well, you know what I went through, for sharing the truth of the Scriptures with them. And I'm sure that you are getting the same treatment.

Mom: I am. But I'm a tough old broad. I can take it.

Son: It's a good thing you are. Because I expect the Roman Catholic Church to become ever more militant towards Protestant evangelism.

Mom: What do you mean?

Son: Well, during his visit to Mexico this past January, Pope John Paul II, issued a summons for Catholics to take to the streets and confront the challenge of Protestant evangelism. He urged his audience to ignore the seductions of fallacious and novel ideologies and to spread the word of the church.

Mom: No kidding.

Son: I'm not kidding. And neither was he. That was a central theme during his visit, in which he called his followers to aggressively combat significant inroads made by protestantism.

Mom: He must be upset about people like you and me who come to know the truth (Jn. 14:6).

Son: I suppose so. Unfortunately, too many professing Christians view Roman Catholicism as just another brand of Christianity. That is pretty clear when you see how the Christian Booksellers Association has allowed Roman Catholic publishing houses to exhibit and sell their heretical books, rosaries, statues and scapulars for years.

Mom: Why would they do that?

Son: Because they don't take the Scriptures seriously (2 Cor. 6:11-18; Gal. 6:7; Rev. 18:4). They have no discernment between truth and error. What other reason would explain it other than money. I remember when a number of well known and prominent evangelical Christian leaders signed a joint declaration with Roman Catholic leaders on March 29, 1994, entitled, "Evangelicals and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium." They agreed to unite and win the world to Christ. The only problem that all of the morons who signed that document had was that they allowed a false gospel message to be extended. So they went back and made some adjustments. But they're so stupid that they still haven't figured out that the Roman Catholic gospel is at odds with the biblical gospel of Christ. It's too bad they can't talk with the martyrs of the "Protestant Reformation" and ask them why they were killed by those who were the agents of Rome. And how about those Roman Catholics who believed so strongly in their churches doctrines and leaders that they were willing to torture and murder for them? Amazing - isn't it?

Mom: Now do you see why people accuse you of being unloving, divisive, judgmental, a bigot and a Roman Catholic basher?

Son: Yes. I know. But what I am saying is the truth! Roman Catholic apologists see the "Protestant Reformation" as a "Protestant Rebellion" and think that the reformers should have stayed in the Roman Church to make the changes they thought necessary from within the Church. Do you know how stupid that position is? How are you going to change serious doctrinal errors in an organization

that claims divine authority for everything it does? According to Roman Catholic theology, you are taking issue with God Himself if you suggest that change is necessary. It's another unfunny joke.

Mom: I know.

Son: Robert A. Baker, wrote in his book, "A Summary of Christian History," [Nashville: Broadman Press, 1959, pp. 151-152, 168] about when the papacy was headquartered in Avignon, France and the return of the papacy to Rome became an issue in each papal election. Anyway, beginning in the year 1378 A.D., there were two popes at the same time! The one in Rome, Italy, was Urban VI and the one in Avignon, France, was Clement VI. During the next twenty-five years you had rival popes at Avignon and in Rome cursing each other and trying to undermine the work of the other.

Mom: Imagine that. There are a lot of people who think that church splits are something new.

Son: If you think about it, it's hilarious. These guys are cursing each other. But the leaders in Rome like to curse those people who are at odds with them. Which explains why the Roman Catholic Church wound up placing a number of curses on the Protestant Reformers during "The Council of Trent" held from 1545 to 1564 A.D. By the way, the curses placed by the Roman Catholic Church upon the Protestant movement and its followers have never been lifted or removed! So much for love and unity among the brethren.

Mom: This is really interesting.

Son: I know. Unfortunately, most people would disagree with us. They aren't interested in history. Yet what has happened in the past is what has led us to the present. Besides, stuff like this isn't taught, by many anymore, and that's why most people don't know about it. Anyway, in March, 1409 A.D., the cardinals called a general council in Pisa and declared the papal throne vacant. Just like that. Think about it. They arbitrarily kicked out the two guys who said they were the Vicar of Christ. In other words, the representative of the Lord Jesus Christ on earth. So they elected a new guy who took the name of Pope Alexander V. But the problem didn't go away because the other two popes refused to step down. So guess what?

Mom: What?

Son: The Roman Catholic Church now had three popes. All at the same time! Can you imagine the confusion among the people while all of this was going on?

Mom: That's incredible! So what happened?

Son: You'll have to read Baker's book and find out for yourself.

Mom: You can really be aggravating.

Son: History isn't so boring after all - is it?

Mom: No. It's not. But now I want to talk about you.

Son: What about me?

Mom: You know.



Son: What? That I'm dying and have a short amount of time left?

Mom: Yes. Are you scared?

Son: No. I'm not (Phil. 1:21). I'm going to heaven to be with the Lord Jesus and that's just the way it is. Now - if I were relying on my efforts and the life I led for that to happen, then yes, I would be scared. But I'm relying on His efforts for me and I don't see any reason to be scared.

Mom: For real?

Son: Yes. For real. Think about it. I have the assurance from the Scriptures that my salvation is binding (Jn. 6:37; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30; 1 Jn. 5:13) upon once trusting the Lord Jesus as my Savior. In other words, once the Holy Spirit enters a believer - He will remain in that believer forever (Jn. 14:16-17, 26). This means once saved - always saved! Those who chose not to agree, with the teaching of assurance of salvation, in effect believe that God actually offered us probation. And not salvation. Where is the grace of God in that? The fact of the matter is this: since we do not get our salvation by being good - we cannot lose it by being bad. So can you see why I am so confident about it all? And why I think it's kind of exciting?

Mom: Yes. I can.

Son: I was hoping to last until the "Rapture" took place, but it doesn't look like that is what God's plan for me is. So when the "Rapture" does take place - I'll be meeting you in the clouds with the Lord Jesus. If that isn't something to look forward to - I don't know what is (Jn. 14:1-3; 1 Cor. 15:51-53; 1 Th. 4:13-18; Ti. 2:13).

Mom: You're right. It is. But I'm going to miss you so much.

Son: I know. But it won't be for very long and then we'll all be together again. I just hope and pray that Bill and aunt Josie will listen to you and check out what you say to them. I don't like to think about the fact that most of the people, I know and love, will not be in heaven with me. But will be in eternal torment in the Lake of Fire instead (Mt. 13:42; 25:41, 46; Rev. 14:10-11; 20:10, 15).

Mom: I know. I love you so much though. I loved you when you were first born and then as a little boy growing up. You were so beautiful. I didn't think it was possible to love you more than I did. And then I discovered that I not only could love you more - but I did love you more.

Son: I was always conscious of you loving me. Even when you were really mad at me. That's why I could take advantage of you like I sometimes did. People still can't get over the fact that you used to pay me to eat when I was growing up.

Mom: But you were such a skinny kid. And I didn't want you to get sick from not eating right.

Son: I know. I was always spoiled. I abused your love for me at the time. And I'm sorry.

Mom: That was a long time ago. You were a kid.

Son: A manipulating kid!

Mom: Aren't all kids?

Son: I guess you're right. When I'm gone mom, just remember that I'm not in this body that you will be looking at (2 Cor. 5:8). The real me will be rejoicing in heaven .

Mom: I know.

Son: Did you know that all I want to do, when I first see the Lord Jesus, is to give Him a hug and a kiss on His cheek and say thank you for saving me. I am really looking forward to doing that. So don't cry too much for me. Do you promise?

Mom: No.

Son: I think that I shouldn't have been so sweet and wonderful and easy to get along with all of my life.

Mom: Now that's - a funny joke!

Son: Isn't it something that God made it a point to save a wise guy like me though?

Mom: Yes. But you're my wise guy.

Son: Did you know that I have always told people that you were the greatest woman I had ever known in my life?

Mom: Really?

Son: It's the truth! And I have always thanked God for giving you to me to be my mother. There isn't anyone else that I could imagine being a better mother to me than you. And I am so thankful for you always being there for me throughout my life. Even when we had terrible arguments and said some really bad stuff to each other. You never kept a grudge - though I have to admit that sometimes I did. You have been terrific and I want to thank you for the way you have always been there for me and for my family.

Mom: Thank you for saying that. It makes me feel good to hear it.

Son: I just wanted you to know that. I think that most of us don't feel appreciated for what we do. The reason probably is because we take things and people for granted. And the things that should be said - seldom are. And unfortunately, many of the things that shouldn't be said - often are. It's just the way we all are. I guess.

Mom: I know.

Son: God bless you - my mother.

Mom: He has blessed me. And may He continue to bless you also - my son.