**Truth or Tradition? Pt. 4 Mt. 13:24-32**

**Guided Growth with Pastor Keith @ CBC , Sunday, Oct. 22nd**

**Satan is the master counterfeiter! Scripture warns he’ll infiltrate the church through “cunningly devised fables” and “False prophets.” (2 Pt. 1:16-2:3; 2 Cor. 11:2-5; 13-15)**

**A careful study of Church History reveals his success:**

* **He mingled paganism (idolatry) with Judaism. 2 Kgs 17:33; Ezek. 8,9**
* **He mingled “God’s Law” with Traditions. Mt 15:6**
* **He mingled “Judaism” with Christianity. Acts 15:1**

**It shouldn’t surprise us that he has continued to try to infiltrate and contaminate God’s Church by mingling “paganism” with Christianity. Pontifex Maximus: “The great bridge builder”**

**1. Many Church Holidays have pagan roots.**

 **A. Halloween was originally a Celtic festival of Samhain to ward off evil spirits.**

 **1) Pope Gregory (731-741) designated Nov 1 as “all Saints day” to remember dead saints.**

 **2) Oct. 31 became “all hallows eve” (aka: Halloween)**

 **B. Christmas was the “Christianized” version of Roman pagan festivals.**

 **1) Saturnalia honoring the “god” Saturn.**

 **2) Deus Sol Invictus: (Mithra) Birthday of the “Sun God”.**

 **3) First December reference to Jesus’ birth isn’t recorded until 326.**

 **C. Valentine Day comes from Lupercalia honoring Juno (*goddess of love and***

 ***marriage)* and Pan *(god of nature*). Venus’ son “cupid” was also involved.**

1. **In 496, Pope Gelasius changed the festival of February 15 to Saint Valentine’s Day.**

 **D. Even Easter has some pagan roots explaining the “Winter, Spring” cycle.**

 **1) Ancient Sumerian legion of Damuzi and Inanna (“The Descent of Inanna” 2100 BC)**

 **Names changed in different cultures. Babylon: Isthar and Tamuz (Ezek. 8:14)**

 **Canaan: Astarte, Greek: Aphrodite, Roman: Venus**

1. **In Saxony, Isthar became Eostre (a.k.a. Eastre). Bunnies, eggs, come from pagan rites!**

**Cardinal Newman (2nd Vatican Council) in Essays of Development of Christian Doctrines 1845:**

*“Confiding in the power of Christianity* ***to resist the infection of evil, and to transmute the very instruments of demon-worship to an evangelical use****…the* ***rulers of the church from early times were prepared, to adopt, or imitate, or sanction the existing rites and customs of the populace****.”*

**2. Many Church Buildings have pagan roots.**

 **A. The Pantheon became: *"Santa Maria Rotunda"***

 **B. In the 6th Century, the Parthenon became: *“The Church of the Virgin Mary”* or**

 ***“the Church of the Theotokos.”* (Mother of God.)**

 **C. The Church of the Holy Sepulchre (326 AD) is built over the site of Emperor**

 **Hadrian’s pagan temple and shrine to Venus (built in AD 135)**

 **D. The Vatican is built on the ruins of a necropolis with an ancient temple.**

**3. Many “church doctrines” have pagan roots.**

 **A. Purgatory predates Christianity.**

 **1) Ancient (pagan) cultures offered “hope” for salvation after death through a “purging”.**

 **a) Priests (for a fee) would conduct special rites to help hasten the purging process.**

 (1) Ancient Egyptian priests extorted people with special burial “rites” to help hasten

 their purging process of the dead.

 (2) Priests of ancient India required expensive prayers for the dead called the “Gurjumi”.

 (3) Ancient Greeks paid the Argives to sacrifice on the 13th day after death to Mercury.

 **(4) Plato (427 BC) wrote extensively about “post death” purging, payments, and practices.**

 ***“the dead must first proceed to a subterranean place of judgment where they shall sustain the punishment they have deserved.”***

 **(5) Virgil (70-19 BC) also wrote extensively of such a “purgatory” in their pagan practices.**

 **2) The Bible says nothing of purgatory! It clearly states that death ends all opportunities for**

 **further repentance and faith! (Luke 16; Heb. 9:27; Rev. 22:11)**

 **B. Transubstantiation of the Mass.**

 **1) Sun god worship is ancient.**

 **a) Isis (queen of heaven) and Horus with the sun disk and the horns of the Apis Bull.**

 **b) In Canaan, Baal was the “son god”.**

 **c) India and Persia worshiped Mitra (Mithras)**

 **d) Romans worshiped Sol Invictus ("Unconquered Sun")**

 **(**1) Roman soldiers brought the worship of “Mitra” to Rome and developed a “mystery

 religion” where Sol Invictus gave birth to Mithra as the “son of the sun god”.

 ***The worship of Mithras involved sacred “rites” to transform bread and water into their god.***

1. **Israel got caught up in this practice. Jer 7:18; Ezek. 8**
2. **Transubstantiation became an official and mandatory “Doctrine” in Fourth Council of the Lateran in 1215. Notice all the references to ancient “Monstrances and halo’s”.**

 **C. The Doctrine of Mariology includes the pillars of:**

 **1) Her perpetual virginity: (Contrary to Mt. 1:25; 13:55,56, Mk 6:3)**

 **2) Her Immaculate Conception (Found nowhere in scripture)**

 ***Both of these were declared Church Doctrine by Pope Pius IX in 1854.***

 **3) Her assumption into Heaven declared by Pope Pius XII on 1 November 1950.**

 **4) Her status as the “Mother of God” (Theotokos) was first declared by the First Council of**

 **Ephesus, held at the Church of Mary in 431.**

 **Her status as the “Queen of Heaven” was declared in 1950 by Pope Pius XII.**

 **This defined her as a co-mediatrix for salvation contrary to 1 Tim. 2:15.**

**The concept of the Mother of God / Queen of Heaven Predates Christianity by over 2000 years.**

***Semiramis and Tammuz, Isis and Horus, etc.***

**Conclusion: *Jesus described himself as the “Shepherd” and people as Sheep. (Jn 10)***

***He warned of the “Thief” or “false shepherd” who come to “steal, kill and destroy.” (Jn 10:10)***

***He said also that these “false shepherds” are like “blind men leading the blind.” (Mt. 15:14) as well as the increase in satanic deception in the last days. (Mt. 24:24)***

**In Ezekiel 8 and 9 God revealed how the Devil (through pagan worship) had so infiltrated the Jewish “worship” that God would allow Jerusalem to be destroyed by Babylon. He put a “mark” on the foreheads of those who still followed him and commanded judgment to begin at his house!**

**Peter makes the same connection in the context of false teaching. (1 Peter 4:16,17)**

**Application: Will you “decide” to base your faith, not on the traditions of religion, or**

 **“cunningly devised fables”, But solely and safely on God’s Clear Word?**

**“These were more noble than those in Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things** (that Paul preached) **were so. “ Acts 17:11**

**Will You “search the scriptures” to verify whether these things are so?**