

Study Lesson Number: 35

Study Lesson Number: 35

THE CHURCH (continued)

THE CHURCH (continued)

THE ATTRIBUTES (or QUALITIES) OF THE CHURCH

What are the chief attributes of the Catholic Church?

The chief attributes of the Catholic Church are: **AUTHORITY, INFALLIBILITY, AND INDEFECTIBILITY.** They are called **attributes** because they are qualities perfecting the nature of the Church.

What is meant by the **AUTHORITY** of the Catholic Church?

By the authority of the Catholic Church is meant that the Pope and the bishops, as the lawful successors of the apostles, have power from Christ Himself to teach, to sanctify, and to govern the faithful in spiritual matters.

AUTHORITY is the power to command others. All authority is from God, and He gives it to the Church in spiritual matters. To refuse to obey the authority of the Church is to refuse to obey Christ. He Himself said to His disciples, "He who hears you, hears Me; and he who rejects you, rejects Me." (St. Luke)

(Special Note: Since Vatican Council II, the Balanced Structure of the One True Church has been greatly disturbed, and as a result, one now must carefully inspect the credentials of every official in the Catholic Church. Care must always be taken that the proper spirit of Charity and Honesty be observed.

What is meant by the **INFALLIBILITY** of the Catholic Church?

By the infallibility of the Catholic Church is meant that the Church, by the special assistance of the Holy Ghost, cannot err when it teaches or believes a doctrine of faith or morals.

INFALLIBILITY DOES NOT MEAN that the Pope cannot commit sin, but that in teaching a doctrine of faith or morals, he is prevented by the Holy Ghost from making a mistake. The Church teaches only truth.

When does the Church teach infallibly?

The Church teaches infallibly when it defines, through the Pope alone, as the teacher of all Christians, or through the Pope and the bishops, a doctrine of faith or morals to be held by all the faithful.

What is meant by the **INDEFECTIBILITY** OF the Catholic Church?

By the indefectibility of the Catholic Church is meant that the Church, as Christ founded it, will last until the end of time.

Nations will rise and fall. False religions will come and go. But the Church will last forever.