THE FOUNDING AND CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH

Christ Founded a Church as well as a Religion

1. Christ speaks frequently of His Kingdom.
2. Christ speaks of his flock.
3. Christ calls his kingdom a Church.
4. Christ is invested with offices of Priest, Prophet, and King.
5. Christ promised the assistance of the Holy Spirit
6. The Church founded by Christ is visible, not purely spiritual association.

The Constitution of the Church

1. The primitive Church was not a democracy.
2. After Christ intended the authority he passed to the Apostles to be handed on to their successors.
3. The Apostles did bestow spiritual authority on other disciples.
4. The Bishops of the early Church were assisted by priests and deacons.
5. From the beginning the Church presented itself as a shepherd guarding a flock.

INFALLIBILITY OF THE CHURCH AND POPE

The Church Must Be Infallible

1. **Christianity was preached as a Revelation of God, not as a system of philosophy.**
    a. "We preach Christ crucified, unto Jews indeed a stumbling-block and unto the Gentiles foolishness, but unto them that are called, . . . Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." (1 Cor: 1:23).
    b. "For Christ we are ambassadors, Gat as it were exhorting through us." (2 Cor: 5:20)
2. **Infallibility was promised.**
    a. "Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world." (Matt 28:20)
    b. "I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Paraclete, that He may abid with you forever, the Spirit of Truth. . " (John 14:16)
3. Reason and History teach us that infallible authority is necessary in religious matters.
4. Christ promised infallibility to the teaching body, or Magisterium of the Church .
    a. Magisterium includes the Pope, and the Bishops united with him.
    b. They also include the apostles, whose teachings cannot be contradicted.
    c. Decisions are made by the Pope or a council of Bishops appointed by the Pope.

The Infallibility of the Pope

1. **Infallibility of the Pope declared by Pope IX at Vatican I in 1870.**
    a. Pope is protected by divine guidance against error when ruling on matters of faith and morals.
    b. Infallibility is confined to when he speaks "Ex Cathedra" (as head of the whole Church) on matters of faith and morals.
    c. Popes can 1) be guilty of sin, 2) hold erroneous views in matters of faith, 3) error in other ways. Infallibility is reserved for official teaching documents promulgated officially.
2. **Infallibility does not depend on virtue or learning of the Pope, but on the activity of the Holy Spirit.**
    a. Jesus promised the Holy spirit would assist the Church. "I have prayed for thee. . ." (Luke 22:23).
    b. Vatican I did not introduce a new doctrine, but merely defined the way in which Christ provided that his Church would be protected from error.
3. **Some Objections answered:**
    a. All men are fallible, so the Pope can err as well.
    b. "Catholics make an omniscient God of the Pope"
    c. Protestants erroneous say that the Pope can stamp any statement with infallibility.
    d. Protestants maintain that authority, not conscience is Catholic guide.
    e. Non Catholics boast of their freedom relative to the enslaved intellect of the Catholics.
4. **The Infallibility of the Pope is a necessity.**
    a. Has not God clothed his apostles with powers far more exalted: miracles, prophesy, divine inspiration.
    b. Pope's only mission is to preserve God's revealed truths from error.
    c. Living Pope is needed since Christ is no longer bodily with us to preserve his teachings.
5. **Protestants claim the Bible is infallible**
    a. So the magisterium of the Catholic Church must have been infallible for four centuries.
    b. Protestants claim their own personal interpretation of the Bible is infallible.