

## Holy Orders

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**00:54 SC:** Welcome to the Bible Study Evangelista Show. I'm Sonja Corbitt, your Bible Study Evangelista, and we are here to love and lift all we've been given. I am just gonna offer you a little word of warning before I plunge in here, I have a lot of ground to cover, and this show is going to probably feel like trying to drink out of a fire hose, and I probably will not get through it all, so either I will add the rest of it to a second show or I will offer it for my friends of the show, which I want to shout-out my latest friends of the show last week Tiffany S, Samantha C, Julie C, and then this week Patricia T, Karen B, Carmen I, Elizabeth G, Susan U and Hal W. Thank you for loving and lifting me, thank you for your support and your help. I hope that you will all please share the shows. I know you do, but I just want to thank you and ask you to share the shows and tell as many people as you can because that's your contribution to evangelization. Every penny you send to help with that effort, every time that you pray for me, every time you share a Facebook post or any of the shows, you're participating in every one of my efforts, so I want to thank you and encourage you to continue to do that so that we can, I hope, convince people, of how beautiful and how ancient our worship is.

**02:19 SC:** And speaking of that, I'll just jump right in. We're going to begin today looking at Holy Orders, we're looking at the vocations now, Holy Orders and marriage, and I'm going to do Holy Orders first, not really because there's any particular order to it, but just as I was looking over it, I got so excited about the show, I love this topic. Holy orders. The priesthood, specifically. Because as a Baptist convert, I had never even seen a real live priest. I had seen them on television, but I had never seen one in real life until the day I walked into the Catholic Church here in my hometown, and asked... Or told the priest that I thought God wanted me to be Catholic, but I wasn't sure, and he stuck me in an RCIA class, one-on-one with my... Who later became my godfather whom I still love.

**03:14 SC:** And this was one of the issues because I had never met a priest before, and I had been taught that there was no use for a priest anymore after Jesus, which I'll get into as we go. But in the Old Testament, we begin with priesthood as early as Adam. Every single person in the Old Testament, every man who was the head of his household was himself a priest. But in order to understand the priesthood, we really need to know what it means to sacrifice, because nowadays the word sacrifice, we use it in all kinds of ways. But in its strict meaning, in its original meaning, in its biblical meaning, a sacrifice is the offering of a gift to God by a group through the agency of someone who has the right to represent the group. So the purpose of such an offering is to give group worship to God. And in doing so, we are acknowledging God's lordship over all of us, mankind, but for those of us who worship Him, we thank Him for His blessings, we're hoping to atone for sin, and we beg for His blessings, His benefits.

**04:27 SC:** So it's not that God needs our sacrifices or gifts, because everything that exists was made by Him to begin with, but until Jesus gave himself as the perfect sacrifice, nothing that we could ever offer to God was really worthy of Him. In fact, the Scriptures say that all of our righteousness is as filthy rags, and that's actually a menstruation term, filthy rags is a menstruation term. And so, what it's saying there is even our very, very best is not worthy of an eternal perfect God. And so, it pleased God, though, from the very beginning of human history to have people act out their feelings toward Him by sacrifice.

**05:16 SC:** Because from everything that God has given us, we want to take what we have and give it back as a gift to acknowledge Him. So even in the very earliest days, even at the beginning with Adam, people took things that God had given them. It could've been an animal or fruit or grain, whatever it was, and they offered some of it back to God, and that was this symbolism of thanksgiving, but those were only token gifts. And even so, they were pleasing to God.

**05:48 SC:** But the point then is since people have offered sacrifices to God from the very beginning of the human race, there have also been priests from the very beginning of the human race. So in that first period of biblical history, in the age of the patriarchs, it was the father of the family who was also the priest, he was the father, he offered sacrifice to God for himself and his family.

**06:08 SC:** So Adam was a priest for his family. Noah and Abraham and all the other family heads were priests for their families, and then in the time of Moses, Moses himself was a priest, as we'll see in a moment, but God directed then at that point that the priesthood of His chosen people, the Israelites should belong to the family of Aaron and the tribe of Levi. And that was because when he led them out of Egypt and they came to Mount Sinai... Remember Moses was on the mountain for 40 days and 40 nights, and the people got worried that he wasn't gonna come back, and they erected this golden calf and they worshipped the golden calf. Then Moses called for whoever was for the Lord to come to Him, and those were the Levites. And basically, he told them to... He installed them as priests. The story is in Exodus chapter 32. Because they were the ones who stood against the idolatry of the peoples.

**07:06 SC:** And then of course, Moses had received the instructions for the tabernacle, and the tabernacle was the place of worship; it went with them throughout the wilderness. And through the very existence of the tabernacle, God communicated his desire for worship, but it wasn't just any kind of worship. Remember that the heads of the households had been the priests before and now the Levites are. And now proper worship for the people of God would be liturgical, and all of the rites and the ceremonies and the sacrifices that would be offered in the tabernacle on behalf of the people would require a special representative of God, the priest, and that is because those priests were going to offer a group sacrifice on behalf of the whole group. A sacrifice that was worship on behalf of the whole group.

**07:54 SC:** Now, before I move forward on the Old Testament priesthood, I just want to mention the fact that men or man equals fatherhood. Every man is called to fatherhood in the exact same way every woman is called to motherhood, now that can be physical or spiritual. It can be physical and spiritual. But either way, inherent in our gender is the call to fatherhood and motherhood. And so with the call of fatherhood is also the call to priesthood. Now that can be the institutional priesthood, as we're going to look at here in a moment, but it can also be the priest of the domestic church or the family. And so every man is called to priesthood. Isn't that cool? I love that.

**08:42 SC:** So let's look at the Old Testament priesthood. The descriptions of their ordination and the consecration for them... That's actually, the word consecration means to set apart. Those rites of the ordination and consecration for Aaron and his sons are recorded in Leviticus 8, and then there are some parallel passages in Exodus 28 and 29, but all together, they give us this really thorough account of the sacred ceremony of ordination.

**09:08 SC:** Now, all of the priests were Levites, but not all of the Levites were priests. Now, I'm gonna show you what I mean. So the hierarchy in the Old Testament was the high priest, and that was the very first one was Aaron who was Moses's brother. Aaron and all of his oldest sons were... All of his descendants' oldest sons were the high priests, and then there were the priests under the high priest, and then there were the Levites. So the high priest, the priests and the Levites correspond to our bishops, priests, and deacons. It's the same parallel hierarchy, which I'm getting ahead, but I just wanted to say that Aaron... All of the priesthood in the Old testament came through the descendants of Aaron and that tribe of the Levites, the Levite tribe, all of the priests, the high priests, and all of those, they came from the Levite tribe. So every high priest, every priest was a Levite, but not every Levite was a priest, and not every priest was a high priest. But in the Old Testament, it was all through physical descendancy is my point.

**10:24 SC:** So Moses, as God's prophet, was the one who ordained the first priests and he himself, he acts in the role of the priest through this consecration and ordination. So he, along with the whole congregation of Israel, leads Aaron to the door of the tabernacle carrying several items, and we see those listed in Exodus 28 and Leviticus 8. Those were the vestments, and the vestments included the breastplate, the ephod, a robe, a tunic over the robe, a turban or a head piece and a sash. And it was actually very similar to what our priests wear today, similar in clothing. If I can find one, I'll try to post you a picture in the show notes to show you, but the colors were gold, violet, and purple. Or violet actually in the Bible, it was blue. So gold, blue, purple and scarlet or red. And then they were all made from linen.

**11:24 SC:** So all of those were brought to the door of the tabernacle in the hands of the priests themselves at their ordination, and the ordination ceremony then is recorded for us in Leviticus 8, in which there were vestments, anointing oil, animal offerings, and bread. More in a moment.

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**12:33 SC:** So the priest goes to the door of the tabernacle, carrying the breastplate, the ephod, the robe, the tunic, the turban, the sash. And then he is to wash, and then he is to vest or to put on those garments and all of the garments were specified by God himself in the Scriptures, they were elaborately decorated and carefully prescribed. And in Exodus 28:2-3, we see that the intention for

the priestly vestments was so that they would be beautifully decorated. I think this is very neat. In Exodus 28:2-3, it says that it was for their glorious adornment that they should have sacred vestments made. I particularly like that because one of the criticisms that I heard a lot as a non-Catholic toward the Catholic Church was that there's so much gold and it's so ornamental.

**13:29 SC:** And of course, that comes from the Reformation or the rebellion, depending on how you look at it, where they took away all of that stuff, that's part of why most non-Catholic churches are very bare, they don't have a crucifix and they don't have the decoration, they don't have the stations of the cross. They don't have beautiful vestments for their clergy, none of that, and that's... I wish I had time to go into that, but I don't. But the point is that the Old Testament priesthood was beautifully adorned and that was purposeful, God commanded that Himself.

**14:02 SC:** So part of the trappings or the vestments of the priest was the Urim and the Thummim, which were inside the breastplate or the pocket, and that was indicative of God's authoritative word, and we see in Sirach 45. That's a beautiful chapter, Sirach 45, on the glories of the priesthood in the Old Testament. But part of what it says there is that the job of the priest was to judge and to teach and to offer the people God's authoritative word. So the priest then was to make a sacrifice and to offer the people the word. Okay, that's the point.

**14:36 SC:** And it's interesting that in Exodus 29:9, and it says this of all of the elements in the Old Testament tabernacle, all of this you can find in my book *Fulfilled* by the way, where we unpack this whole priesthood thing quite a bit. We don't go in as much into the New Testament stuff as we're going to today, 'cause we're talking about sacraments. But I want to give you the biblical foundation for the sacraments and where it comes from, and it starts in the Old Testament, as do all of the Sacraments. But it says in Exodus 29:9 that the priest's office shall be theirs by perpetual statute, thus shall you ordain them. So the priesthood was supposed to be perpetual. And again, and I've said this so many times, perpetual does not mean until the New Testament, and then it's over. That's my point. When I say perpetual, when God says perpetual, He means perpetual, He means forever.

**15:29 SC:** The next thing after the vestments and the washing was the anointing. They were anointed with a very specific recipe for the anointing oil that was specified in Exodus chapter 30. It was lavish, it was expensive, it was fragrant, it was precious, and it was reserved exclusively for the consecration of the tabernacle and the priests, and the furnishings, and that initiation or ordination of the priest into the privilege of serving in God's presence as His representatives. So upon punishment of death, that anointing oil was not supposed to be used for anything else.

**16:07 SC:** So this is where the word Messiah comes from, it means anointed one. As the ancient priests were anointed for sacred service, so was the Messiah who was anointed with the sevenfold spirit. So God places all this seriousness on the sacredness and the details of all the elements, and he tells us why in Leviticus 10:3. The Lord said, "Through those near to me, I will be sanctified. In the sight of all the people I will obtain glory." And so the explanation then for that reaction that God had, it shows that improper cult worship or polytheism of the day is a desecration and it compromises God's glory. And so that desecration, it actually brings divine punishment, actually, it says in Exodus 28:43, but I digress.

**17:00 SC:** So after the anointing, then came the sacrificial offerings. The first was the sin offering, in which the priest put their hands on the head of a bull, and that was to symbolize the confession of

the priest's sin over the animal, and then of course, they were to slaughter the animal and sprinkle the blood around the altar, and it says specifically that that was done for atonement in Leviticus 8:15. And after having purified and sanctified the altar, then the priests devote themselves entirely to God's service by offering an offering there. It was a burnt offering or a Holocaust, which is what that word means. Holocaust means a burnt offering, and it was a sacrifice of consecration. And so it was called the ram of consecration in Leviticus 8.

**17:44 SC:** And then Moses takes the blood of that ram of consecration and he dips his thumb in it. This is part of this priestly ordination that Moses does. He dips his thumb into the blood and he anoints the priest on the lobe of Aaron's right ear, on the thumb of his right hand and on the toe of his right foot, it says in Leviticus chapter 8. And the sons of Aaron also came forward, so all of the priests, Aaron is the high priest, and then the priests and he did the same for them. And that's similar to what we do in the mass when we make that sign of the cross on our forehead, our lips and our hearts at the reading of the gospel. And by doing that, we're saying "May the word of God be in our minds, on our lips and in our hearts." That's kind of what we're saying.

**18:30 SC:** And so the smearing of the ear, the thumb and the toe with blood signified that the ear must be attentive to God's command, the hand ready to do His will, and the foot prepared to walk in His ways. And so at that point in the right, then Moses pours the remaining blood over the altar and placed the fat, the thigh, the unleavened cake, a cake of oil bread, and a wafer into the priest's hands, and then he waves them before the Lord. And then Moses took back all of those things, and he burnt them all on the altar, altogether with the burnt sacrifice, and that was done as a sweet odor to the Lord, and at his command. God commanded each of these things to be done. And then they ate a sacred meal together. Isn't this interesting?

**19:10 SC:** So all together, these rise of consecration show the authority and the office of this perpetual priesthood. The Hebrew word for consecration is from the verb to fill, and it means, that expression to fill the hand comes from that. Consecration, to fill or to set apart. And it came to be a liturgical expression, meaning to confer power, to institute to a priestly office and therefore to consecrate. So the idea then conveyed by all those rites and the words together is the conferment of a certain power. And in a physical sense, the priest's hands would be filled with the sacrifices that they offered God as they served him in the tabernacle. But more importantly, their consecration meant that their hands would always be filled with service to God to the exclusion of everything else. God alone would be their portion. And that is exactly what he told the Levite tribe.

**20:04 SC:** They didn't have a part of the land. When God parceled out the land to the tribes, the Levites didn't have any. Why? Because the Levites were set apart for God himself, and so God would be their portion. This is the point: The institutional priesthood, the Catholic priesthood, the institutional priesthood was God's idea. The Catholic Church didn't dream it up, it was in the Old Testament, and God commanded... He shows us that He loves priesthood because He commanded that there be an institutional priesthood in the Old Testament. The consecration ceremony took place for seven days. They did all of this for seven days in a row, and the priests were secluded in the tabernacle at that time, and that was done for their atonement.

**20:49 SC:** Now, as I said earlier, the hierarchy of the Old Testament was the high priest, who was Aaron to begin with, and then the priests, his sons, and then the Levites, which would have been the rest of the whole tribe. And so the high priest was over the priests and the Levites. In fact, this is cool, the death of the high priest... And this was all the way up until Jesus's time was... It was

considered an act of atonement, and it was marked by the release of a condemned murderer. Now, I'll come back to that in a moment. But we can already see in the Old Testament that the ordination rites, through those rites, we can see what the duties of the priests were. They centered on the care of the tabernacle, hearing the confessions of the people and offering sacrifices for them and officiating at the liturgical feast. And so those are the duties of any Catholic priest, are they not? And they're described in detail in the Torah.

**21:44 SC:** Now, we don't do things the way they did in the Old Testament. We don't have animal sacrifices that we haul up on the altar, slit its throat and bleed the blood out everywhere. We don't do that, but what we do is similar. And so Jesus, he is our high priest. In Revelation 1:12-20, Jesus is standing in the midst of seven lampstands. And we come to find out through that passage that the lampstands are the messengers of the churches. And so those were the bishops of the churches. The lampstand in the Old Testament tabernacle was symbolic of the priesthood. It had almonds on it. I wish I had time to get into that, and I don't. But all of that is in my book, *Fulfilled*.

**22:22 SC:** But Jesus is standing in the midst of them, and there are seven. Seven is a divine number. And it has been posited that the lampstands, because of the letters that follow to the seven churches after this vision that John sees in Revelation, there are seven letters that follow this vision. And because of those seven letters, it is thought that those seven lampstands were symbolic of the seven ages of the church in Christ. And so, Jesus is standing in the center of his church throughout history, church history, meaning New Testament history. [chuckle]

**23:00 SC:** So Jesus is at the center of the priesthood. That's the point. He is the high priest. And the Book of Hebrews goes through that in great detail. The Book of Hebrews talks about how Jesus, he is the high priest in eternity, and he's wearing high priestly vestments in that vision that John sees. And so he presents himself to us as the high priest. And the Book of Hebrews goes into that in great detail. I can't do it now, but I just wanna give you that so you can go back and read it if you want you. More on that in the New Testament Catholic priesthood when we get back.

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**24:33 SC:** When the old law ended with the establishment of the new law by Jesus, the priesthood of the old law also came to an end. So the new law of love has a new sacrifice and a new priesthood. And we see at the Last Supper where Jesus instituted that sacrifice of the mass. And in this new sacrifice, the gift that was offered to God is not gonna be a mere token gift, it's not gonna be sheep or bread or wine. Now, for the very first time and forevermore, it would be a gift worthy of God. It would be the gift of God's own Son, an infinite gift, a gift of infinite, priceless value, as God himself is infinite. And in the mass, under the appearances of the bread and the wine, Jesus renews everyday the once and forever offering that he made on the cross, that he made of himself to God on

the cross. And in the mass, he gives to each of us who are baptized members, the opportunity to unite ourselves with him in that one perfect offering.

**25:40 SC:** But who's gonna be the priest who's gonna stand at the altar, the person whose hands and lips Jesus is gonna use to make that offering for himself? Who's gonna be the human priest that Jesus is gonna give the power of making himself present on the altar under the appearances of bread and wine? Well, there were 11 to begin with. We know that at the Last Supper. Now, we don't know if Judas was present at the time that the apostles were made priests for sure. We don't know one way or the other, so we're gonna say definitely 11. But at the Last Supper, as we know, Jesus made his apostles priests because he gave them the command and with the command, the power and the authority to do what he had just done. He said, "Do this in remembrance of me." Luke 22:20, he says that very definitively.

**26:27 SC:** And it's important to know that when you see the word "command" or "promise" in the Bible, that it conveys the doing of the thing with it. When God says something, He gives the power to do it. When He says that it's done. [chuckle] That's kind of the point. And so when he says, "Do this in remembrance of me," he's giving them the command and the power and the authority to do the thing he just commanded them to do. So that's the power to offer the sacrifice in his name of his own body and blood. And that means that they are priests. The first apostles, the disciples were priests.

**27:09 SC:** Now, it's interesting that there were 12 tribes in the Old Testament, and he calls 12 disciples or 12 apostles. So he's saying with that calling of the new 12, and you know they could not have missed this because they were Jewish and they understood all of this, they knew that he was establishing 12 new tribes for a whole new people. And so he made them priests, and he gave them the power of changing that bread and wine into his body and blood. He also added that power to forgive sins in his name. "Receive the Holy Spirit," he said on that first Easter Sunday night. He said, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven, and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained."

**27:53 SC:** So, the power of the priesthood that Jesus gave the apostles was not supposed to die with them. We see in the Book of Acts that they also laid hands on others and conferred on them a measure of their own authority and power. I'll get to that in just a moment. I'm getting ahead of myself 'cause I get excited. But Jesus came to save everybody. Everybody who would ever live, if they would accept it all the way to the end of the world. And so the apostles passed their priestly power and authority onto other men in the ceremony that we now call the sacrament of Holy Orders. And in the Acts of the Apostles, we read at the very first time there was an ordination. It says, "And the plan met the approval of the whole multitude, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and Philip, and Prochorus and Nicanor and Timon and Parmenas and Nicolas, a proselyte from Antioch. These they set before the apostles, and after they had prayed, they laid their hands on them." Acts 6:5-6.

**28:52 SC:** So that is the office that they are conferring. Now, it wasn't a priesthood yet. They were actually only deacons. They were ordained deacons, but they shared in a measure of the power and authority that Jesus had given the apostles. And as time went on then the apostles consecrated more bishops to carry on their work. The apostles were the first bishops, okay? I am getting a little ahead of myself, but I want to just point that out. The apostles consecrated more bishops to carry on their work, and then those bishops in turn ordained other bishops and priests. And those bishops ordained

others so that the Catholic priests of today can say for real that the power of their priesthood has come down in the sacrament of Holy Orders in an unbroken line from Christ to himself.

**29:39 SC:** Now, 2000 years have gone by, and we know that there is a lack of priests and a lack of good priests. And I would just suggest that probably a lot of those that are missing are in the Protestant churches. I imagine there are a lot of men who have been truly called by God and they were supposed to be priests and they lost their way in Protestantism. Now, that's not any fault of their own. I'm just saying that that's probably part of why we have a shortage of priests. So we should ask, have our sons ask, "Does God want me to be a priest?" Right? It's not something we select for ourselves. In the Old Testament, it was done by physical descendants, descendancy. Now, it's done by Jesus's personal selection. And so we don't just say, "Man, I'd love to be a priest." Jesus has to call us, and so we want to spend the time with our sons helping them discern whether or not they are called to be priests.

**30:44 SC:** Now, there are two ways in which the sacrament of Holy Orders is different from the others. One, is that Holy Orders can only be administered by a bishop. Only the bishop has the power to ordain priests because the bishop is the direct successor of the apostles, and they were bishops, which I'll get to in a moment. A priest cannot make another priest a priest. The second way in which Holy Orders is different from the other sacraments is that Holy Orders is not received all at one time. When we're baptized, we're completely baptized with that single baptism. When we're confirmed, we're completely confirmed in a single ceremony.

**31:20 SC:** But Holy Orders is given by degrees in successive steps. And so first, you're ordained a deacon, then you're ordained a priest, and then you may or may not be ordained a bishop. So all bishops were first deacons and then priests, all priests were first deacons, but not all deacons will be priests and not all priests will be bishops. I hope that made sense. So at each stage in the sacrament, there is an increase in sanctifying grace. At each stage, there is an imprinting of a particular character on the soul, the character of that power and authority to do the duties that being a priest or being a bishop requires. And so, each one contains the one before it, each ordination I mean.

**32:10 SC:** So for the deacon, he has a right to baptize, to preach and to administer Holy Communion. For the priest, he has the power and authority to change bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ and to forgive sins. And for the bishop, he alone has the complete fullness of the priesthood, and he has the power to confirm and to ordain and to pass that power of the priesthood onto others in the sacrament of Holy Orders. So you can see that each level of the hierarchy has its own duties. And the bishop, of course, he can do them all. He's the highest, and then there is that increase in sanctifying grace and that priestly character with its accompanying authority. There is the special sacramental grace that gives to the one who is ordained a claim upon God for whatever actual graces he may need in the faithful discharge of his office. This is true actually of matrimony too. We'll see next week when we get to that.

**33:03 SC:** But it's the power to offer sacrifice, remember, if we go back to the Old Testament, that distinguishes a priest from a Protestant minister, okay? This is important because Catholic priests actually offer a real sacrifice, there must be a real priesthood, and that's the difference. So the priest has the power to offer the perfect gift to God in the name of God's people. And so that's why we can't say that a priest is a minister just by itself. He is a Minister, he is a servant of Jesus in Jesus's flock. He's a preacher too, and so he could be called a preacher, but that's not all he is. He is one who sacrifices, he has the power to offer the sacrifice on behalf of the whole people, and non-



Catholics have no reason for that, they don't have a real true sacrifice to offer on behalf of everyone. And that's true even in the Anglican Church, because they don't actually have a line of succession and they don't have a real sacrifice, and so that's the difference if you're wondering.

**34:13 SC:** So the third step of that sacrament of Holy Orders is the bishop. So when a new bishop is needed to head a diocese or to perform some other work in the church, the Holy Father, as Peter's successor, designates the priest who is to be raised to the bishop or the episcopacy. That's actually what the word bishop means, episcopacy.

**34:34 SC:** So the priest then receives that third laying on of hands from a bishop, and then he himself becomes a bishop. And that is then... It's given to him the power and the authority to perpetuate himself. He can ordain priests and to help consecrate other bishops. As I mentioned, in non-Catholic churches they don't believe in the mass or in a priesthood that is empowered to offer any sort of sacrifice, so they don't believe in the sacrament of Holy Orders either. And even in the high church, Episcopalians and Anglicans, they do believe in the mass, and they believe in the priesthood, but the real priests and bishops ceased to exist in the Anglican Church back in the 16th century at the Reformation. At that time, the leaders of the Anglican Church eliminated all reference to the mass and the power of the sacrifice from their ordination ceremonies, because they don't have the intention of ordaining a sacrificing priest, then the sacrament of Holy Orders is invalid and they're not considered true priests. We'll talk about the orthodox when we get back.

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**36:32 SC:** So the orthodox churches, the Greek Orthodox, Russian Orthodox, Romanian Orthodox, and so on, about 1000 years or more ago, it's actually more than that, but when the whole Christian world was Catholic, the church leaders in some countries in that area broke away from their union with Rome. They refused to obey the Pope as the head of the church. And when that happened it was because of political... They are a very tribal and clannish kind of culture, and because of that, that's why we still haven't seen any unity there. But because of those resentments, they turn their backs on Rome and they continue to believe, however, all the truths of the Catholic church, so they still believed in the mass and all the sacraments and their bishops remained true bishops even though they weren't in allegiance to the Pope. So those bishops continued to ordain valid priests and to consecrate other bishops. And the power of that priesthood then passed down through the centuries.

**37:35 SC:** So the Orthodox churches still have the mass and the sacraments, but because of their rejection of the Pope, they're not Catholic churches and Catholics are not allowed, or they shouldn't, attend their services because they're not Catholic. But they're not Protestant churches either, they're separated churches or schismatic churches. If you go to the Holy Land, you'll see a whole lot of this

orthodox stuff, their churches, their priests, all that kind of thing. They're not Catholic but they're not Protestant and they're not the Eastern Catholic churches.

**38:07 SC:** Most of us who are Catholics here, we belong to the Roman Rite or the Latin Rite. Our liturgy is in the Latin, sometimes in the Latin language, but it's the Roman Catholic Church, the Western Catholics. But there are huge groups of Catholics in other countries in Eastern Europe and Asia who have had the mass and the sacraments in their own language from the very beginning of the Church, so we call those Coptic Christians. Those are the original Christians over in the Holy Land. So the Greek Catholics, the Armenian Catholics, they're all Catholic, these are Catholic people. [chuckle]

**38:38 SC:** And that's part of why when Protestants go over to the Holy Land and they try to get the Catholics there saved, they just laugh at them because they are living in the Holy Land and they know the history of the church. They know that their faith goes all the way back to the original apostles, so they can't be swayed by these brand new strange doctrines that Protestants try to convert these Catholics, yes, but these Christians with. So because they are Catholic we can assist at masses in churches of the Eastern Rite and we can even receive Communion there. S1: So, whether we're Eastern or Western, we are Catholic. We are one in Christ.

**39:20 SC:** So let's go to the Pope. Does the Pope have any more spiritual power than any other bishop? Well, he does have more authority. He has more jurisdiction than any other bishop. Because he's the bishop of Rome, and the successor of Peter, he has authority over the entire church. He makes laws for the whole church. He designates priests who are gonna be bishops. He assigns bishops to their diocese. He also enjoys this very special privilege that Jesus conferred on Peter, which is called the privilege of infallibility. Now, this doesn't mean that everything the Pope does is infallible. It doesn't mean that if he farts that that was infallible. It doesn't mean if he says something ridiculous on an airplane that that was infallible. It means that in certain situations, God preserves the Holy Father from error, and here are the stipulations. He has to be making a definitive pronouncement to the entire universal church, it has to be on a matter of Christian faith or moral conduct, and he has to be using the fullness of his teaching authority. That's called ex-cathedra or from the chair. And that comes from the Old Testament, the chair of Moses, that Jesus told them, "You should listen to those who sit on the chair of Moses."

**40:32 SC:** He says this in Matthew 23 verses... I'm gonna read that, Matthew 23:1-3, and as I was flipping to that, he told me I need to also read Isaiah 22, which I'll do in a moment, but Jesus spoke to the crowds and said to his disciples, saying, "The scribes and the Pharisees have taken their seat on the chair of Moses, therefore do and observe all things whatever they tell you, but do not follow their example, for they preach but they do not practice. They tie up heavy burdens hard to carry and lay them on people's shoulders, but they will not lift a finger to move them." And then he goes into this tirade, sort of, about how the Pharisees are hypocrites, but my point there is that Jesus upholds the authority of the chair of Moses. That is the chair of authority that the high priest sat on. It was the chair, the cathedra. So when we say ex-cathedra, when the Pope speaks ex-cathedra, he's speaking from the chair. And so it's the successor of the chair of Moses, it's the chair of Peter. It's Peter's chair.

**41:33 SC:** And so those are the three conditions on which the Pope can speak infallibly and they have to all be present, and he has to be speaking in unity with the whole college of bishops. He can't just go off on his own. He has to be speaking in unity with the whole college of bishops, and there

have been dirty Popes, and they have tried to promulgate erroneous teachings, and God removed them. They died, and sometimes miraculously, so God protects his church from error, teaching error. The word bishop actually comes from the root, to see or to watch. I think that's so cool.

**42:09 SC:** So the hierarchy of the Catholic Church is biblical. There are deacons. Diakonos is the Greek. Priests, and the Greek there is presbyteros or elders. Those are ministers of the church who are above deacons, priests. And then bishops, episcopals, or overseers. That's where that word to see or to watch comes from, the overseer. That's what a bishop is, and that's why the Bible says that we should do what they tell us, and that we should submit to their leadership because they watch over us and they will give account for our souls. So they are responsible for the well-being of our souls before God, in the same way that a father or a priest is responsible for his church, or a father is responsible for his family. Okay?

**42:52 SC:** Now I wanna turn to Matthew 16:19. I wanna read this because I'm gonna read something from the Old Testament. I wanna show you how it comes directly from the Old Testament. Jesus said to Peter, "I say to you, Peter, you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." Now, listen to what Isaiah 22 says. This is God to Shebna. Shebna was a scribe in the administration. He was head of the administration of God's people. He was the master of the palace. And this is what Isaiah says in the prophecy concerning him for his disobedience, verse 19. "I will thrust you from your office and pull you down from your station. On that day, I will summon my servant, Eliakim, son of Hilkiyah. I will clothe him with your robe, gird him with your sash, confer on him your authority. He shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah." Now listen. "I will place the key of the House of David on his shoulder. What he opens, no one will shut. What he shuts, no one will open. I will fix him as a peg in a firm place, a seat of honor for his ancestral house." Now, there you see the keys? The open and shut door, the peg in a firm place and the seat of honor, the chair of honor.

**44:28 SC:** Now, as all prophecy, this actually was speaking about real people that lived at this time, Shebna and then Eliakim, the son of Hilkiyah. But we also know that all prophecy has a secondary and even a tertiary fulfillment, and it could actually have several, but we know here that Jesus, when he spoke to Peter and he gave him the keys, he says, "I give you the keys to the kingdom. What you open, no one will shut. What you shut, no one will open," and then it says in this prophecy that he will be fixed in a firm place with a seat of honor. On him shall hang all the glory of his ancestral house, descendants and offspring, all the little dishes from bowls to jugs. And so we can see that Peter then is occupying this prophecy, he is the fulfillment of this prophecy in Christ. Because of Christ, and because Christ called him, he is the head of the apostles, and so we see this successor of Peter, that's how the Pope came about.

**45:26 SC:** Now just because I can hear you asking, I'm gonna mention that the office of a cardinal has nothing to do with priestly power at all. It's a position of honor, but it has really nothing to do with holy orders. They're just sort of the Pope's personal advisors. They're like a cabinet officer. And then an archbishop is over several adjacent diocese that are grouped together to form a province. The archbishop then is over that province or that archdiocese. He's not a boss over the other diocese in his province, because each bishop is the ruler of his own diocese. But he does have precedents in honor and he has certain duties, but he doesn't have more priestly authority. And then there's monsignor, he gets to wear the purple cassock instead of black, and that's an honor that the

Holy Father confers on certain priests. But they don't have any special power either. That's really just a seal of the bishop's approval in high regard, but it doesn't increase his priestly power or authority.

**46:26 SC:** So back to the idea of fatherhood then. Man equals fatherhood, equals priesthood. And that's why Isaiah 22:21 can say that he shall be a father to the people. So when we call priests father and we get criticized for it from non-Catholics, it's perfectly biblical, and they did that to the rabbis as well. They called rabbis father. So it's not that Jesus was saying there aren't other fathers or that we shouldn't call our earthly father even, father, just that God himself is the ultimate Heavenly Father, and all other fatherhood proceeds from him, and that includes the priesthood. The institutional priesthood, which is perfectly biblical, as I just showed you, and then the domestic church priesthood, which every man is called to, if he's called to matrimony. But every man is called to fatherhood. That's the point. Whether he is a priest or whether he is a father in the natural sense, every man is called to fatherhood. Isn't that beautiful? I absolutely love that. So I'm gonna leave you with that, and next week we'll look at matrimony. I can't believe I got through all that. In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, until next week. Amen.

[music]

