

Steve Ray responds to James White's Web page:
"Catholic Legends And How They Get Started"

James White took exception to book [Upon this Rock](#) and a quotation from St. Augustine. White's petty article needed a response. Here it is.

(A few revisions were made on 4/29/00. New quotes and information added.)

Isn't the Internet marvelous? With just a click of a mouse button you can read articles and studies from all over the world, some good and some not so good. I clicked a link the other day and found an article about ME! Imagine that, how flattering! Some guy named James White (hereafter referred to as "our critic") didn't apparently read, understand, or appreciate my book [Upon this Rock](#) so he wrote an article which included little ol' me. (His words will be in blue.) As a world renowned expert on the "real truth" of the Catholic Church and God's gracious gift to all Christians (kinda like the 20th century Martin Luther, eh?), he seems to have become a self-proclaimed expert not only of the Fathers of the Church but on the brain cells inside Karl Keating's head and my own. (Kinda scary, eh? Kinda sad too.)

With the click of a mouse I was able to read his literary masterpiece, which is certainly destined to become a classic (insert pathetic chuckle here). It will someday, I am sure, save the world from the scourge of Catholics and especially Catholic apologists. I had the fun of reading his stuff first hand. You can marvel at his world-class scholarship for yourself at <http://www.aomin.org/Sermo131.html> (make sure you bring some popcorn). I clicked on it, waited in anticipation, and BOOM, there I was along with my friend Karl Keating (I may provide a portrait next time the bio). Well, since such clicking is so easy and fun, I thought I would provide a response so others can click away and discover the true scoop on the matter and have fun over an evening or during a lunch hour.

First, here is how I've organized my response. I have not argued with our critic on the first part of his article, per se. I have done that already in great length ([Click Here](#)) when dealing with our critic's friend William "Bill" Webster. Besides that, Karl Keating, a very good and trusted friend of mine, is quite capable of explaining and defending himself and is quite able to expose the errors of our critic. I agree with Karl that public debate is not always preferable and there are reasons to refrain from debating. Why should I spend time debating our critic? Good question. There is none. I can think of much better ways to spend my weekend :-). I told James, "You obviously take me more seriously than I take you. Even though debating you might be fun it is not on my list of priorities. I will let you know if my priorities change in the future." I think there is merit in Karl's response. However, I think it meritorious to respond to the charges against my book in writing. I would have done so no matter who it was who maligned it. Error always should be addressed (sigh).

There is a weak new movement among a few misinformed Protestant apologists which attempts to quickly master the Church Fathers and twist them anachronistically (I love this word, especially since it is one of our critic's favorite words) to fit their Protestant traditions and wishes. Many Protestant apologists, and often the anti-Catholics in complicity with them, simply parrot the likes of William "Bill" Webster, but Webster proves to be much better at it than the parrots. Funny thing how history repeats itself. The Papal antagonists of today are nothing new. This "patristic argumentation" against the papacy was done with much more force, finesse, intelligence, and conviction a century ago with the Anglican divines. If someone wants to read the real thing, step over Webster and his parrots and go to the Anglicans of the late 1800s and early 1900s. But, just as many have arisen today to put the lie to the anti-papal claims, so champions of the past century arose and marvelously defended the papacy. Read for example Chapman, Rivington, Livius, Allies, Scott, Hall, Allnatt, and a host of others including those more recent like Dolan, Shotwell and Lewis, Butler, Giles, Jaki, D'Ormesson, Cullmann, Miller, Lattey, and more (see the hundreds of titles and authors in the bibliography of my [Upon this Rock](#)).

Too bad these great men are so little known today—ignorance of such men and their compatriots allow the likes of our critic to be taken seriously by folks unhappily divorced from Church history, both ancient and modern. Are there a bunch of Catholic "ecumenical scholars" willing to give away the ship? You bet, and those who oppose the papacy place great stock in these "scholars" concessions. They love to refer to them as "Catholic historians" as though they are the final word. There are some who have good things to say, but at the same time collapse at crucial points. Much could be said here, but this is not the topic of our discussion.

Second, I have begun my response with the section introduced by a name I recognize well—my own. Maybe it's a bit of "self-preservation" or maybe just to clear the air. But the bottom line is I respond because it is honesty and fun and my wife even comments as I write, "You're really having fun aren't you." I smile. I have no animosity toward our angry critic. He has an agenda dear to his heart and I can but hope he is sincere and really thinks he is doing a service for the kingdom of God. I can't read his mind, I can only read and respond to his words. I bear him no ill-will. I purposely avoid using his name throughout this response to keep it as impersonal as possible.

The "scorn" is not directed personally at our critic; rather it is directed at the unprovoked and unnecessary nastiness of the article and the perception that the critic can read my mind and intent, as well as my words. This is all very interesting in light of our critic's recent Joint Agreement co-signed with Bob Sungenis (seems to have been removed from White's site, probably because our critic violated it and it had to be removed). I would have wished he could have stuck to the "new leaf" he's turned over for at least a month or two. A good college try, as the saying goes. I have never met the man and don't recall ever talking with him except through e-mail on very few occasions. I am happily going to keep it that way. I have no intention of starting a written debate or continuing the discussion beyond this simple reply.

Third, after addressing the section entitled "Stephen Ray's Presentation" I have provided a few Links for interested readers and a few Appendices with extended excerpts demonstrating there is more to the issue than our critic admits or knows.

Lastly, since I really don't take this kind of criticism too seriously (especially after reading it and knowing its source) I thought we could set the academic atmosphere aside this time and have a little fun with this. A little friendly jousting, good-natured humor, and maybe a bit of well placed sarcasm never hurt anyone, if of course it is all taken in a spirit of fun. I hope our critic has a sense of humor. So, get your popcorn and let's jump right in.

Our Critic begins . . .

>>But while we can excuse Keating on the basis of possible ignorance of the actual events of history, we cannot do so with Catholic convert Stephen K. Ray.<<

I am flattered by this compliment regarding my erudition (insert smile here), though it appears to be a "left-handed compliment". Oh well, us impoverished and ignorant Catholics will accept compliments any way we can. When the Protestant "defenders-of-the-faith-storm-troopers" knock on our religious Internet doors at least it proves someone has noticed us. (Insert here a proud smile after being noticed). Some people have to paint their hair green and wear nose rings to get noticed, others have to debate everyone and their brother to get noticed; - I just had to write a book. I have it easy I guess.

>>Instead, we must soberly conclude that his treatment of this issue in his 1999 book Upon This Rock (Ignatius Press) is simply deceptive.<<

Beauty, and unfortunately, deception, often lies in the eyes of the beholder. When one reads history through their own colored spectacles and then criticizes and labels those who hold to a different opinion of history as "deceptive" it apparently makes them feel good and affords them a perceived credibility with their comrades. It would be more charitable, something which the critic appears short of in this article, to suggest that maybe it is simply a difference of opinion. When critics toss around loaded words like "deceptive" as though they can read everyone's mind, it makes one wonder and become a little suspicious. Hopefully he is suggesting my book is innocently deceptive without attributing intentional deception to the author.

Actually, my book Upon this Rock has been read by many much better versed in Church history than our critic, including more than a few professors of history and theology who have endorsed my book for its accuracy, and have complimented my humble efforts with words of high praise. Should I now crumble because this critic sneers at my book later in his article-- because it contradicts his view (his legend)? Not likely.

>>This work is, in my opinion, the clearest example of the lengths to which a Roman controversialist will go in twisting history so as to support Roman claims. In a work that is without question one of the least accurate and scholarly works I have ever seen on the subject, one that argues in circles constantly, Ray addresses both Cyprian and Augustine's views.<<

Twisting history? I am not going to argue here on this matter. I did that in my [Response to Webster](#). Setting aside the history-twisting charge for now, I will continue with the article. However, to see the extent the critic goes to twist history, read the last two appendices and compare them with our critic's analysis earlier in his article.

I wonder if our critic has actually read my book upon which he makes such a caustic and seemingly infallible criticism. I would venture a guess that he only read the portions which related to him, but didn't read the entire book and the development of the thesis and argument to understand the full content, or he has taken passages out of context (which is exactly what he has done here in his critique) and twists them. I think we'll see who the "twister" is as we proceed. I think some of these guys read the Fathers and my book like they do the Bible--making it say what they want it to say or wish it said. I would respect our critic a bit more if he would provide a fair presentation the book instead of just attacking the pages he happened to flip to or the passages that contain his name.

I think Webster also failed to read my book and my suspicions were piqued for two reasons: he often argued a point that I had earlier stipulated, or claimed I didn't say certain things which were clearly stated in my book. This is all available for your weekend reading pleasure on my website. Secondly, he only mentioned the eight footnotes which contained his name but failed to comment on the two footnotes that mentioned him but for some reason were not put in the index. I wonder if the current critic has followed his friend's course of study.

>>However, given that Ray does not use the tools of a historian, and in fact utterly abandons any kind of scholarly methodology, the result is predictable.<<

My book *Upon this Rock* has been widely accepted as historical and scholarly and is already required reading in more than one university. I use Scripture, reason, historical documents, other scholars, etc. but somehow these are not considered "tools of a historian"? And supposedly our critic holds a patent on such, even though his method in the first part of his article uses a similar approach in some ways? What the critic means here is that I don't come to conclusions that fit his Protestant tradition so he rejects the methodology as well as my conclusions.

>>He early on exposes how utterly unreliable his work will be in words such as these:

Sometimes silence is more eloquent than words. This is especially true in Church history. We hear so much about what the Fathers say and so little about what they do not say. This is revealing and should play a significant role in our research. (*Upon this Rock*, p. 12).

Such a methodology is, quite simply laughable. <<

Such is the ignorance of our critic. Such a methodology is not laughable if it is part of a larger methodological approach. If it were the only method used, then I would raise my hands in full support. But again it seems very unlikely that the critic has read the context of this statement in my book or he would not have made such an ill-advised objection. It seems one of two things: he has either not read the text and therefore is ignorant of the fuller context and proper understanding of my argument, or he is just not playing fairly. I'll let the reader decide, the reader who has taken the time to read my book and consider the arguments fairly and in context.

Is he trying to say that I will only use silence to prove my argument? Webster alluded to such in his first response. Is silence my only argument? Heavens no. The very paragraph our critic quotes ends with the words, "But along with what the Fathers say, we need to hear their silence as well" (*Upon this Rock*, 12). I then go on to explain what I mean and give 300 pages of documentation with over 500 footnotes with quotes and proofs. So, am I arguing only from silence? Come on, get real!

If there is a concept universally accepted in a certain society and no one objects to its existence and does not argue against it there are two things that future historians may use to prove the concept was universally accepted. They will provide written documentation that the concept was taught, preached, written about, believed and practiced throughout the society. Silence strengthens the argument. If there are no written documents condemning the concept and no opposition to its practice, then the silence adds credibility to and supports the contention that the written documents and teachings were believed, so much so that there was no viable or substantive opposition to the concept or practice. Silence here is profound. In my argument, since the concept and practice of the primacy of Rome was inherent in the early Church, I use silence to collaborate my claim, I do not use it as the primary argument. Don't I wish critics would be more critical (in a good sense, of course).

One considers many things and uses many tools when studying history. Not only do you look to what was said and written but what was not said and not written. There are many tools in the historian's tool chest. If a carpenter laughed at the use of a hammer and nails he would build very poorly. If our critic discards valuable tools of the trade (of historical research) then he also will build poorly. One who laughs at a hammer makes a fool of himself, not the one who includes the hammer among his tools. His uninformed laughter only builds the esteem of the man with the hammer.

>>Ray goes on to use this to argue that unless an early Father specifically denies Petrine primacy and succession that this is somehow "relevant" to historical research.<<

Yes and no. If by that we mean that the Primacy of Peter is taught and practiced and no one teaches against it, then yes, it is relevant. However, if by that he means I try to prove the Petrine primacy and succession based on silence alone, then no. If someone wants to summarize my argument, they ought to first read and understand it. (Insert throat clearing here.)

>>It is painfully obvious, to any semi-unbiased reviewer, that Ray is assuming what he seems to know he cannot prove. The grotesquely anachronistic "examination" that follows is glowing evidence of Ray's inability to accurately handle historical data and to provide any kind of meaningful presentation. <<

Such an unbiased reviewer, say, as our current critic? (insert laugh and knowing smile here). I love the insertion of the "anachronistic argument". For someone as anachronistic as he to use such a word against me is like the pot calling the kettle black. Again, come on. I went into great detail on anachronism and historiography in my [discussion with Webster](#). I'll do more if necessary.

>>Protestant apologist William Webster has thoroughly refuted Ray (see www.christiantruth.com) who, in response, has only been able to provide more thorough documentation of his own anachronistic, circular reasoning. Utilization of Ray's means of thought could provide the basis for any kind of belief in the early church, no matter how far-fetched.<<

Yes, and as I said, many new Protestant apologists "parrot" Bill Webster and Webster is much better than the parrots. Read my book and my response to Webster for yourself and see if you agree with this critic who appears to have read neither. My [215-page response to Bill Webster](#) and the subsequent fallout. We'll see who reasons in circles as we progress.

>>But despite this, Ray's treatment of both Cyprian and Augustine is not just grossly flawed, it is deceptive.<<

Oh no, the "D" word again. Deceptive? Oh my, such rhetoric—critic glares with eyes ablaze! Such harsh words. I forgive him for I know he has an argument to win and he thinks he wins best, I guess, if he uses such inflammatory language (violating, in my opinion, his new standard as represented in the Joint Agreement with Bob Sungenis), ad hominem arguments, and the "D" word. He hopes his readers will buy his prattle hook line and sinker. But I am certainly not alone in my well-reasoned and substantiated claims. I am in good company. It is all clearly expounded in my book and on my website discussion with Webster. I ask the reader, should I reproduce it all here to expose our critic's flawed suppositions? No patient reader, I'll have mercy on you and simply refer you to the already posted document for those of you who want to read it. There will be further documentation and argument added to the website soon. Maybe our critic will read it.

>>It is obvious Ray knows the truth of the matter, but he either suppresses that truth, or twists it into a shape unrecognizable to anyone who reads the early Fathers for themselves.<<

Obvious? It is obvious that I really believe in our critic's tradition but I'm lying. Hum! Wow, I guess you learn something new every day. I wish our critic had read the Fathers and not just "proof-texted" them. Kinda like he does when dealing with the Mormons—quote the Fathers when it suits the argument, ignore them when they sound too Catholic.

>>When dealing with Cyprian he desperately attempts to undercut the reality of Cyprian's view of the cathedra Petri, and likewise somehow "forgets" to cite the passages we provided above which

demonstrate Cyprian's rejection of Stephen's meddling in the affairs of the North African Church.<<

Jabber, jabber, jabber. After a while I get weary of someone else telling me what I believe and don't believe when they apparently haven't even read my book! I deal with all this in great detail in my writings to Webster. This "all-knowing critic" seems to have missed that somehow (so much for being all knowing, eh?). Too bad. Do I sound desperate or does this poor fellow sound desperate. I'm certainly not desperate, in fact, I'm smilin' and enjoying myself.

>>Though providing lengthy footnotes, he does nothing but ignore Cyprian's real doctrine, while attacking William Webster for pointing out the obvious.<<

Obvious? Maybe to someone who has already put the blinders on but not quite so obvious to an objective reader and historian. Cyprian is a unique character with a unique twist to his theology of the Church and very few (remember that few does not mean none) are willing to claim that he has a "clear doctrine" (no ambiguities Mr. Critic? Everything is clear as a bell with Cyprian?). I quote in my book a prominent Protestant scholar, Earle Cairns, professor of church history at Wheaton College, a bastion for Evangelical Protestant Christianity. (Please take note that our friendly critic fails to tell you that this good fellow agrees with me and Cairns is no friend of the papacy.).

For those who have not read my book yet (clearing throat here with a crooked smile and wink), Professor Cairns writes, "The Roman church has insisted from earliest times that Christ gave to Peter a special rank as the first bishop of Rome and the leader of the apostles. Cyprian and Jerome did the most to advance this position by their assertion of the primacy of the Roman see to the other ecclesiastical seats of authority" (Christianity Through the Centuries, revised edition [Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1954, 1981], 117) This is quoted with many others on Cyprian in my book along with Jaroslav Pelikan and Philip Schaff. However, I am not going to debate St. Cyprian here because I have laid it out clearly and fairly in my book and in my internet debates with William Webster.

So, here I stand without an ally and without a brain? Come on. (Insert disgusted side glance.) Professor Cairn concedes that Cyprian held to a primacy and authority in Rome. Maybe our critic should castigate Professor Cairn for the silly way he interprets history, how he has misinterpreted Cyprian, how he ought to sit at the feet of Mr. Webster to get the "real story". Ah, aren't these critics fun?

>>But our concern is much more with the tremendously deceptive presentation regarding Augustine's Sermon 131.<<

That our critic has the final word on Sermon 131 or that he is correct that I am deceiving my readers on this point will be determined as we go along. Let's not draw too many conclusions yet.

>>Beginning on page 230, Ray provides a completely circular argument, not based upon Augustine, but upon Ray's desperate need to read into Augustine the concept of Petrine primacy in the bishop of Rome. His citations (as throughout the book) are meant to be relevant only given the assumption of what he is trying to prove, the pre-existing commitment to the modern Roman theory of Petrine primacy.<<

Everyone begins with a view to what history is and says. No one goes at it without ideas, assumptions and certain clues. Our critic is no different. His very attempt to discredit my book is fueled by his "desperate attempt" to force his Protestant views into early history (and the Bible for that matter). He is also desperate to contain the bleeding since so many of the brightest Evangelical Protestants are jumping ship and joining the Catholic Church. Even Evangelical writer Riddlebarger admits that "While evangelicalism is growing numerically, apparently there are not as many notable Roman Catholics becoming evangelicals as vice-versa" (Roman Catholicism, hostile to the Catholic Church, ed. John Armstrong [Chicago: Moody Press, 1994], 240).

So, our critic has his reasons and purposes for writing as well. If the critic wants to point fingers and claim that someone has a point to argue and a reason to argue it, fine; however, I would request two things: first, to not impute evil intent to the author, and second, admit that he also has a perspective, a "tradition" to which he holds and defends.

It is rather frustrating to relay all this here since it is clearly explained in my book and the responses to Webster which he mentions in his critique. I am quite up front with my presuppositions and the method of my approach. If

the critic had actually read my book instead of just grandstanding with passages taken out of context (I hope he doesn't "do the Bible" this way; oh my) he should explain to his reader that I have already explained my method and reasons. An author can get frustrated when critics spout off but demonstrate (even if it isn't actually the case) an ignorance of the book upon which they purport to judge. And here it seems that the infallible critic can also see into one's heart and knows the purposes and "deceitful" intent behind the book. The only thing worse than someone who thinks they can read your mind is someone who does a darn poor job of it.

Now, am I wrong to discover my Catholic theology in St. Augustine? Just because the terminology and definition on the Petrine Primacy from Vatican I is not found explicitly in Augustine, does it mean that Augustine rejected the papacy? Just because the first century Christians did not use the word "Trinity" or used vague terms in conveying this doctrine does it mean they didn't believe in the Trinity? Of course not. The issue is not on the lack of terminology or explicit definitions, but rather whether the concepts of these doctrines are found in the early Church even in embryonic form. Both were subject to development and fuller understanding by the Church as I show in my book."

Again, I have dealt with that in great detail in my writing to Webster. The horticulturist knows what the Catholic critic often forgets: the acorn and the oak are organically one. The horticulturist sees the oak in the acorn. What the oak tree is today was inherently what the acorn, sprout, sapling, and young tree were yesterday. Is the doctor silly to see the child in the old man. Does the geneticist fail to see the child in the embryo? Of course not. Nor is the Catholic anachronistic and thinking wishfully to see the papacy in the early Church. Funny that our critic, and others of his recently-devised traditions, attempt to do the same thing, read their tradition back into the Fathers of the early Church but all that appears to them as a specter. See Appendix A at the end of this response. It is a few paragraphs extracted from my response to William "Bill" Webster.

>>He even takes a pathetically weak shot at my own discussion of Augustine's view of Matthew 16:18-19 which is so poorly constructed that there is no need to refute it: it stands as its own refutation. <<

I have added my "pathetically weak shot" here for the reader. They can determine for themselves if it is pathetically weak. Here is footnote #186 in section three. This is one of over 500 footnotes:

"Retractiones 1, 20, 1 in Saint Augustine, *The Retractations* trans. Sister Mary Inez Bogan [Washington D.C.: Catholic Univ. of America Press, 1968], 60:90-91. This passage has generated a lot of excitement in those who oppose the papacy. They mistakenly think they have discovered a nail for the "coffin" of Catholic teaching, even though Augustine teaches here that it is perfectly valid to understand Peter, in Matthew 16, as the rock upon which Christ built his Church. St. Augustine neither denies that the Rock is Peter nor does he deny the visible reality of the Church and the primacy of Rome. James White, neglecting to mention everything else in the Augustinian corpus that refutes his proof-texting, touts this passage as some kind of coup de grâce (see *The Roman Catholic Controversy*, 121-122). No one denies that the Fathers saw additional applications to Matthew's text (as we see in the Catechism of the Catholic Church), but White fails, unhappily, to properly represent St. Augustine whose constant words and actions professed a thoroughly "Catholic" understanding of the Petrine primacy in the see of Rome.

Even if, for the sake of argument, Augustine had said that Peter was definitely not the rock in Matthew 16 (which, by the way, no Father ever said), the Fathers taught and practiced what most Evangelicals fail to understand--the Petrine succession was of apostolic origin and was an organic outgrowth of the Holy Spirit's leading and protection of the Church and would have been adhered to even if Matthew 16 didn't exist. White also fails to factor in the development of doctrine--that Christian doctrine and practice develop over time as the need arises. If we apply White's methodology to the development of the New Testament we would assert that since the early Christians did not define the canon of Scripture in the precise words of today's Evangelicals, then the New Testament is to be rejected today. It was not until the end of the fourth century that 2 Peter or Jude were universally accepted as canonical. Should we reject them now because the earliest Christians failed to definitively define the canon the way Evangelicals do today? Catholics understand that the earliest Christians did not fully appreciate the ramifications of the primacy of St. Peter and his successors. Jesus' words to St. Peter can be seen as a "prophecy", in the words of Cardinal Newman. The full-blown understanding and implementation of the papacy took time to develop, just as did the canon of the New Testament and the doctrine of the Trinity.

"Let's apply White's principle, in his own words concerning Peter and Matthew 16, to the issue of the canon's development. Regarding the development of the doctrine of the papacy he writes, "Notice the huge movement in

thought that has taken place between the early part of the fifth century and the latter part of the nineteenth" (James White, The Roman Catholic Controversy [Minneapolis, MN: Bethany House, 1996], 122). But, would not even White have to agree that in the case of the canon of the New Testament there is a huge movement in thought--from almost exclusive reliance on oral tradition and no defined New Testament canon, to a list of twenty-seven books that are non-negotiable and required for any Evangelical--that has taken place between the latter part of the first century to the latter part of the fifth? Why does White accept such development in the early Church's understanding of the canon but not of the papacy? White recommends that we read further on the topic with these words: "The reader is strongly encouraged to read the fine presentations available on this topic" and then he directs us to the History of the Christian Church by Philip Schaff (Roman Catholic Controversy, 245). What Schaff tells us is what we already know, but what James White denies: "Augustine, it is true, unquestionably understood by the church the visible Catholic church, descended from the apostles, especially from Peter, through the succession of bishops; and according to the usage of his time he called the Roman church by eminence the *sedes apostolica* [Apostolic Chair]" (History of the Christian Church [Grand Rapids, Mich.: Wm. E. Eerdmans, 1910], 3:307).

"Fr. Stanley Jaki, in his excellent book on the "keys" of Matthew 16 writes, '[Against the Donatists Augustine emphasized] that Peter was first given the keys which later on were communicated to the others apostles. . . . The need to insist on the Church's power to forgive sins against Donatists and all their kindred 'spiritualists' made almost inevitable the insistence that all apostles and all their successors had the power of keys, as a power tied even in Matthew to the power of loosing and binding given to the twelve as well. Such a stretching of the meaning of the passage in Matthew could have led to anarchy in the Church if pivotal importance had not been attributed at the same time to the Roman succession. Only a deliberate oversight of this latter point can prompt one to rehash an old superficiality and make anti-Roman hay out of Augustine's ignorance of Greek (and Aramaic), which left him undecided whether Christ founded the Church on Peter or on his faith. Only ill-will can turn into a champion of a 'spiritualist' invisible church that Augustine who repeatedly greeted Rome's decision as a rescriptum or in Roman legal terminology a decision against which there was no further appeal. . . . For Augustine the twelve [apostles] were no more conceivable without their head, Peter, than the Church was conceivable without the chief apostolic see, Rome' (The Keys of the Kingdom [Chicago, IL: Franciscan Herald Press, 1986], 75, 76)."

>>But on page 233 we read the following: "Roma locuta est; causa finita est [Rome has spoken; the case is closed]."Look familiar? It should. As we have seen, Augustine never said this. Ray uses the same quotes Keating did: but, he then attaches an almost page-length footnote that shows that he is well aware Augustine never uttered these words! This is the deception. Keating can claim ignorance: Ray has no such excuse. Look at what Ray says:

This popular, shortened version of Augustine's statement put to rest the contention caused by the Pelagian heretics. The full text of his statement--the exact equivalent of the shortened version above--is, "[On the matter of the Pelagians] two Councils have already been sent to the Apostolic See [Rome]; and from there rescripts [decrees from the Pope] have come. The matter is at an end [causa finita est]; would that the error too might sometime be at an end." (Jurgens, Faith of the Early Fathers, 3:28). <<

Oh boy, we'll have some fun here! Our critic will be writing to Oxford Press and a hundred other publishers to expose their willful deception by the time we're done with this one. First, what is the problem? I relay the exact words of Augustine as I explain in the footnote. It would do the reader well to read the whole footnote, not just the few lines taken out of context by our infallible critic. I tell the reader that the common rendition "Rome has spoken the matter is closed" are not the actual words of Augustine. If I were deceptive, as our critic claims, I would have failed intentionally to relay the actual words.

So the reader will have the benefit of the whole footnote from my book and not just a snippet, here is the full text:

"Sermons 131, 10. These sermons were presented between 391-430. This sermon however, was written subsequent to the Councils of Carthage and Milevis (AD 16). This popular, shortened version of Augustine's statement put to rest the contention caused by the Pelagian heretics. The full text of his statement--the exact equivalent of the shortened version above--is, "[On the matter of the Pelagians] two Councils have already been sent to the Apostolic See [Rome]; and from there rescripts [decrees from the Pope] have come. The matter is at an end [causa finita est]; would that the error too might sometime be at an end" (Jurgens, The Faith of the Early Fathers 3:28. "In matters of faith, [Augustine] says, it is the duty of all to have recourse to the Apostolic See and its pastoral

ministry; for God specially directs the Pope in giving his decisions. It is true, the oft quoted phrase: 'Roma locuta est, causa finita est,' is not found verbally in any writings of Augustine; but its equivalents occur again and again.

And this is all that is required to make him a staunch supporter of Papal infallibility" (Bernard J. Otten, *A Manual of the History of Dogmas* [St. Louis, MO: B. Herder, 1917], 1:336). Rome was the final appeal. "[The authority of the Apostolic See] was an authority beyond and including the authority of local councils, which, when they had done their best, referred to it for approval and ratification of what they had done. No part of the Church was more autonomous than the African; yet when 130 bishops had met under the Primates of Carthage and Numidia, and were as sure as to the truth of the doctrinal statements which they opposed to error as bishops could be, St. Augustine himself being one of them, they did not think their labours concluded until they had sent their decrees to be ratified at Rome. St. Augustine described their authority as being a rivulet when compared with the fountainhead" (Thomas W. Allies, *The Throne of the Fisherman* [London: Burns & Oates, Limited, 1887], 338)."

Another footnote provided in my book on St. Augustine is pertinent to this topic. And, once again you will see, my fair and objective readers, that I have provided the actual words of St. Augustine numerous times in my book.

Letter of Pope Innocent I to Victorius, Bishop of Rouen 2, 3, 6 in Jurgens' *The Faith of the Early Fathers* 3:179, dated Feb. 15, 404 a.d., only eleven years after the Council of Hippo formalized the canonization of the New Testament. "Pelagianism is a heresy which strikes at the very root of the Christian attitude to God and redemption. A provincial Council in proconsular Africa (A.D. 416) decreed that Pelagius and Caelestius should be anathematized 'unless they openly anathematize' their errors. But the Council wrote to Pope Innocent I 'in order that to the statutes of our littleness might be added the authority of the Apostolic See. . . . Augustine, preaching at Carthage in September 417 about the Pelagian trouble, says: 'On this matter [the findings of] two Councils have been sent to the Apostolic See, and answers have been received thence. The matter is ended: let us hope that the error [sc. the heresy] may soon be ended.' Thus Augustine, the great anti-Pelagian theologian, appears to agree with Innocent that the papal determination of a controversy about the faith is final" (B. C. Butler, *The Church and Infallibility* [New York: Sheed & Ward, 1954], 170-171).

Now that I have established the fact that I did not intend to deceive; in fact, quite the opposite, I laid all the cards out on the table, I must ask this question. Why would I use this line "Rome has spoken, the matter is closed" instead of the full text of Augustine's passage? Simple for you, fair reader, but seemingly too complicated for our critic. My guess is that you, the intelligent reader will readily understand. Have you heard that phrase before? Isn't it commonly used, part of our cultural literacy? Pick up a Dictionary of Quotations and see what you find. I will do so in a minute. Part of our daily parlance are phrases that stick in our minds. You are familiar with sayings such as "An apple a day keeps the doctor away" or "A stitch in time saves nine." These are part of our culture, phrases and sayings that pervade our daily life. I dare say if you were to say "Rome has spoken . . ." to most educated folks they would readily respond "the matter is closed." Why? Because it is part of our culture. The same goes with "Mary had a little lamb". The reader would immediately respond "its fleece was white as snow".

"Rome has spoken, the matter is closed" is part of cultural literacy, a common phrase. That, kindly reader, is why I use the phrase in my book. However, knowing there is more to the story I fully explain the actual words of Augustine several times, hardly a deception wouldn't you agree. Yet, the subtitle of our critic's article centers on this phrase and my "deception" in its use.

Now let's educate our critic a bit. He already has a Ph.D. he says, but I'm sure he's willing to admit there is more he can learn. I'm sure he will admit he can learn a thing or two once in a while, unless of course he claims omniscience (insert throat-clearing here). I hope he gets his pencil out for to be consistent he will now need to charge the editors at Oxford University Press, John Bartlett, and a host of others with willful deception. Who are these good folks and what crime have they committed? What deception have they intentionally foisted upon an unwary public? Simply this, they inform their readers that Augustine said the hideous (and non-existent) words "Rome has spoken the matter is closed." Call out the guard. Arrest these rouses. What is our evidence of their subtle deceptions. Their books of course. Let's take a look.

Let's start with John Bartlett's Familiar Quotations: *A Collection of passage, Phrases and Proverbs Traced to their Sources in Ancient and Modern Literature* [Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980], 129. Here we read, "Rome has spoken, the case is closed." And guess what? The author does not even tell us of the actual words of the quote, only the familiar summary of Augustine's words. Oh my, a deception for sure. At least I give my reader, even by our critic's admittance a whole page footnote explaining the history and actual words of Augustine's statement.

Next, the 2816-page Home Book of Quotations (New York: Greenwich House, 1967), says the same thing on page 1740: "Rome has spoken; the case is concluded."

And lastly for the sake of space, and the reader's patience, though we could produce a bushel full, let's look at The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations (New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1980). Here we read on page 22, "Roma locuta est; causa finita est. Rome has spoken; the case is concluded (Sermons, bk. i)." Oh my, another intentional and nefarious deception. An attempt to overthrow Protestantism and the Anglican Church. Imagine, the Oxford Press in full deceitful complicity with Bartlett, myself and Karl Keating. A conspiracy for sure, intended to subjugate the religious world.

See how silly critics can be at times. See what happens when they take things out of context or read things in the worst possible light, allowing their pre-conceived ideas to twist their thinking around like a rubber nose. There are many contexts that are important: textual contexts, historical contexts, cultural contexts, etc. Critics should be more careful before becoming judges of things they have little knowledge of. I hope our critic can do better than this embarrassment as we continue to evaluate his hysteria.

» As we see, Ray knows that Augustine did not say the words he quotes, but, he excuses this misrepresentation by re-translating the term "rescripts" (Latin: rescripta) as "decrees from the Pope." Upon what basis does he do this? We are not told.«

On what basis did I draw this conclusion? Did I fail to inform my readers? Did I add my own "anachronistic" comments in the brackets without reason? Heavens no. Does our critic have a set of Jurgens' "The Faith of the Early Fathers?" (Link is to the first volume of three.) I would bet a few shares in my company that he does (kidding of course, another deception, right?). I make it clear that I am quoting from Jurgens' and in Jurgens there is a endnote which I simply summarized for the sake of space and placed my summary in brackets (you know, these things [...]). Had our all-knowing critic taken a few minutes to check his resources before blowing his stack he could have read the footnote in Jurgens and answered his own question.

Jurgens writes "Endnote 12. The two councils were held at Carthage and Milevis respectively, their proceedings being found in the corpus of Augustine's letters, nos. 175 and 176. The rescripts from Rome, from Pope Innocent 1, are likewise found in the same corpus, letters nos. 181 and 182." Hopefully that clears that mystery up.

RESCRIPTS: Before we go any further, let's do a little historical and etymological (fancy word for the "history and development of words") study on the word "rescripts". We will first look at the English word "rescript" from the definitive 20-volume Oxford English Dictionary. The Oxford says, "1a. A decretal epistle from the Pope in reply to some question or difficulty referred to him [starting to sound familiar?]; also, any Papal decision, decree, or edict. 1b. (The original sense) The reply sent by a Roman emperor to a magistrate or other person consulting him on a doubtful point of law or as to the action to be taken in particular circumstances. 2. Any edict, decree, order, or formal announcement made by a ruler or governing body, or having an official character."

The word was understood from biblical times to represent an authoritative document from the Emperor. An example is given in the New Bible Dictionary, "This independence was granted in a rescript from the Seleucid king Demetrius II in May 142 bc, by which the Jews were released from the obligation to pay tribute." The rescripts from the king ruled the day.

Another example from the Protestant New Bible Dictionary, "Alternatively, it lay within his discretion, like Gallio (Acts 18:14-16), to refuse jurisdiction. If in doubt he could refer to the emperor, whose rescript would be binding on him as long as he remained in the province, though not necessarily upon his successors."

Appendix F goes into more detail on "rescripts" for those who are interested. Remember that Augustine lived in the days of kingdoms, monarchies and empires--he knew what rescripts were.

»We know that Innocent responded to the actions of the councils in North Africa. It is pure anachronism to 1) assume the North Africans held to Rome's view of supremacy, 2) assume that the North Africans felt their actions required "ratification" by the bishop of Rome, and 3) assume that Augustine was basing his statement "the matter is at an end" on the decision of Innocent rather than (as the context shows) the Scriptural arguments he had presented against Pelagianism and the actions of the North African

councils. <<

Oh really! We'll see who falls into the camp of "anachronism" when we deal with the issue a bit later. And we'll also see if it was Scripture alone upon which Pelagianism was squashed or whether it was through the councils of the Church ratified by the Apostolic see. (Our earlier quote provided by Parson showed that it was not Scripture, *per se*, but the authority granted to Rome which was derived from Scripture--the words of the African bishops. Scripture granted Rome authority!). Personally, I can't wait to get to that part. You know, I wish the critic had read my book and much of this would have been moot.

But, to cite a few authorities that even our critic might accept I will start with J. N. D. Kelly, Canon of Chichester Cathedral, a Fellow of the British Academy, member of the Academic Council of the Ecumenical Theological Institute in Jerusalem, author of numerous books, Anglican and no supporter of the papacy. He wrote about Pope Innocent I and Augustine and our current passage from Sermon 131, "St. Augustine rejoiced that two councils had sent their decisions to the holy see, definitive rulings had come back, and the case was settled" ([The Oxford Dictionary of Popes](#) (New York: Oxford University Press, 1986), 38. Good grief, that sounds like what I said! Imagine that.

Also, Parsons quotes from the original documents,

In the year 416, Silvanus, primate of Numidia, held a Synod of 61 bishops at Milevi, which accused the two heresiarchs to the Pontiff, and concluded its epistle in these words: 'We believe that, by the help of the mercy of our Lord and God Jesus Christ, who deigns to guide thee when consulting Him, and to hear thee when praying to Him, those who hold such perverse and pernicious things will more easily yield to thy authority, derived from the authority of the Holy Scriptures [notice, contrary to our critic's flawed supposition, that the Scriptures were not the authority that squashed the Pelagians; rather, it was the Scriptures that gave the authority to the Roman see to make a legal determination against the Pelagians! Quite a twist, eh?]; that we may rather rejoice because of their correction, than lament their destruction.' Pope Innocent I., having received the Relations of the African Synods, now condemned the two primary errors of Pelagianism, and defined the two opposing dogmas on the necessity of grace and on infant baptism.

In a Rescript to Silvanus and the other fathers of the Milevitan Synod, [Pope Innocent] says, 'Wherefore, in the authority of Apostolic vigor, we decree that Pelagius and Celestius, that is, the inventors of new words . . . are deprived of ecclesiastical communion, until they withdraw from the snares of the devil, in which they are held captive according to his will; that they be not received, in the meantime, into the Fold of the Lord, which they, following the perverse path, have willed to desert. . . . At the same time we command, that any who may with similar pertinacity attempt to defend the same, shall be punished, if ever any shall recover, and having abandoned the error of depraved dogma, shall condemn those things for sake of which they have condemned themselves, the customary medicine, that is, her association, shall not be refused them by the Church.' With the receipt of this Rescript of St. Innocent, says St. Augustine, 'the cause was finished;' but well did he add, 'would that the error also were ended!'" (Studies in Church History by Rev. Reuben Parsons [New York: Fr. Pustet & Co., 1904], 1:257-258).

>>Ray makes no reference to the actual substance of Sermon 131.<<

Good grief (as my good Baptist father always says)! Actually, I provide 347 words (according to the "Word Count" feature on Microsoft Word) on the portion of the sermon I refer to. My topic was not meant to be a full-blown discussion of Sermon 131—if it had I would have entitled it "Augustine and Sermon 131: A Full Exposition". One needs to be focused as an author. Anyone reading my book will understand the format and limitations; and, hopefully our critic will understand this aspect of writing a book as well.

>>He never quotes it.<<

Certainly I do, in the footnote. Hello, anyone home? (Let's quote the whole pertinent part for the sake of our readers and provide a link to the whole sermon for those who want to read it. Go to Appendix E and read the section in question.)

Our critic proves I did quote it earlier by providing the fuller context of the real quotation by Augustine right out of my book. Am I missing something here? Of course I quoted from Sermon 131 (should I apologize for not quoting

the whole thing in my book (turning red from embarrassment for my neglect)). These guys, including Webster are notorious for quoting selectively and ignoring passages that damage their parochial views. Webster's book *The Matthew 16 Controversy* and our critic's books and articles are great examples. I know I am not responding to Webster here, but I don't find our critic chastising his buddy Webster for a book so full of errors, misquotes, and missing ellipses; in fact, he promotes it and sells it on his website. I was embarrassed for Webster as I read it, yet our critic highly recommends the book.

Actually, in Upon this Rock I include many of the allegedly "damaging" passages regarding the papacy and address them. Others have left them out, but I have not followed that pattern. I honestly tried to include as many passages from the early centuries as I could within the confines of one book and publisher's limitations. I provide a fair sampling from friendly and unfriendly sources and meet them head-on. I wish those currently being discussed here would do the same. A quick perusal of Webster or our current critic's books (example The Roman Catholic Controversy) will demonstrate that they quote Augustine profusely wherever they consider it damaging to the Catholic position but even though Webster's book dedicates over 40 pages to Augustine, Webster never mentions this famous and very important passage from Sermon 131. In fact, there are a whole slew of Augustinian passages that somehow failed to make it into their books. Neglect, dishonesty, didn't fit the confines of his argument? I don't know. But if critics want to accuse others of selective quotations and twisting history, they ought to look to their own house as well. It is not wise for those who live in glass houses to start a rock-throwing contest. I guess if you want the passages "neglected" in our friends' books you'll just have to read Upon this Rock for the fuller account (insert smile here).

»And what is worse, he utterly ignores the entire issue of Zosimus and the entire history of what transpired immediately after this sermon was preached! «

Frankly, I was not commenting on Zosimus at that point in my book or on what happened afterwards. An author has to stay focused as I'm sure our understanding critic already knows. I was commenting on what Augustine said at this point in his sermon. But for the unbiased reader I have provided below Appendices B, C, and D to show what happened afterwards and to show that things are not as clearly "Protestant" as our wishful critic would have them. The Catholic position stands tall. Many more of such could be provided but these two will suffice until a new book on the topic is published by a friend (sly smile here with the start of an anxious drool). Also, Joe Gallegos is finishing up a full article on St. Augustine and these matters at hand which will be posted on my site when finished. I also deal with Augustine in my correspondence with William Webster and a follow-up to his latest is forthcoming. Whew, with all that out of the way . . .

It may be appropriate, with my good readers' indulgence (not the kind that allows you to sin with impunity—grin) just having fun with a perennial misunderstanding of Catholic teaching) to discuss one earlier paragraph in our critic's critique. Our critic says this about the pertinent passage of Augustine in Sermon 131:

»It is a measure of the utter desperation of the Roman position to have to make reference to such things, in our opinion. The topic is not the bishop of Rome nor the authority of Rome. It is obvious, beyond question, that Augustine's point is that Pelagianism is a refuted error. It is not refuted because the bishop of Rome has refuted it. It is refuted because it is opposed to Scripture. Two councils have concluded this, and the bishop of Rome has agreed. From Augustine's position, the error has been exposed and refuted. If only those who are in error would come to know the truth! Augustine exhorts his hearers to teach the gainsayers, and pray that they may be dissuaded from their errors. This then is the context and content of Sermon 131 of Augustine (which is, btw, Sermon 81 in the Eerdman's set, pp. 501-504 of volume VI for those who wish to read the entirety of the work). «

I am not going to waste my time dissecting our critic's article in detail like I did Bill Webster's, other than to address the short section addressed to me and my book. However, I do want to take a good look at a sample paragraph which applies to the topic at hand. First, notice the theatrics (get more popcorn): "utter desperation of the Roman position". We're not impressed. Loud squawking in italics and jumping up and down don't impress me or my learned readers. Our critic is most assuredly entitled to his opinion, this is, of course, still America. And, I am glad he admits it is just his (actually "our opinion" which may imply the plural of majesty, I'm not sure) opinion because it can then be weighed in relation to how much weight his opinion holds - with me, not much.

Our critic then implies that I, and other ignoramuses and desperate folks seem to think that this comment on papal

(Roman) primacy is the main thesis of Augustine's Sermon 131. I never said that, nor did I or others imply it. But the fact that Augustine places this important concluding statement at the end of his sermon is not insignificant, both in what it says, the weight it carries, and its placement in the sermon. No one contests that the thesis of the sermon is not about the papacy - that seems obvious enough, but the fact that it is not primarily about the papacy is no reason to minimize an important statement by Augustine about the primacy of Rome. This would be tantamount to saying that since the message of Matthew's Gospel is not primarily about the Trinity that we dismiss the Trinitarian Baptismal formula in chapter 28 as an argument for the Trinity. What kind of reasoning is that? Yet that is what we are subjected to over and over again. Talk about arguing in circles!

And yes, we all know that Augustine is dealing in small part with the refuted error of Pelagianism (though the whole sermon is not emphasizing Pelagianism but is a homily on John's gospel of which Pelagianism takes up a miniscule part of the homily) but we must ask by what authority was Pelagianism refuted. Is it any surprise that Augustine ends his sermon saying it was refuted by the local councils and then confirmed with a final word from Rome? This is not a matter for rocket scientists for heaven's sake. So why does our "desperate" critic (oh my, I've fallen into using his terms now. Lord, have mercy!) now claim that Pelagianism is sermon 131 is refuted because it is "opposed to Scripture"? Where does it say that in the text? Talk about reading one's tradition back into the Fathers! Let the average reader read Sermon 131 and show me specifically where Augustine claims the matter has been determined by Scripture alone or by a final refutation based on Scripture. Come on, show me. Now, let the reader read Sermon 131 again and show me where Augustine says the authority which refuted the heresy and closed the matter was the authority of the CHURCH, her councils, and the Apostolic see.

Am I missing something here or is our critic showing himself to be very anachronistic - reading his favorite Protestant traditions into the texts of the Fathers?

And, I dare say the Pelagians would disagree with our critic that this homily states they were refuted because their theology was opposed to Scripture. They would ask "Opposed to Scripture according to whose interpretation?" (Our critic's, of course.) The whole argument had been based on opposing interpretations of Scripture and someone, some authority, had to make a definitive determination on what the Scripture taught - what the truth of the matter was - and Augustine does not say, as our critic does, that it was refuted by Scripture. Rather, Augustine ends the sermon, as I say in my book, stating that the heresy was refuted by the authority of the CHURCH and her councils, and backed up by the authority of Rome, "the Apostolic see". Would that our critic would accept the authority of the Church as espoused by Augustine!

Our critic then says, "Two councils have concluded this, and the bishop of Rome has agreed." However, that is not what Augustine says (but I won't accuse our critic of deception as he has done with me). Augustine refers to Rome as "the Apostolic see". The Apostolic see, the office of the Bishop of Rome has made final determination, Rome has RATIFIED the determination made by the "smallness" of the local councils. This is powerful stuff - this is territory where Evangelical Protestants haven't even begun to crack the ice yet; but, even so they are still self-proclaimed "experts" on the Fathers (insert grin here). I am anxious to hear our critic say, "This matter has been determined by my denomination and ratified finally by the Apostolic see in Rome." When that happens, then will I stand up, cheer and take notice of their exposition of the Fathers.

Yes, Pelagianism has been refuted. But, Augustine does not say it was the Bible that was the definitive determining factor; rather, it was the Church, more specifically the rescripts from the Apostolic see.

I think I have made my point on this matter. And, this was only dealing with one simple though misguided paragraph. Imagine what we could do if we tackled every paragraph. Oh well, let's grab some more popcorn, or maybe ice cream this time and move on.

»Instead, he provides two Roman Catholic citations that utterly ignore the historical context of Augustine's words. One, from Bernard Otten, is a simply ridiculous assertion that while Augustine never said "Roma locuta est," "its equivalents occur again and again." We have already seen Sermon 131 surely does not do this, so where else do we look for these "equivalents"? We are not told.<<

I have been accused of deception, trying to trick them into believing that Augustine used the words "Rome has spoken the matter is closed." Yet here again our critic admits that I have informed my readers - through the agency of a quotation this time - that these were not the actual words of Augustine. So I have undeceived my readers at least three times now, while our critic has attempted to re-deceive them as to my book. I am not

attributing ill will here, maybe only carelessness.

As to the "equivalents" I would suggest reading the rest of this section in my book, actually the whole book for that matter. I hope by now the reader has begun to question the objectivity and fairness of our agenda-driven critic. I would ask my honest readers: should I throw in my lot with the Rev. Bernard J. Otten, S. J., Professor of Dogmatic Theology and the History of Dogmas at St. Louis University (and his scholarly two-volume Manual of the History of Dogmas) or with our "world-renowned", impeccably educated critic who received his "degree" - well, we'll not discuss that here. I would also HIGHLY recommend that our readers (and our critic) read Studies in the Early Papacy by Dom John Chapman, especially the chapters "St. Cyprian on the Church" and "The Condemnation of Pelagianism".

>>Another pro-Rome work is cited that inserts the anachronistic idea that the North African bishops felt they had to send the conclusions of their councils to Rome "for ratification," and as normal, we are not given any foundation upon which we can examine the claim.<<

Our "completely objective and never erring critic" seems to imply that "pro-Rome" is synonymous with "ignorant, uneducated, and extremely prejudiced without a hope of historical objectivity". Alas, it seems I fall into this unfortunate camp of imbecilic anachronistic pro-Romans. (God have mercy on my soul.) Hopefully we have cleared up his confusion on this point.

>>The fact that the North Africans rejected Zosimus' clear, forceful rehabilitation of Pelagius, which included his insulting the North Africans as "storms of the church" and "whirlwinds" and which came couched within his complete claim of apostolic authority, shows this is not the case. The North Africans rejected his authority and his conclusions. So upon what basis can anyone say they felt the decisions of their councils needed Roman ratification? Indeed, as John Meyendorff points out, barely three years later these same African bishops wrote to Celestine, bishop of Rome, and said, "Who will believe that our God could inspire justice in the inquiries of one man only (i.e., the bishop of Rome) and refuse it to innumerable bishops gathered in council?" (Imperial Unity and Christian Division, 1989, p. 65). Does that sound like these men believed as Stephen Ray assumes everyone must have? Surely not. The facts are clear.<<

The facts may be clear to our critic, as clear as much of the other wishful thinking that he day dreams about. Reading a bit more and from a wider range of sources (other than just an Eastern Orthodox perspectives which he utilizes in this section and which suffers from the same "burr under the saddle" from which our critic suffers) he would realize it is not so "clear" and conclusive as he would like it to be. The history of Pope Zosimus is a major issue which would entail much discussion and which I am not going to delve into here. However, I have added Appendix B, C, and D which are lengthy excerpts for those who want pursue it further. Take a look at these scholars and their assesment of the situation and then ask yourself who is really misrepresenting the Fathers and history--who is really twisting the truth! Now you have an idea of how shoddy Protestant apologetics can create mythical Protestant history (legends) and how Protestant apologists often self-destruct when their legends are carefully analyzed. I have also added a few links to topics addressing Augustine and especially his Sermon 131. Happy reading!

http://members.aol.com/_ht_a/philvaz/articles/num16.htm

<http://www.cin.org/users/jgallegos/papacy.htm>

Appendix A

A Short Excerpt on Historiography and Anachronism from my Response to William Webster.

"I'm not sure why William accuses me of an "error of historiography." I suspect that he has been seduced by a positivist and secularist historiography which would certainly undermine his own understanding of salvation history. He seems to think it improper that I detect a child in an embryo. He seems to deny that the past points toward the future. No Christian who takes the Bible seriously can deny that history is directed towards increasing our understanding of God's will. In short, doctrine develops. History is not just a series of discrete, undirected, random events unrelated to one another. Our fragmentary and incomplete past understandings grow into fullness through the superintendence of the Holy Spirit. Animal skins, the doctrine of atonement for Adam and Eve, was adequate

but primitive when compared with the Mosaic sacrificial system.

"Further, the Mosaic understanding of atonement cannot do full justice to Jesus' sacrifice. I hear Bill saying, however, that it is a mistake to see Moses in Adam and Eve's animal skins or to see Jesus' in the sacrifice of animals. That would be anachronistic. To the contrary, it is the practice of the Hebrew historians, the mind of the Apostles, and the methodology of the Fathers. History is meaningful, under the providence of God and directed to a purpose. The Hebrew historians are often called the world's first great historiographers. They read their current history in light of the received narrative of what God had accomplished in their past. The Apostles and the Fathers weren't shy about interpreting their moment in light of the tradition they had received. Each expected that they were approaching a fuller understanding than their ancestors had. That is why we can read the fragmentary evidence of the past as pregnant with greater meaning than secularists and non-Christians can. We can see the oak in the acorn. I'm surprised that Bill has a hard time understanding this since he is so committed to the Puritans who themselves were not shy to read their present as the fulfillment of the past. He would do well not simply to accept the historical conclusions of the Puritans but to try and enter into their historical methodology.

"The accuser is often blind to the fact that they practice themselves what they point out in others. Can any of us be 100% objective when studying history? Can we completely avoid reading our experiences, historical and theological developments, and understandings back on earlier generations? Did the Apostle Paul ever do such a thing? Did he view Jewish history differently after Acts 9 than he did as a Pharisee? Did the Apostles in Jerusalem and the Gentiles in Asia view anything differently after the first church council in Acts 15? Will Bill agree that his presuppositions and accepted Baptist traditions have no effect on his research?

"The new book Reading Scriptures with the Church Fathers (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity, 1998), written by Protestant author Christopher A. Hall, make the point, "Many conservative Protestant interpreters, though uncomfortable to find themselves slumbering with Enlightenment and postmodernist bedfellows, will fail to discern or acknowledge the necessity of studying the fathers" (pg. 31). I would suggest that even those who do begin to investigate and read the Fathers, still fail to understand or think like the Fathers, therefore misunderstanding Patristic thought and teaching.

"I tried to be objective as I studied history and the papacy and I'm quite willing to admit that I view history as a Catholic. I understand the Catholic Church as a living organism, the Body of Christ. It is also an organization, even though this word has its unhelpful connotations. As any organization grows the need for a unifying factor is essential. As a business owner, I know this all too well. Countries know it, sports teams know it, families know it, and Protestant churches know it too. When the "guarantor" of unity is removed or non-existent, the unity is soon non-existent. How many Protestant denominations have blown apart through envy, contradictory opinions, differing theologies. This type of disunity proves the point. Catholics expect God to provide unity for his Church, and therefore a "principle" or head to represent and secure this unity since that is his desire and the prayer of our Lord (Jn 17:22-23). I would expect him to make provision to ensure and guarantee that visible unity. The Protestant doctrine of sola Scriptura does the exact opposite. Within less than four hundred years it has spawned over 30,000 competing and conflicting sects and groups.

"Catholics believe, with good biblical and historical warrant, as well as just good old common sense, that Peter and popes are God's answer to providing the needed and expected unity. Just as a CEO in a company, a captain in the army, a father in a family and a pastor in a Baptist church, there is a need for visible leadership to ensure unity. I deal with this in great detail along with the biblical reasons for the papacy, which Bill doesn't really address in his "rebuttal", or in his books. One of the embarrassing things of dealing with the biblical evidence, especially if one looks at modern scholarship, is that linguistic and textual biblical scholars almost unanimously have agreed that the Rock is Peter. This is the literal meaning of the text though many other applications can be drawn from the text. (Boy, I feel like I'm writing my book all over again!)

"My friend Dennis Walters again commented on the definitions of the Church and her Ecumenical Councils and the defining of words and the meanings of earlier ages: "I grant that the language at large changes the meanings of words. In popular speech, the changes happen fairly quickly (600 years is a fairly slow rate of change; most meanings change far more quickly). But in philosophy and theology, which are sciences, the chances of meanings changing with no one noticing are remote at best. I agree with William that theological terms change in meaning. But one reason why the Church continually revisits the same topic century after century in its councils, encyclicals, and theological investigations is to ensure that the problem William is pointing to does not happen vis a vis Church teaching. So, when the Church says that, by 'transubstantiation' we actually mean something pretty close to what

Justin meant by 'transmutation,' it is doing so after a great deal of scientific investigation and reflection. The historiographical problem--actually, a logical and a historical problem both--is actually what the Church is explicitly trying to avoid in making statements that attempt to clarify meaning."

"This issue of historiography really lies at much of the disagreement between Bill and I. I think it is probably an honest difference in methodology and how we see God working in history. As long as we differ on the basic premise of how to read Christian history, we will continue to come up with differing conclusions. I think this is a somewhat fair assessment. Can I criticize Bill for his conclusions? Yes and no. I will agree with him where I can, but disagree, kindly I hope, where we come up with very different results."

Appendix B:

St. Augustine and Pope Zosimus from *St. Peter and the Popes* by Michael Winter (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960), I hope our critic and Webster have no problem with me quoting from Winter since Webster quotes him as a trusted authority repeatedly in his work. Our critic says the facts are clear (maybe in his head they are remembering what Martin Luther said, "There are now as many theologies as there are heads" (paraphrase).

From *St. Peter and the Popes*: "The heresy of Pelagius was the only truly theological dispute in the early history of the Western church. The movement, of which Pelagius was the figurehead more than the instigator, taught as its fundamental principle that divine grace was not absolutely necessary for the salvation of the soul. The movement was not confined to Africa, but it found there its most determined opponents. When the Donatists were no longer a peril, St. Augustine devoted the whole of his energies to writing and preaching against the Pelagians, and the rest of the African bishops were no less zealous for the defense of the traditional belief. In the year 416 two important councils were held at Milevis and Carthage, where the Pelagian doctrines were condemned. Both councils wrote to the Pope requesting that 'the impiety of Pelagius should also be condemned by the authority of the Apostolic See.' At the same time Augustine, and four other bishops, addressed a further letter to the Pope dealing with the same matter. 'For we do not pour back our little stream for the purpose of replenishing your abundant source; but in the great temptation of these times . . . we wish to be reassured by you, whether our stream, though small, flows from the same head as your abundant river.'

"In seeking papal approval of their decisions the Africans were anxious that they should acquire the universal effectiveness which only the Roman See could give them. In the following year the Pope replied to them by the three letters dated January 27th, 417. The content of all three is much the same. The letter to Carthage contains an important digression on the authority of the Bishop of Rome, and it is here quoted in full, since it indicates the highly developed state of the papal theory at that date.

"In making inquiry with respect to those things that should be treated with all solicitude by bishops, and especially by a true and just and Catholic council, by preserving as you have done, the example of ancient tradition, and by being mindful of ecclesiastical discipline, you have truly strengthened the vigour of our religion, no less now in consulting us than before in passing sentence. For you decided that it was proper to refer to our judgment, knowing what is due to the Apostolic See, since all we who are set in this place desire to follow the Apostle from whom the very episcopate and whole authority of this name is derived. Following in his steps, we know how to condemn the evil and to approve the good. So also, you have by your sacerdotal office preserved the customs of the fathers, and have not spurned that which they decreed by a divine and not human sentence, that whatsoever is done, even though it be in distant provinces, should not be ended without being brought to the knowledge of this see, that by its authority the whole just pronouncement should be strengthened, and that from it all other churches (like waters flowing from their natal source and flowing through the different regions of the world, the pure streams of one incorrupt head), should receive what they ought to enjoy, whom they ought to wash, and whom that water, worthy of pure bodies, should avoid as defiled with uncleanable filth. I congratulate you, therefore, dearest brethren, that you have directed letters to us by our brother and fellow Julius, and that, while caring for the churches which you rule, you also show your solicitude for the well-being of all, and that you ask for a decree that shall profit all the churches of the world at once . . .'

"After this dignified reminder of the papal authority, the letters go on to approve the decisions taken in Africa, and in particular Pelagius and his associate Celestius are excommunicated. Since the sentence was from Rome, its effect was universal and final. A few months later St. Augustine preached a sermon which gave rise to the adage *Rome locuta est Causa finita est* (Rome has spoken, the matter is settled). What he really said was: 'For by now two synodal letters have been sent on this dispute to the Apostolic See; from that see in turn replies have come. The matter is settled (*causa finita est*): would that the error, too, might end at last.'

"In the eyes of the Africans the whole affair both of the doctrine and the actual excommunication of Pelagius had been satisfactorily concluded. The local councils had been given approval by Rome and the decisions had thus acquired universal force. It has been suggested that, the settlement was regarded as the joint effort of both parties, as if two equal partners were contributing to the final decision. The contemporary witnesses did not think so. A record of the affair was written by St. Prosper of Aquitaine, the disciple of St. Augustine: 'At that time the Pelagians, who had already been condemned by Pope Innocent, were being resisted by the vigour of the Africans and above all by the learning of Bishop Augustine.' Elsewhere he records the matter more poetically: 'They fell dead when Innocent of blessed memory struck the heads of the deadly error with the Apostolic sword.' Marius Mercator records the matter in greater detail: 'Celestius and Pelagius were not then for the first time condemned by Zosimus of blessed memory, but by his predecessor Innocent of holy memory . . . [He refers to the examination of the books of Pelagius] . . . These books were sent together with the letters to the fathers and bishops in Africa, where the books were read at the three councils which were assembled. From thence reports [relations] were sent to Rome, together with the books; the Apostolic sentence in reply to the councils followed, which deprived Pelagius and Celestius of ecclesiastical communion. It is clear that these fifth-century writers envisaged a subordination of authorities.

"In the whole of the career of St. Augustine there is no other instance of his having recourse to Rome as he did in the Pelagian affair. In various of his writings he indicates several sources of guidance which are complementary rather than exclusive of each other. In his treatise on baptism he advises that if one were in doubt as to the procedure to follow (over rebaptizing) guidance should be sought from the practice of the universal church, whose attitude could ultimately be ascertained from local or ecumenical councils. He refers to the ecumenical council because he was under the impression that the rebaptism controversy had, in fact, been settled by a general council. The apparent contradictions in his attitude have been clarified by Batiffol on the basis of his applying different criteria in different situations: 'Against the Donatists he preferred to invoke the authority of the universal church; for the question of baptism the authority of an ecumenical council. In the controversy against the Pelagians, Augustine regarded the Roman church as judge in matters of Faith. In the whole of Augustine's ecclesiology he manifests a preference for considering the church as a whole. However, this preference is not incompatible with the position of the papacy. In the last analysis communion with the universal church and communion with Rome have the same result. Augustine gives greater emphasis to the former, but the extent to which the two aspects harmonize can be judged from the letter to Gloriosus: 'Carthage . . . had a bishop of no mean authority, who could afford to ignore the hostile group of enemies, since he perceived himself to be joined by letters of communion, both to the Roman church, in which the authority of the Apostolic office [apostolicae cathedrae principatus] always persists, and to the other regions of the world whence the gospel came to Africa.' In view of the fact that the Pelagian affair was the only truly theological heresy of his period, the infrequency of his appealing to Rome cannot rightly be regarded as an anomaly. What is truly significant and relevant in the Pelagian dispute is the spontaneous way in which the two councils, and Saint Augustine, referred to Rome for approval and confirmation.

"There the matter should have ended but for the intrigues of the Pelagians and the impetuosity of Pope Zosimus. Zosimus succeeded Innocent in March, 417, and was soon approached by Pelagius and Celestius with the request that their case should be reopened. Without giving much thought to the matter, Zosimus declared his willingness to give them a hearing. Although the matter did not proceed very far, it is well to bear in mind that there was never a question of revising Innocent's doctrinal decision, but only of examining the justice of the personal sentences against Pelagius and Celestius. Nevertheless the Africans took alarm, and a council at Carthage in November, 417, protested in favour of the previous decisions. Zosimus wrote to the Africans to calm their anxieties and also to affirm his competence in the matter. The first part of this letter, 'Quamvis patrum traditio', is, like that of Innocent to the Africans, a detailed statement of the nature of the papal authority. Since it emanates from the Pope, it is of value in showing how the papal function was understood:

"Although the tradition of the fathers has attributed to the Apostolic See so great authority that none would dare to contest its judgment, and has preserved this ever in its canons and rules, and current ecclesiastical discipline in its laws stiff pays the reverence which it ought to the name of Peter, from which it has itself its origin, for canonical antiquity willed that this apostle should have such power by the decisions of all; and by the promise of Christ our God, that he should loose the bound and bind the loosed, and an equal condition of power has been given to those who with his consent have received the heritage of his See. For he himself has care over all the churches, and above all of that in which he sat, nor does he suffer anything of its privileges or decisions to be shaken in any wind, since he established it on the foundation firm and immovable, of his own name, which no one

shall rashly attack but at his peril. Since, then, Peter is the head of so great authority, and has confirmed the suffrages of our forefathers since his time, so that the Roman church is confirmed by all laws and disciplines, divine or human; whose place we rule, and the power of whose name we inherit, as you are not ignorant, my brethren, but you know it well and as bishops you are bound to know it; yet, though such was our authority that none could reconsider our decision . . .'

"Documents such as this letter and that of Innocent quoted above show how complete was the Roman appreciation of the papal power not only in practice but also in theory. The appeal to the Petrine text of Matthew had been characteristic of the Popes since St. Stephen, and expositions such as the present letter show how fully they had worked out the consequences of Peter's superiority being transmitted by succession.

"In May, 418, two hundred African bishops met in Carthage and again championed the previous decision of Innocent. By the end of that month Zosimus, too, had reached the same decision, which he announced in the *Tractatoria*. By then he had come to realize the insincerity of Pelagius, but it is undeniable that he was assisted in his decision by the firmness shown in Africa.

"In addition to the affair of Pelagius, the year 418 is famous on account of the case of the African priest Apiarius. The event itself was of little consequence and the records are sadly incomplete, yet the question has become notorious, thanks to the interest which it aroused among the Gallicans.

"It appears that the priest Apiarius was excommunicated by his bishop, Urbanus of Sicca, on account of certain crimes, and that he appealed to Rome for exculpation. In the same year the council of Carthage forbade appeals from Africa to higher courts 'across the sea' (*ad transmarina*). It is not certain whether this was prompted by the appeal of Apiarius, but it would seem likely. The reference could possibly be an allusion to the journeys to seek support at the imperial court such as the Donatists were in the habit of making, but it seems more likely from the sequel that it was politely directed against Rome. Pope Zosimus reacted by sending legates to Africa to protest. This was an innovation in the practice of the Apostolic See, inspired no doubt by the imperial executores, but envisaged in theory as early as the council of Sardica. These legates upheld, among other matters, the right of bishops to appeal to Rome. Having declared the principle, they made the fundamental mistake of basing this right, not on the inherited prerogatives of St. Peter, nor on the tradition of the church, but on the authority of the council of Nicea. The reason for this claim was the fact that in Rome, at that date, the official records of the councils of Nicea and Sardica had become amalgamated, so that the canons of the latter were assumed to have emanated from Nicea. Hence the legates in Africa were unwillingly referring to the provisions which the council of Sardica had laid down with respect to the procedure of appeal to Rome. Aurelius, the Bishop of Carthage, was ignorant of such provisions in the acts of the council of Nicea, but he agreed to allow the appeals pending an examination of the Eastern collections of the canons of Nicea. This decision was adopted by the council of Carthage in May, 419, and for the moment the matter rested in this state of compromise.

"Before very long the consultations with the major Eastern churches revealed that the council of Nicea had not been the origin of the canons in question. As a result of this discovery, it might have been expected that Africa would have put a stop to all appeals to Rome, yet in fact nothing of the kind happened. Appeals still went from Africa to the Pope. A well-known appeal of this period was that of Antonius of Fussala, which involved St. Augustine. It is clear that Augustine and his contemporaries did not object to the principle of appeal to Rome, and Augustine's letter on the subject indicates that it was a long-established practice."

(I did not add the footnotes due to complication of scanning and such. If interested, one can check out Winter's book or request the footnote information from me. I could, if necessary, fax a photocopy of the page if desired.)

Appendix C:

(Luke Rivington from Magdalen College, Oxford, England, exposes and corrects Dr. Pusey who chanted a mantra a century ago similar to our critic's twisted view today. Rivington shows that the facts of history are not as clear as Dr. Pusey and our critic would like to confuse them to be. The text is contained in Luke Rivington's *The Primitive Church and the See of Peter* [London: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1894].)

"Dr. Pusey has made the relationship of Zosimus towards Pelagianism one of his test cases against the infallibility of the Holy See; but in his handling of that Pope's history he has, in express terms, whether he knew it or not, contradicted St. Augustine, and in his own imaginary history of St. Zosimus he has founded his opposition on an

incorrect description of Papal infallibility. It is the old story of the conflict between science and religion. The opposition is always found to be between imaginary facts (or gratuitous deductions) and Christian teaching, or between ascertained facts and a caricature of that teaching. In this case neither the facts exist nor is the representation of our teaching correct.

"I. In A.D. 417 Zosimus succeeded St. Innocent, and Celestius at once hastened to Rome and resumed the appeal against the African sentence, of which he had given notice at the time, but which he had failed to prosecute."

"Zosimus admitted him to an audience. Celestius had brought with him a letter of approbation from the Bishop of Jerusalem, and had avowed his desire to submit to the decrees of Innocent. It is this that alters the whole case, and wrests the memory of this Pope from the accusation which Dr. Pusey so persistently brought against him. It is this that never appears in that writer's arraignment of the Pope. St. Innocent had expressly said I that if Celestius and Pelagius should condemn their depraved teaching, they were to receive 'the usual medicine' -i.e. be received back into the Church. They did present documents in which they promised amendment. Dr. Pusey says that the document which they presented was heretical, and that Zosimus failed in his guardianship of the faith, because he approved a Pelagian confession. St. Augustine says he did no such thing. He insists upon the fact that, all through, St. Zosimus was entirely on the orthodox side. These are his words: Zosimus never said, never wrote, that what they think about children is to be held--moreover, also, he bound over Celestius again and again (crebra interlocutione), when he was endeavoring to purge himself, to the necessity of consenting (consentiendum) to the above-mentioned letters of the Apostolic See' (i.e. the letters of Innocent); and he argues that whilst Zosimus eventually condemned Celestius and Pelagius, repeatedly and authoritatively ('repetita auctoritate'), what took place meanwhile was the most kindly persuasion [for the purpose] of correction, not the most hateful approval of depravity. And elsewhere he insists that Zosimus dealt with Celestius on the understanding that he should condemn what had been objected against him by the deacon Paulinus [i.e. at Carthage], and give his assent to the letters which had emanated from his own predecessor,' i.e. St. Innocent. St. Augustine is meeting the cavils of the Pelagians, who wished to make out that the Pope, St. Zosimus, had favored their cause; and by an appeal to the actual history of the case, he overthrows their contention, and in doing this he answers Dr. Pusey by anticipation.

"II. Moreover, St. Zosimus did not absolve these heretics there and then, but wrote to Africa for any 'instruments' of information, and said that if no one offered within two months to present a further case against Celestius and Pelagius, he should consider all doubt removed. He had received their letter of entreaty, he says, before he gave judgment. The African Fathers had met and represented to the Pope that his absolving these heretics would cause great confusion. They said that they decided that the decision of St. Innocent should hold good until Pelagius should confess that the doctrine he had taught was false.

"Zosimus was really acting with the caution of a judge: and as a judge he was in the right. It is the office of a judge to give sentence according to the evidence produced, and Zosimus was, from a formal point of view, right in his decision to hear Celestius and Pelagius. They professed amendment, and until evidence of their insincerity was forthcoming, Zosimus was in duty bound to admit them to a hearing. Dr. Pusey is mistaken in nearly every assertion that he makes on this subject. He says that Zosimus 'formally acquitted' Celestius. He only promised to do so if nothing from Africa turned up to the contrary, but meanwhile he discovered his insincerity. Dr. Pusey also says that Celestius 'presented to Zosimus an heretical confession of faith.' Now St. Augustine expressly says that this document was not heretical. He calls it 'Catholic.' Whence this tremendous difference between St. Augustine and Dr. Pusey ?

"III. St. Augustine shall explain. He says that Celestius and Pelagius promised submission and correction, if in anything they were judged to be wrong. This, according to our saint, stamped the document as Catholic. There were errors contained in it, it is true; but St. Zosimus himself says to the Africans that they have misunderstood the text of his letters, as a whole, 'as though we had given credence to Celestius in all things, and without discussing his words, had assented, so to speak, to every syllable.' it was the submission promised to the Apostolic See, which made Zosimus accept them as worthy of a hearing, and it was this that, St. Augustine expressly says, made the document 'Catholic in its meaning.'

"Pelagius said of his confession of faith: 'In which, if anything has been laid down unskillfully or incautiously, we desire to be corrected by you, who hold both the faith and the See of Peter; but if this our confession is approved by the judgment of your apostolate, then, whoever shall affix a stain on my character will prove himself to be unlearned, or ill-willed, or even not a Catholic, and not me to be a heretic.'

"This was the addition which in St. Augustine's judgment made the document strictly Catholic in tone.

"Celestius likewise said, 'We offer them' (i.e. their teachings) 'to be approved by your apostolic judgment [lit. the judgment of your apostolate], so that if perchance any error of ignorance has crept in upon us, as being men, it may be corrected by your sentence.'

"Consequently, Marius Mercator, whose authority is of great moment, says that Celestius 'by frequent answers' gave hopes that he condemned the heads of teaching for which he had been condemned at Carthage, and that this was the reason why 'he was thought worthy of some kindness by that holy bishop' (Zosimus), for he 'was commanded with special urgency' to renounce what had there been objected against him.'

"I have said that Zosimus was acting in the spirit of a real judge, and this his letter to the Africans shows. They had really acted without the proper procedure. Although (as it proved) substantially right, they were formally wrong. They had acted on the accusation of two deposed bishops, Eros and Lazarus, whose motives were not beyond question, and who, as degraded from their office, had no longer the right of accusation. Zosimus, who had the care of all the Churches, pointed out the evils that would ensue if such wandering stormy petrels as Eros and Lazarus were allowed to enter upon the role of accusers of others. And in their previous trial the Africans had failed in duty towards Celestius, who had given notice of appeal to Rome; for, although they appear to have respected the appeal, they took no care to have it properly conducted. It must be remembered also that Zosimus did not rehandle the dogmatic question. It was merely with the sincerity of Celestius and Pelagius that he dealt, and in this he was deceived. But this has nothing to do with his infallibility. Rome has never taught, Rome does not teach today, that the occupant of the Holy See cannot be deceived, but only that when he is led to determine a matter of faith or of the moral law as of obligation on the whole Church, he is secure of divine assistance.

"The whole case, therefore, of Zosimus is outside the region of infallibility, as that infallibility is defined in the Vatican decree. As Facundus, the African writer, says, in reference to the whole matter, 'Simplicity, through not penetrating the wiliness of the wicked, ought, not to be reckoned a crime;' and, as St. Augustine says, Pelagius could not deceive the Church of Rome beyond a certain point. Zosimus discovered that Celestius was not in earnest, summoned him to appear, and on his non-appearance excommunicated and anathematized him.

"IV. But he did more than that. He drew up an encyclical on the matter of faith, which consisted of an enlarged form of the decree of Innocent, accepted by the African Church; and by the advice of St. Augustine, the subscription to this was made obligatory on all bishops, and on the laity whenever suspected of heretical leanings. The emperor gave the aid of his civil authority, and St. Augustine of his pen, which for some years he devoted to this subject, for the settlement of which he claimed the decree of St. Innocent and the encyclical of St. Zosimus embodying and enforcing that decree.

"St. Zosimus, in writing to the Africans concerning his decision to allow Celestius a hearing, said: 'Although the tradition of the Fathers has attributed so great authority to the Apostolic See, that no one would venture to dispute concerning its judgment, and has always guarded the same by canons and regulations, and the current discipline of the Church up to this time, by its laws, pays due reverence to the name of Peter, from whom she traces her descent (for canonical antiquity by the judgments of all willed that such power should accrue to this Apostle, derived also from the very promise of Christ our God, that he could loose what was bound and bind what was loosed, an equal condition of power was given to those who obtained the inheritance of the see with his approval, for he has the care as well of all the Churches as in a special manner of this his own see. . . . Since, then, Peter is the head of such authority, and he has confirmed the subsequent desires of all our ancestors, that the Roman Church should be sustained by human as well as divine laws . . . , nevertheless, though such is our authority, that no one can withdraw himself from our judgment, we have done nothing which we have not of our own accord brought to your knowledge by our letters,' etc.

"I produce this passage by way of showing the kind of teaching which Africa received from Rome, and which nowhere in St. Augustine's voluminous writings finds any contradiction: with which, on the contrary, his teaching, as seen above, fully harmonizes.

"We look in vain in the history of the Church of North Africa at this time for any disclaimer, any suggestion, that Rome was not the See of the Apostle Peter, and, as such, the inheritor of peculiar powers of jurisdiction. [Here is a case when silence is a good argument.] She assumed this position as in duty bound; she instinctively quoted the divine authority by which she acted, and Africa on the whole listened, applauded, co-operated, and obeyed. Such is

the only conclusion that can be drawn from the facts quoted above. So dependent was Africa on Rome, that when the Donatists boasted that some Easterns had written letters of sympathy, St. Augustine argued that these Easterns must have been Arians, because 'never would an Eastern Catholic [Church] write to the Bishop of Carthage, passing over the Bishop of Rome' -in other words, all ecclesiastical communication would come from the East through Rome. And in this great contest with Pelagianism, Prosper, in his historical defense of St. Augustine against Cassian, writes, with the knowledge of a contemporary, that 'the Pope Zosimus of blessed memory added the strength of his own judgment to the decrees of the African Councils, and armed the right hands of all the prelates with the sword of Peter to the destruction of the impious.'"

(I did not add the footnotes due to complication of scanning and such. If interested, one can check out Rivington's book or request the footnote information from me. I could, if necessary, fax a photocopy of the page if desired.)

Appendix D:

(Here we have another scholar with impeccable credentials who disagrees with the parochial view of our critic. Warren Carroll's The Building of Christianity, vol. 2 (Front Royal, VA: Christendom College Press, 1987). Carroll holds his Ph.D. in history from Columbia University and is the chairman of the History Department at Christendom College.)

"When Orosius returned to Africa to give his master Augustine an account of what had taken place in Palestine, two episcopal synods were convened in Africa. Their members joined Augustine and Aurelius, Primate of Africa, in appealing to Pope Innocent to settle the matter 'by the authority of the Apostolic See' 'which has been taken from the authority of the Holy Scriptures.' The covering letter from Aurelius, Augustine, and three other bishops which accompanied the communication from the two African synods concluded as follows:

We do not pour back our little stream for the purpose of replenishing your great fountain; but in the great temptation of these times ... we wish it to be approved by you whether our stream, though small, flows from the same head of water as your abundant river, and to be consoled by your answer in the common participation of the same grace.

The pre-eminent authority of the Pope over the whole Church -- which modern controversialists still claim was not generally recognized even this far into the Church's history? is here unmistakably affirmed. Responding on January 27, 417, Pope Innocent declared:

You have truly strengthened the vigor of our religion no less now in consulting us than before in passing sentence [on the Pelagians]. For you decided that it was proper to refer to our judgment, knowing what is due to the Apostolic See, since all we who are set in this place, desire to follow the Apostle from whom the very episcopate and whole authority of this name is derived.... You have by your sacerdotal office preserved the customs of the Fathers, and have not spurned that which they decreed by a divine and not human sentence, that whatsoever is done, even though it be in distant provinces, should not be ended without being brought to the knowledge of this See, that by its authority the whole just pronouncement should be strengthened, and that from it all other churches (like waters flowing from their natal source and flowing through all the different regions of the world, the pure streams of one incorrupt head), should receive what they ought to enjoy.

Then the decisive ruling:

We judge by the authority of Apostolic power that Pelagius and Celestius be deprived of ecclesiastical communion until they return to the faith out of the snares of the Devil.

It seemed, as St. Augustine was to say in a famous sermon on Pelagianism in September of that year, that 'the case was concluded' now that Rome had spoken; but heresy is rarely so easily destroyed. Pope Innocent died less than two months after his letter we have quoted, and his successor Zosimus was one of those Popes who had more of the innocence of the dove than the wisdom of the serpent. As several incidents during his short but busy two-year pontificate show, he was very easily deceived. Unfortunately the two episcopal accusers of Pelagius at the Palestinian synod of Diospolis had both been Gallic bishops opposed to the new Pope's episcopal favorite in Gaul, the shady Patroclus, whom he made Archbishop of Arles and metropolitan of all Gaul. So when Celestius went to Rome to appeal to the Pope against his predecessor's condemnation, he found a ready audience. Pope Zosimus was by no means prepared to tolerate heresy, but he was eager to believe that the accused heretics had been

misrepresented. Pelagius took advantage of this with a cleverly written apologia promising obedience to the Pope, and a treatise on free will that papered over his differences with orthodoxy by apparent but unreal concessions. Pope Zosimus impulsively accepted both Pelagius' and Celestius' statements at face value and declared them sound; but he would not lift his predecessor's excommunication of either man until he had heard again from the African church. When he received their bill of particulars ? the acts of their councils on Pelagianism and the detailed brief of errors with hard-hitting questions for the Pelagians prepared by the African bishop Paulinus ? Pope Zosimus demanded that Celestius present himself for a thorough examination upon that material and for specific response to its questions.

Celestius was no match for the great Augustine, the essential author of the acts of the African synods on Pelagianism and the brief of Paulinus; in fact he was prevaricating, knowing that he no longer held the orthodox belief. He fled rather than face the questioning, and Pope Zosimus sadly renewed Innocent's condemnation, attaching to his condemnatory decree the canons anathematizing Pelagian doctrines which had been adopted by the plenary African council of May 1, 418 at Carthage, and ordering that his decree and these canons be 'carried throughout the Catholic world.' The final decision probably came during Holy Week of 418, and was followed by an order from Emperor Honorius barring all Pelagians from Rome.

Pelagius and Celestius now fade out of history. The last defense of their full heresy was taken up by Bishop Julian of Eclanum in Italy, who concluded that orthodoxy as now defined by St. Augustine and authoritatively taught by Popes Innocent and Zosimus 'represented a crude form of pietism, from which he must rescue Christianity at all costs, if it was to keep hold of cultivated people.'

Dismissing most Catholics as 'uneducated and stupid,' and Augustine himself as 'that Punic preacher, dullest and most stupid of men,' using his Confessions to attack Augustine (in apparent forgetfulness of what Christ had said about casting the first stone), Bishop Julian revealed, in his methods of debate as in much of its substance, the intellectual arrogance to which the denial of the doctrine of original sin often quickly leads. Pope Zosimus had no patience with this kind of resistance to his difficult decision. He excommunicated Julian and the eighteen Italian bishops who followed him, depriving them of their sees. Emperor Honorius expelled them from Italy. After long wanderings they finally found refuge with Theodore, Bishop of Mopsuestia in Asia Minor, later considered a partial heretic himself as a result of the Three Chapters controversy of the next century, long after his death.

Before dying at the end of the year 418, Pope Zosimus left a legacy of trouble to the church in Africa by receiving the appeal of Apiarius, an African priest, against the excommunication which had been pronounced against him by his bishop, Urban of Sicca, and ordering Apiarius' reinstatement. Justifying his action against the indignant protests of the Africans, Pope Zosimus cited the seventh canon of the Council of Sardica, but unfortunately identified it as one of the canons of the Council of Nicaea, since the Sardican canons had become attached to those of Nicaea in the canonical manuscripts of Rome, causing much trouble and even suspicion when it could not be found in authentic copies of the Nicene canons brought from the east. But this canon of Sardica only authorized appeals to Rome by bishops; it said nothing about appeals from priests against their bishops. The case dragged on through six years and three pontificates; long afterward it became a staple of Protestant controversy against Papal authority. As such, it cannot stand; for as John Chapman pointed out, if the African church rejected the Pope's governing authority there was neither reason for them to argue with the Pope about how he should exercise it nor to accept his orders, receive his representative, and at one point reinstate Apiarius ? they would simply have ignored him. But they certainly did not ignore him; their protests were primarily an attempt to persuade the Pope not to exercise appellate jurisdiction in such cases, which could better be tried by a synod of bishops in Africa itself. Eventually Apiarius confessed his crimes to a synod, whereupon all agreed that he should be removed from all priestly duties."

Appendix E

(Pertinent passage from Sermon 131 of St. Augustine found in Eerdman's The Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, first series, 6:501. The italicized text is the passage around which the debate swirls. If someone desires the whole text, visit <http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/160382.htm>.)

9. This then is the righteousness of God. As it is called, "The Lord's salvation," not whereby the Lord is saved, but which He giveth to them whom He saveth; so too the grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord is called the righteousness of God, not as that whereby the Lord is righteous, but whereby He justifieth those whom of ungodly He maketh righteous. But some, as the Jews in former times, both wish to be called Christians, and still ignorant of

God's righteousness, desire to establish their own, even in our own times, in the times of open grace, the times of the full revelation of grace which before was hidden; in the times of grace now manifested in the floor, which once lay hid in the fleece. I see that a few have understood me, that more have not understood, whom I will by no means defraud by keeping silence. Gideon, one of the righteous men of old, asked for a sign from the Lord, and said, "I pray, Lord, that this fleece which I put in the floor be bedewed, and that the floor be dry." And it was so; the fleece was bedewed, the whole floor was dry. In the morning he wrung out the fleece in a basin; forasmuch as to the humble is grace given; and in a basin, ye know what the Lord did to His disciples. Again, he asked for another sign; "O Lord, I would," saith he, "that the fleece be dry, the floor bedewed." And it was so. Call to mind the time of the Old Testament, grace was hidden in a cloud, as the rain in the fleece. Mark now the time of the New Testament, consider well the nation of the Jews, thou wilt find it as a dry fleece; whereas the whole world, like that floor, is full of grace, not hidden, but manifested. Wherefore we are forced exceedingly to bewail our brethren, who strive not against hidden, but against open and manifested grace. There is allowance for the Jews. What shall we say of Christians? Wherefore are ye enemies to the grace of Christ? Why rely ye on yourselves? Why unthankful? For why did Christ come? Was not nature here before? Was not nature here, which ye only deceive by your excessive praise? Was not the Law here? But the Apostle says, "If righteousness come by the Law, then Christ is dead in vain." What the Apostle says of the Law, that say we of nature to these men. "If righteousness come by nature, then Christ is dead in vain."

10. What then was said of the Jews, the same altogether do we see in these men now. "They have a zeal of God: I hear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge." What is, "not according to knowledge"? "For being ignorant of God's righteousness, and wishing to establish their own, they have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." My Brethren, share with me in my sorrow. When ye find such as these, do not hide them; be there no such misdirected mercy in you; by all means, when ye find such, hide them not. Convince the gainsayers, and those who resist, bring to us. For already have two councils on this question been sent to the Apostolic see; and rescripts also have come from thence. The question has been brought to an issue; would that their error may sometime be brought to an issue too! Therefore do we advise that they may take heed, we teach that they may be instructed, we pray that they may be changed. Let us turn to the Lord, etc. (Roberts, Alexander and Donaldson, James, Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers, First Series: Volume VI, [Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.] 1997.)

The Protestant editors added the following notes to this text: "Of Carthage and Milevis which are among the Epistles of St. Augustin, 175, 176. And the rescripts of the Roman Pontiff, Innocent (A.D. 417), in the Epistles 181, 182. Ben. ed. note."

Appendix F

Rescripts? Did I make up its definition? Nope!

"L. rescibere, (of the emperor) to write re-, back, i.e. in reply, hence to render a decision" (Origins: A Short Etymological Dictionary of Modern English by Eric Partridge [New York: Greenwich House, 1966], 598.

re:script \rɛ\-\æskript\ noun

[Middle English rescripte, from Latin rescriptum, from neuter of rescriptus, past participle of rescibere to write in reply, from re- + scribere to write --more at scribe]
(15th century)

1 : a written answer of a Roman emperor or of a pope to a legal inquiry or petition

2 : an official or authoritative order, decree, edict, or announcement

3 : an act or instance of rewriting.

(Merriam Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, (Springfield, Massachusetts: Merriam-Webster, Incorporated) 1993.)

Rescripts, PAPAL (Lat. Re-scribere, " to write back"), responses of the pope or a Sacred Congregation, in writing, to queries or petitions of individuals. Some rescripts concern the granting of favours; others the administration of justice, e. g. the interpretation of a law, the appointment of a judge. Sometimes the favour is actually granted in

the rescript (*gratis facta*-a rescript in *forma gratiosa*); sometimes another is empowered to concede the request (*gratia facienda*-a rescript in *forma commissoria*); sometimes the grant is made under certain conditions to be examined into by the executor (a rescript in *forma mixta*). The petition forwarded to Rome comprises three parts: the narrative or exposition of the facts; the petition; the reasons for the request. The response likewise contains three parts: a brief exposition of the case; the decision or grant; the reason of the same.

"Every rescript presupposes the truth of the allegations found in the supplication. Intentional falsehood or concealment of truth renders a rescript invalid, since no one should benefit through his own deceit. According to some, however, a rescript is valid if voluntary misrepresentation affect only the secondary reason of the grant. This is certainly true where there is no fraud, but merely inadvertence or ignorance of requirements; for, where there is no malice, punishment should not be inflicted; and the petition should be granted, if a sufficient cause therefore exist. A rescript in *forma commissoria* is valid, if the reason alleged for the grant be true at the time of execution, though false when the rescript was issued. When a rescript is null and void, a new petition is drawn up containing the tenor of the previous concession and cause of nullity, and asking that the defect be remedied. A new rescript will then be given, or the former one validated by letters *perinde valere*. If the formalities sanctioned by law or usage for the drawing up of rescripts are wanting, the document will be considered spurious. Erasures, misspellings, or grave grammatical errors in a rescript will render its authenticity suspected. Excommunicated persons may seek rescripts only in relation to the cause of their excommunication or in cases of appeal. Consequently in rescripts absolution from penalties and censures is first given, as far as necessary for the validity of the grant.

"Rescripts have the force of a particular law, i.e. for the persons concerned; only occasionally, e.g. when they interpret or promulgate a general law, are they of universal application. Rescripts in *forma gratiosa* are effective from the date they bear; others only from the moment of execution. Rescripts contrary to common law contain a derogatory clause: all things to the contrary notwithstanding. Rescripts of favour ordinarily admit a broad interpretation; the exceptions are when they are injurious to others, refer to the obtaining of ecclesiastical benefices, or are contrary to common law. Rescripts of justice are to be interpreted strictly. Rescripts expire for the most part in the same manner as faculties" (The Catholic Encyclopedia [New York: Robert Appleton Co., 1911], 12:783).