

**PAPAL ROME IDENTIFIED WITH THE
GREAT APOSTACY PREDICTED IN THE
SCRIPTURES, THE SUBSTANCE
OF THREE DISCOURSES ADDRESSED TO
THE FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN
ALBANY, JANUARY, 1838**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649666928

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Three Discourses Addressed to the First Presbyterian Church in Albany, January, 1838 by J. N.
Campbell

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Edited by Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd.
Cover @ 2017

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J. N. CAMPBELL

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INTRODUCTION.



The following pages contain, as the title page purports, the substance of three discourses addressed to the First Presbyterian church in this city during the early part of the present year. These discourses were a part of a somewhat extended series, designed to exhibit that evidence of the divine origin and inspiration of the scriptures which is to be derived from the prophecies they contain. They have been written out only since they were delivered: hence many of the remarks interwoven with the facts and arguments they present, cannot now be recalled; while others, designed to connect them with the series to which they

belonged, have been intentionally omitted, because not relevant to the particular subject they discuss. They are given to the public at the solicitation of many of those who heard them, and by the special request of the session of the church.

I am aware that this little volume might have been greatly enlarged, by the introduction, under each particular, of many additional and well authenticated facts. I have, of design, made it as concise as I could, consistently with an adequate and perspicuous exhibition of the subject. If these discourses should fall into the hands of any who have not before been led to examine the matter of which they treat, and if they should excite in their minds sufficient interest to induce them to seek farther information from other and better sources, my object in this publication will be accomplished.

There are many I know, who utterly disapprove of any attempt, like the present, to expose the true character of Romanism. I wish to offer to such a few of the reasons.

why I differ from them in this opinion; I beg them seriously and candidly to weigh them. That there are millions in the world, and many thousands in our own country, who are members of the church of Rome, is a fact with which every reader is acquainted. It is another fact, which is probably not so generally known, that an unusually earnest and determined effort is now making to extend the power and influence of that church in protestant countries, and especially in the United States. That it is a covert effort certainly does not make it the less dangerous. Of the fact I state, no one, who has taken the trouble to enquire and examine, can have any doubt; and no person of reflection, who is acquainted with the history of the times, can fail to perceive that this effort has been remarkably successful. And there are, I conceive, clear indications that the Romish controversy is about to become a matter of far greater moment in the church, than it has ever been since the time of the Reformation.

Now in this position of things, it is certain

that a large proportion of the Protestants of our own country look with great favor on the Romish church. They suppose it to hold some important errors ; perhaps they go so far as to believe it to be, in many respects, corrupt ; but still they admit it to be a part of the true church, and entertain no apprehension that its peculiar tenets are adapted to fatally mislead its members and endanger their salvation. It is also evident that they feel no solicitude about the influence of Romanism upon the young ; for there are thousands of the children of Protestants now educated in Romish schools. Thus Protestants are every where, in large numbers, giving their influence and money to the support and extension of the Romish faith. Certainly it is the duty of every one, in such circumstances, to examine the nature of that faith ; to enquire calmly but diligently into the character of the Romish system ; and above all, when it is affirmed to be capable of demonstration that it is the great predicted apostacy from the church of Christ, to examine the

evidence which may be adduced on this subject, "that every man may be fully persuaded in his own mind." Let it never be forgotten that Romanism is an exclusive and intolerant system. It affirms that out of the church of Rome there is no salvation. As far as it has possessed the power, so far it has uniformly every where refused to permit the exercise of any other religious faith. That it is opposed to civil liberty, and the progress of learning, its whole history shows; and there are facts which bear directly upon this point to be found in these discourses, though these particulars have not formed any part of the discussion. Let it be examined then, calmly and dispassionately, but let it be fairly and fully examined; and let every one act according to that persuasion of his own mind which shall be the result of such an examination.

There is another view of this subject which is exceedingly important. If Romanism be the apostacy, what is the condition of those, who belong to that communion? Can they be considered as entertaining only harmless

errors? Or have they embraced a faith which jeopardds their salvation? No one who has read the awful denunciations of the inspired word against the sin of apostacy, can hesitate how to answer these questions. Here then is suggested an additional and a far higher motive for the diligent investigation of this question, upon the part of every christian. It is a duty of the first importance to endeavor to reclaim those that are out of the way; to strive to undeceive those who are deluded; and to seek to direct all in the only way of salvation. But if we believe that the errors of the Romanists are not fundamental errors, and that they form a part, though not the purest part, of the true church, we shall not be very solicitous to enlighten them, nor have our consciences greatly impressed with the duty of seeking their salvation. In this view of the matter, it emphatically becomes every one to enquire into the true character of this church. Let every one institute this enquiry, and let him be governed by the result of it in his own mind.