

Pope Francis, Mary Is Not My Mother, and I Am Not an Orphan

Pope Francis has been a breath of fresh air for many Catholics seeking greater liberty and a growing concern for conservative Christians who take issue with his comments about homosexuality and other cultural issues.

But the pontiff's latest statement is sparking an uproar from believers around the world. Pope Francis sent a tweet Tuesday that absolutely violates the truth of Scripture:

"The Christian who does not feel that the Virgin Mary is his or her mother is an orphan," Pope Francis tweeted. As of the time I wrote this column it had been retweeted about 4,000 times and many of the responses were in appropriately unkind. It's not appropriate to attack the pope for his beliefs. It's more appropriate to share the truth.

Mary the Mother to the World?

First, let's explore how the pope expanded on his exaltation of Mary. During his weekly address in Rome, the pope positioned the Roman Catholic Church as a "mother" to the world and encouraged Catholics to follow Mary as an example of godly motherhood.

"In our catecheses, we have often noted that we do not become a Christian on our own, but by being born and nurtured in the faith in the midst of the people of God, that is the church. She is a true mother who gives us life in Christ, and in the communion of the Holy Spirit, brings us into a common life with our brothers and sisters," the pope said.

"The model of motherhood for the church is the Blessed Virgin

Mary, who in the fullness of time conceived through the Holy Spirit and gave birth to the Son of God. Her motherhood continues through the church, who brings forth sons and daughters through baptism, whom she nourishes through the Word of God."

What About Romans 8:14-15?

Mary was a humble willing servant and a good example of godly motherhood, but she does not bring forth sons and daughters through baptism or nourish us through the Word of God beyond her example of humble servanthood in the Bible. What concerns me more, though, is the notion of people being orphans if they don't consider Mary their mother. Let's consider this statement in the light of Scripture. Romans 8:14-17 shines light on the issue of orphans in Christ—there are no orphans in Christ:

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him, that we may also be glorified together."

Nowhere in these verses does it make mention of Mary. Rather, we see the Father, the Christ and the Holy Spirit at work in a believer's life. That's Bible. If that's not enough, Jesus Himself stated plainly: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you" (John 14:18). I don't mean this in a sarcastic manner at all, but please note that Jesus did not say Mary would come to them, or that He would bring Mary with them, or that Mary is praying for them, or that they should pray to Mary.

There are other issues in the Catholic religion that don't line up with Scripture, but suggesting that "The Christian who

does not feel that the Virgin Mary is his or her mother is an orphan” contradicts the simplicity of the gospel and excludes the millions of Protestants around the world who honor Mary as the mother of Jesus but do not ask for her help from heaven. Christians are justified by faith (Rom. 5:1)—the righteousness of God in Christ (2 Cor. 5:21). Mary was a blessed vessel God chose to bring the Messiah into the world, but Jesus did not exalt her, and neither should we. Let’s stand with the simplicity of the gospel.

Jennifer LeClaire is news editor of Charisma. She is also director of Awakening House of Prayer in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, and author of several books, including *The Making of a Prophet* and *The Spiritual Warrior’s Guide to Defeating Jezebel*. You can email Jennifer at @ or visit her website [here](#). You can also join Jennifer on Facebook or follow her on Twitter.