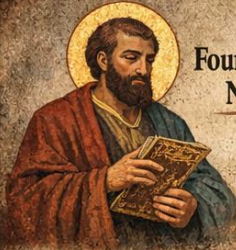


INVESTIGATION INTO THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

A Biblical Examination of its Teachings and Practices [1+source]



Founded by Mark,
Not Peter [1+source]

No Biblical
Record of Mark
in Egypt [1+source]



Prayers to Mary &
Saints:
Not Biblical [1+source]



Priests Called "Father":
Forbidden by Christ [1+source]



Infant Baptism
Without Faith [1+source]



ONE MEDIATOR CHRIST ALONE



"For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.

1 Timothy 2:5 [6+source]

Apostolic Claims Do Not Equal Apostolic Truth [1+source]

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THE COPTIC ORTHODOX CHURCH

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A Biblical Examination of its Teachings and Practices

1. The Claims

The Coptic Orthodox Church is the original church built by Peter.

The Roman Catholic Church broke away from it.

The Coptic Church does not pray to Mary or use the rosary.

The Coptic Church is the only church that kept the original faith.

2. Historical and Theological Truth

Founding

The Coptic Orthodox Church was founded in Alexandria, Egypt, by Mark the Evangelist, not Peter.

Peter founded the church in Rome, not in Alexandria.

Who Was Mark the Evangelist?

The Coptic Orthodox Church claims that its founder was Mark the Evangelist, the same apostle who wrote the Gospel of Mark. Scripture identifies him as John Mark, a companion of Peter and Paul ([Acts 12:12](#), [Colossians 4:10](#), [2 Timothy 4:11](#)). Though not one of the original twelve apostles, he was still an apostle of Christ, sent out as a messenger and evangelist just as Paul was later called an apostle outside the original group.

Historical tradition says Mark carried the gospel to Alexandria around 42 AD, but this claim rests solely on church tradition, not on Scripture or verifiable historical record. There is no biblical evidence that he ever traveled to Egypt, nor any confirmed proof that the Mark mentioned in Scripture is the same person the Coptic Church claims as their founder.

While Scripture identifies John Mark as a companion of apostles ([Acts 12:12](#), [Colossians 4:10](#), [2 Timothy 4:11](#)), it does not record him establishing a church in Alexandria, nor does it grant him authority to institute doctrine or sacramental systems beyond what the apostles taught.

Even if Mark preached in Egypt, apostolic preaching does not equal apostolic authority to redefine worship, mediation, or salvation. Authority rests not in proximity to apostles, but in fidelity to apostolic teaching.

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The issue is not whether Mark ministered, but whether the doctrines practiced today are found in the apostolic record. A claim of apostolic connection does not legitimize teachings that contradict apostolic doctrine. Apostolic succession without apostolic doctrine is succession in name only.

3. Mary, the Saints, and Intercession

Beliefs

The Coptic Orthodox Church does not use the Western rosary, but it venerates Mary and prays to her within its liturgy.

Evidence from the Coptic Service Booklet

Prayers include:

“We exalt you, O mother of the true Light. We glorify you, O holy Virgin, Theotokos.”

“Hail to Mary the Queen. In her is found the cluster of life.”

“Intercede on our behalf, O our Lady the Theotokos, Mary the mother of our Savior, that He may forgive us our sins.”

“Pray to the Lord on our behalf, O my lords and fathers the Apostles, Peter and Paul, that He may forgive us our sins.”

These are not commemorations. They are direct prayers to Mary and the saints asking them to intercede for the forgiveness of sins, which Scripture reserves for Christ alone.

4. Observed Practices Inside the Church

The Title “Abuna”

Priests are called “Abuna,” meaning *our father* in Arabic.

This mirrors the Roman Catholic “Father.”

The use of “Abuna,” meaning “our father,” establishes a formal spiritual hierarchy in which men are elevated as authoritative spiritual figures over the people. Christ’s warning in [Matthew 23:9](#) addresses not casual language, but religious systems that assign spiritual authority and mediation to men.

While Scripture may use “father” descriptively, it never establishes a priestly office through which forgiveness, blessing, or spiritual authority flows. Paul

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never functioned as an absolving priest. Christ condemned religious titles that replace direct dependence on God, and the use of “Abuna” does exactly that.

Kissing the Priest’s Hand

Members kiss the priest’s hand because they believe it is sanctified by handling the Eucharist.

This turns reverence for Christ into veneration of man.

The Cross Between Hands

The priest holds a cross between his fingers while blessing or greeting, symbolizing grace flowing through him to others.

This reinforces a mediated relationship between man and God, something the New Covenant ended.

5. Comparison with Scripture

Doctrine or Practice	Coptic Orthodox Teaching	Scriptural Truth
Founding	Founded by St. Mark in Alexandria	Peter founded Rome, not Alexandria
Historical Division	Broke communion in 451 AD	Rome did not come out of Coptic Church
Rosary	Not used	—
Mary	Venerated and prayed to	No biblical prayer to Mary
Saints	Asked to intercede for forgiveness	Only Christ mediates
Priests	Called “Abuna” (Father)	Forbidden by Christ (Matthew 23:9)
Hand-Kissing	Sign of reverence	No apostolic example
Cross Blessing	Used as a channel of grace	Grace comes through faith alone

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6. One Mediator

“For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ.” (1 Timothy 2:5)

Christ alone stands between man and God.

The use of saints, Mary, or priests as intermediaries contradicts this unchangeable truth.

7. Prayer and Worship

“I am the Lord: that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another.” (Isaiah 42:8)

All prayer and worship belong solely to God.

To exalt or pray to Mary or saints transfers that glory to created beings, which is idolatry.

8. Baptism: A Ritual Without Repentance

The Coptic Orthodox Church uses the language of “regeneration” while redefining its meaning. In Scripture, regeneration follows faith and repentance and results in a transformed life. In Coptic theology, regeneration is applied sacramentally, independent of personal belief. This is not the biblical new birth, but a ritual declaration without inward change.

The Coptic Church baptizes infants by immersion three times.

They teach that this baptism removes original sin and gives new birth, even though the child has no understanding, no confession, and no faith.

The Biblical Order

Hear the Word

Believe in Christ

Repent of sin

Confess Christ

Be baptized for the remission of sins

“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” (Mark 16:16)

“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Christ for the remission of sins.” (Acts 2:38)

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Acts 2:39 is frequently cited to justify infant baptism: “The promise is unto you, and to your children.” This appeal ignores the full structure of Peter’s statement. The promise is extended to children only within the same conditions just stated, repentance and faith. The verse does not grant automatic inclusion but defines the scope of those who may respond.

Peter explicitly limits the promise by adding, “and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.” The promise is not generational, but conditional. Calling, repentance, and response define inclusion. If “children” are included automatically, then those “afar off” would also be included without faith, which contradicts the entire Gospel proclamation.

Peter addressed conscious hearers who were “pricked in their heart” and asked what they must do. His answer was not ceremonial inclusion, but repentance. The command to be baptized followed belief and conviction. Nothing in the context suggests infants were present, addressed, or included apart from personal response.

To read infant baptism into **Acts 2:39** is a category error. The verse defines eligibility, not execution. It states who may receive the promise, not how or when baptism is to be applied. Scripture never interprets this statement as authorization to baptize those incapable of repentance or faith.

Appeals to “household baptisms” (**Acts 16:15, Acts 16:33, 1 Corinthians 1:16**) fail under examination. In every recorded instance, the Word was preached, belief was present, and rejoicing in faith followed. Scripture never identifies infants as recipients, nor does it suspend the requirement of belief. Doctrine cannot be constructed from assumptions inserted into narrative gaps. Infant baptism reverses the biblical order by applying the sign of repentance and faith to those incapable of either. Scripture records entire households being baptized but never states that infants were baptized apart from belief. Narrative silence cannot be used to override explicit commands requiring repentance and faith.

Appeals to **John 3:5** (“born of water and the Spirit”) do not establish baptismal regeneration. Christ rebuked Nicodemus for not understanding this truth from the Scriptures already given. The new birth described is spiritual, not ceremonial. Throughout Scripture, “water” is used metaphorically for cleansing

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through the Word (**Ezekiel 36:25–27; Ephesians 5:26**). No infant baptism is commanded, modeled, or explained from this passage.

As *Truth or Deceit* exposes, people who are told they are “Christians” without repentance live under a false faith that will not stand before God.

Faith, Repentance, Confession

The use of godparents or sponsors to confess faith on behalf of an infant has no biblical precedent. Confession is always made by the one who believes.

Scripture never permits one person to confess Christ for another in order to secure salvation. A confession that does not arise from the heart is not confession at all.

“If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Christ and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Romans 10:9)

Biblical regeneration is inseparable from faith. Scripture never presents the new birth as a mechanical result of ritual. **“Whosoever believeth that Christ is born of God” (1 John 5:1)**. Faith is the evidence of regeneration, not its byproduct. A regeneration that precedes belief contradicts the apostolic witness.

Infants cannot believe, repent, or confess.

When confronted with the inability of infants to believe, the Coptic Orthodox Church substitutes personal faith with what it calls “the faith of the Church.” Scripture never recognizes proxy faith for salvation. Faith is always personal, conscious, and accountable. No one is justified, regenerated, or forgiven by another person’s belief.

Scripture repeatedly emphasizes individual responsibility in salvation. **“The soul that sinneth, it shall die” (Ezekiel 18:20)**. **“Every one of us shall give account of himself to God” (Romans 14:12)**. Faith cannot be transferred, imputed, or borrowed. The righteousness of one does not regenerate another apart from personal belief.

The appeal to early church tradition or patristic writings does not establish biblical authority. Scripture, not post-apostolic practice, is the final rule of faith. Errors arose early, even during the apostles’ lifetimes (Galatians 1:6–9; Acts 20:29–30). Antiquity does not sanctify disobedience, and widespread practice does not convert tradition into truth.

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Their baptism therefore has no biblical effect. It is an empty ritual performed without faith.

As *Justification Being Cleared Before God* teaches, no person can be justified without obedience, repentance, and faith working together.

Remission vs. Forgiveness

Membership in a religious community does not equal regeneration. Under the Old Covenant, many were circumcised yet unbelieving. The New Covenant is explicitly different: “**They shall all know Me**” (**Hebrews 8:11**). Entrance into the New Covenant is not inherited, assigned, or communal, but personal and spiritual.

Remission means God erases sin as if it never occurred.

Forgiveness means He withholds punishment.

Remission comes only after repentance and baptism.

Infants have committed no personal sin requiring repentance, confession, or remission. Scripture never teaches that baptism removes inherited guilt apart from faith. The New Testament consistently ties remission of sins to conscious repentance and belief, not biological condition.

Why Infant Baptism Is Worthless

No repentance

No faith

No confession

No obedience

No remission due to absence of repentance and faith

Scripture never teaches delayed faith or retroactive repentance. Faith is not credited by future intention. Salvation is always addressed in the present tense: “**Today, if ye will hear His voice**” (**Hebrews 3:15**). A baptism justified by future belief empties the act of meaning and turns obedience into presumption. It is a human invention that gives the illusion of salvation while the heart remains unchanged.

As Paul warned, “**Many will say, Lord, Lord... and I will declare, I never knew you**” (**Matthew 7:22–23**).

The claim that baptism replaces circumcision collapses under Scripture.

Circumcision marked ethnic covenant membership, not forgiveness of sins.

Baptism, by contrast, is explicitly connected to repentance, faith, and remission

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(**Acts 2:38**). The New Covenant does not apply spiritual signs to the unrepentant. Paul explicitly rejects physical parallels when addressing salvation (**Romans 2:28–29; Colossians 2:11–12**).

A system that declares regeneration without conversion produces religious identity without spiritual life. It fills churches with baptized unbelievers who trust in ceremony rather than Christ. This is not a minor doctrinal error; it is a counterfeit Gospel that assures the unrepentant that they are born again when they are not.

Any doctrine that replaces personal repentance and faith with institutional belief denies the Gospel itself. The Church does not believe for the sinner. The sinner must believe for himself.

Acts 2:39 does not support infant baptism. It reinforces the opposite. The promise of salvation extends broadly, but it is received individually through repentance and faith. Any use of this verse to justify baptizing infants divorces it from its context and overturns Peter's own command.

9. Prayers to the Saints and Mary - The False System of Intercession

The Coptic Church calls upon Mary and saints as active mediators.

But Scripture rejects any intercessor besides Christ.

“For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ.” (**1 Timothy 2:5**)

Praying to Mary or saints is not “honor.” It is idolatry disguised as devotion. The prayers found in Coptic liturgy (“Intercede on our behalf, that He may forgive our sins”) violate the truth that forgiveness is given only through the blood of Christ (**Hebrews 9:22**).

As Love Proven Only Through Obedience confirms, genuine love for God is proven through obedience, not affection or exaltation toward others.

Any system that replaces obedience with admiration for saints corrupts the definition of love itself.

Whenever prayer is directed to anyone other than God, worship has been redirected away from its rightful object.

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10. The Role of Priests - A Man Between God and the People

The Coptic Orthodox priest also functions as a sacrificial minister in the Eucharist, claiming to offer the body and blood of Christ repeatedly. This practice contradicts Scripture, which declares that Christ offered Himself once for all, never to be repeated or re-presented (**Hebrews 9:26–28; Hebrews 10:10–12**).

Scripture explicitly denies any ongoing sacrificial act. “By one offering He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (**Hebrews 10:14**). A repeated or continual sacrifice, whether called mystical or sacramental, denies the sufficiency and finality of the cross.

They claim authority to bless and to grant ongoing forgiveness through confession, extending beyond the one-time remission of sins declared at baptism, thereby assuming functions that belong only to Christ.

“Call no man your father on the earth, for one is your Father, who is in heaven.” (Matthew 23:9)

When believers kiss a priest’s hand, bow before him, or seek his absolution, they repeat the same spiritual hierarchy that Christ came to abolish.

As Sanctification Being Made Holy by the Word and the Spirit explains, sanctification happens when the Spirit and the Word work together in the obedient believer, not through absolution from another man.

The Holy Spirit does not sanctify through ceremony but through submission. Grace does not pass through a man’s hand or ritual act.

“By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8)

Every believer is part of a royal priesthood (1 Peter 2:9).

Under the New Covenant, no man offers sacrifice for sin. The priesthood of Christ is exclusive, eternal, and unshared. Any system that assigns sacrificial function to clergy resurrects the Levitical order that Christ fulfilled and abolished.

No human priest can stand where Christ already stands.

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11. The Cross and Ritual Blessings - Substituting Symbol for Faith

The Coptic priest's cross blessing is said to channel grace.

Scripture never institutes objects as normative or repeatable channels of grace, forgiveness, or sanctification. While God, in isolated moments, acted sovereignly through physical means, those events were never ritualized, never institutionalized, and never assigned doctrinal authority.

Faith alone is the instrument through which grace flows.

“The just shall live by faith.” (Romans 1:17)

When an object becomes a channel of blessing, faith turns into superstition.

The bronze serpent in Moses' time became an idol and had to be destroyed (**2 Kings 18:4**).

The same principle applies today. Whenever a symbol replaces spiritual truth, idolatry is reborn.

When Grace Is Abused and Sin Rules exposes that grace without obedience produces lawlessness.

The cross-blessing ritual creates the same illusion: visible religion without inward repentance.

Emotion without obedience is only performance.

Grace is not an ornament. It is the evidence of transformation through faith.

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us.” (Titus 3:5)

Grace does not flow through ceremony.

The Spirit is not transmitted by touch.

No cross in a man's hand can deliver what only Christ in heaven can give.

Biblical exceptions do not establish biblical doctrine. God's sovereign acts in Scripture were never turned into religious systems, nor were believers instructed to seek forgiveness or grace through objects. When symbols replace obedience and faith, idolatry replaces worship.

12. Final Analysis and Doctrinal Verdict

The Foundation Exposed

The Coptic Orthodox Church claims ancient roots, but its roots are not its problem, its fruit is.

It replaced faith with ritual, obedience with tradition, and Scripture with

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ceremony.
It is religious but not redemptive.

Summary Table

Coptic Doctrine	Biblical Truth	Verdict
Founded by Peter	Founded by Mark in Alexandria	Historical error
Infant baptism	Baptism follows belief and repentance	Unbiblical
Prayer to Mary and saints	One Mediator, Christ	Idolatry
Ongoing priestly absolution	Forgiveness after baptism comes directly from God	False system
Calling priests "Father"	Forbidden by Christ	Disobedience
Cross and ritual blessings	Grace through faith, not objects	Superstition
Eucharistic sacrifice	Christ's sacrifice once for all	False sacrifice

The Root Problem

Any doctrine that requires appeal to post-apostolic writers in order to function has already admitted its absence from Scripture.

The Coptic Church confuses symbolism with salvation.

It honors saints more than Scripture, upholds form more than faith, and preaches ritual as righteousness.

It teaches dependence on the dead instead of fellowship with the living Christ.

"Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Galatians 3:3)

Righteousness and Holiness: Obedience That God Recognizes proves that righteousness is not declared by belief but demonstrated through obedience. He that does righteousness is righteous. A system that does not produce obedience cannot be called holy.

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The True Apostolic Faith

The true Church stands on four unshakable pillars:

Repentance toward God

Faith in Christ alone

Baptism after belief for remission of sins

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit as seal and witness

No priest, saint, or ritual can replace these.

“We have an advocate with the Father, Christ the righteous.” (1 John 2:1)

Final Verdict

The Coptic Orthodox Church bears the outward form of devotion but denies the power of the Gospel.

Its doctrines contradict the apostolic pattern and lead men to trust in religious structure rather than divine relationship.

By teaching an ongoing sacrificial Eucharist, it denies the finished work of Christ and restores a system God Himself ended.

“Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof: from such turn away.” (2 Timothy 3:5)

The Coptic Orthodox Church stands guilty of replacing truth with tradition, faith with form, and Christ with ceremony.

Its gospel is not the Gospel of Scripture.

Its baptism is not the baptism of repentance.

Its prayers are not directed to the living God.

No tradition, no priest, and no ritual can save.

Only repentance, faith, baptism after belief, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost bring redemption.

Everything else is religion without salvation.

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