We are re-publishing this article because we receive many protests from Roman Catholics - and even some self-described Evangelicals - who claim that Roman Catholic "veneration" of the corpses and bodily fluids of the dead is not worship. But when Romanists give adoration and devotion to other persons and objects that is to be reserved for the one true and living God alone, they may call it by another name, but it is, in fact, idolatrous worship.

In scenes evoking old Bela Lugosi vampire movies and trampling the blood of Christ underfoot, Pope Benedict XVI, along with officials of the Roman Catholic church-state and a crowd of 1.5 million, worshipped the body, blood, and images of Pope John Paul II during beatification ceremonies at the Vatican on May 1, 2011. More than fifty heads of state from around the world were present for the ceremony. At the end of this article are pictures of the macabre ritual.

The Worship of Saints

The ceremony marked a major step in the Vatican's move to confer the status of "sainthood" on the dead Pope. Roman Catholicism practices what it calls the veneration of saints. In Roman Catholic terminology it is called "the cult of the saints". Rome encourages a level of devotion to so-called saints that can truly be called worship, and in fact Roman Catholic literature speaks of the worship of saints.

The false teachings of Roman Catholicism say that these 10,000 (and counting) designated saints are "special friends of God." They can be asked to intercede for those still on earth. In Roman Catholic doctrine, a saint can be designated as the patron saint of a particular activity or profession. A saint can be prayed to in order to prevent disasters or heal illnesses.
There are many parallels between the Roman Catholic doctrine of saints and the ancient pagan Greek and Roman belief in a pantheon of many gods who had special powers in specific areas of life. Each one was to be prayed to, and devotion shown to him (or her) through various acts of veneration, in order to gain each god's favor as needed. The Roman Catholic doctrine of sainthood is one of many areas in which the Roman church has blended elements of paganism, both old and new, into its false version of Christianity.

The Roman Catholic church has promoted and perpetuated these horrors through its centuries-long use of revisionist version of the Ten Commandments that excludes God's second commandment against idolatry. (See our article, What's the Difference Between the Roman Catholic and Protestant Versions of the Ten Commandments?)

**Power in the Blood of the Pope?**

In the case of John Paul II, the Vatican is teaching that his blood has special power. Housed in an elaborate reliquary, some of the blood of John Paul, collected during medical tests while he was alive and subsequently preserved, was held aloft for the worship of the crowd. The container of blood was prominently displayed during the beatification Mass, and was kissed by Pope Benedict XVI and other worshipping priests.

Such macabre idolatry is common Vatican practice. In order to be consecrated for service, every altar of a Roman Catholic church must contain such a relic of some dead "saint". The Roman Catholic church holds tens of thousands of body parts, and containers of bodily fluids of the dead, in its collection of so-called relics of the saints. These include what are alleged to be the hair and breast milk of Mary the mother of Jesus, pieces of John the Baptist's head, and Peter's brain and teeth. All are worshipped by the Catholic faithful. John Calvin mentions all of these and many more
horrors in his *Treatise on Relics*. Revulsion against the worship of such relics was also a significant factor in Martin Luther's break with Rome.

**Doctrines of Demons**

Dear friends, this sad spectacle is nothing less than "giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons" (1 Timothy 4:1). The Bible tells us that there is no power in the blood of bulls and goats (Hebrews 9:13, 10:4), much less in that of a sinful man whose soul is now in Hell. The pagan practice of worshipping the dead, and attempts to communicate with the dead, are forbidden by Scripture in the strongest possible terms (Leviticus 19:27-31, 20:6, 20:27; Deuteronomy 14:1, 18:11; Psalm 106:27; Isaiah 65:4; Ezekiel 43:7-9).

The Lord sums this up in Isaiah 8:19 - "Should not a people seek their God? Should they seek the dead of behalf of the living?"

**Power Only in the Blood of Christ**

There is power only in the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. True Christians worship not His blood, but His person, because He alone is our God, our Savior, our Mediator before the Father, and Head of the Church:

Knowing that you were not redeemed with corruptible things...but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot. He indeed was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you who through Him believe in God, who raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory, so that your faith and hope are in God. (1 Peter 1:18-21)

For there is one God and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a ransom for all. (1 Timothy 2:5-6)
Giving thanks to the Father who has qualified us to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in the light. He has delivered us from the power of darkness and conveyed us into the kingdom of the Son of His love, in whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins. He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn over all creation. For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence. (Colossians 1:12-18)

Of how much worse punishment, do you suppose, will he be thought worthy who has trampled the Son of God underfoot, counted the blood of the covenant by which he was sanctified [i.e., by which he professes to be sanctified] a common thing, and insulted the Spirit of grace? For we know Him who said, "'Vengeance is Mine, I will repay,' says the Lord." (Hebrews 10:29)

So that no one will think we exaggerate Rome's ghoulish idolatry, on the following pages we have included pictures of the ghastly ceremony. (Photos used by permission of copyright holders.)
Vatican Secretary of State Cardinal Tarcisio Bertone worships the reliquary containing the blood of late Pope John Paul II during the beatification mass.

Pope Benedict XVI kisses the reliquary containing the blood of John Paul II.
John Paul's blood held aloft for the worship of the crowd.
Cardinals kissing the coffin of John Paul II.

Priests worshipping statue of John Paul II.

Statues of John Paul II on sale at the ceremony.
The crowd of 1.5 million at the Vatican.