

It is interesting to read what Jesus said now, and to contrast it with his statement five verses earlier. Verse 23 tells us that Jesus "turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Very seldom do we find Jesus expressing such strong condemnation as this. Never, so far as I recall, did He speak so harshly to any other apostle.

Recently I stood in the largest ecclesiastical edifice in Christendom, St. Peter's Church in Rome. High under the dome of that great building I saw written in letters of gold the Latin version of the words of verse 18: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." Nowhere did I see posted the words of verse 23: "But he turned, and said unto Peter, Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Yet both of these verses are parts of the Scripture. Both are equally statements of the Lord Jesus Christ. Both are equally vital in understanding the nature of the Christian church. Both were addressed to the same man--Peter!

#### THE FIRST REFORMATION

We might perhaps call this the first reformation in the history of the church. Peter, that great disciple, that wonderful apostle, that man who so deeply loved his wonderful Lord, allowed his human wisdom to lead him into denying the Word of God and opposing the revelation given by Jesus Christ. When he did so, he was rebuked in the strongest possible terms.

When false ideas come into the church of Christ, and are not rooted out but are allowed to grow and to spread, there is always a danger that they may secure control in some particular branch of the church. If this happens, reformation becomes absolutely necessary.