

THE CATHOLIC “GOSPEL”

INTRODUCTION

- It is true that Protestants and Catholics have much in common in our convictions about moral issues such as abortion, marriage, homosexuality, and other threats to society’s moral fabric
- Many Protestant and Catholic leaders have suggested that the moral issues we agree on are more important than the doctrinal issues we disagree on
- This has resulted in many from both sides suggesting that they lay aside their doctrinal differences and embrace one another as true brothers and sisters in Christ
- Thirty years ago, the “Evangelicals and Catholics Together” document was an attempt to unite both groups and was supported by many notable Protestants including Bill Bright, Os Guinness, Pat Robertson, Charles Colson, and J.I. Packer

Excerpt from ECT Document

Conversion is turning away from all that is opposed to God, contrary to Christ's teaching, and turning to God, to Christ, the Son, through the work of the Holy Spirit. It entails a turning from the self-centeredness of sin to faith in Christ as Lord and Savior. Conversion is a passing from one way of life to another new one, marked with the newness of Christ. It is a continuing process so that the whole life of a Christian should be a passage from death to life, from error to truth, from sin to grace. Our life in Christ demands continual growth in God's grace. Conversion is personal but not private. Individuals respond in faith to God's call but faith comes from hearing the proclamation of the word of God and is to be expressed in the life together in Christ that is the Church.

As is evident in the two thousand year history of the church, and in our contemporary experience, there are different ways of being Christian, and some of these ways are distinctively marked by communal patterns of worship, piety, and catechesis. That we are all to be one does not mean that we are all to be identical in our way of following the one Christ. Such distinctive patterns of discipleship, it should be noted, are amply evident within the communion of the Catholic Church as well as within the many worlds of Evangelical Protestantism. It is understandable that Christians who bear witness to the Gospel try to persuade others that their communities and traditions are more fully in accord with the Gospel. There is a necessary distinction between evangelizing and what is today commonly called proselytizing or "sheep stealing." We condemn the practice of recruiting people from another community for purposes of denominational or institutional aggrandizement.

- Added to this, there are clearly some believers within the Catholic church...despite its doctrine some people do genuinely come to saving faith in it
- “Despite the unbiblical beliefs and practices of the Roman Catholic Church, there are genuine believers who attend Roman Catholic churches. There are many Roman Catholics who have genuinely placed their faith in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. However, these Catholic Christians are believers despite what the Catholic Church teaches, not because of what it teaches. To varying degrees, the Catholic Church teaches from the Bible and points people to Jesus Christ as the Savior. As a result, people are sometimes saved in Catholic churches. The Bible has an impact whenever it is proclaimed (Isaiah 55:11). Catholic Christians remain in the Catholic Church out of ignorance of what the Catholic Church truly stands for, out of family tradition and peer pressure, or out of a desire to reach other Catholics for Christ.”¹

¹ <https://www.gotquestions.org/catholicism.html>

- However, Roman Catholicism is not biblical Christianity...it is not another mostly like-minded denominational group within orthodox Christianity
- “To put it plainly, Roman Catholicism is a heretical religion that preaches a different gospel than the gospel of Jesus. Roman Catholics are not Christians and should not be approached as brothers and sisters in Christ.”²

Galatians 1:6-9 ~ I am amazed that you are so quickly deserting Him who called you by the grace of Christ, for a different gospel; 7 which is really not another; only there are some who are disturbing you and want to distort the gospel of Christ. 8 But even if we, or an angel from heaven, should preach to you a gospel contrary to what we have preached to you, he is to be accursed! 9 As we have said before, so I say again now, if any man is preaching to you a gospel contrary to what you received, he is to be accursed!

- Paul uses very strong language here to warn those who proclaim a different Gospel...in that case, it was the Judaizers Paul was warning about, those who added additional requirements to the true means of salvation
- They were guilty of adding law to the gospel of Christ, ultimately thereby destroying grace and turning salvation into something that is merited and earned
- If anyone proclaims a Gospel which differs in even the slightest way from the true Gospel, Paul says they are “accursed” (Gk. *anathema*), referring to those who are condemned in hell
- The seriousness with which Paul condemns false Gospels cannot be understated or minimized
- When it comes to orthodox Christianity and Roman Catholicism, they cannot both be right because of the massive differences that exist between them
- Thus, one must promote the true Gospel and the other must constitute a false Gospel
- “Both Catholics and Protestants have historically understood the magnitude of the difference between their separate belief systems. Because it goes to the very heart of the gospel, the difference is so great as to constitute two wholly distinct religions. If one is true Christianity, the other cannot be. That has been the nearly unanimous view of Catholics *and* Protestants since the dawn of the Reformation. We must realize that the moral opinions shared by Catholics and evangelicals are *not* more important than the doctrinal issues that divide us. The gospel is a matter of the utmost consequence – certainly far more weighty in the scope of eternity than even the greatest moral and political concerns of the moment.”³

DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES BETWEEN CATHOLICISM AND CHRISTIANITY

Salvation

- Although on the surface, there might be many apparent similarities between the Catholic “gospel” and the true gospel, upon closer examination it becomes very clear that these differences are monumental
- Scripture is very clear that salvation is by grace alone, through faith alone, in Christ alone
- In order to be saved, sinners must come to the Lord in faith and embrace the free gift of salvation provided through the sacrifice of Christ, entirely apart from good works
- This is the doctrine of justification by faith alone by which a sinner is declared righteous on the basis of Christ’s righteousness
- Luther said is the article upon which the church stands or falls and Calvin said is the hinge upon which everything turns

² https://g3min.org/roman-catholicism-is-not-christianity/?fbclid=IwAR2VG4KyfW_JmqWd_I6nsFqF_KqdxkAi3wzvPIAgyGKk1R9MULqmYjBZwA

³ John MacArthur in “Foreword” to *The Gospel According to Rome* by James McCarthy, 8 (emphasis original).

- True believers are not saved by good works but are saved for good works

Romans 4:5 ~ But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is credited as righteousness

Romans 5:8 ~ But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 10:13, 17 ~ for “WHOEVER WILL CALL ON THE NAME OF THE LORD WILL BE SAVED”...17 So faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-10 ~ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

- This can be represented by the following mathematical formula:

$$\text{Faith} = \text{Salvation} + \text{Works}$$

- However, the Catholic “gospel” is a works-based system in which a person is saved by meriting the graces needed for salvation
- Catholicism teaches that we can merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for eternal life
- A Catholic is justified repeatedly by sacraments and works because he loses the grace of justification each time a mortal sin is committed...only through penance can a Catholic recover the grace of justification
- “According to official Roman Catholic doctrine, in order for a person to be saved, it’s quite a tedious task. It involves steps such as actual grace, faith, good works, baptism, participation in the sacraments, penance, indulgences, and keeping the commandments. In short, the doctrine of soteriology taught by the Roman Catholic Church is a works-based system where a person must work their way to God.”⁴
- Catholics denounce the idea of justification by faith alone, emphasizing instead the necessity of works
- “If anyone says that the justice received is not preserved and also not increased before God through good works, but that those works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not the cause of its increase, let him be anathema.”⁵
- It can be represented by the following mathematical formula:

$$\text{Faith} + \text{Works} = \text{Salvation}$$

- While faith is the starting point in Catholic soteriology, they don’t stop there...it is faith AND _____
- “The most crucial problem with the Roman Catholic Church is its belief that faith alone in Christ is not sufficient for salvation. The Bible clearly and consistently states that receiving Jesus Christ as Savior, by grace through faith, grants salvation...The Roman Catholic Church rejects this. The official position of the Roman Catholic Church is that a person must believe in Jesus Christ AND be baptized AND receive the Eucharist along with the other sacraments AND obey the decrees of the Roman Catholic Church AND perform meritorious works AND not die with any mortal sins AND etc., etc., etc. Catholic divergence from the Bible on this most crucial of issues, salvation, means that yes, Catholicism is a false religion. If a person believes what the Catholic Church officially teaches, he/she will not be saved. Any claim that works or rituals must be added to faith in order for salvation to be achieved is a claim that Jesus’ death was not sufficient to fully purchase our salvation.”⁶

⁴ https://g3min.org/roman-catholicism-is-not-christianity/?fbclid=IwAR2VG4KyfW_JmqWd_I6nsFqF_KqdxkAi3wzvPIAgyGKk1R9MULqmYjBZwA

⁵ Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 24.

⁶ <https://www.gotquestions.org/catholicism.html>

- Additionally, a true believer is eternally secure once saved, sealed by the Holy Spirit and never able to be lost due to the fact that God keeps his own until the end

John 6:39-40 ~ This is the will of Him who sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I lose nothing, but raise it up on the last day. 40 For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who beholds the Son and believes in Him will have eternal life, and I Myself will raise him up on the last day.

Ephesians 1:13-14 ~ In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God’s own possession, to the praise of His glory.

- However, in Catholic soteriology, one is “saved” until a mortal sin is committed; if that person dies in a state of mortal sin, they descend into hell

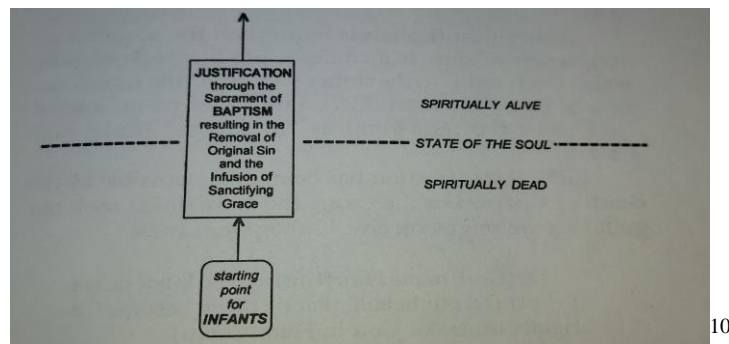
The Necessity of Baptism

- As believers, we embrace the importance of baptism as a first step of obedience in following Christ and as a means of identifying with him...it symbolizes the washing away of sin and the new life which is our in Christ
- Baptism is not a saving ordinance
- However, Catholicism connects baptism to justification in that baptism is a necessary sacrament whereby a person is granted salvation
- “Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit, and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: ‘Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word.’”⁷
- “Baptism is necessary for salvation for those to whom the Gospel has been proclaimed and who have had the possibility of asking for this sacrament. The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude...”⁸
- Catholicism teaches that when a child is baptized he/she is:
 - Rescued from the power of Satan
 - Freed from original sin
 - Made innocent and stainless before God
 - Born again
 - Give the gift of divine life
 - Made a partaker of eternal life
 - Made a temple of the Holy Spirit
 - Made a member of Christ’s body
 - Welcomed into the Church
 - Committed to being raised in the Roman Catholic faith
- Baptism justifies a child by removing the guilt of original sin and by infusing sanctifying grace into the soul
- “The proper performance of the rite produces a result that is independent either of the worthiness of the priest or of the faith of the child...This almost magical concept of baptism is expressed in the ritual itself. The priest invokes God to empower the water...Emergency baptism is another practice that shows the alleged wonder-working power of the sacramental waters. Since the Church teaches that baptism is necessary for salvation, the possibility of an infant dying before receiving the sacrament must be guarded against. The Church requires Catholics to baptize an infant in danger of death without delay.”⁹

⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1213.

⁸ *Ibid*, 1257.

⁹ McCarthy, *The Gospel According to Rome*, 32.



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The Sacraments

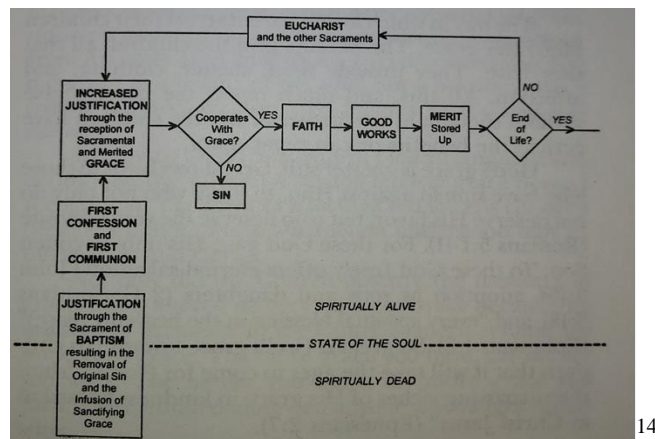
- According to Catholicism, salvation is not an event but a process that begins with baptism and progresses through the frequent reception of the sacraments and through cooperation with grace
- At baptism, the person receives sanctifying grace, putting them in the state of grace; however, this state is not a permanent one and can be lost through serious, conscious, and deliberate sin
- Thus, the practice of the sacraments are needed in order to keep the soul in a state of grace
- There are seven sacraments in Catholic theology:
 1. Baptism
 2. Penance
 3. Eucharist
 4. Confirmation
 5. Matrimony
 6. Holy orders
 7. Anointing of the sick
- “The Church teaches that these seven sacraments are the primary means by which God bestows sanctifying and actual grace upon the faithful...The sacraments are said to contain grace. They are not merely symbolic expressions of grace that God gives to those who believe. Rather, each sacrament is a channel of God’s grace...God is believed to confer grace upon Catholics by means of the sacraments through the proper performance of the sacramental ritual...The Roman Catholic Church teaches that the sacraments are necessary for salvation. Baptism, or at least he desire of it, is necessary for initial justification. Penance is necessary for restoration to the life of grace should a Catholic forfeit grace through serious sin. Confirmation, anointing of the sick, and especially Holy Eucharist provide grace needed to avoid sin and do good.”¹¹
- According to Catholic theology, God’s grace is only effective in a person’s life if they cooperate with it
- Thus, as the person cooperates with grace in their performance of the sacraments it results in the performance of good works
- This performance of good works then earns a reward from God, a reward called merit
- “Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, we can then merit for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life. Even temporal goods like health and friendship can be merited in accordance with God’s wisdom.”¹²
- The amount of merit is proportional to the kind of work performed, the quantity of the work accomplished, the difficulty of the work, the duration of the work, the amount of sanctifying grace already in the soul, and the intensity with which the work is performed

¹⁰ Ibid., 29.

¹¹ Ibid., 57.

¹² *Catechism*, 2010.

- “Sanctification begins with baptism. It proceeds in a lifetime of activity as the Catholic receives the sacraments and performs good works in cooperation with grace. The process is completed only after death, when a person finally enters the presence of God in heaven. Then, and only then, can a Catholic say that he is saved. Until then the Catholic is not saved but is being saved through a process of sanctification.”¹³
- Additionally, a person can increase and preserve their justification through the practice of sacramentals which are similar to sacraments but are not as powerful
- Sacraments give sanctifying and actual grace by virtue of their performance; however, sacramentals do not...their purpose is to help Catholics prepare for the reception of grace that comes through the sacraments and are meant to bring a spiritual dimension to everyday life
- Sacramentals include:
 - Stations of the cross
 - Crucifixes
 - Lighting candles
 - Statues
 - Pictures of the saints
 - The sign of the cross
 - Anointing with holy oil
 - Holy water
 - Ashes on the forehead
 - Ringing bells
 - Observing holy days
 - Blessing of a new car
 - Reciting the rosary
 - Observing relics



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Confession

- The Catholic church teaches that there are two categories of sin:
 1. Mortal – serious sin committed with full knowledge and free consent of the will (i.e. unbelief, hatred, adultery, theft, murder)
 2. Venial – sin committed in not so serious a manner or without full knowledge or consent of the will (i.e. distraction in prayer, white lies, lack of love, idleness, etc.)

¹³ McCarthy, *The Gospel According to Rome*, 61.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 61.

- “Venial sins weak a person’s spiritual vitality and make the individual more susceptible to greater sins. But unlike mortal sins, they do not kill the life of the soul or incur eternal punishment. Roman Catholic theologians compare the manner in which mortal and venial sins affect the soul to the way in which illnesses affect the body. Most ailments are minor. The body’s immune system fights them off and eventually restores health. A venial sin is like a minor sickness of the soul. It hinders spirituality and lowers resistance to temptation, but the vitality of the soul survives. Mortal sin is a deathblow. It kills the soul as surely as a fatal disease kills the body. When a Catholic who has received sanctifying grace through baptism commits a mortal sin, he loses that grace. Though by baptism he had been justified, because of mortal sin he forfeits the grace of justification, or, it might be said, is dejustified. He becomes a child of wrath and destined for hell. And just as a dead body has no capacity to restore life to itself, the Church teaches that a soul struck dead by mortal sin cannot revive itself. The sinner must turn to the Church and to the sacrament of penance.”¹⁵
- It is through confession of sin to a priest and the act of penance that a wayward Catholic is restored and rejustified by the sanctifying grace to the soul that is dead because of mortal sin
- Steps: 1) Confession of the sin; 2) Contrition of the sinner; 3) Judgment by the priest; 4) Absolution by the priest; 5) Penance by the sinner
- In the act of penance, the sinning Catholic must do something to make satisfaction to God for the sin (i.e. a fast, a charitable gift, self-denial, perform some devotional exercise, say many prayers, etc.)

Purgatory, Indulgences, and Treasury of Merit

- Roman Catholic salvation is a journey down a long road with an uncertain destination
- It starts with baptism, continues with a lifetime of doing good works, and finishes at death which is the moment of truth
- At death, the Catholic learns whether or not he has attained to eternal life, going through a particular judgment which is when his final destiny is determined
- “In order to pass the particular judgment and ultimately reach heaven, a Catholic must die in a state of grace. This means that at the moment of death his soul must be in possession of sanctifying grace. In such a case the Catholic is said to have achieved final perseverance; he has preserved grace in his soul until the end. If a person is devoid of sanctifying grace at the moment of death, however, God will banish the individual to eternal punishment...The Church teaches that no one knows until the particular judgment what his fate will be. Anyone might commit a mortal sin at the last moment, die in that condition, and be eternally lost. Therefore no living Catholic can say that he is saved in an eternal sense. Rather, he is being saved as he cooperates with grace. To be eternally saved, a Catholic must persevere to the end.”¹⁶
- Some who pass particular judgment go straight to heaven (i.e. baptized infants who die young, those who have worked hard or suffered greatly, etc.)
- However, the average Catholic is probably not ready for heaven but also not bad enough for eternal damnation
- They are not good enough for heaven because they likely have numerous venial sins that need to be atoned for that weren’t atoned for on earth
- Purgatory is the place where this atonement takes place
- “The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the

¹⁵ Ibid., 75-76.

¹⁶ Ibid., 91-92.

Councils of Florence and Trent. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire.”¹⁷

- “In the communion of saints, ‘a perennial link of charity exists between the faithful who have already reached their heavenly home, those who are expiating their sins in purgatory and those who are still pilgrims on earth. Between them there is, too, an abundant exchange of all good things.’ In this wonderful exchange, the holiness of one profits others, well beyond the harm that the sin of one could cause others. Thus recourse to the communion of saints lets the contrite sinner be more promptly and efficaciously purified of the punishments for sin.”¹⁸
- The living can help the dead by acquiring special credits known as indulgences that cancel out temporal punishment in purgatory
- The Church has the power to dispense indulgences from the vast reservoir known as the “treasury of merit”
- “The ‘treasury of the Church’ is the infinite value, which can never be exhausted, which Christ’s merits have before God... This treasury includes as well the prayers and good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary... In the treasury, too, are the prayers and good works of all the saints, all those who have followed in the footsteps of Christ the Lord and by his grace have made their lives holy and carried out the mission the Father entrusted to them. In this way they attained their own salvation and at the same time cooperated in saving their brothers in the unity of the Mystical Body.”¹⁹
- “The doctrine and practice of indulgences in the Church are closely linked to the effects of the sacrament of Penance. What is an indulgence? ‘An indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven, which the faithful Christian who is duly disposed gains under certain prescribed conditions through the action of the Church which, as the minister of redemption, dispenses and applies with authority the treasury of the satisfactions of Christ and the saints. An indulgence is partial or plenary according as it removes either part or all of the temporal punishment due to sin.’ The faithful can gain indulgences for themselves or apply them to the dead.”²⁰
- “An indulgence is obtained through the Church who, by virtue of the power of binding and loosing granted her by Christ Jesus, intervenes in favor of individual Christians and opens for them the treasury of the merits of Christ and the saints to obtain from the Father of mercies the remission of the temporal punishments due for their sins. Thus the Church does not want simply to come to the aid of these Christians, but also to spur them to works of devotion, penance, and charity.”²¹

The Mass and Transubstantiation

- Catholicism teaches that Christ instituted the Mass at the Last Supper and that when Christ said, “this is my body” and “this is my blood” (Matt 26, 28) that the elements changed into his body and blood
- They say this was the first Eucharist
- “In the most blessed sacrament of the Eucharist ‘the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity, of our Lord Jesus Christ and, therefore, the whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained.’”²²
- “The Council of Trent summarizes the Catholic faith by declaring: ‘Because Christ our Redeemer said that it was truly his body that he was offering under the species of bread, it has always been the conviction of the Church of God, and this holy Council now declares again, that by the consecration of the bread and wine there takes place a change of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our

¹⁷ *Catechism*, 1031.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1475.

¹⁹ Second Vatican Council

²⁰ *Catechism*, 1471.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 1478.

²² *Ibid.*, 1374.

Lord and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood. This change the holy Catholic Church has fittingly and properly called transubstantiation.”²³

- “If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really and substantially the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the whole Christ, let him be anathema.”²⁴
- The Church teaches that the Eucharist is a means of grace through which the faithful obtain sanctifying grace and are further justified, enabling them to keep the commandments and do good works
- However, the Roman Catholic view of transubstantiation should be rejected for many reasons²⁵:
 - It asserts that a substance can exist without any of its customary characteristics
 - It ignores the fact that Jesus was physically present with – and obviously distinct from – the bread he held in his hand
 - It ignores the fact that drinking literal blood would have been abhorrent and unthinkable to the Jewish disciples, not to mention against the Mosaic Law (Lev 3:17; 7:26-27; 17:10-14)
 - It ignores the biblical teaching that the glorified body of Jesus is now in heaven (Heb 1:3) and that the way he currently makes his presence known among his people is by his Spirit
 - It ignores the parallel statement in Luke 22:20 (“this cup...is the new covenant”), which clearly means that the cup represents or signifies the new covenant
 - Its appeal to John 6:53-54 for biblical support ignores two key features of the original context of this passage:
 - The Lord’s Supper had not yet been instituted at the time of John 6, and therefore the original hearers could not have understood it in that way
 - Eating the flesh and drinking the blood in John 6 are equated with believing in Christ (vv. 47, 51, 54)
- The climax of the Mass occurs when the priest repeats the words of Christ spoken at the Last Supper...this is when it is believed that the elements change into the body and blood by the power of the Holy Spirit
- Sacrifice is the primary purpose of the Mass and it involves the concept of an ongoing sacrifice for sins
- Catholics believe that the same Christ who offered himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an unbloody manner
- Obviously, the serious problem with the Mass is that it fails to recognize the clear biblical teaching on the finality and completeness of Christ’s sacrifice once and for all time (Heb 9:25-28).

Hebrews 9:25-28 ~ nor was it that He would offer Himself often, as the high priest enters the holy place year by year with blood that is not his own. 26 Otherwise, He would have needed to suffer often since the foundation of the world; but now once at the consummation of the ages He has been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. 27 And inasmuch as it is appointed for men to die once and after this comes judgment, 28 so Christ also, having been offered once to bear the sins of many, will appear a second time for salvation without reference to sin, to those who eagerly await Him.

Mary

- Catholicism holds that God decided to preserve her from the defilement of sin, known as the Immaculate Conception

²³ Ibid., 1376.

²⁴ Council of Trent, Session 13, Canon 1.

²⁵ Adapted from Matthew Waymeyer Theology 3 (TES) course notes

- “She...was created without a sin nature and was ever absolutely free of all stain of sin, all fair and perfect, remaining free of every personal sin her whole life long. Her holy innocence and sanctity are so excellent that one cannot even imagine anything greater, and which, outside of God, no mind can succeed in comprehending fully.”²⁶
- Catholic theology also holds that, although Mary was married to Joseph, following the birth of Jesus she remained a virgin, abstaining from all sexual relations with her husband
- Furthermore, it teaches the assumption of Mary, namely that her body did not undergo decay at death but God miraculously took her up to heaven
- She is also believed to be, not just a model of virtue, but a co-redeemer with Christ
- She not only participated in the incarnation, but she remained at the cross to suffer with Jesus
- As such, her sufferings were so intense that they brought her very near the point of death herself, thereby participating with Jesus in the very painful act of redemption
- Thus, although in a subordinate role, she had a part with Christ in the redemption of the human race
- “You [Mary] conceived the living God and, by your prayers, will deliver our souls from death.”²⁷
- “Taken up to heaven she did not lay aside this saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation...Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix.”²⁸
- Therefore, in Catholicism she is the mediatrix of all grace
- “Roman Catholicism teaches that Mary, by her participation in our redemption, also earned the privilege of being the one through whom God would dispense all grace to the world...Mary is God’s unique channel of blessing...the seat of all divine graces...to whom the church exhorts the faithful to flee in time of need.”²⁹
- No wonder then Mary is venerated for her role as the Mother of God and the Queen of Heaven
- The most common way that Catholics venerate Mary is by saying the Rosary, a series of prayers counted on a string of beads

Authority

- Rather than standing on *sola Scriptura*, Catholics adhere to multiple sources of authority
- First, the pope and the bishops, assuming Peter was the first pope (Matt 16:13-18)
- Both the bishops and the Pope possess infallibility, being unable to err in their teaching
- The Pope demonstrates this infallibility when he speaks *ex cathedra* (“from the chair of authority”)
- “The task of interpreting the Word of God authentically has been entrusted solely to the Magisterium of the Church, that is, to the Pope and to the bishops in communion with him.”³⁰
- Second, Scripture constitutes an authority

²⁶McCarthy, *The Gospel According to Rome*, 186-187.

²⁷ *Catechism*, 966.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 969.

²⁹ McCarthy, *The Gospel According to Rome*, 203-204.

³⁰ *Catechism*, 100.

- Third, church tradition constitutes an authority
- “Tradition...is not contained in books, but in people, in the life of the Church. It is the life experience of the Catholic faithful. It is revelation written principally in the Church’s heart rather than in documents and records.”³¹
- “The Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation are entrusted, does not derive her certainty about all revealed truths from the holy Scriptures alone. Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence.”³²



CONCLUSION

- “Romanism is a gigantic system of church-worship, sacrament-worship, Mary-worship, saint-worship, image-worship, relic-worship, and priest-worship. In one word, Romanism is a huge organized idolatry.”³⁴
- “In conclusion, Protestants continue to protest against the Roman Catholic Church. Until such time that the Roman Catholic Church officially repents of preaching a false gospel of works and changes their official doctrines to align with the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ from the sufficient Scriptures—we cannot and we must not embrace Roman Catholics as Christians.”³⁵

³¹ McCarthy, *The Gospel According to Rome*, 291.

³² *Catechism*, 82.

³³ McCarthy, *The Gospel According to Rome*, 303.

³⁴ J.C. Ryle

³⁵ https://g3min.org/roman-catholicism-is-not-christianity/?fbclid=IwAR2VG4KyfW_JmqWd_I6nsFqF_KqdxkAi3wzvP1AgyGKk1R9MULqmYjBZwA