

EXPLAINING YOUR FAITH TO CATHOLIC FRIENDS

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EXPLAINING YOUR FAITH TO ROMAN CATHOLIC FRIENDS (SUMMARY)

Galatians 5:1-5 (NIV): It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery. Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace. But by faith we eagerly await through the Spirit the righteousness for which we hope. **Romans 11: 6 (NIV):** And if by grace, then it is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

1. What do studies show that Catholic people actually believe?

Question from annual surveys: "I have to earn my salvation by doing enough good things."

- 100% of evangelicals strongly disagree with that statement
- 5% of Catholics strongly disagree (84-87% strongly or somewhat agree)

2. Why do they believe that?

- It's what the RC Church teaches (Trent, Catechism, Canon Law, Papal writings)
- The Church admittedly derives its teachings "not from Scripture alone"

3. Aren't all people who "love Jesus" my bothers & sisters?

- How does Romans define salvation? (salvation by faith alone)
- What's the whole point of Galatians? (works salvation is not the gospel)
- What was the Reformation all about? (Sola Fide; Sola Scriptura; Solo Christo)
- What was the Council of Trent all about? (Protestant teaching is damnable heresy)
- What is the RC Catechism all about (a kinder, gentler reaffirmation of Trent)

4. Hasn't the RC Church softened its stance since the Reformation?

- Perhaps in tone, but theologically it has only moved further from Scripture:
 - Apocryphal books added to the Bible; Tradition declared equal authority
 - Criticism of the Scriptures; Infallibility of the Pope
 - Immaculate Conception & Assumption of Mary
 - Mary as Mother of the Church & Co-Redeemer with Christ
 - God does not forgive sins directly – only through a priest of the Church
- Ecumenical statements do not concede RC doctrine; only state ambiguities

5. What are the implications of this?

- Don't assume that people are saved just because they call themselves *Christians*:
 - Not all who say "Lord, Lord" "we've done good works in your name"
 - Not all Protestants are truly saved (perhaps 50% are)
 - Not all who call themselves *evangelical* are truly saved
- Could that many people be lost (there are a billion Catholics, after all)?
 - There are 1.6 billion Muslims; a billion Hindus
 - Jesus said it was a narrow way, and few find it
 - Churches can look alive but be spiritually dead (e.g. Sardis in Rev 3:1)
 - The best counterfeits look the most like the real thing

6. What are the implications for explaining your faith to Catholics?

- Make sure *Sola* is superglued to your *Fide*; i.e. trust in Christ **ALONE!**
- Rest & rejoice in your own **forgiveness, freedom, access, security & heritage**
 - Make these uniquely evangelical blessings part of your testimony (next page)
- Find out what they believe; specifically are they trusting solely in Christ
- Know what you believe (Can you explain Sola Fide from Scripture?)
- Grow in what you believe (Can you defend Sola Scriptura? Clarity of Scripture?)
- Don't truncate the message of salvation; it's more than "believe in Jesus"
- Encourage folks to "count the cost" before making a decision (Lu 14); You want their actions to be made according to knowledge, not (just) emotions

VERY DIFFERENT RELIGIONS RESULT FROM DIFFERENT FOUNDATIONS

1. Sources of Authority for Catholicism	Protestants Disagree for Biblical Reasons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Church does not derive truth from Scripture alone. Scripture is insufficient in itself. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, para #82) • It is not enough to know what the Scriptures reveal about prayer. The Church's living tradition is needed. (#2650) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The sacred writings are able to make you wise for salvation. 2 Tim 3:15 • All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim 3:16-17
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infallibility of the Pope and Bishops enables them to extend the Word of God. (#891-2) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do not go beyond what is written. 1 Cor 4:6 • Do not add to his words. Pro 30:6 • If any one may add unto these, God shall add to him the plagues described in this book. Rev 22:18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripture cannot stand alone without Tradition and the teaching office of the Bishops (#97) • Both Scripture and Tradition must be accepted and honored with equal sentiments of devotion and reverence. (#82) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away. Matt 24:35 • See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ. Col 2:8 • They honor me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men. You leave the commandment of God and hold to the tradition of men. Mark 7:6-8 • Why do you break the commandment of God for the sake of your tradition? Matt 15:3
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripture is too complex for the average person to interpret. It is the task of exegetes [trained biblical scholars] who exercise watch over and interpret the Word of God. (#119) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Timothy] knew the scriptures from a child. 2 Tim 3:15 • How can a young man keep his way pure? By guarding it according to your word...I have stored up your word in my heart, that I might not sin against you. Ps 119:9,11 • And the people of Berea were more open-minded than those in Thessalonica, and they listened eagerly to Paul's message. They searched the Scriptures day after day to see if Paul and Silas were teaching the truth. Acts 17:11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scripture is described as being pure, perfect, eternal, sure, truth, forever settled in heaven; it sanctifies, causes spiritual growth, is God-breathed, authoritative; it gives wisdom unto salvation, makes wise the simple, is living and active, is a guide, a fire, a hammer, a seed, the sword of the Spirit; it gives knowledge of God, is a lamp to our feet, a light to our path, produces reverence for God, heals, makes free, illuminates, produces faith, regenerates, converts the soul, brings conviction of sin, restrains from sin, is spiritual food, is infallible, inerrant, irrevocable, searches the heart and mind, produces life, defeats Satan, proves truth, refutes error, is holy, equips for every good work, is the final judge of all tradition, is the Word of God. • Where are we told these things about tradition? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Last 2 bullet points from: <u>Roman Catholicism</u>, John Armstrong, Moody Press 	

VERY DIFFERENT RELIGIONS RESULT FROM DIFFERENT FOUNDATIONS

2. <i>Authority Structure in Catholicism</i>	Protestants Disagree for Biblical Reasons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pope is the head of the Church. (Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph #882) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Christ] is the head of the body, the church. Col 1:18
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pope is the supreme pastor and teacher of all the faithful. (#891) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Holy Spirit...will teach you all things. Jn 14:26
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Pope is called the Holy Father. (#10) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [God] You alone are holy. Rev 15:4 • My glory I will not give to another. Isa 48:11 • Call no man your father on earth, for you have one Father, who is in heaven. Matt 23:9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Bishops interpret the Word of God. (#85) • Authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, is to be done by the Pope and the bishops. (#85, 100) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • But you have received the Holy Spirit, and he lives within you, so you don't need anyone to teach you what is true. For the Spirit teaches you everything you need to know. 1 Jn 2:27 • But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth. Jn 16:13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Priest administers the sacraments, which provides the grace you need for salvation. (#1120, 1129) • Were there no forgiveness of sins in the Church, there would be no hope of life to come. (#983) • For forgiveness of sins, you must confess them to the Priest. (#987) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who can forgive sins but God alone? Mark 2:7 • Repent and pray to the Lord. Act 8:22 • [Jesus said] Come unto me. Matt 11:28 • Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually! Ps 105:4 • Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace. Heb 4:16 • I acknowledged my sin to you; I said, I will confess my transgressions to the LORD. Ps 32:5 • For you, O Lord, are good and forgiving...to all who call upon you. Ps 86:5 • Ye shall seek me, and find me. Jer 29:13
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper...and Mediatrix. (#969) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 1 Jn 2:1 • Behold, God is my helper. Ps 54:4 • There is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus. 1 Tim 2:5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mary is given the title "Mother of God" to whose protection the faithful fly in all their dangers and needs. (#971) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let your requests be made known to God. Phil 4:6 • Call unto me. Jer 33:3 • Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you. Ps 50:15
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Saints do not cease to intercede for us as they offer the merits that they acquired on earth. (#956) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [Jesus] always lives to make intercession for [us]. Heb 7:25 • Christ Jesus is at the right hand of God ...interceding for us. Rom 8:34 • The Spirit himself intercedes for us. Rom 8:26

ROMAN CATHOLICISM & CLASSICAL PROTESTANTISM: TOTALLY DIFFERENT RELIGIONS

Question	Roman Catholicism	Classical Protestantism
How do I approach God?	Through the Church	Directly: Earnestly seek His face
• Learn	Take Church's training (RCIA); Read the catechism	Read God's Word; Study it
• Attitude	Give mental assent to what the Church teaches	Repentance and a contrite heart
• Prayer	Pray the Rosary (54 prayers to Mary; 11 to God)	Make your requests known to God; Come boldly before the throne; No vain repetition
• Liturgy	Draw close to God through the Church's forms and liturgy	Pray in your closet; 2 or 3 gather together
How do I get right with God?	We are made increasingly righteous by following the Church's teachings	We are declared righteous by trusting in Christ alone
• My Status	Weakened by sin but able to cooperate with God's grace	Blinded by sin; Conversion is God's action
• Process	The actions include:	Believe with your heart
	• Be baptized to wash away sins	Repent...your sins wiped away; Baptism is a symbol
	• Confirmation to receive the Holy Spirit	The Spirit indwells all true believers
	• Receive Holy Communion to receive more grace	Grace is not doled out for our actions; it is the gift of God in Christ
	• Receive indulgences (having the extra merits of Mary & the saints applied to your account)	Every man stands before the Lord on his own and is judged for his deeds; Neither Mary nor any saint have "extra merit"
	• Use the sacramentals for extra grace (signing the cross, crucifixes, medals, holy water, ashes, candles, statues, etc.)	The flesh profits nothing
What must I do to maintain my status?	Increase the graces through right actions	We maintain our communication with God, but our "sonship" is settled forever
• Deal with sins	Must confess to a priest	Confess directly to God (Acts 8)
• Frequency	Must confess at least annually	Don't let the sun go down
• Attitude	If no grave sins, re-confess previously confessed sins	God removes our sin and remembers it no more
• Gravity of sin	• "Venial" sins are those that are "easy to forgive"	All sin leads to death; Christ's death was not "easy"
	• "Mortal" sins destroy your spiritual life	He is faithful and just to forgive sins
• Response	After priestly absolution, you perform the <i>penance</i> assigned (Vulgate translation of Mat 3:2)	"Penance" was a bad translation (the 16 th century Catholic Erasmus discovered this)

What is my source of authority?	The Church	The Written Scriptures
• Infallibility	Infallible Pope	Infallible Scriptures
• Veracity	The Pope and Church teachings are above questioning	Try the spirits; Search the Scriptures
• Teacher	Bishops	Holy Spirit
• Sources	Tradition and Scripture; Also the Catechism, Canon Law and other Church documents	Do not go beyond what is written (I Cor 4); Don't add to His Word
What is the Church?	A hierarchical organization	Christ's body; all believers
• Foundation	Peter	No other foundation...but Christ
• Head of the Church	Pope	Christ
• Clergy	Mediate between God & man	Christ is the one mediator
• Lay people	Not the "church" but "sons & daughters" of it; the "faithful"	All believers are a kingdom of priests
• Status	Monasticism is a holier life; Priestly orders are a sacrament	All vocations can honor God
• Mary, Mother of Church	Mediatrice of all graces	All good...gifts come from God
• Mary, Queen of Heaven	Sometimes called the "female face of God"	My Glory I will not share with another
What are my responsibilities?	Obey the rules	Follow the Spirit's leading; Walk by faith
	Obey the 10 Commandments	Worship the Lord
	Follow the 6 precepts:	
	• Attend Mass & Holy Days of Obligation	Do not forsake assembling
	• Observe fast days	Live as to the Lord (Rom 14)
	• Confess grave sins at least once a year	When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long
	• Receive communion at least once a year	Do in remembrance of me
	• Observe marriage laws	Submit to one another
	• Contribute to the Church	Freely give (Matt 10)
		Ministry of reconciliation
		Use spiritual gifts
	Pray for the departed	Pray for the living
	Seek intercession of the saints	Christ ever lives to intercede; The Spirit prays for us; Bible forbids calling on the dead
What are the results?	Obligations; Hope	Peace with God; Certainty
• Destiny	Most people will spend time in purgatory to finish suffering	With His stripes we are healed; After death is the judgment
• Certainty	It is a sin of presumption to say you know you're heaven-bound	That you may know; there is no condemnation

THE *CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH* (CCC) ON "TRADITION & SACRED SCRIPTURE"

CCC paragraph 78. This living transmission, accomplished in the Holy Spirit, is called Tradition, since it is distinct from Sacred Scripture, though closely connected to it. Through Tradition, "the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes."

82. As a result the Church, to whom the transmission and interpretation of Revelation is 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."

85. The task of giving an authentic interpretation of the Word of God, whether in its written form or in the form of Tradition, has been entrusted to the living teaching office of the Church alone.

95. It is clear therefore that, in the supremely wise arrangement of God, sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others. Working together, each in its own way, under the action of the one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls.

100. 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.

119. It is the task of exegetes to work, according to these rules, towards a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture in order that their research may help the Church to form a firmer judgment. For, of course, all that has been said about the manner of interpreting Scripture is ultimately subject to the judgment of the Church which exercises the divinely conferred commission and ministry of watching over and interpreting the Word of God. "But I would not believe in the Gospel, had not the authority of the Catholic Church already moved me." (St. Augustine)

Comments

- While the Catholic layperson has been allowed to read the Scriptures for the past 40 years, it's very clear that interpreting it for himself is not an option. He must accept the church's interpretation.
- Paragraph 95 above says that Scripture cannot stand alone, something that Protestants would very strongly disagree with. Jesus said "Heaven and earth will pass away but my words will not."
- The Catechism is Catholicism's official interpretation of (parts of) Scripture and is "offered to all the faithful." One might ask, "Why doesn't it need an interpreter?" or "Is it written more clearly for the layperson than is the Bible?"

CATHOLIC & PROTESTANT BIBLES

- Commonalities

Same 27 books in the New Testament.

Available in various translations:

- Catholic: New American Bible, RSV, Douay-Rheims (older), etc.
- Protestant: KJV, RSV, NIV, etc.

Considered accurate, if not infallible or inerrant.

- Differences

Philosophical View:

- Catholic: Church is mother of the Bible.
- Protestant: Bible is mother of the church

Extra books in Catholic Bible, added 1545 at Council of Trent:

- Tobit, Judith, I & II Maccabees, Wisdom, Sirach, Baruch; Expanded Esther and Daniel.
- Called:
 - Protestant: Apocrypha (belong to the genre of non-biblical literature)
 - Catholic: Deutero-canonical (a second canon)
- Note: After 1000+ years, the RC OT no longer matched the Jewish canon, or the larger church's canon for those years.

Interpretation:

- Catholic: Only the RC Church's Magisterium has the right to interpret the Bible. Note: Catholic bibles include footnotes that clarify official RC interpretations such as the breakdown of the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20.
- Protestant: All true Christians are priests and can interpret the Bible, albeit with the Spirit's guidance, and some would add in accordance with fellow churchmen.

Ideas for sharing your faith:

- Obtain a RC Bible or use the person's Bible you're talking with. In most cases, the gospel will still come across clearly.
- Get a copy of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

BIBLICAL AUTHORITY

James G. McCarthy's brochure, *Roman Catholicism – What You Need to Know*, contains the following table comparing the Catechism of the Catholic Church to what the Bible says about itself.

[Bracketed numbers are references to the Catechism]

The Catholic Church Teaches

50. Peter was the head of the apostles [552, 765, 880].
51. The bishops are the successors of the apostles [861-862, 938].
52. The Pope, as the Bishop of Rome, is the successor of Peter [882, 936].
53. The bishops, with the Pope as their head, rule the universal Church [883, 894-896].
54. God has entrusted revelation to the Roman Catholic bishops [81, 86].
55. The Magisterium is the authoritative teacher of the Church [85-87].
56. The Magisterium is the infallible interpreter of Scripture [890-891, 2034-2035].
57. The Pope is infallible in his authoritative teaching [891].
58. The Magisterium alone has the ability and the right to interpret Scripture [85, 100, 939].
59. Scripture is to be interpreted in the sense in which it has been defined by the Magisterium [113, 119].
60. The Magisterium has the right to define truth found only obscurely or implicitly in revelation [66, 88, 2035, 2051].
61. Scripture and Tradition together are the Word of God [81, 85, 97, 182].
62. Scripture and Tradition together are the Church's supreme rule of faith [80, 82].

The Bible Teaches

50. Christ was the head of the apostles (John 13:13).
51. The apostles had no successors, for to succeed them one needed to be a witness of Christ's resurrection (Acts 1:21,22).
52. Peter had no successor.
53. Christ, the head of the body, rules the universal church (Colossians 1:18).
54. God has entrusted revelation to the saints (Jude 3).
55. The Holy Spirit is the authoritative teacher of the church (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 John 2:27).
56. Scripture is the only infallible interpreter of Scripture (Acts 17:11).
57. God alone is infallible (Numbers 23:19).
58. Every Christian, aided by the Holy Spirit, has the ability and the right to interpret Scripture (Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 2:12-16).
59. Scripture must be interpreted in the original sense intended by the Holy Spirit (2 Peter 3:14-16).
60. No one has the right to go beyond what is written in Scripture (1 Corinthians 4:6; Proverbs 30:6).
61. Scripture is the Word of God (John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21). Tradition is the words of men (Mark 7:1-13).
62. Scripture is the church's rule of faith (Mark 7:7-13; 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

SALVATION

James G. McCarthy's brochure, *Roman Catholicism – What You Need to Know*, contains the following table comparing the Catholic Catechism to what the Bible says about salvation.

The Catholic Church Teaches

1. Justification is a transformation of the soul in which original sin is removed and sanctifying grace infused [1987-1995].
2. Initial justification is by means of baptism [1262-1274].
3. Adults must prepare for justification through faith and good works [1247-1249].
4. The justified are in themselves beautiful and holy in God's sight [1992, 1999-2000, 2024].
5. Justification is furthered by sacraments and good works [1212, 1392, 2010].
6. Justification is lost through mortal sin [1033, 1855, 1874].
7. Catholics guilty of mortal sin are justified again through the sacrament of penance [980, 1446].
8. Salvation from the eternal consequences of sin is a lifelong process [161-162, 1254-1255].
9. Salvation is attained by cooperating with grace through faith, good works, and participating in the sacraments [183, 1129, 1815, 2002].
10. Faith is belief in God and the firm acceptance of all that the Church proposes for belief [181-182, 1814].
11. Sanctifying grace is a quality of the soul, a supernatural disposition that perfects the soul [1999-2000].
12. The sacraments are necessary channels for the continual infusion of grace. They bestow grace in virtue of the rite performed [1127-1129].
13. Grace is merited by good works [2010, 2027].
14. Venial sins do not incur eternal punishment [1855, 1863].

The Bible Teaches

1. Justification is an act of God in which He declares a sinner to be righteous in His sight, having forgiven his sins and imputed to him God's own righteousness (Romans 3:21-4:8).
2. Justification is by faith alone (Romans 3:28).
3. God justifies ungodly sinners who believe (Romans 4:5). Good works are the *result* of salvation, not the cause (Ephesians 2:8-10).
4. The justified are *in Christ* holy and blameless before God (Ephesians 1:1-14).
5. Justification is the imputation of the perfect righteousness of God (2 Corinthians 5:21). In Christ the believer has been made complete (Colossians 2:10).
6. Justification cannot be lost. Those whom God justifies will be saved from the wrath of God (Romans 5:8,9).
7. There is no second justification. Those whom God justifies, He also glorifies (Romans 8:30).
8. Salvation from the eternal consequences of sin is an instantaneous and secure act of God coinciding with justification (Romans 5:9).
9. Salvation is attained by grace through faith apart from works (Ephesians 2:8,9). Good works are the result, not the cause, of salvation (Ephesians 2:10).
10. Saving faith is the entrusting of oneself to Christ as Lord and Savior (Romans 10:8-17).
11. Grace is the undeserved favor of God (Ephesians 1:7,8).
12. The child of God is the constant object of the Father's grace (Romans 5:1,2).
13. Grace is a free gift (Romans 11:6).
14. Every sin is punishable by eternal death (Romans 6:23).

15. Serious sins must be confessed to a priest [1456-1457].
16. The priest forgives sin as a judge [1442, 1461].
17. When the guilt of sin is forgiven, temporal punishment remains [1472-1473].
18. Acts of penance make satisfaction for the temporal punishment of sin [1434, 1459-1460].
19. Indulgences dispensed by the Church for acts of piety release sinners from temporal punishment [1471-1473].
20. Purgatory is necessary to atone for sin and cleanse the soul [1030-1031].
21. Poor souls suffering in purgatory can be helped by those alive on earth offering up prayers, good works, and the sacrifice of the Mass [1032, 1371, 1479].
22. No one can know if he will attain to eternal life [1036, 2005].
23. Eternal life is a merited reward [1821, 2010].
24. The Roman Catholic Church is necessary for salvation [846].
15. Sin is to be confessed directly to God (Ezra 10:11).
16. No one can forgive sin but God alone (Mark 2:7).
17. When God forgives sin, He completely forgives (Colossians 2:13; Isaiah 43:25).
18. Jesus made perfect satisfaction for all sins (1 John 2:1,2).
19. Jesus releases believers from their sins by His blood (Revelation 1:5).
20. Purgatory does not exist. Jesus made purification for sins on the cross (Hebrews 1:3).
21. Those who sleep in Christ need no help. To be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord (2 Corinthians 5:8).
22. The believer can know that he has eternal life by the Word of God (1 John 5:13).
23. Eternal life is the free gift of God (Romans 6:23).
24. There is salvation in no one but the Lord Jesus Christ, "for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved" (Acts 4:12).

ORIGINAL DATES OF SOME ROMAN CATHOLIC TRADITIONS

William Webster wrote an excellent chapter in the book “Roman Catholicism” from Moody Press. The chapter title was “Did I Really Leave the Holy Catholic Church?” In it he shows over and over again, that while the Catholic Church *claims* it only teaches what has been believed by all Christians everywhere (especially the church fathers), the historical facts show otherwise. For example, the table below (compiled from various sources) show how many of the Catholic teachings have a relatively recently history, certainly not stemming from the apostolic age.

Year	Practice or Doctrine Introduced or Instituted
2nd century	Presbyter (or elders) were first called priests by Lucian.
300	Prayers for the dead.
375	The veneration of angels and dead saints and the use of images.
394	The Mass as a daily celebration was adopted.
416	Infant baptism by sprinkling becomes compulsory in the Western church.
431	Proclamation that infant baptism regenerates the soul.
431	The beginning of the exaltation of Mary, and the first use of the term “Mother of God” by the Council of Ephesus.
451	The worship of Mary, the mother of God instituted.
500	The Mass instituted as re-sacrifice of Jesus for the remission of sin
500	Priests began to dress different from the laity and to wear special clothes.
526	Extreme Unction.
593	Declaration that sin needs to be purged, established by Pope Gregory I.
593	The doctrine of purgatory was first established by Gregory the Great.
600	Prayers began to be offered to Mary, dead saints, and angels.
610	The first man was proclaimed “Pope” (Boniface III).
709	Kissing the Pope’s foot begins.
788	Veneration of the cross, images, and relics authorized.
850	Holy water, mixed with a pinch of salt and blessed by a priest was authorized in.
890	Veneration of Saint Joseph.
927	College of cardinals begun.
995	Canonization of dead people as saints initiated by Pope John XV.
998	Fasting on Fridays and before Lent.
1000	Attendance at Mass made mandatory under the penalty of mortal sin.
1056	Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox churches split over papal authority, different modes of water baptism, and the veneration of dead saints and images.
1079	Celibacy of priesthood, decreed by Pope Gregory VII.
1090	The rosary, or prayer beads copied from Hindus and Muslims was introduced by Peter the Hermit.
11th century	The Mass developed gradually as a sacrifice.

Year	Practice or Doctrine Introduced or Instituted
12th century	The seven sacraments defined by Peter Lombard.
1184	The Inquisition of "Heretics" was instituted by the Council of Verona. Legalized and promoted by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215. (Some estimate that 26 million Jews and Protestant believers were killed before it ended six hundred years later. Historian Dowling estimates 50 million since AD 606.)
1190	The sale of Indulgences established to reduce time in Purgatory.
1215	The dogma of transubstantiation decreed by Pope Innocent III.
1215	Confession of sins to the priest at least once a year was instituted by Pope Innocent III in the Lateran Council.
1220	The adoration of the wafer (host) decreed by Pope Honorius III.
1229	Bible placed on Index of Forbidden Books in Toulouse.
1251	The scapular invented by Simon Stock of England.
1302	Pope Boniface VIII declares "It is necessary for salvation that all human creatures shall be subject to the Roman Pontiff."
1414	Cup forbidden to laymen.
1438	Purgatory elevated from doctrine to dogma by Council of Florence.
1439	Dogma of sacraments affirmed.
1545	Tradition granted equal authority with the bible. (Council of Trent)
1545	The Apocryphal Books were added to the Bible by the Council of Trent.
1854	The Immaculate Conception of Mary was proclaimed by Pope Pius IX.
1864	Pope Pius IX condemns all scientific discoveries not approved by the Roman Church.
1870	Infallibility of the pope in matters of faith and morals proclaimed by the First Vatican Council.
1922	Virgin Mary proclaimed co-redeemer with Jesus by Pope Benedict XV.
1930	Pius XI condemned the public schools.
1931	Pius XI reaffirmed the doctrine that Mary is "The Mother of God."
1950	Assumption of Virgin Mary into heaven, proclaimed by Pope Pius XII.
1965	Mary proclaimed the Mother of the Church by Pope Paul VI.
1985	Pope John Paul II declares that God will not forgive sins directly and that forgiveness of sins can only be obtained through a priest of the Roman Catholic Church.
1999	Pope John Paul II declares heaven, hell and purgatory are essentially states of being not real places.
2015	Pope Francis allows that some atheists can do good and go to heaven.

PREPARING YOUR TESTIMONY FOR A ROMAN CATHOLIC FRIEND

Here are some sample points you might make in your personal testimony that may make your friend really wish they had what you have.

I came to discover that:

- Although God does have enemies whom he will severely judge, he wanted to be a loving father to me.
- Like the father of the prodigal son, he will run to me when I turn to him.
- He greatly desires for me to come to him, and spend time pouring out my heart to him, and reading what he has written to me.

I learned that:

- God doesn't constantly watch his child for disobedience for the purpose of checking to see if I measure up to his standards, at any moment eager to punish me.
- The goodness that God demands is not something I have to manufacture; God accepts the righteousness that Christ lived and applied it to me.

Once I learned this:

- I experienced what complete forgiveness was all about.
- I saw God as my loving father and was at total peace with him.
- I knew I was his child permanently; that he promised to never disown me.
- I understood why the gospel is called GOOD News;
 - I don't have to earn my salvation.
 - Salvation is a free gift of God.
 - My mistakes won't cause me to lose my salvation.
 - I can know for certain that heaven is my guaranteed destiny.
 - I know that the moment I die Christ will welcome me in his arms.
 - I can face death with great confidence and even cheerfulness.

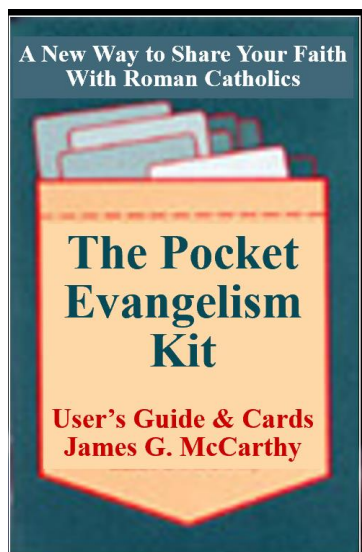
I eventually learned that:

- I can love reading God's written Word. It can really draw me close to God and meet my every need.
- In response to the love of God, I am coming to love him more and more.
- I am growing closer to God, so that now I actually want to do many of the things he wants me to do. It's becoming a joy to love others including the unlovely. It's becoming a joy to give money to God.
- Jesus was right when he said that because we have freely received, we freely give.
- A church where the free gospel of grace is taught has a lot of people who truly understand God's love, and going to church can be as enjoyable as a family reunion. Man, there are times now when I worship God with brothers and sisters, and there is no greater experience for me.

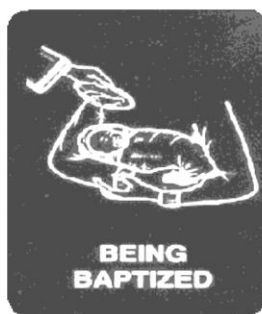
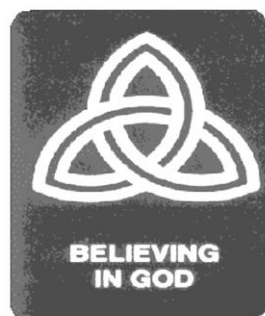
I have come to know God personally in a way I never knew before:

- I know Christ now as one who *does* stick closer than a brother.
- I know why Christ called his followers *friends*.
- I now what the Psalms mean that my soul pants for God.
- I know what it means to love God—really love God—with my whole heart.

THE POCKET EVANGELISM KIT



The cards



POCKET EVANGELISM KIT, SCRIPTURE REFERENCES FOR EACH OF THE CARDS

Believing in God

What must you believe in order to go to heaven? (Write down their answer or remember it well)

Loving Your Neighbor (Do you love your neighbor with the kind of love that God requires?)

Matthew 22:39 Love neighbor as self

Luke 10:25-37 Good Samaritan parable

I John 3:16-18 We ought to lay down lives for each other

James 1:27 Look after orphans and widows

Keeping the commandments (Are you able to keep the 10 commandments to God's standard?)

James 2:10 Break 1 = guilty of all

Gal 3:10-12 Rely on observing law = under a curse. Not justified by law but by faith

Romans 3:20,23,28; 7:7-12 Law = conscious of sin; all have sinned and fall short

Doing good works (How many good works do you have to do in order to earn eternal life?)

Isaiah 64:6 Righteous acts = filthy rags

Romans 3:12,23; 4:4-5 No one does good; all have sinned

Eph 2:8-9 Saved by grace not works

Titus 3:5 Saved not by righteous deeds but because of His mercy

John 6:28-29 What work does God require? Believe in One He has sent

Praying (In what way does praying help you to attain to eternal life?)

Matt 6:7 Don't babble - think they will be heard for their many words

Matt 7:21-23 Not every one who says Lord, Lord will enter

Receiving the sacraments (How does receiving the Eucharist contribute to your salvation?)

Luke 22:19 This is my body given for you. Do in remembrance of me.

I Cor 11:23-26 In remembrance of me. Proclaim Lord's death until he comes

Being Baptized (How does baptism help you to get to heaven?)

I Cor 1:17 God sent me to preach - not baptize

Luke 23:40-43 Thief on cross. Today you will be with me in glory.

Acts 10:44-48 Holy Spirit came upon the Gentiles. Then baptized.

Being devoted to Mary (How can Mary help you get to heaven?)

I Tim 2:5 1 God and 1 mediator between God and man

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else

Going to Church (How does going to church or being a member of a church help you to attain salvation?)

Ephesians 1:22-23 Church = his body. Jesus is the head.

I Cor 12:12-13 One body, many parts. Baptized by 1 spirit into 1 body

Col 1:18 Christ is the head of the body, the church

Dying with no unconfessed sin (How does the condition of your soul at death effect your eternal destiny?)

John 10:28 I give them eternal life and no one can snatch them from me

Romans 5:8-10; 8:33-34 Saved from wrath because justified by Jesus; Jesus intercedes for us

I John 5:11-13 God has given us eternal life through his son. Have son = have life. Write so you may know that you have eternal life.

Believing in God

James 2:19 Demons believe in one God

Matt 7:21-23 Not everyone who says Lord, Lord will enter

Anything Else

John 14:6 I am the way, truth, life. No one comes to the Father except through Me

Acts 4:12 Salvation is found in no one else

John 8:24 You will die in your sins if you don't believe in me

Matt 7:13-20 Enter through the narrow gate. By their fruit you will recognize them

GOSPEL PRESENTATION SCRIPTURES

God's wonderful plan of salvation. His way of making us right with him.

Bad News:

Sin

Romans 3:23 All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

I John 3:4 Everyone who sins breaks the law

Ex 20:1-17 10 commandments

Matt 5:21-22, 27-28 Anger = in danger of hell. Look lustfully = committed adultery in heart

Penalty = death

Romans 6:23 Wages of sin is death

Rev 20:11-15 Judged according to what they had done. If name not in book of life = hell

Example: God cannot stand sin. He almost wiped out the whole world with the flood.

Summary: There is a great gulf between God and man and man cannot do anything about it.

Are they under the conviction of sin? If so proceed.

What can we do about our problem of sin?

Luke 13:3 Unless you repent, you will perish

Acts 3:19 Repent, turn to God so your sins can be wiped out

John 3:3-8 If not born again can't see the kingdom of God

Good News:

Solution is Jesus

John 1:1,14 Word = Jesus. God became flesh

I Tim 2:5 1 God and 1 mediator between God and man

Jesus paid the penalty for sin

Mark 10:45 Jesus came to give His life as a ransom for many

I Pet 3:18 Christ died for our sins, raised for our justification

Free gift - not man's work

Eph 2:8-9 Saved by grace, not works so no one can boast

Romans 6:23 Wages of sin is death but the free gift of God . . .

Romans 11:6 It's either grace or works

Terms of acceptance

Mark 1:15 Repent and believe the good news

Ask person: What is God's offer of salvation? (Do they understand?)

Card = Trusting Jesus as Savior. Need to renounce dependence on anything else.

John 3:16 Whoever believes in Him will not perish

Acts 16:30-31 What must I do to be saved? Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ

Do you want to receive God's free gift of salvation now or do you need time to think it over?

SUGGESTIONS FOR USING THE POCKET EVANGELISM KIT

Intended audience:

Individuals raised in a Catholic or Protestant church

How the kit is best presented:

One-on-one with no distractions. (If the individual has children, a babysitter is recommended).

Suggested Preparation:

- 1) Read through The Pocket Evangelism Kit 2 or 3 times
- 2) Memorize what to say as you introduce the cards (pages 15 & 16)
- 3) Memorize what to say as you lay the individual cards down (pages 16 & 17)
- 4) Separate out the Trusting Jesus as Savior Card so you remember not to lay it down with the rest of the cards. Remove the Being Devoted to Mary Card if the cards are used with a Protestant.
- 5) Memorize what to say after the card selection is complete (pages 16 & 17)
- 6) If the person selected the Believing in God Card, ask "What must a person believe about God in order to go to heaven?" Write down their response or remember it well. Know when to give them the Trusting Jesus as Savior Card (pages 17 & 18)
- 7) Practice steps 2-6 several times
- 8) Decide which cards you plan to refute first. (Keeping the Commandments, Doing Good Works, and Loving Your Neighbor are the easiest. Some of the hardest ones are Being Devoted to Mary, Going to Church, Being Baptized, and Receiving the Sacraments. It is easy for individuals to become sidetracked on some of these.) (Pages 22-24). Become familiar with the questions/scriptures on the handout entitled: Cards – Scripture References. You may want to do your own research and develop your own list. You don't use them all – most of the time one or two per card is all that is necessary. Instead of reading or quoting Bible verses, find the verse in the Bible and then let the individual read it for themselves. Remember that you usually only have to refute a couple cards before they are ready to hear what the Bible says about the way to heaven.
- 9) Decide if you are going to read from the backs of the cards, use the handouts, or go by memory as you ask the individual the 'question to help him rethink his selection of the card' and the 'summary statement of what the Bible teaches about trying to achieve salvation through the activity represented by the card'. See pages 21 & 22.

WHAT DOES SALVATION REALLY MEAN?

• **INTRODUCTION.** In Matthew 12 Jesus categorized all of humanity into 2 camps when he said "Whoever is not with me is against me." In John 8 he told a group of religious leaders that they were of their father, the devil. In Colossians 1, we are told that "he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son."

We are either "saved" or we are not, and we need to be clear what it means to be saved. This document defines what Grace Bible Church believes, based on orthodox, biblical teaching. The evangelical branch of Christianity was birthed on this teaching, but unfortunately has drifted from its moorings. It is no longer safe to assume that evangelical leaders believe and teach this foundational doctrine. Many evangelical churches do not emphasize historic Christian creeds, but even if they did there are no creeds that clearly address this issue: the doctrine of soteriology, or salvation.

• **REFORMATION ROOTS.** Martin Luther re-discovered the central, biblical principle of salvation, that is "in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: 'The righteous will live by faith.'" Many other verses make that clear, e.g. Ephesians 2:8-9 "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

Coming out of the struggles of the Reformation came a sort of creedal statement summarizing the Protestant's view of biblical salvation, specifically that we are saved "by Grace Alone, through Faith Alone, in Christ Alone." GBC holds to that formulation, and this paper will explain each key word in it. For each term, we'll define what it means and what it doesn't mean. In doing this, we will refute common errors that we find in the church around us, including among evangelical leaders who we think are not being faithful to the Word, or to the historic Protestant tradition.

First, we'll look at the 3 *Alones*.

• **GRACE ALONE.** Among many similar verses, Romans 11:6 clearly states that salvation is given to us freely by God's grace, that we do not need to earn our salvation: "And if by grace, then it cannot be based on works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace." Romans 6:23 says: "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." When the Galatians were being taught wrongly about salvation, Paul wrote in scathing terms to counter the idea that one needs to do certain things to be saved, such as being circumcised. In fact he wrote that if they were adding works to their faith in Christ, their faith would be nullified: Galatians 5:2-4 states: "Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace." We must rely completely on the sufficiency of Christ, or we are left to save ourselves by living a perfect life.

Some Evangelicals have missed this critical point. They have put an undue emphasis on man's part in the conversion process. They may have equated conversion with saying a sinner's prayer, walking an aisle, or repenting with genuine sorrow for sin. The new birth is to be born from above (John 3:3); it is not the result of a human decision because "Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit." (John 3:6). Like Jesus calling a dead Lazarus to "Come forth," new life comes from God. While it is true that we must be born again, we don't give birth to ourselves—God does that.

By point of reference, official Roman Catholic teaching does not hold to the view of grace *alone*. Anathemas condemning this view were clearly invoked against this Protestant teaching, and have never been rescinded. Nor would they be rescinded, since many fundamental doctrines of Catholicism are based on this. The denial of the sufficiency of Christ's death and resurrection are evident in Catholicism's repeated sacrifice of the mass, masses held for departed loved ones, the doctrines of mortal sin, purgatory, and indulgences which are still granted for good works. This view leads to practices such as extreme self-denial such as monasticism and extreme self-punishment such as flagellation.

• **FAITH ALONE.** Hebrews 12:14 says "without holiness no one will see the Lord." Jesus said in Matthew 5:20 that "unless your righteousness surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of heaven." Clearly, we sinners need to have our sin dealt with and we somehow need to obtain perfect holiness. Again Scripture is clear how this is done. Romans 4:4-5 says "Now to the one who works, wages are not credited as a gift but as an obligation. However, to the one who does not work but trusts God who justifies the ungodly, their faith is credited as righteousness." And 2 Corinthians 5:21 states: "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

This transfer of our sin to Christ and his righteousness to us, is called in theological terms, “imputed” righteousness ...Christ’s perfect righteousness credited to our account through our faith. It is a wonderful truth, one that is fully consistent with “grace alone.”

Some evangelicals are confused about this key truth. Some teach what is called “Lordship salvation,” that is, that one is not saved simply by trusting in Christ alone, but by making him the Lord of your life. While we are encouraged to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice to God (Romans 12:1), that is a command given to a church of persons who were already saved. Romans 7 and other passages show that Christians have two natures which war against each other. We believe that those who would argue that we can reach a point of ‘sinless perfection’ deny these biblical positions.

By reference, the official theology of the Catholic Church is that righteousness is not “imputed” but “infused.” This position can be stated like this: through participation in the church’s sacraments, one becomes more and more righteous. A person may obtain the needed righteousness by his own good deeds or by having those of other people applied to his life. Individuals whom the Catholic Church has declared to be ‘saints’ may have more good works than they needed to get to heaven and those works can be applied to others (the doctrine of ‘super-abundant’ works). If one has not built up enough righteousness by the end of his life, he will need to go to purgatory. We do not believe this position recognizes the sufficiency of Christ’s righteousness. We believe that Galatians 5:2-4 would apply, making one’s belief in Christ to be of no effect: “Mark my words! I, Paul, tell you that if you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all. Again I declare to every man who lets himself be circumcised that he is obligated to obey the whole law. You who are trying to be justified by the law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.”

• **CHRIST ALONE.** 1 Timothy 2:5 states: “For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus.” In many Scriptures we are invited to come to God, to enter into a personal relationship with him; to pour out our hearts to him; to listen to him; to taste and see that he is good. We are invited into intimate, personal relationship, not a third-party relationship (through a priest).

We are his children. 1 John 3:1 says: “See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!” As children of the King, Hebrews 4:16 says we can “approach God’s throne of grace with confidence.”

The book of Hebrews stresses repeatedly that our great high priest has come, has completed his work, and sits at the right hand of God. His sacrifice was better than the sacrifice of animals because his sacrifice is once and for all. It does not need to be repeated. Christ has done it all. He exclaimed “It is finished!” By its sacerdotal system of priests and rites, Catholicism denies the tenets of Hebrews, and denigrates the work of Christ. The only mention of priests after Christ is that all Christians are priests and we are to teach, serve and pray for one another.

Generally, evangelicals state their agreement with “Christ alone.” Yet some deny it by their actions in assuming that the Catholic Church’s plan of salvation is a biblically-valid way to peace with God. Yet 1 John 5:11-12 says our new life is found in Christ, not the sacraments of the church, or in infused righteousness: “And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. Whoever has the Son has life; whoever does not have the Son of God does not have life.”

In our tolerant society, it is politically correct to assume that all religions lead to God. But it doesn’t happen to be true. It is unpleasant to think that a religion with a billion adherents could be a counterfeit religion, and leading many to hell. Yet, Jesus said in Matthew 7:13: “For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction.”

Many evangelical leaders and authors hesitate to say that anyone who claims to be a Christian is lost. But Christ warned many who named the name of Christ would be lost. Mormons claim to be Christians, as do many other cults. As shepherds of the flock, we need to warn our people of counterfeit religion, even (especially) counterfeit Christian religions.

We have shown above how the Roman Catholic Church rejects the 3 ALONEs. For the record, let's examine the 3 nouns: Grace, Faith & Christ. We'll see how the Catholic Church does not even use these 3 terms with biblical definitions, as we do. This is what has allowed ecumenical agreements between Protestants and Catholics to be crafted that sound clear but mean different things to different readers.

- **GRACE.** Biblically, grace is the disposition and action of God toward us that has no basis in our own goodness or merit. Romans 5:8 says: "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us." Grace is rooted in God's love and goodness. It includes his merciful forgiveness, his incarnation, death, burial and resurrection, as well as every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 1). To those of us he has called to be his own, it results in our eternal salvation.

Scripture makes clear that grace is God's unmerited favor. It is not something we have earned or we deserve.

When a sacramental religion such as Catholicism teaches that one is '*saved by grace*,' it is the not the same use of the term *grace* as we have just described it. Digging deeper, it defines 2 kinds of grace: sanctifying and actual grace. As these graces work themselves out in a person's life, he will discover that some sins will cause you to lose your salvation. And depending on the state of your soul at the moment of death, no one ever be absolutely certain of eternal life.

This is not the grace that we know, which results in true peace with God (Romans 5:1 "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.") and certainty of heaven (Romans 8:1 "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." and 1 John 5:13 "I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.")

Further, salvation is initiated by being baptized, and maintained by being confirmed, receiving the Eucharist, confessing to a duly-authorized priest, and performing the prescribed penance. This is not being saved by grace, in the way the Bible defines grace.

- **FAITH.** Hebrews 11:1 defines faith: "Faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see." 1 Corinthians 15:19 says "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." When we place our faith in Christ, we trust in him *alone* and we don't try to add anything to it. (Galatians 5:2: "If you let yourselves be circumcised, Christ will be of no value to you at all.") When we really trust in Christ alone, if his sacrifice alone fails to placate a God angry at our sin, then we will perish in our sins. It could be a risky proposition, but we are promised we will not be put to shame.

Faith, as defined in Catholicism, is faith in a church. It is defined to be a mental agreement with all that the church teaches. Christ denounced this kind of religion in Matthew 15:8, saying: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

• **CHRIST.** Colossians 2:9 tells us that “in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form.” 1 John 2:2 adds: “He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.” And in John 14:9, “Jesus answered: ‘Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father.’” Hebrews 10:12 adds: “But when this priest had offered for all time one sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God.”

GBC holds to this biblical, exalted view of Christ.

Catholicism teaches a different Christ, one whose sacrifice on the cross needs to be repeated perpetually on the altar. It’s one whose “body, soul and divinity” becomes a wafer, and becomes wine, without changing its external form. It’s one whose death needs to be supplemented by our sufferings, and whose righteousness needs to be supplemented by the good works of other saints on our behalf.

Further the Catechism teaches that Christ is incomplete without us, and that we make him whole: paragraph 795 states: “Let us rejoice then and give thanks that we have become not only Christians, but Christ himself. Do you understand and grasp, brethren, God’s grace toward us? Marvel and rejoice: we have become Christ. For if he is the head, we are the members; he and we together are the whole man.”

• **CAUTIONS.** Given the above discussion, here are some practical implications:

1. **First and foremost.** 2 Corinthians 13:5 urges us to “Examine yourselves to see whether you are in the faith; test yourselves.” If you are not certain that you are “saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone” then seek God earnestly while he may be found. Romans 8:14 says: “those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.” If you are not being led by God’s Spirit, then let today be the day of salvation for you.

If you are not confident of your eternal security, seek the Lord. The pastors and leaders of GBC always stand ready to help you search the Scriptures and find peace with God.

2. **Validate what evangelical leaders teach.** Paul commended those who compared even his teaching against the Scriptures (Acts 17:11 “Now the Berean Jews were of more noble character than those in Thessalonica, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.”)

Unfortunately a very common assumption among leading evangelicals today is that Catholicism is a valid expression of biblical Christianity, an assumption this document disputes. As a few examples of this:

- A local evangelical college has held a number of seminars basically promoting the orthodoxy of Catholicism.
- Charles Colson, the Evangelicals & Catholics Together (ECT) movement, Breakpoint hold this view.
- Summit Ministries, David Noebel’s *Understanding the Times* book.
- Norm Geisler & Ron Rhodes’ book *Conviction Without Compromise*.
- C. S. Lewis, as an Anglican (British Episcopalian), shares a number of Catholic beliefs: purgatory, etc.

His views on the substitutionary atonement surprise some people when they look into it deeply enough.

3. **Relationship with Catholics.** When you interact with Roman Catholics, you cannot assume they are either lost or saved. There are lost and saved people in every church. As you relate to others, what you want to know is what are they trusting in to make them right with God. No matter who you talk to, clarify your terms...self-professed Christians are not always true believers. Numerically, some statistics you may want to keep in mind are these:
 - Independent estimates by both John MacArthur and Greg Laurie are that **only about 50%** of the people in evangelical churches are truly trusting in Christ alone.
 - Only 5% of US Catholics strongly disagreed with this survey statement: “If a person is generally good, or does enough good things in their life, they can earn a place in heaven.” By way of contrast, fully 100% of those categorized as “evangelical” strongly disagreed with the statement.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE SAVED?

► Biblical Steps to Faith in God ◀

1. I recognize that I am a sinner in God's eyes.

Rom 3:10. There is no one righteous, not even one.

Matt 22:37-38. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

Matt 5: 27-28. You have heard that it was said, "Do not commit adultery." But I tell you that anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.

James 2:10. For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it.

Rom 3:23. For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.

2. I understand that God is angry at me for my sin. The punishment which God has established for sin is spiritual death (or separation from God for all eternity). I stand in judgment of hell for my sins.

Rom 5:12. Sin entered the world through one man, and death through sin, and in this way death came to all men, because all sinned.

Rom 6:23. The wages of sin is death.

John 3:18. Whoever does not believe stands condemned already because he has not believed in the name of God's one and only Son.

John 3:36. Whoever rejects the Son will not see life, for God's wrath remains on him.

3. I admit my helplessness to save myself—that I cannot be good enough to earn God's favor.

Gal 2:16. Know that a man is not justified by observing the law...by observing the law no one will be justified.

Isa 64:6. All our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Rom 7:18. I know that nothing good lives in me.

4. I repent & seek the Lord earnestly.

Deut 4:29. But if you seek the LORD your God, you will find him if you look for him with all your heart and with all your soul.

Mark 1:15. Repent & believe the gospel.

Acts 3:19. Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out.

1 Pet 3:18. For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God.

5. I stop trusting in my own goodness.

Gal 5:4. You who are trying to be justified by law have been alienated from Christ; you have fallen away from grace.

Rom 11:6. It is no longer by works; if it were, grace would no longer be grace.

Rom 3:28. A man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Titus 3:5. He saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.

Rom 4:5. However, to the man who does not work but trusts God who justifies the wicked, his faith is credited as righteousness.

Gal 2:21. If righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!

6. I believe in Jesus Christ & put my trust in him alone.

John 3:16. For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 20:31. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

Acts 16:30-31. "What must I do to be saved?" "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved."

Romans 10:9-10. If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you profess your faith and are saved.

John 6:40. Everyone who looks to the Son and believes in him shall have eternal life.

Romans 4:3. What does Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to him as righteousness."

7. I accept his free gift of forgiveness & eternal life.

Rom 6:23. The gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Eph 2:8-9. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast.

John 1:12. To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

Isaiah 55:1. Come, all you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you who have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without cost.

Revelation 21:6. He said to me: "It is done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and the End. To the thirsty I will give water without cost from the spring of the water of life.

Matthew 10:8. Freely you have received; freely give.

8. I rest in the confidence that I am totally forgiven by God, at peace with him, & I am his child forever.

Eph 1:7. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.

Rom 4:7-8. Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him.

Rom 5:1. Since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 8:1. Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Eph 3:12. In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

John 8:34-36. Jesus replied "I tell you the truth, everyone who sins is a slave to sin. Now a slave has no permanent place in the family, but a son belongs to it forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed."

1 John 5:11-13. And this is the testimony: God has given us eternal life, and this life is in his Son. He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life. I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life.

20 UNIQUE BENEFITS OF A SALVATION THAT COMES BY FAITH ALONE

What are the most valuable things that you have, as one who trusts in Christ alone for your salvation, and which a person trusting in his own works does not have? You have:

A proper understanding of God

1. an understanding that neither God nor Christ are stern judges eager to punish you; that God delights in us, gives us all good things to enjoy; that he invites us to spend time with him, to bring him our requests, and to pray without ceasing; that he's never too busy to spend time with us.
2. freedom from the Old Testament laws, knowing that you live in grace by faith, following the Spirit's specific leading of your life.
3. an opportunity to confess your sins directly and immediately to God, to restore fellowship and intimacy with him at any moment; the invitation to put your past behind you, knowing that God removes our sins as far as the east is from the west.

A personal relationship with God

4. a personal relationship with the almighty God, whom you can call on at anytime, who loves to hear from you, to help you and meet your needs, to grant you the desires of your heart; You are a beloved child of the king who owns all things.
5. a personal relationship with Christ, the only one who rose from the dead, and who calls you his friend, who loves you more than a brother, who gave his life for you, and who constantly prays for you.
6. the indwelling presence of the all-knowing, ever-present Spirit, who teaches and leads you, who empowers you live as you ought, and who also prays constantly for you. This gives you the ability to overcome temptations and adversity and to become all you can be.

Peace with God, Life & Death

7. true forgiveness for anything you've done in the past, and a certainty that you'll be forgiven for anything you might do in the future.
8. genuine, lasting peace with God, and a certainty that to die is gain: eternal pleasures forever more in the presence of your loving father.
9. courage and confidence in the face of death, for either yourself, or for saved loved ones.

A reliable source of wisdom & truth

10. a place to go—the written Scriptures—for comfort, wisdom, and guidance for all of life.
11. a certainty that you can understand and use the Scriptures with the Spirit's guidance.
12. a confidence that the Bible is sufficient; there won't be new additions to God's Word.

A new family for community and support

13. a place to go—the church—for growth and interpersonal support for all areas of life.
14. a simple faith, a "yoke easy and light," without numerous church-imposed rules.
15. an opportunity and responsibility to change and improve the church.

A new purpose

16. a meaning and significance in life, with unique spiritual giftedness to fulfill a calling and a destiny larger than your own self.
17. an understanding that whatever vocation God calls you to can be lived for his glory, that no one is holier or closer to God just by being in full-time religious service.
18. an exciting opportunity to introduce others to Christ and lead them onto maturity.
19. a responsibility to build the culture for his glory, and to be good citizens, especially in a democratic country; freedom from historically-problematic church-state ties.

A healthy view of pleasure

20. an understanding that God gives us all things to enjoy, although requiring moderation; an understanding that even our sexuality is a gift intended for pleasure; although restricted to marriage, the Bible does not restrict sex for procreative purposes only.

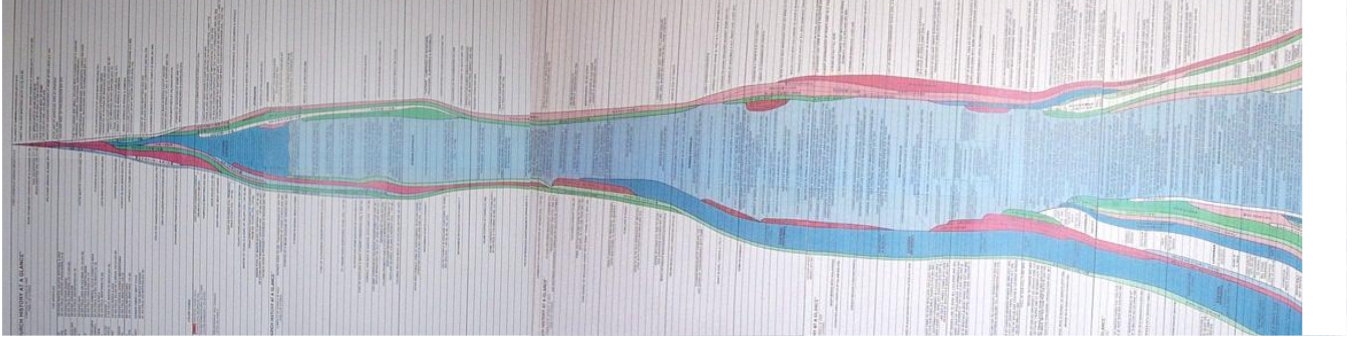
OUTLINE OF CHURCH HISTORY

Age	Key Church Events	Lessons
Apostolic Church	Miracles; Missions; New Testament Written	Apostles are the foundation of the church, with Christ as the cornerstone
Persecuted Church	Purified; Growing; Organized; New Testament books settled	Church, as Christ, is made perfect through suffering
Imperial Church	Tolerated; Sanctioned; Inculturated; Paganized	Love not the world, nor the things therein
Medieval Church	Fall of Rome; Rise of Papacy; Union of Church & State; Muslim threat; Holy Roman Empire; Monasticism; Crusades; Rich & Powerful Church; Inquisition; Forced conversions	Christ's kingdom is not of this world; It overcomes spiritually, not by the sword; Power corrupts – Absolute power corrupts absolutely
Reformed Church	Protestant Reformation; Nationalization of churches; Religious wars	Justification by faith
Modern Church	Proliferation of denominations; Missions; Liberalization of doctrine; Political intrigue	Not thrown by every wind of doctrine
Compromised Church	Post-modern thought; Toleration of error; Ecumenism	Hold fast to what is true

==== Future "history" of the church =====

Apostate Church	Honored; Spiritually dead; Short life expectancy	When Christ returns, will he find faith on earth?; The love of many will grow cold
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A Map of Church History



By Don Kies, Elmhurst, IL

Observations from The Map:

- The Roman Catholic Church (RCC) wasn't the only church around in any era.
- The church in the first 500 years didn't look anything at all like today's RCC.
- The evangelical church never really died out, but it often lived in the shadow of the RCC, and was frequently persecuted—or martyred—by the RCC.
- Christ has indeed built his church as he said he would (1/3 of the world claim to be Christians).

THE REFORMATION: IMPETUS, ISSUES & IMPACTS

The Reformation is generally recognized as beginning in 1517, when the (then) Roman Catholic priest Martin Luther invited debate about certain church practices by posting his “95” Theses” on the Wittenberg Church door in Germany. In the end, the church would not reform, and in many ways, retrenched (counter-reformation). The reformers became known as Protestants, and new churches began such as the Lutheran and Reformed Churches.

Antecedent forces leading to the Reformation

— From the “*The Story of the Christian Church*,” pages 115-134

1. The Renaissance...undermined the Roman Catholic Church.
2. The first printed by Gutenberg was the Bible... The people soon realized the papal church was far from the New Testament ideal.
3. The arising patriotism in Europe...an unwillingness to submit to a foreign rule over their own national churches; to resist the appointment by a pope in a distant land...a determination to abridge the power of the church councils, brining the clergy under the same laws and courts with the laity.
4. The sale of indulgences...signed by the pope himself, purporting to bestow the pardon of all sins, not only upon the holders of the certificates, but upon friends living or dead...without confession, repentance, penance, or absolution by a priest.

Historical events

1. But Protestantism received almost a deathblow in the terrible massacre of St. Bartholomew's Day, Aug 24, 1572, when nearly all its leaders and countless thousands of their followers were murdered.
2. John Tyndale translated the New Testament into English...Tyndale was martyred.
3. King Henry VIII broke from Rome because the pope would not sanction his divorce form Queen Katherine. [He] established an English Catholic Church with himself as head. Henry VIII put to death Romanist and Protestants alike who differed from his views.
4. Queen Mary [“bloody Mary”] was a bigoted Romanist...reigned only 5 years, but in that time about 300 Protestants suffered martyrdom.

A Catholic Admission: An Impetus for the Reformation

“For nearly half a century, the [Roman Catholic] Church was split into two or three obediences that excommunicated one another, so that every Catholic lived under excommunication by one pope or another, and, in the last analysis, no one could say with certainty which of the contenders had right on his side. The Church no longer offered certainty of salvation; she had become questionable in her whole objective form. The true Church, the true pledge of salvation, had to be sought outside the institution. It is against this background of a profoundly shaken ecclesial consciousness that we are to understand that Luther, in the conflict between his search for salvation and the tradition of the Church, ultimately came to experience the Church, not as the guarantor, but as the adversary of salvation.” —Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, 1989 as head of doctrine in the RCC.

(One note however: While this sounds logical, the Papal Schism mentioned here occurred over 100 years before Luther's stirrings.)

A Summary of the Reformation Issues

The reformers concluded that a church is a church only when (1) the true gospel is preached, (2) the sacraments are rightly administered, and (3) a biblically based church government exercises discipline over its members. Regarding the true gospel, the Reformation doctrine is sometimes summed up as "justification by grace alone through faith alone because of Christ alone"—acknowledged by mainstream Protestants as the article by which the church stands or falls, and the tenet that distinguishes a true from a false church. Also see the 5 Sola's previously discussed.

The Impact of the Reformation

Many have made the observations that is simply suggested in a pamphlet entitled "Civilization and the Protestant Reformation – Civilization as we know it began on October 31, 1517." Some quotes:

- The debate Martin Luther began nearly 500 years ago turned the world upside down. Democracy, civil rights and liberties, constitutional government, religious liberty, and the free market all find their roots in the Reformation.
- His second major contribution to Western political thought was the idea of a written constitution--the Bible--limiting the power and authority of church (and later political) leaders. There is a direct connection between the Reformation cry of *sola Scriptura* and the American idea of the Constitution--not any man or body of men--as the supreme law of the land.
- By articulating the Biblical doctrine of faith as wholly a gift of God, Luther undermined the Catholic Inquisition and formulated the theological rationale for religious liberty.
- One of Luther's most brilliant followers, John Calvin, systematized the theology of the Reformation. The seventeenth-century Calvinists laid the foundations for both English and American civil rights and liberties: freedom of speech, press, and religion, the privilege against self-incrimination, the independence of juries, and right of habeas corpus, the right not to be imprisoned without cause. The nineteenth-century German historian Leopold von Ranke referred to Calvin as the "virtual founder of America."
- The German sociologist Max Weber wrote a book in 1905 titled *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* in which he argued that capitalism historically emerged in Protestant countries because they inculcated those virtues that led to the development of capitalism: hard work, honesty, frugality, thrift, punctuality. These virtues, coupled with the idea of a calling, provided the impetus ending serfdom and establishing a free political and economic order. The theology and values of the Bible, rediscovered by the Protestant Reformers in the 16th century, have been the principal ideas creating what we know as Western civilization.

Complete article is on the web at:

http://www.trinityfoundation.org/ammo/tract_print.asp?ID=tract05.html

Halley's Bible Commentary makes this observation: "Hinduism has made India what it is. Confucianism and Buddhism have made China what it is. Mohammedanism has made southwest Asia and north Africa what they are. Roman Catholicism has made Italy, Spain and Latin America. Protestantism has made Britain, United States and Canada. **These facts speak for themselves, and speak loudly.**" [emphasis in original]

ROMAN CATHOLIC HISTORY & POLITICAL INTRIGUE

While we do not have time to explore the fascinating history of the Catholic Church, the following topics are some that prove that “truth is stranger than fiction.”

1. History of the Popes
2. History of Papal Succession and the Conclaves; “Rule of the Harlots”
3. Great Forgeries: The Donation of Constantine and the Psuedo-Isidorian Decretals
4. King-Making and Temporal Power
5. Papal Coronations and Church Wealth
6. Simony, Murder, and Sex in the Middle Ages
7. The Crusades
8. Rule of the Church: Papal and Bishopric Infighting; The Papal Schism
9. The Inquisition
10. Persecution of the Early Reformers (Wycliffe, Huss, etc.)
11. Misuse of Indulgences
12. The Counter-Reformation; The Jesuits
13. Protestant Martyrs & Massacres
14. Papal Involvement in the World Wars
15. Vatican Concordats with Napoleon, Mussolini, and Hitler
16. The Ratlines
17. Current Political Ambitions of the Vatican
18. Vatican Stances on Democracy and Marxism
19. “Structures of Deceit” & the “Smoke of Satan” in the Vatican
20. Liberal Theology & The Papacy
21. Cafeteria-Style Catholics; *Humanae Vitae*
22. Undoing Vatican II (Unofficially)
23. Placating the Tridentine and Charismatic “Extremists”
24. Staving Off Evangelical & Protestant Inroads
25. Ecumenical Ties with Non-Christian Religions
26. Sexually Active Priests & Prevalent Homosexuality in Seminaries
27. Pedophile Priests and Official Coverup

One note: There is such a thing as revisionist history, and you cannot believe everything you read. For example, the old, classic, Halley’s Bible Commentary states forthrightly about the Reformation and its aftermath that “All told a few hundred martyrs may be charged against Protestants, at most not over a few thousand; but to Rome, untold millions.” In the newer version of the same commentary, after its rights were purchased by the evangelical BGEA, those unpleasant numbers were removed.

On this topic, two books I would recommend are Protestant Dave Hunt’s “A Woman Rides the Beast,” and Catholic Malachi Martin’s “Keys of this Blood.”