

Truth
or
Fiction

*A Dissection of the Roman Catholic
Catechism*

Stephen Lukens



Truth or Fiction : A Dissection of the Roman Catholic Catechism

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Introduction

*T*his work began in an attempt to write something down that my college classmates would be able to examine and read for themselves. I had engaged with them on many occasions about the differences between protestant Christianity and the assertions that the Roman Catholic Church have made and continue to make. Most of the time I was greeted by hostility and an attitude that seemed to fail to grasp at the magnitude of what it meant to claim that the Roman Catholic Church, as a whole, was a part of Christianity. By claiming this my classmates were forgetting, or maybe just ignoring, the hundreds of years of struggle, and sacrifice, that had been fought through and endured by the reformers

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in order to preserve the Gospel.

So, I began to work on this document in order to have a small piece of work that I might reference or give to my classmates when discussing the Roman Catholic Church. However, over the years my small work blossomed into a desire to format it into a book that could be read and used as a defense of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. So, I began to research and delve into the mysteries of the Bible more in order to best understand the arguments contained within the Bible that pertain directly to many of the Roman Catholic Churches teachings.

In order to fully understand why the Roman Catholic Church was wrong, I realized that the great majority of Christians did not know their own history as Christians, I would need to provide a small background as to who some of the men were that were involved within the Protestant Reformation. The following introduction became the result of this desire to help others to understand the history and purpose behind some of the men who fought so bravely for the Truth.

Men like Martin Luther, William Tyndale, John Huss, and John Wycliffe gave their lives to the cause of proclaiming the truth of Scripture alone by faith alone. They did this at great physical angst and pressure from the Roman Catholic Church to recant their beliefs and to fall in

line with their teachings.

If we do not understand what they went through to separate themselves from the Roman Catholic Church, then we will forget to remember the truths of Scripture that they stood for and proclaimed, disregarding their own physical safety in so doing. They were not trying to stand against the Roman Catholic Church because it was to their benefit at the time. While it benefited them physically due to their spiritual renewal, it was an extremely taxing thing to take on the might and power that existed, at the time, within the Roman Catholic Church, for their physical bodies were also taxed to great lengths due to the fact that they were persecuted mercilessly.

The modern Protestant Church, in their desire for ecumenicalism, spits in the faces of those men and women who gave everything to further the Gospel. Instead of remembering and respecting the work that they did, many Christians do not even know their names, let alone what they did for the Church of Christ. My prayer and hope is that as you read about these great men of faith, that your eyes would be opened to the truths that they spoke about and the fruit that they demonstrated through their actions.

The Reformers

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John Wycliffe (born between 1320 and 1330 – died December 1384) gave his life to teaching and training men in the Scriptures and leading them by his godly example. When others turned in their integrity and damned their souls for the chance to receive riches, he stood his ground and proclaimed Truth above all else. So much so, that upon his death, it was not deemed enough by the Roman Catholic Church that he was dead. Instead of letting his body rest, in 1415 they dug his body up, which after so many years was just a pile of bones, burned it and then scattered his ashes in the River Swift. They did all this because of hate, not because they hated Wycliffe, but because they hated God and the truths that Wycliffe had attempted to share with the world about God.

Wycliffe is commonly seen as an instrument that God used to bring about the Protestant Reformation. His teachings and influence reached hundreds of people with the Gospel and instilled a deeper understanding into many of the pupils whom he taught. He is affectionately known by many, as the Morning Star of the Reformation. He received this name due to the ground work that he so staunchly laid throughout his life.

He was a very simple man. He enjoyed teaching and training those young men who aspired to serve God through the church and in ministry to others. He

challenged the Roman Catholic Church in England in regards to the pomp and luxury that so many reveled in. He asserted that the Roman Catholic Church was living in sin due to their attempts to take money from their congregations in order to continue to live their lavish lifestyles.

He not only received much hatred from his fellow clergy members, but also received threats on his life from the Roman Catholic Church as a whole. He was detained, held captive in one of his lecture halls, and was summoned to answer for many of his assertions against the Roman Catholic Church. Some of those assertions included statements made against the very existence of the Papacy. He asserted that the veneration of saints was in fact the same as worshiping idols made out of inanimate objects.

One of the issues that the Roman Catholic Church found with Wycliffe was the fact that throughout his ministry, he worked to complete a translation of the Bible into English so that others could read it for themselves. This deeply angered the Roman Catholic Church, as they desired to control and manipulate what the common people understood about God. The only people that could read the Bible at this time were those who had been heavily learned in Latin.

Wycliffe finished a complete translation of the Bible

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around 1382. It received some updates and variations from some of his followers after his death to more accurately translate some passages of Scripture. Wycliffe believed that the Gospel alone was needed for people to come to salvation. He asserted more and more frequently towards his death that clergy, those who preached the Gospel, needed only to desire to share God and His Truth with those around them. That they needed to make no vows and needed not to live in monasteries, but rather to preach Christ and Him crucified, just as Paul had:

The true Christian was intended by Christ to prove all things by the Word of God: all churches, all ministers, all teaching, all preaching, all doctrines, all sermons, all writings, all opinions, all practices. These are his marching orders. Prove all by the Word of God; measure all by the measure of the Bible; compare all with the standard of the Bible; weigh all in the balances of the Bible; examine all by the light of the Bible; test all in the crucible of the Bible. That which cannot abide the fire of the Bible, reject, refuse, repudiate, and cast away. This is the flag which he nailed to the mast. May it never be lowered! — John Wycliffe

John Huss (1369 – 1415) was a Bohemian priest. He

followed Wycliffe's teachings closely and even modeled some of his works after the manner by which Wycliffe had written. Not only were they contemporaries, but they were both used by God to help lay the foundation upon which the Protestant Reformation would blossom and grow.

Huss was excommunicated from the Roman Catholic Church in 1410 due to his teachings on predestination, the structure of the ecclesiastical order with the Roman Catholic Church, the authority of the Bible, and the Eucharist. This did not stop him from teaching and preaching the Gospel to anyone who would listen. However, this would eventually lead to his death.

He was not intimidated by the might and power of the Roman Catholic Church. Rather, he stood strong just as Peter and John had before the Sanhedrin in the book of Acts. He was told to stop preaching, that he was cut off from God through his excommunication, and that he was not allowed to tell others about his views. Huss did not care what they did to his body, he in fact even insinuating that he relished the opportunity to die for his belief in God his Savior.

In 1415, the same year that the Roman Catholic Church exhumed and burned Wycliffe's body, John Huss was burnt at the stake. It is widely known amongst the followers of Huss and those who have studied his life, that upon being

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lit on fire he began to sing the Psalms of David. It was as if with his final breath God was allowing those in attendance to see the might and power of His Word. Even though the flames licked at his flesh, Huss remained steadfast in his belief in Christ as the Head of the Church. He stated:

I hope, by God's grace, that I am truly a Christian, not deviating from the faith, and that I would rather suffer the penalty of a terrible death than wish to affirm anything outside of the faith or transgress the commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. — John Huss

Martin Luther (1483 – 1546) was born in Germany. He became a priest in the Roman Catholic Church after having an encounter with God's power and might through a raging storm. Because his life was spared he deemed it necessary to give his life to the service of God. He did this through his own human nature and desires, seeking to gain God's affection through his works and deeds. He strived for many years to do so, constantly depriving himself of sustenance and worldly pleasures in an attempt to bring himself closer to God.

It is known that upon many occasions Luther would lock himself in his quarters and flay his back with a whip until he would pass out in an attempt to rid his worldly

body of sin and to drive himself to the feet of Jesus. He continued this for quite some time with little relief in regards to the tumultuous nature that his soul was constantly embroiled in. He was beginning to wonder how Christ could save sinners and yet leave their souls in such turmoil when he came upon the book of Romans, specifically Romans Chapter 9.

It was due to the masterpiece, which is the book of Romans written by the Apostle Paul through the guidance of the Holy Spirit, that Martin Luther eventually came to understand the depth and majesty of God's saving power. God opened his eyes for the first time and he began to understand that there are no works to be done that can lead to salvation. That there is nothing that we can do as mere human beings that would lead us to the foot of the cross. We must give ourselves solely to the leading of the Spirit through faith in Jesus and His Word.

It was this revelation that caused Luther to begin his search for the true meaning within many passages of Scripture. He was no longer looking for ways to make himself holy, or sanctified, on his own account, but instead he began searching all of Scripture to see how this new revelation that was made known to him interacted with the entirety of the Bible.

Luther began to question everything about the Roman



Catholic Church, much to the chagrin of his mentor, and what they had taught him. Some of the things that he questioned included their interpretation of Scripture, their use of indulgences, the manner in which they lived, the oaths they were required to take, and who would, or could, receive salvation. Luther became adamant that the only way to salvation was through Jesus Christ by faith alone, through belief in the Bible as being true and the very foundation upon which faith is built and sustained.

On Saturday October 31st, 1517, Martin Luther nailed his *95 Theses* to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church. This was an active act of spiritual war against the Roman Catholic Church. His *95 Theses* and their act of being nailed to the door in Wittenberg are seen as the beginning of the Protestant Reformation in full effect. This being roughly one hundred years after the death of John Huss

Many people wonder how such an act by Luther did not end with his death, either being burned at the stake or by some other means. There were several reasons for Luther being kept alive, the most important being the simple, but wonderful fact that God did not wish for Luther to yet leave this world.

God gave Frederick of Saxony the conviction that he should champion for the cause and life of Martin Luther. Throughout Luther's life he would come to his aid with

physical protection, verbal support, and even would provide Luther with a place to safely live.

Prince Frederick came to love and protect Luther, even against the orders and decrees of the German Emperor. When Luther was called upon to stand trial for his beliefs and teachings, Prince Frederick provided him with an escort in order to keep him safe, for he was afraid that Luther would not even make it to the trial due to the hatred that the Roman Catholic Church had expressed against him. His love for Luther was that which one would have for a family member, and in many respects Luther was like family member to him.

It was at the Diet of Worms, that one of the most quoted sayings to ever be said was issued by Martin Luther. He was asked to recant his *95 Theses* and to return to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church. Luther understood the magnitude of what he was being asked to do. He also understood the consequences that were surely to follow if he refused to recant. Luther spent the night after their demand in prayer and supplication before the Lord asking for strength and wisdom. The next day when called upon to give his answer, Luther said this deeply convicting and profound statement:

Unless I am convinced by the testimony of the



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Scriptures or by clear reason (for I do not trust either in the pope or in councils alone, since it is well known that they have often erred and contradicted themselves), I am bound by the Scriptures I have quoted and my conscience is captive to the Word of God. I cannot and will not recant anything, since it is neither safe nor right to go against conscience. May God help me. Amen. (Brecht, 1996)

So, many people today would proclaim that Luther was a rebel and should have tried to work through these issues in a more friendly and ecumenical way. However, there is no better way that Luther could have defended the truths of Scripture. This was not about Martin Luther; it was about the accuracy and infallibility of Scripture. If this was about Luther, then he would have discussed himself with those accusing him of heresy. However, it was about God's Word, His Truth, and how we must interact with it. Luther asserted that it was based on Scripture alone that he would change his position, and since no one could show him through Scripture that his position was wrong, Luther became the focal point of the Roman Catholic Church's wrath.

Luther lived out his final days teaching at Wittenberg University, and through God's doing evaded arrest. During

his final years, he was given a home and sanctuary by Frederick, it was during that time that he penned the mighty words that flow through the cherished hymn; *A Mighty Fortress is Our God*. He died of a stroke when visiting his hometown.

Martin Luther was in no way perfect, but he did present the Gospel to those around him with passion and great desire. He stood for truth and even though the Roman Catholic Church did not take his life, they greatly impacted his health through their relentless attempts to arrest him for his refusal to recant his theses and teachings.

William Tyndale (1494 – 1536) was born in England. He was a scholar and master of languages. It is said that he knew at least eight different languages fluently and completely. He began to have an impact on the world at a very young age. Once receiving his Masters around the age of twenty-one, he became a tutor for the family of Sir John Walsh.

Tyndale had already developed a hunger for the doctrines of the other reformers and sought the Scriptures diligently to affirm their teachings and to grow in his understanding of them. Throughout his time as a tutor he had many encounters with the clergy of the Church of Rome. Their disdain for Tyndale continued to grow due to his desire to see the common people know and understand

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the Bible for themselves.

At one point Tyndale is known to have had a heated discussion with someone within the Roman Catholic clergy. The clergyman said to Tyndale, “We are better to be without God’s laws than the Pope’s”. This of course infuriated Tyndale as he was at the time involved in deep study of the doctrines of grace that had been proclaimed by the early reformers against such Roman Catholic heresies as this, replied:

I defy the Pope and all his laws. If God spare my life ere many years, I will cause the boy that drives the plow to know more of the scriptures than you!

This event began a never-ending thirst within Tyndale to translate the Bible into the common language for people everywhere to be able to read. This became his life’s work and desire. He cared not about his own personal wellbeing and spent an amount of time actually in chains for his teachings and stance against the popery of Rome.

Tyndale is thought to have actually met with Martin Luther in Wittenberg during his translation of the Scriptures. Oh to have been a fly on the wall in order have heard the discussions that these two men had about the translation of Scripture into the common vernacular. One

of the many languages that Tyndale had learned was German, which, was the native tongue of Martin Luther.

In 1524 Tyndale began to print the Scriptures using a printing press, a new invention at the time. Instead of merely copying the work by hand, which scholars had to do in order to get a copy of Wycliffe's translation, Tyndale began printing hundreds and thousands of copies of the Bible.

His dream of reaching the common people with the Scriptures seemed to be coming to a reality. Copies of the Bible were being smuggled into England and many other countries in Europe after being translated into their native tongues. However, the Roman Catholic Church and eventually the Church of England, which in many ways was merely an offshoot of the Rman Catholic Church in all but name, began to burn as many copies of Tyndale's translation that they could. They commissioned men to find every copy that existed and to burn them. Many people attempted to resist these men and their attempts to take from them what had just so recently become their most prized possession. These people were arrested, killed outright, or burnt at the stake along with their Bibles.

At this point the Church of England had been formed, due to King Henry the VIII's desire to divorce his wife for lack of bearing him a son. King Henry VIII forced a

separation from the Church of Rome in order to live as he pleased, albeit sinfully. However, the formation of the Church of England did not stop Tyndale from being persecuted. As I mentioned, many of the traditions and actions of the Church of England were orchestrated by those who, until very recently, had been clergy within the Roman Catholic Church.

In 1536 William Tyndale was charged with heresy and sentenced to death. He was tied to a stake to be burned and with his last prayer uttered the words that would be seen to bring about the widespread use of the Bible amongst the people of England. He said, “Lord! Open the King of England’s eyes.” Upon uttering these words, he was strangled to death and then burnt. Only three years later, the King of England commissioned the Bible to be translated into English so that the common people could read it for themselves within their parish churches.

God used Tyndale mightily to further the proclamation of the Gospel. He allowed Tyndale to see his dream of teaching the common people the Scriptures to become a reality. While he suffered and died for his attempts to provide everyone that desired a copy of the Bible, his efforts paved the way for a great reform throughout all of Europe. Since people could begin to read the Bible for themselves, they began to see and understand that the reformers were

right in their attempts to confront and refute the Roman Catholic Church.

Tyndale firmly believed that the Bible was necessary for the Christian to understand and affirm or refute the teachings found within Christianity. He said:

The knowledge of Christian doctrine grounded only upon arguments is a doubtful and uncertain knowledge. I conceive that syllogisms and arguments are only for this world, and the things of this world, but not for the things of God and of the other world. The natural philosopher attains to his natural knowledge by observations and experiments in several particulars, by antecedents and consequences. Most of his knowledge in those things is very feeble, crazy, questionable, and the like, which made that great Philosopher after his inquiry for knowledge profess, that he only attained to this, that he knew himself to be ignorant, Hoc tantum scio quod bihil scio, "this only do I know, I know nothing." But God has ordained a better way to convey His truth into our hearts, and that is by a renovation of our minds and by the communication of a divine nature. God has not let His people remain in uncertainties in those things which are material

*and necessary, but has given a certainty of demonstration. Whatsoever I do receive for truth on the account of argumentative conclusions, that I am bound to lay aside and disown for error upon the same account when a more probable argument comes along. Truly friends, if all the ground of our entertaining Christ and truth, or Christian doctrine is because such an argument conveyed it to us, what will become of us and the truth when we meet with a subtle philosopher and antichristian head who will frame an argument against the truth, unanswerable by our logic? Where shall a man ever consist, if he must live on the terms in the world? Besides, every one to whom the Gospel of Christ is preached is not headstrong enough to grapple with the bigness and depth of some kind of arguments. They may have their hearts truly mortified to this world, and carried out in love to the person and nature of our Lord Jesus. — William Tyndale, *The Writings of A Puritan's Mind Volume 1**

There was no doubt in his mind that in order for people to understand what they believe and to be able to defend it that they needed to stand *Sola Scriptura* (on Scripture alone).

John Calvin (1509 – 1564) was born in France. He was, along with most of the Protestant Reformers, involved heavily in scholarly work. He studied liberal arts in Paris and then continued his studies in theology according to his father's wishes. His father later had a falling out with one of the local bishops and desiring to make sure that he was not taken advantage of again, he instructed John to begin studying civil law. He went to Orleans and studied law until his graduation in 1531. He graduated with a doctorate in law and then returned to Paris.

Calvin did not want to be a lawyer; he merely followed his father's wishes in studying law, as many other young men did at that time. He desired to write and to expound upon the biblical teachings of others. During his personal studies he became aware of the many follies and 'mire' within the Roman Catholic Church. So, he left the Roman Catholic Church to join one of the local Protestant congregations. In his commentary on the book of Psalms Calvin said this about his conversion:

To this pursuit I endeavored faithfully to apply myself in obedience to the will of my father; but God, by the secret guidance of his providence, at length gave a different direction to my course. And first, since I was too obstinately devoted to the

superstitions of Popery to be easily extricated from so profound an abyss of mire, God by a sudden conversion subdued and brought my mind to a teachable frame, which was more hardened in such matters than might have been expected from one at my early period of life. — John Calvin, Commentary on the Psalms

Calvin quickly became one of the leading reformers in Paris. He not only understood the Roman Catholic practices and rituals, but he also demonstrated an ability to articulate his thoughts through writing in a very understandable way. He began to research the reformers and their writings with the same vigor that he had approached the entirety of his scholarly work. He soon drew the ire of the Roman Catholic Church in Paris and was forced to flee the country.

He desired to travel to Basel, but was detained in Geneva, Switzerland by a fellow reformer named William Farel. Farel encouraged Calvin to remain in Geneva in order to assist with the local church. Calvin did so for about two years. After those two years both Calvin and Farel were forced to leave Geneva due to a governmental change that favored the Roman Catholic Church.

While he was away from Geneva, Calvin pastored a church in Strasbourg from 1538 – 1541. It was here that

Calvin began to delve deeper into his writings. He revised his previously published *Institutes of the Christian Religion* and added to its length three times over. He also had a knack for languages, writing not only in Latin but also in French. It was his desire that everyone would be able to read his writings.

In 1541 Calvin's supporters were re-elected to the city council in Geneva and invited him to return. He did so and remained there until his death in 1564. From the time that he returned to Geneva until his death Calvin strove to provide commentary on as much of Scripture as he could. He published commentaries on Isaiah, Genesis, Psalms, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, and Joshua from the Old Testament and Romans, 1 & 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 & 2 Timothy, Hebrews, Titus, 1 & 2 Thessalonians, Philemon, James, 1 & 2 Peter, 1 John, Jude, Acts, John, Matthew, Mark, and Luke from the New Testament.

Calvin was not only a gifted author; he also enjoyed preaching and did so with regularity. From 1541 until his death he preached daily. He was not like the many preachers today who only wish to tickle the ears of their hearers and make them feel good. Calvin desired to share the Scriptures with all who cared to listen and as frequently as they cared to listen. During his time in Geneva many

young reformers and refugees traveled to hear him preach. They came to study and learn from the man that had begun to change the face of Protestant Christianity.

One of the biggest influences that Calvin had upon the people of Geneva was his influence in removing the Church from the State and vice-versa. Instead of the State being governed by the Church as the Roman Catholic Church desired, he advised that they function separately from each other, while still providing insight and guidance to each other. This was an extremely radical view at the time, one which the Roman Catholic Church had no desire to see replicated. They held power over hundreds of governments and did not wish to give up that power.

While Calvin was by no means perfect in his leadership and interpretation of Scripture, he was instrumental in establishing many of the foundational principles whereby the Protestant Church was founded upon. Calvin engaged the people of his time in such a way as to place a great amount of worth upon Scripture and very little worth upon the words of man, unless they were based or founded upon Scripture itself. He attempted to provide an understanding of the Gospel that was forthright and understandable. His teachings gave birth to what is known as Calvinism.

While Calvinism received its name due to the teachings of John Calvin, it was never his intention to

create an interpretation of Scripture named after himself. He examined the Scriptures in a way that many scholars can only marvel at and in so doing trained an enormous amount of people in ways to read the Bible. Because of this, his teachings became known by his name, because it was easier for people to reference his teachings by doing so.

C. H. Spurgeon said these things about Calvinism three centuries later:

*It is no novelty, then, that I am preaching; no new doctrine. I love to proclaim these strong old doctrines that are called by nickname Calvinism, but which are truly and verily the revealed truth of God as it is in Christ Jesus. By this truth I make my pilgrimage into the past, and as I go, I see father after father, confessor after confessor, martyr after martyr, standing up to shake hands with me . . . Taking these things to be the standard of my faith, I see the land of the ancients peopled with my brethren; I behold multitudes who confess the same as I do, and acknowledge that this is the religion of God's own church. — C. H. Spurgeon, *Spurgeon's Sovereign Grace Sermons, Still Waters Revival Books, p. 170**

I have my own opinion that there is no such thing as

preaching Christ and Him crucified, unless we preach what nowadays is called Calvinism. It is a nickname to call it Calvinism; Calvinism is the gospel, and nothing else. I do not believe we can preach the gospel if we do not preach justification by faith without works; nor unless we preach the sovereignty of God in His dispensation of grace; nor unless we exalt the electing unchangeable eternal, immutable, conquering love of Jehovah; nor do I think we can preach the gospel unless we base it upon the special and particular redemption of His elect and chosen people which Christ wrought out upon the cross. — C. H. Spurgeon, Autobiography: Volume 1, The Early Years, p. 168

Our Response

Though we have only discussed a few of the reformers and merely glanced into the many insightful and impactful words that they spoke during their lives, I hope that they have given you an understanding of the magnitude upon which the Protestant Reformation began. It was not with ease or by selfish choice that these men came to refute and contradict the Roman Catholic Church. It was through great peril to themselves and amid great sacrifice that these men put Jesus Christ first and foremost in their lives, no

matter what the cost was.

We must come to remember and understand the reformation, the events and actions of those who caused it to come to pass. The reformation was not only the manner by which God began to purify a remnant for Himself but it helped to purify His church in such a way that had not been seen since the time of Christ and the Apostles. The modern church has forgotten what it means to stand for God alone and to live by faith. The modern church is more content to allow ecumenical demonstrations to rule the day than to remember the very reasons that the Catholic Church has declared that Protestants are not believers and are accursed.

In order to be called a Christian, one must put their faith and hope in Jesus Christ alone. This is, unfortunately, not what the Roman Catholic Church believes. The Reformers attempted to make this known to the world and many of them paid dearly with their lives. The Roman Catholic Church is not a part of Protestant Christianity, and we must stand for the very same truths that the Reformers stood for so long ago.

If they were willing to sacrifice their livelihood, their homes, their families, their freedom, and their lives to proclaim the Gospel for the whole world to hear, then why can we not even defend our faith against those who merely threaten to defriend us through social media? I urge you to

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research and examine the situation and purpose behind the Protestant Reformation. The men that were involved in it were of the utmost learning and knowledge. They were not merely outcasts claiming to be wise of their own accord, but rather were scholars of the highest degree. Many of whom joined Paul in this regard, having received the highest training available to them.

In order to best remember their efforts and attempts to bring light to a dark world, we should try to emulate the five solas that came about because of their life's work. They are: Sola Scripture, Sola Gratia, Solus Christus, Sola Fide, and Soli Deo Gloria. Simply translated from the Latin that they were born from; Scripture alone, Grace alone, Christ alone, Faith alone, and for the glory of God alone. These are the foundation upon which Protestant Christianity is founded upon. Many within its ranks have fallen away from these truths and fail to understand the magnitude of doing such a thing.

The modern church is weak (specifically in the United States of America) and most of the time eats milk for their sustenance and very rarely takes in a nice piece of meat. When they do, they are either too weak to chew the meat and choke upon it, or they think that its taste is gross because they have become so accustomed to having their feelings and ears tickled by the sweet soothings of men.

In the pages following, I have listed some of the beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church, straight out of their own catechism. Through Scriptural authority I hope to refute those points and to show the great and grave errors that the Roman Catholic Church holds to. The bold paragraphs are from the Roman Catholic Catechism, and the plain font paragraphs that follow are my attempts to refute them through Scriptural references and the leading of God.

This book has not been written with malice or hate, but rather out of a love for my brothers and sisters in Christ. I know that I am a mere man and therefore everything that I have to say should hold as little weight as any other man, and yet my hope is that as you explore the issues taken on within these pages that your heart and mind will be lifted to the throne of God and that you will experience a deep desire to dig within the Scriptures to find out the truths that are contained therein.

There is nothing more beautiful than to see Truth emerge more fully and clearly, to be able to look upon the face of God in glimpses while at the same time knowing that we still see dimly until the day we join Him around the throne. We should enjoy the immense pleasure that He has granted to us. Yet, we must still put the teachings of the world to the test.

This work has taken many more years to complete

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than I originally thought that it would. I have taken great pains to research and study the things that will be discussed within these pages. I would challenge those who read this work to enjoy the truths of Scripture and search diligently for them. They will bring joy to your life and bring guidance to everything that you do, while drawing you closer to the throne of grace through the sanctification of your soul.

Do not fear, for our Lord cares for us more than any other part of His creation.

Mary

Chapter One

508 From among the descendants of Eve, God chose the Virgin Mary to be the mother of his Son. "Full of grace", Mary is "the most excellent fruit of redemption" (SC 103): from the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life.

The Roman Catholic Church asserts that Mary, the mother of Jesus, was kept from inheriting original sin from Adam. Basically, this means that Mary was a perfect human being, she did not and could not sin, ever. The Roman

Catholic Catechism contends:

From the first instant of her conception, she was totally preserved from the stain of original sin and she remained pure from all personal sin throughout her life.¹

According to the Holy Word of God, this cannot be true. The apostle Paul has an extensive argument in Romans 1:18-3:23, showing that all people, both Jews and Greeks, stand guilty before God.

He says, “*All men, both Jews and Greeks, are under the power of sin, as it is written: “None is righteous, no not one”* (Romans 3:9-10). He is certain that ‘*all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*’ (Romans 3:23).

It is not only in the New Testament that this doctrine of a universal sin nature is preached. Psalm 14:3 states, “*They have all gone astray, they are all alike corrupt; there is none that does good, no, not one.*” No one is free from sin.

So why would they teach that Mary was a perfect and protected vessel? Roman Catholicism uses this doctrine of Mary to explain why Jesus was sinless. If Mary was perfect,

¹ Catholic Catechism #508

and there was no human father, then Jesus would not have inherited original sin. Where does Scripture teach this? It does not. There is nowhere in Scripture that even hints at a sinless nature for Mary. As Paul instructs believers to compare what they are taught by those in the church to the holy and perfect Word of God, so must we also do. We must ask for those who would assert the sinless nature of Mary to show us from Scripture where Mary's nature is any different than the rest of humanity.

509 Mary is truly "Mother of God" since she is the mother of the eternal Son of God made man, who is God himself.

And Mary said, 'My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blessed; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name. And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts; he has brought down the mighty from their thrones and exalted those of humble estate; he has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich he has sent

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empty away. He has helped his servant Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, as he spoke to our fathers, to Abraham and to his offspring forever.' - Luke 1:46-55

In these verses, Mary begins by exalting God her Savior. If someone would truly be the “Mother of God”, would they really need the one that they are the mother of to save them? I think not. Especially because they have already contended that Mary was sinless.

Mary does nothing to exalt herself. She claims her state of being as that of “humble servant”. She does not say that all generations will call her blessed because of anything that she has done, but rather because of what God has done for her, and for His name. You cannot be someone’s humble servant if you are such a holy mother as they make Mary out to be. Mary is not a holy mother, but rather a humble Christian redeemed by grace through faith in the promised Messiah.

If Mary considered herself to be the mother of Jesus in the way that the Roman Catholic Church asserts that she is, why would she claim the lineage of man and claim their fatherhood rather than claiming alone the motherhood of Christ? If you follow their idea of thinking all the way through, then it would mean that the mother/father of

Mary would have to be the mother/father of God, and so on. It would become a never ending cycle that would leave so many people the mother/father of God that it does not even make sense. Or, you would have to contend that every woman conceived their child supernaturally by an act of God and not through the natural means of sex. This also does not even make sense when taken in accordance with what the entirety of Scripture says.

511 The Virgin Mary "cooperated through free faith and obedience in human salvation" (LG 56). She uttered her yes "in the name of all human nature" (St. Thomas Aquinas, STh III, 30, 1). By her obedience she became the new Eve, mother of the living.

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law, although the Law and the Prophets bear witness to it – the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction: for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he has passed over

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former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time, so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus. - Romans 3:21

Mary had no obedience apart from the gift of God. She chose nothing of her own free will. She was given a gift, the same as any other Christian that Christ's work on the cross redeemed. Mary should not be placed on a pedestal just because she was the vessel that God used to bring His Son into the world. She should be looked upon as a redeemed sinner, purchased through the blood of Jesus.

Mary did not achieve some new station in the kingdom of God by merely obeying. She was the vessel chosen by God to bring His Son into the world, and she is not the "new Eve" as the Roman Catholics would lead you to believe. We say that Jesus was/is the second Adam. This is because He is our spiritual head and Savior. Mary does not have the same recognition, for she is not in any way connected to the saving redemption that is enacted in the people of God.

867 The Church is holy: the Most Holy God is her author; Christ, her bridegroom, gave himself up to make her holy; the Spirit of holiness gives her life. Since she still includes sinners, she is "the sinless one made up of sinners." Her holiness shines in the saints;

in Mary she is already all-holy.

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit... - I Peter 3:18

Christ died for all of the church, and in Him we have already been made righteous and holy. Mary does not receive any greater glory in heaven than those others whom Christ has saved and redeemed, for Mary is amongst their number. Mary cannot present anyone before the throne of God as holy. She cannot even present herself as such. The only One, who can present others as holy before the throne of God, is Jesus.

It is through His righteous act on the cross that anyone is redeemed. It is through this act that He can present someone as holy, not holy themselves, but clothed in His righteousness. Without His righteousness, we would all be thrown into hell for all eternity. Jesus died for our sins and Mary had nothing to do with our redemption or sanctification.

973 By pronouncing her "fiat" at the Annunciation and giving her consent to the Incarnation, Mary was

already collaborating with the whole work her Son was to accomplish. She is mother wherever he is Savior and head of the Mystical Body.

First, I would like to ask, what exactly are they referring to as the “Mystical Body”? I think that they have tried to place such a view of mystery and wonder on Mary herself, when it should be fully set on Christ and His work. Mary did not collaborate with God about what should happen to Jesus on earth. If they are referring to the church of Christ, then yes, Jesus is the Savior and Head of that body. However, Mary is not the mother of such a body. She is not part of the trinity, she is not holier than other Christians, and she cannot bring something to the trinity that is missing, because there is nothing missing. God is all-sufficient and complete in and of Himself.

And Mary said, ‘Behold, I am the servant of the Lord; let it be to me according to your word.’ And the angel departed from her. - Luke 1:38

Now, this does not say that Mary and the angel planned what would happen, but rather the fact that she is the servant of the Lord and is willing to do whatever He commands. Is this not the way that every Christian should react to the Gospel/God? No questions, no doubts, just a

willingness to see the will of God carried to fruition.

God did not need Mary's consent for the incarnation to happen. If Mary would have sinfully rejected God's plan, which she could not have because it was God's holy and perfect will, then God would have merely used another. However, since it was God's perfect and holy will that Mary be used by God to bring His Son into the world, Mary only had one response, to obey God. This was not due to any extraordinary faith on the part of Mary, but rather due to the work of the Holy Spirit within Mary's heart and mind.

974 The Most Blessed Virgin Mary, when the course of her earthly life was completed, was taken up body and soul into the glory of heaven, where she already shares in the glory of her Son's Resurrection, anticipating the resurrection of all members of his Body.

When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain for the word of God and for the witness they had borne. They cried out with a loud voice, 'O Sovereign Lord, holy and true, how long before you will judge and avenge our blood on those who dwell on the earth?' Then they were each given a white robe and told to rest a little

longer, until the number of their fellow servants and their brothers should be complete, who were to be killed as they themselves had been. - Revelation 6:9-

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We see here a description of those who have been martyred and killed for preaching the Gospel, and they do not even have their resurrected bodies yet. How can we say that Mary somehow would? Where do they get their proof for this? It is not found anywhere in Scripture!

The Roman Catholic Church would claim that Mary had ascension to glory just like Jesus did. This comes from their belief that Mary was also sinless. This is such a heresy that we cannot even begin to justify it. There is nothing within Scripture that even comes close to this heresy. It is something that the Roman Catholic Church has drawn up of their own accord and cannot be claimed in any form as truth.

975 "We believe that the Holy Mother of God, the new Eve, Mother of the Church, continues in heaven to exercise her maternal role on behalf of the members of Christ" (Paul VI, CPG § 15).

I do not serve a God who has a human ruling over and ordering Him around. There is no maternal heavenly role

for Mary! She was merely the vessel that God used to bring Jesus to this earth, for the salvation of many, including Mary:

While he was still speaking to the people, behold, his mother and his brothers stood outside, asking to speak to him. But he replied to the man who told him, 'Who is my mother, and who are my brothers?' And stretching out his hand toward his disciples, he said, 'Here are my mother and brothers! For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother.' - Matthew 12:46-50

We clearly see here that Christ does not hold Mary in such a high regard that she has the power to tell Him what to do. There is a respect that we see from Jesus and a care that He has for His mother. We see this demonstrated when Jesus was on the cross and He gives John to Mary and Mary to John. He makes sure that each of them will be cared for, the two people whom He loved most. However, Mary is never elevated to the standing of “Holy Mother of God” or “the new Eve”. There is no role in heaven that exists for Mary, except, to worship and glorify God for all her days. To see the beauties and majesty that radiates forth from Christ, brighter than the sun. We do not need the intercession of Mary or any other person, for we have the

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intercession of Christ!! Holy and mighty, robed in all splendor, interceding on our behalf to the Father, giving Himself in our place!

*Who is to condemn? Christ Jesus is the one who died – more than that, who was raised – who is at the right hand of God, who indeed is interceding for us.
- Romans 8:34*

Why would we ever need more than that? Is Jesus, who is God, not enough for us? Is there that much doubt that the God of the universe is adequate enough to save? ‘If God is for us, then who can stand against us.’² This statement holds true no matter where or when it happens. There is no sin that can hold us down, no place where God cannot hear us, and no person that is greater or who has more success interceding to the Father on our behalf than Jesus Christ Himself!

2162 The second commandment forbids every improper use of God's name. Blasphemy is the use of the name of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Virgin Mary, and of the saints in an offensive way.

² Romans 8:31

You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain, for the LORD will not hold him guiltless who takes his name in vain. - Exodus 20:7, ESV

This is abundantly clear. We shall not misuse/take in vain the name of the Lord our God. The second commandment does not say a thing about how we should speak of the saints who have gone before us, I include Mary in this category since we have already discussed how she does not hold a higher standing amongst the saints than any other Christian.

To say that using someone's name in an offensive way is the same as using God's name in an offensive way is blasphemy in and of itself. To even compare the name of God, the I Am, to a mere human being is inconceivable in the magnitude of difference between the two. There is no way around this. God is God and we (human beings) are not. There is no comparison. We are the created and He is the Creator.

If we even begin to place the same value upon the names of the saints who have gone before us as we place upon the name of God, then we have lifted those saints up to a place that they do not deserve, and I can guarantee do not want. By lifting saints to such a place, we not only make them into idols in our lives, but we are proclaiming that

God's name is worth the same to us as the saints that worship Him. This is the definition of blasphemy. To worship or revere something or someone in the same way that only God should be worshiped, that is truly blasphemous.

2682 Because of Mary's singular cooperation with the action of the Holy Spirit, the Church loves to pray in communion with the Virgin Mary, to magnify with her the great things the Lord has done for her, and to entrust supplications and praises to her.

Mary did not have any special cooperation with the action of the Holy Spirit. No more than any other person who has come to saving faith in God. Mary believed and was used by the Spirit in a very special way. That does not mean that she then somehow has a special connection and cooperation with the Holy Spirit.

We do commune with Mary around the throne once we are called from this world, bringing praise and glory to God for what He has done for us as Christians, not for what He has done solely for Mary. He did the same thing for every Christian that has ever lived that He did for Mary. He took away the heart of stone that she was born with and replaced it with a heart of flesh. A heart that was molded and shaped by the Holy Spirit in the same way every other

Christian's heart was molded and shaped to be used for the glory of God.

We do not need to entrust supplications to Mary, nor should we desire to. We have a great High Priest who intercedes for us daily before the Father. What more could we want? We have the Son of God interceding for us and lifting us before the throne of grace:

Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. - Hebrews 4:14-16, ESV

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Baptism

Chapter Two

985 Baptism is the first and chief sacrament of the forgiveness of sins: it unites us to Christ, who died and rose, and gives us the Holy Spirit.

Baptism does not save in any manner or form. It is something in Scripture that is always commanded after the act of repentance. Scripture always speaks of baptism by saying, “Repent and be baptized.” It has nothing to do with an inward change or a means of salvation, but rather is the outward sign of what Christ has already done in a person’s heart. Baptism does not save, in and of itself holding no power of salvation.

Baptism does not give us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit comes to all who call on the name of the Lord for salvation. There is no need to be baptized in order to receive the Holy Spirit, merely a repentant heart and a request for forgiveness.

One thing that is interesting with this statement is the underlying statement that babies that are baptized are not only filled with the Holy Spirit, but also have forgiveness for sins merely by being baptized. This is contrary to everything that Jesus preached and taught and goes against everything written in the Bible. In order to receive the Holy Spirit and to receive forgiveness of sins, one must repent of their sins and believe in the name of Jesus for salvation. In Acts 11 Paul states that they received the Holy Spirit when they believed.³

If baptized babies were already in this state, should we then not go around baptizing every child that is born? This is foolishness. Every child that is baptized has no more of the Holy Spirit than those who are not baptized. The Holy Spirit comes to those who have confessed Jesus as Lord and upon those alone.

1277 Baptism is birth into the new life in Christ. In

³ Acts 11:15

accordance with the Lord's will, it is necessary for salvation, as is the Church herself, which we enter by Baptism.

Baptism is necessary for salvation? No, baptism is never once mentioned in Scripture as a requirement for salvation. What would we say then to all the people that have turned to God on their death bed? For instance, the thief who was on the cross next to Jesus was never baptized and yet Jesus Himself said that he would be with Him that very day in paradise. There are many times that baptism is mentioned in Scripture. Yet, in none of these instances does it ever say that because you have now been baptized you may enter the kingdom of God. Are we to say that all of John the Baptist's ministry was for naught because he was not a Christian until Jesus baptized him? Absolutely not! John the Baptist was a Christian from very early on in his life. Some might even argue from inside of his mother's womb.

Then he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And they said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." And they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. - Acts 16:30-32, ESV



There is no mention of baptism here. This is only one example of what Scripture says regarding this issue. Others include; Romans 1:16-17, Matthew 19:16-30, and James 2. It is a very good thing to be baptized, and Scripture would point to it being something that every Christian should do. It is a proclamation of what Christ has already done in our hearts with His work of salvation. It shows all of those that witness the act, the commitment that the person being baptized has made to follow Christ and the grace that He has lavishly poured upon us.

1279 The fruit of Baptism, or baptismal grace, is a rich reality that includes forgiveness of original sin and all personal sins, birth into the new life by which man becomes an adoptive son of the Father, a member of Christ and a temple of the Holy Spirit. By this very fact the person baptized is incorporated into the Church, the Body of Christ, and made a sharer in the priesthood of Christ.

If this were the case then why are we not baptizing every single person alive? If by merely baptizing them they are forgiven of all their sins, what would be the downside? Here is an example of where the Roman Catholic Church makes a very grave error. They put more importance and worth on the outward sign of baptism than on the

regenerating work of the Holy Spirit upon a person's heart. According to this statement there is no need of repentance, no need to turn from our sinful nature and turn to Christ, no need to ask for the grace and mercy that can only be given by God. All we need, according to this statement, is a little water washed over us.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him



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who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. - Ephesians 1:3-14, ESV

This is how we are saved. There is not even a mention of baptism in this passage, but merely a declaration of the work that God does within us to bring about salvation and the forgiveness of sins. It is not baptism that saves us, but the blood of Christ that was shed for us on the cross:

Indeed, under the law almost everything is purified with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sins. - Hebrews 9:22, ESV

1280 Baptism imprints on the soul an indelible spiritual sign, the character, which consecrates the baptized person for Christian worship. Because of the character Baptism cannot be repeated (cf. DS 1609 and DS 1624).

These statements from the *London Baptist Confession of*

Faith of 1689 say all that needs to be said on this issue in regard to the baptismal statements made in point 1280 of the Roman Catholic Catechism:

Baptism is an ordinance of the New Testament, ordained by Jesus Christ, to be unto the party baptized, a sign of his fellowship with him, in his death and resurrection; of his being engrafted into him, of remission of sins; and of giving up into God, through Jesus Christ, to live and walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:3-5; Col. 2:12; Gal. 3:27; Mark 1:4; Acts 22:16; Rom. 6:4) - The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689.

Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance. (Mark 16:16; Acts 8:36, 37; 2:41; 8:12; 18:8) - The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689.

The outward element to be used in this ordinance is water, wherein the party is to be baptized, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19, 20; Acts 8:38) - The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689.

Immersion, or dipping of the person in water, is necessary to the due administration of this ordinance. (Matt. 3:16; John 3:23) - The London Baptist Confession of Faith of 1689.

1281 Those who die for the faith, those who are catechumens, and all those who, without knowing of the Church but acting under the inspiration of grace, seek God sincerely and strive to fulfill his will, can be saved even if they have not been baptized (cf. LG 16).

This point is confusing. In the two points that precede this one, the Roman Catholic Church tries to make the argument that baptism is needed for salvation. Then they go on to say with this point that there are certain people that have special privileges or are more holy than others and do not need to be baptized. Why say that it is needed then? Are we all not sinners, redeemed by grace alone? It would seem that the Roman Catholic Church has placed a double standard upon the meaning of baptism and therefore requires people to do things their way, rather than how Scripture lays it out for us.

As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them just as on us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he said, 'John baptized with

water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?" When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life." - Acts 11:15-18, ESV

1283 With respect to children who have died without Baptism, the liturgy of the Church invites us to trust in God's mercy and to pray for their salvation.

No one can be saved after death. Again, the Roman Catholic Church puts more weight on children dying without baptism than it does on whether their hearts are in tune with the salvation of God. Yes, we need to pray for those that are unregenerate, but while they are alive, not after they have already died. Death is final. At our deaths we are either entered into glory to await the final coming of the Lord with the rest of the saints who have gone before us, or we are condemned to hell for eternal punishment.

God's mercy does not extend to those who have reached death and have not repented of their sins. There is a reason why we must believe in God's sovereign design.

Without it, we would be left trying to explain what happens to infant children that die. Knowing that God is sovereign allows us to rest knowing that God can convict the heart of anyone at any time, even infants and children. His sovereign decree upon the lives of those who He has created is perfect and works for the good of those whom He has called unto Himself.

1316 Confirmation perfects Baptismal grace; it is the sacrament which gives the Holy Spirit in order to root us more deeply in the divine filiation, incorporate us more firmly into Christ, strengthen our bond with the Church, associate us more closely with her mission, and help us bear witness to the Christian faith in words accompanied by deeds.

This is completely contrary to what Scripture teaches. The Holy Spirit is given to human beings with one act alone. Saving faith, which is accomplished by the work of Christ, the Holy Spirit and the Father. Confirmation is nothing but a man-made action.

When the day of Pentecost arrived, they were all together in one place. And suddenly there came from heaven a sound like a mighty rushing wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. And

divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. - Acts 2:1-4, ESV

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. - Acts 2:37-41, ESV

There is nothing like a confirmation taking place in either of these passages and yet thousands of people are being saved and filled with the Holy Spirit. It is a work of God in our hearts, and not an action that we can take.

Also, the Roman Catholic Church contradicts themselves again. We have already seen their attempt to say that the Holy Spirit is given through baptism. That is false, as Scripture tells us. Now, they are trying to say that it, the Holy Spirit, is given through confirmation. So, which do they actually believe? When you spin as many lies as the Roman Catholic Church does, you are bound to get them mixed up, no matter how much worldly knowledge you may have. The idea that a confirmation brings anyone the Holy Spirit is just completely contrary to what they have even said about baptism, because a confirmation cannot take place until a child is at least seven years old. Let alone that it is contrary to Scripture, which is the real issue and problem with saying that confirmation brings the Holy Spirit to anyone.

That means that those who are baptized either do not actually receive the Holy Spirit. From Scripture we know that they do not, unless they have been regenerated by grace through faith. It means that confirmation is merely another attempt to draw individuals into a works based salvation that, in all honesty, does not exist in accordance with what Scripture teaches.

1591 The whole Church is a priestly people. Through Baptism all the faithful share in the priesthood of

Christ. This participation is called the "common priesthood of the faithful." Based on this common priesthood and ordered to its service, there exists another participation in the mission of Christ: the ministry conferred by the sacrament of Holy Orders, where the task is to serve in the name and in the person of Christ the Head in the midst of the community.

This section is complete heresy. Once again, as was previously discussed, baptism cannot and will not save any person. There is nothing within the act of baptism that can purify/sanctify anyone. Therefore, to say that once a person is baptized he/she then enters into the distinction of being a "priestly people" would be to say that anyone who is baptized then becomes a part of Christ's priesthood. This cannot be true in any way. It is no more possible for water to save a person's soul than for a human being to lay an egg. It is not in any way, shape, or form possible.

God has designed and set forth the means and the manner by which a person is saved. Paul's epistle to the Romans declares that people hear the Word preached, they believe through the moving of the Holy Spirit within their hearts to turn their heart from stone to flesh, and then they call upon the name of the Lord for the salvation of their

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souls in repentance of their sins. This is the manner by which God has set into place within the universe for a person to be joined to Christ and thereby share in all the splendor and glory that is ours through His work and sacrifice.

The Lord's Supper

Chapter Three

1055 By virtue of the "communion of saints," the Church commends the dead to God's mercy and offers her prayers, especially the holy sacrifice of the Eucharist, on their behalf.

We are not called to offer prayers on behalf of the dead. This is contrary to what Scripture actually says. We are called to live this life as a witness to God's glory and upon

our death we will be with Him in heaven, to worship Him for all eternity. Communion is to be an act of worship to God, not an offering of prayers to the dead saints that have gone on before us.

And he took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." And likewise the cup after they had eaten, saying, "This cup that is poured out for you is the new covenant in my blood. But behold, the hand of him who betrays me is with me on the table. For the Son of Man goes as it has been determined, but woe to that man by whom he is betrayed!" And they began to question one another, which of them it could be who was going to do this.
- Luke 22:19-23, ESV

We do not see any mention here of dead believers that will be involved in prayer or that we will be praying for. Rather, we see an example of how we are to come before the Father and worship in remembrance of the amazing sacrifice that Christ paid on the cross on our behalf.

1189 The liturgical celebration involves signs and symbols relating to creation (candles, water, fire),

human life (washing, anointing, breaking bread) and the history of salvation (the rites of the Passover). Integrated into the world of faith and taken up by the power of the Holy Spirit, these cosmic elements, human rituals, and gestures of remembrance of God become bearers of the saving and sanctifying action of Christ.

As Christians we cannot agree with this statement. We know through Paul's writings that it is by grace alone through faith alone through the preaching of the Gospel alone that we are saved. We can see within this statement that the Church of Rome is completely confused by the idea of two covenants. Scripture talks about the way that Jesus brought a new covenant and it has absolutely nothing to do with works, but rather solely depends on faith.

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. - Ephesians 2:8-10, ESV

There is nothing in this passage that would point to any liturgical action that would bring forth sanctification



or saving faith. We are saved because the Holy Spirit quickens our heart to hear the glorious truth preached throughout the world of the saving act of righteousness shown by Christ's death on the cross.

1410 It is Christ himself, the eternal high priest of the New Covenant who, acting through the ministry of the priests, offers the Eucharistic sacrifice. And it is the same Christ, really present under the species of bread and wine, who is the offering of the Eucharistic sacrifice.

When we partake of the Lord's Supper there cannot be any physical transformation within the bread and wine. The first time that the act took place was before Jesus' death and resurrection. He (Jesus) administered the Lord's Supper to the apostles as a symbol of what was to come. In the same way we observe the Lord's Supper in remembrance of what Jesus did for us on the cross, for all people (those whom God has/will elect) throughout all ages.

Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood

of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. - Matthew 26:26-29, ESV

1411 Only validly ordained priests can preside at the Eucharist and consecrate the bread and the wine so that they become the Body and Blood of the Lord.

This point coincides with the previous one. However, there is an added layer in their statement here. They come out and say outright that the bread and wine become the body and blood of our Lord. How can this be the truth about what happens to the sacrament of the Lord's Supper? Are we truly going to believe that mere bread and wine is turned into human flesh and blood? There are a few issues with this idea. First, if human beings are eating Jesus' body and blood, are we not then cannibals? Second, and most importantly, Christ died once for all. He does not continually sacrifice Himself at our command and desire to partake of the Lord's Supper. Scripture says:

We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. For the death he died he died to sin, once



*for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. - Romans
6:9-10, ESV*

He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever. - Hebrews 7:27-28, ESV

1413 By the consecration the transubstantiation of the bread and wine into the Body and Blood of Christ is brought about. Under the consecrated species of bread and wine Christ himself, living and glorious, is present in a true, real, and substantial manner: his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1640; 1651).

This point coincides with the previous one. Our Lord does not ask us to eat of His actual blood and flesh, but merely to take part in an act that symbolizes the communion that we have with Him through His sacrifice on the cross. This does not mean that there is not a deeper part to the Lord's Supper, but rather that mere food stays

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as food during the sacrament. During the Lord's Supper we do come before the throne of grace, baring our hearts and minds before the Lord. The Lord's Supper should be taken in remembrance of the sacrifice that Christ made on the behalf of believers upon the cross and the effects that act has upon our lives. We are not to view the Lord's Supper as a mystical process wherein juice (or wine) and bread are turned into actual blood and flesh of our savior.

By saying that “his Body and his Blood, with his soul and his divinity” are present in a “true, real and substantial manner” they seem to be trying to say that mere elements can contain the divinity and soul of God. How can this be true? How can we view God to be the ruler of the world, the creator of all things, and yet He is contained in certain elements meant for human consumption? If God's divinity is present in these elements then we would have to consume the actual divinity and soul of Christ upon taking of the Lord's Supper. This is blasphemy. If we were to consume the divinity of God, then would it be contained within our beings as well? These are merely a few of the many questions that could be raised with this issue.

1414 As sacrifice, the Eucharist is also offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead and to obtain spiritual or temporal benefits from God.

The Lord's Supper (Eucharist) cannot be taken for the reparation of the sins of the dead. This is exactly contrary to what Scripture says about this sacrament:

For I received from the Lord what I also delivered to you, that the Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it, and said, "This is my body which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes. Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty concerning the body and blood of the Lord. Let a person examine himself, then, and so eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without discerning the body eats and drinks judgment on himself. That is why many of you are weak and ill, and some have died. But if we judged ourselves truly, we would not be judged. But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world. - 1 Corinthians 11:23-32, ESV

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Now as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and after blessing it broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take, eat; this is my body." And he took a cup, and when he had given thanks he gave it to them, saying, "Drink of it, all of you, for this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. I tell you I will not drink again of this fruit of the vine until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom. - Matthew 26:26-29, ESV

There are no mentions of sins being atoned for or reparations being given to the dead in this passage. The Lord's Supper is for the living only. As Scripture says, "So we are always of good courage. We know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight. Yes, we are of good courage, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord."⁴

Therefore, there is nothing that can be done about the sins of those that have already died. When someone dies they are no longer absent from the Lord's presence. They are either with Him in glory, worshiping forever and

⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:6-8

forever or they are dead, seeing the wrath of God poured out upon them in judgment of their sins for all eternity

1415 Anyone who desires to receive Christ in Eucharistic communion must be in the state of grace. Anyone aware of having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution in the sacrament of penance.

Here we see the Roman Catholic Church's attempt to place their priests in a position that only Christ should hold. They say that people must receive absolution from these priests in order to receive communion. However, we know that there is only one Mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus, our Lord.⁵ Human beings, sinful beings, do not have to go before a priest or any other human being in order to come into communion with God. We do see in Paul's description of how the Lord's Supper is to be administered that those who have a prevailing sin in their lives or do not believe in Jesus as their Lord and Savior should abstain from the act of communion. However, there are no steps that need to be taken in regards to resolving this issue except to go before the throne of grace, to pray

⁵ I Timothy 2:5

for forgiveness, and to seek the wisdom of God.

Each and every sin is deadly. There are not sins that cause people to be damned to hell while others merely are damaging to a person's physical body or reputation. Scripture says, "For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."⁶ This shows that each and every sin should directly result in our death. Yet, Christ bears with our sinful nature in order to bring about knowledge of His grace and power.⁷

When we step before the throne of God, in the taking of the Lord's Supper, we are proclaiming to all of those around us that we believe in Jesus; His sacrifice and love, His forgiveness and mercy, and most of all His sovereignty over death and sin. It is not something that any priest should, or even can have power over granting or denying, but rather a gift that God has given to those who believe in order to be able to communion with them as His bride.

1416 Communion with the Body and Blood of Christ increases the communicant's union with the Lord, forgives his venial sins, and preserves him from grave

⁶ Romans 6:23, ESV

⁷ Romans 9:22

sins. Since receiving this sacrament strengthens the bonds of charity between the communicant and Christ, it also reinforces the unity of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ.

For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever. - Hebrews 7:26-28, ESV

Our sins are not forgiven by taking communion. Our sins are forgiven by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He paid for our sins once, and does not have to pay for them every week. Jesus took upon Himself the sins of those whom He had chosen to be His bride before the foundation of the world. These are the only people that have received and will receive God's salvation.

The body of Christ, the church, is not a mystical body. It is real and goes forth throughout the world spreading the

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Gospel. The Church does not need to be mystical or mysterious, but rather the Church should live out their lives doing real life things.

When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel. - Ephesians 3:4-6, ESV

This is the only mystery involving the body of Christ; that God would so choose to save those of us that are considered unworthy. There is not a person that is worthy, yet the Gospel of Christ was first for the Jew, and then for the Gentile. We should take great joy in knowing that we have been chosen by God to receive such a blessing of grace and salvation.

1418 Because Christ himself is present in the sacrament of the altar, he is to be honored with the worship of adoration. "To visit the Blessed Sacrament is . . . a proof of gratitude, an expression of love, and a duty of adoration toward Christ our Lord" (Paul VI,



MF 66).

We cannot worship the sacrament. By doing this we would be making it into an idol. Christ is not in the sacrament, but rather uses it to cause our hearts and minds to see His beauty and majesty. If we worship a sacrament, then we are taking something that God has given to us as good and holy and distorting it for our own pleasure.

We see in Matthew 26:26 and following the first institution of Communion through the partaking of the bread and wine. In taking of this Communion there is no proof of gratitude, for it is a matter of the heart. Rather, we see an outward expression of reflection and remembrance of what Christ did for us on the cross.

1419 Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him. Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints.

When this point is read it would lead the reader to believe that we will have glory and power along with Christ. Yet, what the Lord's Supper really does is to give us

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an insight into the glorious act that Christ has done on our behalf. We do not receive glory of our own, but rather partake in Christ's glory. The mere act of partaking in the Lord's Supper does not give us these longings and strength. Rather, the thoughts of our hearts affect what we see through and in the Lord's Supper. We are not merely connected to the Church in heaven, but rather have a deep fellowship with those here on earth. As one body we remember Christ's sacrifice for us. The Church that is already in heaven has no need for this sacrament. They bask daily in the glory and splendor of the King of kings worshiping Him forever.

Truth or Fiction

Salvation

Chapter Four

945 Already destined for him through Baptism, the person who surrenders himself to the God he loves above all else thereby consecrates himself more intimately to God's service and to the good of the whole Church.

Though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call. - Romans 9:11

It is not baptism that destines us for salvation, but rather the fact that God Himself calls us to His side. We are

Truth or Fiction

called to God because of His works, not ours. He chose those whom He would call to His side before we were born, doing neither good nor bad. It is through His call, not of baptism, but through the Holy Spirit pricking our hearts and minds to love Him:

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. - Ephesians 2:8-10

We see that it is not any means of our own by which we are saved, but rather through faith in Christ alone. Baptism does not save anyone, or destine them to be saved. Salvation is a gift, a gift that God gives freely. He does not require us to perform certain physical actions in order to receive salvation, but rather calls us to present ourselves in such a way that once we have received salvation, it will be evident to those around us.

For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power. - I Corinthians 1:17

Now, if it was baptism that destined one to be saved in the future, then would it not have been a great and more fruitful call for the apostle Paul to be baptizing people instead of preaching the Gospel to them? He says that he has not come to baptize, but rather to preach the Gospel. This seems to say that it is not baptism that destines one, but rather in concordance with the rest of Scripture, it seems to point to the fact that it is through hearing the Word of God and faith in Him that leads to salvation.

And Peter said to them, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls unto himself.' - Acts 2:38-39

When we look at the verses from Acts it is very clear which comes first, it does not state that one should be baptized and then later in life they will be saved due to the destining act of baptism, but rather it says that one should repent and then be baptized. Baptism is a sign/act to show an outward example of what Christ has already accomplished in the hearts and lives of those whom He has redeemed.



Truth or Fiction

Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized. - Acts 18:8

Again, we see that belief comes before the actual act of baptism, pointing and leading us to see that baptism does not destine anyone to be saved. Water has no spiritual meaning, unless a person's heart has already been convicted of their sin. Water is only ever water, however, when someone believes in Jesus as Lord and wishes to be baptized; they use water to symbolize the washing away of their sin and to proclaim their testimony to all who are witnesses that Jesus is in fact their Lord and Master.

987 "In the forgiveness of sins, both priests and sacraments are instruments which our Lord Jesus Christ, the only author and liberal giver of salvation, wills to use in order to efface our sins and give us the grace of justification" (Roman Catechism, I, 11, 6).

Is Christ really liberal in the actual act of giving out salvation? Scripture clearly tells us that the road that leads to salvation is narrow and the path to destruction is broad. Therefore, Christ is not a liberal giver of salvation in the manner that it would seem that the Roman Catholic Church

means. Rather, Scripture tells us that salvation is offered to many people, but the amount of people that actually receive salvation is a very small number in comparison to the number of individuals in the world. God is only liberal in the sense that He offers salvation to all who call upon His name. However, the amount of people that call upon His name pales in comparison to the number of people who continually reject Him.

He has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us to the kingdom of his beloved Son, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. - Colossians 1:13-14

It has nothing to do with priests or sacraments, but rather with the work of Christ and the way that He has offered Himself up for the church. We also know from Scripture that only those who God draws come to salvation. This would place a limit on salvation and does not allow all people to come to saving faith.

For example, Esau was rejected and hated by God before he was ever born. God had chosen to use him as an example for the generations to follow of what happens to a person when God removes His hand of protection from them. Esau never had God's saving protection, but did

receive His common grace, which allowed him to live and breathe.

1054 Those who die in God's grace and friendship imperfectly purified, although they are assured of their eternal salvation, undergo a purification after death, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of God

For what purpose do those who presumably are already under the saving grace of Christ need to have this time of purification? The writer of Hebrews, most concede that this is Paul, tells us that Christ has already paid the full price for our sins. Why then would we need to undergo more purification than that which we have already received? God has lavished upon us the righteousness of Christ! If that is not enough to make us holy, then no amount of time could possibly create in us a holiness that would be acceptable enough to please a perfect and righteous God.

This statement makes a complete mockery of the finished and complete work of Jesus Christ. It makes everything He did worth only so much dung. If one was to believe this statement, Jesus would no longer hold those whom His Father has given Him in the palm of His hand, but rather He would be wringing His hands and hoping that

things would work out right. This is not the God of the Bible, it is not the God who created the world, and certainly is not the God who has saved sinners and keeps them safe and secure in their salvation.

This makes Jesus the guarantor of a better covenant. The former priests were many in number, because they were prevented by death from continuing in office, but he holds his priesthood permanently, because he continues forever. Consequently, he is able to save to the uttermost those who draw near to God through him, since he always lives to make intercession for them. For it was indeed fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, unstained, separated from sinners, and exalted above the heavens. He has no need, like those high priests, to offer sacrifices daily, first for his own sins and then for those of the people, since he did this once for all when he offered up himself. For the law appoints men in their weakness as high priests, but the word of the oath, which came later than the law, appoints a Son who has been made perfect forever. - Hebrews 7:22-28, ESV

1275 Christian initiation is accomplished by three sacraments together: Baptism which is the beginning



of new life; Confirmation which is its strengthening; and the Eucharist which nourishes the disciple with Christ's Body and Blood for his transformation in Christ.

This statement does not even talk about salvation. There is a “Christian initiation”, but what is that? We are not initiated into being a Christian. Being a Christian cannot be accomplished by merely following a set of rules or protocols. If it could then why would we let anyone do anything but follow these protocols? Salvation is accomplished in ONE way ALONE!

Brothers, my heart's desire and prayer to God for them is that they may be saved. For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge. For, being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and seeking to establish their own, they did not submit to God's righteousness. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

For Moses writes about the righteousness that is based on the law, that the person who does the commandments shall live by them. But the righteousness based on faith says, “Do not say in

your heart, ‘Who will ascend into heaven?’” (that is, to bring Christ down) “or ‘Who will descend into the abyss?’” (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). But what does it say? “The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart” (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. For the Scripture says, “Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame.” For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, bestowing his riches on all who call on him. For “everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.”

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!” But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?” So faith comes from hearing, and

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hearing through the word of Christ. - Romans 10:1-17, ESV

1486 The forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism is conferred by a particular sacrament called the sacrament of conversion, confession, penance, or reconciliation.

There are many references throughout Scripture that clearly point to instances where individuals are forgiven of their sins without being baptized. Baptism is an outward sign of what has happened within a person's heart.

And getting into a boat he crossed over and came to his own city. And behold, some people brought to him a paralytic, lying on a bed. And when Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Take heart, my son; your sins are forgiven." And behold, some of the scribes said to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, "Why do you think evil in your hearts? For which is easier, to say, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins"—he then said to the paralytic—"Rise, pick up your bed and go home." And he rose and went home.

When the crowds saw it, they were afraid, and they glorified God, who had given such authority to men.

- Matthew 9:1-8, ESV

There is not one mention of baptism in this passage. The paralytic man's sins and bodily afflictions are forgiven and healed. He is not baptized, merely forgiven of his sins and made well again. God does not need to cleanse our outer body in order to cleanse our hearts. We can look at the apostle Paul and see that when our Lord threw him from his horse and blinded him for a time, that a great work was begun in his heart, not needing baptism. However, baptism would later be the sign showing what God had done for Paul.

The second half of this point, from the Roman Catholic Catechism, seems to create some different pieces that the Roman Catholics would like to add to salvation that do not exist within Scripture. Human beings are forgiven of their sins because of the work of Jesus Christ, through his life and death and resurrection. It is because of Jesus that sinners even have the ability to be forgiven of their sins. It is because of the Holy Spirit that they ever have the desire to repent of their sins in the first place. To ignore these aspects involved within the salvation of man is to impart all or part of the work of salvation to man rather than God.

Edward Fisher in his book, *The Marrow of Modern Divinity*, states:

For it is the doctrine of the Church of Rome, that if a man exercise all his power, and do his best to fulfil the law, then God, for Christ's sake, will pardon all his infirmities, and save his soul. And therefore you shall see many of you Papists very strict and zealous in the performance of duties, morning and evening, so many Ave Marias and so many Pater Nosters; yea, and many of them do great deeds of charity, and great works of hospitality; and all upon such grounds, and to such ends as these. The Papists, says Calvin, cannot abide this saying, 'By faith alone'; for they think that their own works are in part a cause of their salvation; and so they make a hotch-potch and mingle-magle, that is neither fish nor flesh, as men say. (Fisher, 2009, p. 111)

Also Martin Luther, in speaking about the marriage between God and the redeemed, stated:

The marriage is made up without all pomp and solemnity: that is to say, nothing at all comes between; no law nor work is here required. Here is nothing else but the Father promising, and I

receiving; but these things without experience and practice, cannot be understood. (Luther, Commentary on the Epistle to the Galatians)

1489 To return to communion with God after having lost it through sin is a process born of the grace of God who is rich in mercy and solicitous for the salvation of men. One must ask for this precious gift for oneself and for others.

This point is a confusing one to look at. One thing to consider would be what they mean by communion with God. We cannot lose our salvation, so if by communion they are referring to salvation, then that would be completely false. If they are referring to merely sinning and not being in full relationship with Christ, then that could be a possibility. However, there is a problem with the end of this statement as well. We can pray for those we know who are not in communion with God, yet we cannot give/grant communion with God to other people.

1491 The sacrament of Penance is a whole consisting in three actions of the penitent and the priest's absolution. The penitent's acts are repentance, confession or disclosure of sins to the priest, and the intention to make reparation and do works of

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reparation.

And every priest stands daily at his service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God, waiting from that time until his enemies should be made a footstool for his feet. For by a single offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after saying, "This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, declares the Lord: I will put my laws on their hearts, and write them on their minds," then he adds, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin. - Hebrews 10:11-18, ESV

Christ bore our sins once and there is no need to see them borne again and again. Once someone asks Christ for forgiveness of their sins, they no longer need to do anything more about them. Yes, we need to change the way we live and strive for the holiness of God. However, we do not need to confess our sins to a priest in order to be forgiven. There are no earthly acts that we can do to make

up for our sin. No matter what we do physically we cannot atone for our sins.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your

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salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. - Ephesians 1:3-14, ESV

1492 Repentance (also called contrition) must be inspired by motives that arise from faith. If repentance arises from love of charity for God, it is called "perfect" contrition; if it is founded on other motives, it is called "imperfect."

Why should there be a distinction in the different types of repentance? When someone is truly repentant and asks God for forgiveness of their sins, they are forgiven and their sins forgotten, no matter what "kind" of repentance they use. The only kind of repentance that we should be concerned about is whether a person is truly repentant or not. Those who repent and turn from their sins will be forgiven and freed from the grip of a sinful lifestyle.

Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance. For this reason the

Jews seized me in the temple and tried to kill me. To this day I have had the help that comes from God, and so I stand here testifying both to small and great, saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses said would come to pass: that the Christ must suffer and that, by being the first to rise from the dead, he would proclaim light both to our people and to the Gentiles. - Acts 26:19-23 ESV

Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, whom heaven must receive until the time for restoring all the things about which God spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets long ago. - Acts 3:19-21, ESV

Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself." And with many other words

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he bore witness and continued to exhort them, saying, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation." So those who received his word were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls. - Acts 2:37-41, ESV

1493 One who desires to obtain reconciliation with God and with the Church, must confess to a priest all the unconfessed grave sins he remembers after having carefully examined his conscience. The confession of venial faults, without being necessary in itself, is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church.

Confessing sins to a priest does not bring reconciliation with God to anyone. A person is forgiven of all sins and comes into the presence of God by merely asking for it. No one can gain reconciliation with God by confessing to another human being, but rather must confess their sins and repent of them before God.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he

is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. - 1 John 1:5-10, ESV

1495 Only priests who have received the faculty of absolving from the authority of the Church can forgive sins in the name of Christ.

This is the Roman Catholic Church's attempt at gaining the power that only God has. We can see examples where the apostles tell people throughout the book of Acts that their sins have been forgiven them, but this is not because they are forgiving them, but rather that they are relaying the fact that Christ has forgiven them. All Christians have the authority and power from Christ to share the Gospel with those they know and come in contact with. God has granted us the power to explain the way that God forgives sins to those that desire such knowledge.

The only person that can absolve (forgive) people of their sins is Christ Jesus our Lord:



Since then we have a great high priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus, the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. - Hebrews 4:14-16, ESV

1496 The spiritual effects of the sacrament of Penance are: - reconciliation with God by which the penitent recovers grace; - reconciliation with the Church; - remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins; - remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin; - peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation; - an increase of spiritual strength for the Christian battle.

The only way that someone can be reconciled with someone else is if they previously had a relationship that was broken. However, if someone is receiving forgiveness for their sins, then they would not have previously been in fellowship (a relationship) with Christ but rather separated from Him. This would mean that there could be no reconciliation but rather an initial relationship born from

and through repentance.

Penance is not the method by which we enter into a relationship with God, but rather by humbly coming before His throne and laying all of ourselves at His feet in repentance. Penance does not draw one closer to God, for His steadfast love extends to His children and therefore nothing can separate them from His love. No works or actions can draw anyone closer to God.

1498 Through indulgences the faithful can obtain the remission of temporal punishment resulting from sin for themselves and also for the souls in Purgatory.

There is no need to pay for remission of sins or punishment that could result from those sins. Not in the sense of a monetary payment. If you are a Christian, your sins and the punishment that results from those sins has already paid for by Christ. He has taken our sins away and carried them to the cross, where they were paid for once and for all. If you are not a Christian, then your sins will result in eternal punishment under the wrath of God the Father. This punishment will not be alleviated by paying any mortal man money for yourself or for others. That money would only go towards whatever means that mortal man would desire, and not to the freeing of your or any

other person's soul. It is only because of man's sin that they claim to require payment for salvation. Salvation is a free gift of God, and no man can put a price on it.

1746 The imputability or responsibility for an action can be diminished or nullified by ignorance, duress, fear, and other psychological or social factors.

How can this be true? If we are all sinners, than how can our actions not actually be sins or mean what they should? Just because we are afraid or under duress does not mean that we should be able to claim that we are not responsible for what we do. It is thinking like this that allows for excuses and creates instances where people do not have to take responsibility for their actions and deeds.

If someone kills someone with an ax, yet no one has ever told them that this is wrong, does that excuse their actions? Of course it does not; they still chose to sin and to grievously wrong their fellow man by going against one of God commands to love their neighbor. Yet, some may argue that since this person knew nothing about those actions being wrong, then they may do those actions with a lesser consequence. Yet, how is a person to learn what those actions mean and what those consequences are, unless Christians preach the truth of Scripture.

For, if a man dies without ever hearing the truth about Jesus and His work on the cross, and therefore never comes to a saving faith, he will end his days in hell. Yet, there is no injustice in this action, for a just and holy God commanded that we preach the Gospel to the ends of the earth and to make disciples of all peoples.

So, wherein does the fault lie? With a just God who has decreed that no one may enter His rest unless drawn by the Father through the preaching of Scripture or with those to whom the creation declares the glorious commands of God and yet they continuously reject Him?

God's words, commands, and verdicts are still true and holy, even if we fail in upholding the simple tasks that God has commanded of us. Namely, to preach and teach those with whom we come in contact with, the truth of Scripture.

With this knowledge, how then can we say that a person's actions can be nullified by "ignorance, duress, fear, and other psychological or social factors?"⁸ If someone sins they still are held responsible by a holy God who has decreed that their action(s) are sin, whether they knew it or not. God does not send people to hell merely because He wants to, but rather because human beings are born fallen,

⁸ Roman Catholic Catechism #1746

we sin willingly, and without the Spirit moving within our hearts and the Father drawing us unto Himself, we will go to hell to be punished justly for all eternity. This is not in any way unjust, for God has declared:

For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. But what fruit were you getting at that time from the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things is death. But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life. For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. - Romans 6:20-23, ESV

1875 Venial sin constitutes a moral disorder that is reparable by charity, which it allows to subsist in us.

What does this even mean? Does it not say in the book of Romans that “the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord?”⁹ How then can we even begin to think that there is such a thing as a sin that does not lead to death? We are not saved by our

⁹ Romans 6:23

works or deeds. There is no charity that has even an inkling of a capability to repair the damage that our sins cause.

Death is death. There is nothing except God that can remove the stench that comes with it and causes our lives to be thrown into such turmoil. Sin causes death, no matter how small the sin is. There are no trivial sins, they are all grave offenses against a most holy God.

2017 The grace of the Holy Spirit confers upon us the righteousness of God. Uniting us by faith and Baptism to the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, the Spirit makes us sharers in his life.

Again here it can be seen that they are trying to say that in order to be saved, one needs to be baptized. Yet, this is not a requirement of salvation in Scripture, but rather a proclamation of that salvation to all those with whom we so desire to express our great joy upon reception of the Father's love for us.

2020 Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ. It is granted us through Baptism. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who justifies us. It has for its goal the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life. It is the most

excellent work of God's mercy.

This statement, like some of the other statements made by the Roman Catholic Church is so very close to the truth, yet it contains one piece that does not hold to the truth of Scripture, creating instead of a truth a false statement. We are not granted justification through baptism. Especially because the Roman Catholic Church believes that it is infants who should be baptized and therefore have not shown or expressed any acts of repentance or change within their soul to receive this justification.

Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will scarcely die for a righteous person—though perhaps for a good person one would dare

even to die—but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we have now been justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. More than that, we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received reconciliation. Therefore, just as sin came into the world through one man, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned—for sin indeed was in the world before the law was given, but sin is not counted where there is no law. Yet death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over those whose sinning was not like the transgression of Adam, who was a type of the one who was to come. But the free gift is not like the trespass. For if many died through one man's trespass, much more have the grace of God and the free gift by the grace of that one man Jesus Christ abounded for many. And the free gift is not like the result of that one man's sin. For the judgment following one trespass brought condemnation, but the free gift following many trespasses brought justification. For if, because of one man's trespass,

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death reigned through that one man, much more will those who receive the abundance of grace and the free gift of righteousness reign in life through the one man Jesus Christ. Therefore, as one trespass led to condemnation for all men, so one act of righteousness leads to justification and life for all men. For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous. Now the law came in to increase the trespass, but where sin increased, grace abounded all the more, so that, as sin reigned in death, grace also might reign through righteousness leading to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord. - Romans 5:1-21, ESV

2027 No one can merit the initial grace which is at the origin of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit, we can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal life, as well as necessary temporal goods.

Oh what a great heresy this is. If we cannot merit the “initial grace” for ourselves, then how is it that we are able to merit for others eternal life? Scripture has been laid out throughout this work, and there has never once an example that lends to this idea found within it. On the contrary,

Scripture points to the exact opposite. There is nothing that we can do to merit eternal life, for ourselves or for another.

Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him." - John 14:6-7, ESV

We do not present others to the throne on our own merit. If we were to ask for our good deeds to outweigh our bad ones, they never could come close. Rather, Jesus, the Son of God, takes upon Himself the weight of the world and offers His righteousness in our stead!

841 The Church's relationship with the Muslims. "The plan of salvation also includes those who acknowledge the Creator, in the first place amongst whom are the Muslims; these profess to hold the faith of Abraham, and together with us they adore the one, merciful God, mankind's judge on the last day."

Muslims do not worship the God of Abraham. They do not hold together with us in adoring the One Merciful God. Our God has three persons; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. If anyone rejects any of those persons, they



reject God. Muslims refuse to acknowledge Jesus as God and therefore cannot worship Him. If we cannot acknowledge Jesus as God, then we do not know the Father. If we do not know the Father, then the Holy Spirit does not live in us:

“Truly, truly, I say to you, he who does not enter the sheepfold by the door but climbs in by another way, that man is a thief and a robber. But he who enters by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the gatekeeper opens. The sheep hear his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. When he has brought out all his own, he goes before them, and the sheep follow him, for they know his voice. A stranger they will not follow, but they will flee from him, for they do not know the voice of strangers.” This figure of speech Jesus used with them, but they did not understand what he was saying to them.

So Jesus again said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, I am the door of the sheep. All who came before me are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. The thief comes only to steal and kill and

destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. He who is a hired hand and not a shepherd, who does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and flees, and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. He flees because he is a hired hand and cares nothing for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father; and I lay down my life for the sheep. And I have other sheep that are not of this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life that I may take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have authority to lay it down, and I have authority to take it up again. This charge I have received from my Father.”

There was again a division among the Jews because of these words. Many of them said, “He has a demon, and is insane; why listen to him?” Others said, “These are not the words of one who is oppressed by a demon. Can a demon open the eyes of the blind?”
- John 10:1-21, ESV



Therefore, Muslims may worship the same god as Catholics, but they do not worship the God of the Bible. Abraham believed by faith in the coming Messiah, and this was his salvation. Muslims have rejected the Messiah that has already come and therefore do not share anything with Abraham:

By faith Abraham obeyed when he was called to go out to a place that he was to receive as an inheritance. And he went out, not knowing where he was going. By faith he went to live in the land of promise, as in a foreign land, living in tents with Isaac and Jacob, heirs with him of the same promise. For he was looking forward to the city that has foundations, whose designer and builder is God. By faith Sarah herself received power to conceive, even when she was past the age, since she considered him faithful who had promised. Therefore from one man, and him as good as dead, were born descendants as many as the stars of heaven and as many as the innumerable grains of sand by the seashore.

These all died in faith, not having received the things promised, but having seen them and greeted them from afar, and having acknowledged that they were strangers and exiles on the earth. For people who

Speak thus make it clear that they are seeking a homeland. If they had been thinking of that land from which they had gone out, they would have had opportunity to return. But as it is, they desire a better country, that is, a heavenly one. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared for them a city.

*By faith Abraham, when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises was in the act of offering up his only son, of whom it was said, "Through Isaac shall your offspring be named."
- Hebrews 11:8-18, ESV*

Abraham's only son, in the eyes of the Lord, was Isaac. Muslims claim that they come from Abraham and Catholics claim that they share this with them. However, the writer of Hebrews, Paul, clearly states that Isaac is the only son of Abraham. Why? He does so because spiritually he is the only son. He is the only son who the promise of a Messiah goes through. There is not another branch of Abraham's beliefs and faith. There is only one way to salvation, through Jesus Christ. Abraham knew this and was saved. Isaac knew this and was saved. In the same manner all who have been and will be saved must believe in Jesus as Messiah, or they do not believe in God.



Truth or Fiction

Muslims cannot be heirs alongside us, because they do not believe in the very One who would make them an heir. The only One capable of doing so is Jesus Christ, and He is not their God. They do not believe that Jesus conquered death, for they do not believe that He even tasted it. How can someone try to state that Muslims share their beliefs when they reject the very foundation upon which the Bible is built, namely, Jesus?

Man

Chapter Five

33 The human person: with his openness to truth and beauty, his sense of moral goodness, his freedom and the voice of his conscience, with his longings for the infinite and for happiness, man questions himself about God's existence. In all this he discerns signs of his spiritual soul. The soul, the "seed of eternity we bear in ourselves, irreducible to the merely material", can have its origin only in God.

The fool says in his heart, 'There is no God'. They are corrupt, they do abominable deeds, there is none who does good. The Lord looks down from heaven on

Truth or Fiction

*the children of man, to see if there are any who understand, who seek God. They have all turned aside; together they have become corrupt: there is none who does good, not even one. - Psalm 14:1-3
ESV*

With these verses in mind, how is it that anyone can have an “openness to truth and beauty” or a sense of “moral goodness”? It is impossible to say that man in his own right seeks after the existence of God, but rather only through the Holy Spirit’s drawing man unto Himself. As it says in the Gospel of John, chapter six, verse forty-four; “No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws Him.”

*And he said to him, ‘Why do you ask me about what is good? There is only one who is good. If you would enter life, keep the commandments. - Matthew 19:17,
ESV*

Again here we see that there is only one who is good in himself, and that is Jesus Christ alone. Man cannot have a “moral goodness” if he cannot be good in and of himself. “And Jesus said to him, ‘Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone.’” (Mark 10:18 ESV)

as it is written: ‘None is righteous, no, not one; no

one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one.’ ‘Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive.’ ‘The venom of asps is under their lips.’ ‘Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness.’ ‘Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known.’ ‘There is no fear of God before their eyes.’ - Romans 3:10-18, ESV

46 When he listens to the message of creation and to the voice of conscience, man can arrive at certainty about the existence of God, the cause and the end of everything.

I would like to reiterate that no one can come to the Father unless they are drawn. Since no one is good, why would anyone want to see that God is the cause and end of everything?

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness suppress the truth. For what can be known about God is plain to them, because God has shown it to them. For his invisible attributes, namely, his eternal power and divine



nature, have been clearly perceived, ever since the creation of the world, in the things that have been made. So they are without excuse. For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Claiming to be wise, they became fools, and exchanged the glory of the immortal God for images resembling mortal man and birds and animals and creeping things. Therefore God gave them up in the lusts of their hearts to impurity, to the dishonoring of their bodies among themselves, because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator, who is blessed forever! Amen. For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. For their women exchanged natural relations for those that are contrary to nature; and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in themselves the due penalty for their error. And since they did not see fit to acknowledge God, God gave them up to a debased mind to do what ought not to be done. They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are

full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Though they know God's righteous decree that those who practice such things deserve to die, they not only do them but give approval to those who practice them."

- Romans 1:18-32, ESV

943 By virtue of their kingly mission, lay people have the power to uproot the rule of sin within themselves and in the world, by their self-denial and holiness of life (cf. LG 36).

For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another. But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. - Titus 3:3-7



This passage is very clear that it is not by any actions of our own that we are able to be free of sin, but rather that it is the work of God in and through us:

Therefore do not be ashamed of the testimony about our Lord, nor of me his prisoner, but share in suffering for the gospel by the power of God, who saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace, which he gave us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, and which now has been manifested through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, for which I was appointed a preacher and apostle and teacher, which is why I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed, for I know whom I have believed, and I am convinced that he is able to guard until that Day what has been entrusted to me. - 2 Timothy 1:8-12

If the purpose of Christ saving us is to redeem us and to place the righteousness of Jesus on us sinners, then we have no need to place any of our works before Him. By doing so, we would be claiming that our works are worth more than that holy, yet dreadful act, of the death of Jesus on the cross. By Jesus dying for our sins, there is nothing

that we can do to “uproot” the sin out of our lives. It is only through the grace of God that we can be rid of any of the sin that so pervades our lives:

For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. - Ephesians 2:8-10

Again, if it is only by the work of Christ, then we having nothing to boast in and cannot as the Scriptures say, boast in anything. Not by any means of self-denial or acts of holiness, there is nothing that we can do that can cause us to be free from sin, except the work of the Spirit in us through Jesus:

We ourselves are Jews by birth and not Gentile sinners; yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified. - Galatians 2:15-16

If no one can be justified through the works of the law that was given to the Jewish people by God Himself, then why should we assume that we could rid ourselves of sin by just trying to apply self-denial to our lives? There is a time for fasting and seeking after God's face, but the act of self-denial cannot free us of sin. The only thing that can do that is the work of Christ on the cross:

Though they were not yet born and had done nothing either good or bad – in order that God's purpose of election might continue, not because of works but because of his call. – Romans 9:11

1711 Endowed with a spiritual soul, with intellect and with free will, the human person is from his very conception ordered to God and destined for eternal beatitude. He pursues his perfection in "seeking and loving what is true and good" (GS 15 § 2).

Where in this world have we seen this to be true? When have we seen that human beings are naturally ordered to God from their conception and destined for eternal beatitude (blessedness)? Or "seeking what is true and good," where have we ever seen this in the magnitude of humanity?

Instead of seeing mankind search for what is true and

good, we see the death and persecution of Christians the whole world over. We see murderous people attempting to reach their selfish and personal goals through death and destruction. We see great parts of the world starving and dying of thirst, while the rest of us use water to fill our pools and to bathe.

And as he was setting out on his journey, a man ran up and knelt before him and asked him, "Good Teacher, what must I do to inherit eternal life?" And Jesus said to him, "Why do you call me good? No one is good except God alone. - Mark 10:17-18, ESV

What then? Are we Jews any better off? No, not at all. For we have already charged that all, both Jews and Greeks, are under sin, as it is written: "None is righteous, no, not one; no one understands; no one seeks for God. All have turned aside; together they have become worthless; no one does good, not even one." "Their throat is an open grave; they use their tongues to deceive." "The venom of asps is under their lips." "Their mouth is full of curses and bitterness." "Their feet are swift to shed blood; in their paths are ruin and misery, and the way of peace they have not known." "There is no fear of God before their eyes." - Romans 3:9-18, ESV

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There is nowhere in these verses, or the many others like them, that say anything about humankind being good and searching for what is true and good. The only time that can happen is when God opens a person's mind to the truth and reveals His goodness to that person.

For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience. Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for

words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. For those whom he foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers. And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified. - Romans 8:18-30, ESV

This seems pretty clear. People are not searching for goodness and truth, but are rather empty and broken. God calls them unto Himself and sets them free from “bondage to corruption.”¹⁰ The whole of creation has been subjected to futility and sin and the effects of that sin:

I will sprinkle clean water on you, and you shall be clean from all your uncleannesses, and from all your idols I will cleanse you. And I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. And I

¹⁰ Romans 8

will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes and be careful to obey my rules. You shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers, and you shall be my people, and I will be your God. And I will deliver you from all your uncleanness. - Ezekiel 36:25-29, ESV

1743 "God willed that man should be left in the hand of his own counsel (cf. Sir 15:14), so that he might of his own accord seek his creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him" (GS 17 § 1).

This statement is so full of heresy that it amazes me that men who claim to be ministers of God would even begin to think that this is true. Scripture clearly, and in many places, lays out for us our true condition. As was examined in the previous point, no one is righteous, and no one is searching for God. The only way that someone comes to God is through the Spirit/Father drawing and moving in that person's heart. There is nothing else that causes a person to come to Christ. Not their own merit, choice, goodness, or physical ability. None of these have the slightest influence on why and how a person first comes to

know Jesus Christ.

First, if it were of our own accord that we came to a saving faith, would we not then be saving ourselves? Does this not make God weak and unsure of how His pure and perfect sacrifice will come out? Does He not then merely sit by wringing His hands and hoping that we search hard enough to see the small glimpses of God that we may come in contact with? I do not believe that the God of the universe, creator of the universe, and sustainer of all things merely sits by or rests and allows us to wander about hoping to bump into us. The God of the universe breathes life into those whom He has chosen for His people and to call unto Himself.

Second, how can we cleave to Him? This not only says that we have the strength and ability to save ourselves through our own efforts, but also claims that once we have done so we can cling to Christ in such a way that our cleaving will sanctify us. This is completely unbiblical and false to its very core.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes

to me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.” So the Jews grumbled about him, because he said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does he now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me—not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this

bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.” The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” So Jesus said to them, “Truly, truly, I say to you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day. For my flesh is true food, and my blood is true drink. Whoever feeds on my flesh and drinks my blood abides in me, and I in him. As the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever feeds on me, he also will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like the bread the fathers ate, and died. Whoever feeds on this bread will live forever.” Jesus said these things in the synagogue, as he taught at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, “This is a hard saying; who can listen to it?” But Jesus, knowing in himself that his disciples were grumbling about this, said to them, “Do you take offense at this? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh is no help at all. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you who do not believe.”

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(For Jesus knew from the beginning who those were who did not believe, and who it was who would betray him.) And he said, "This is why I told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father. - John 6:35-65, ESV

This could not be any clearer. It is exactly as it reads. Jesus never turns away anyone who comes to Him. Yet, not every person in the world will be saved. So, how can this be true? It is true because this passage of Scripture also lets us know that "no one can come to me unless it is granted him by the Father."¹¹ This means that in order for someone to come to Christ and not be turned away, they must first be called, drawn, granted this ability and saving action by the Father. There is no other way to look at this passage. When we say the only way to salvation is through Jesus, it is the only way to saving faith. However, there is nothing that we can do to discover or merit this mercy and grace. It is one hundred percent an action of God the Father through the work of His Son on earth and the cross as well as the work of the Holy Spirit in the hearts and minds of those to whom the Father has freely given saving faith.

¹¹ John 6:65

The Church

Chapter Six

36 "Our holy mother, the Church, holds and teaches that God, the first principle and last end of all things, can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason."¹¹ Without this capacity, man would not be able to welcome God's revelation. Man has this capacity because he is created "in the image of God".¹²

No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, 'And they will all

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be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me – not that anyone has seen the Father except he who is from God; he has seen the Father. - John 6:44, ESV

Human reason cannot cause someone to come to knowledge and faith in God. Man does not welcome God’s revelation, he is drawn by the Spirit into a realization that he is nothing, and that Jesus is all:

But how are they to call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!’ But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?’ So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. - Romans 10:14-17

Paul, in Romans, clearly states that there is no way to get to know God, except through the Word being preached. Man cannot get to know God by any means of his own.

869 The Church is apostolic. She is built on a lasting foundation: "the twelve apostles of the Lamb" (Rev

21:14). She is indestructible (cf. Mt 16:18). She is upheld infallibly in the truth: Christ governs her through Peter and the other apostles, who are present in their successors, the Pope and the college of bishops.

I would like to see where in the Bible the pope is described along with the college of bishops as the successor to Peter and the rest of the apostles. Rather, Christ is the head of the church, the pope is not.

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power

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and dominion, above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all. - Ephesians 1:15-23

It seems to me that there is no mention of human beings here, but rather that Christ rules and governs the church by His own power and not that of the pope. Paul proclaims:

And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. - Colossians 1:18

936 The Lord made St. Peter the visible foundation of his Church. He entrusted the keys of the Church to him. The bishop of the Church of Rome, successor to St. Peter, is "head of the college of bishops, the Vicar of Christ and Pastor of the universal Church on earth" (CIC, can. 331).

I would like to ask some questions regarding this statement. First, how is that the Roman Catholic Church regards Peter as the head of the church on earth when he wasn't even the head of the church in Jerusalem? Secondly, how is it that one man can have charge over the whole church on earth? Is not that role supposed to belong solely to Christ?

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities – all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. - Colossians 1:15-20

962 "We believe in the communion of all the faithful of Christ, those who are pilgrims on earth, the dead who are being purified, and the blessed in heaven, all together forming one Church; and we believe that in



this communion, the merciful love of God and his saints is always [attentive] to our prayers" (Paul VI, CPG § 30).

Here we see a very subtle reference to the idea of "purgatory". We must see that they clearly distinguish between "those who are pilgrims on earth" and "the dead who are being purified" and "the blessed in heaven". There should be no difference between the second and third descriptions. God molds us and purifies us as we go through our lives. The church calls this sanctification and it is never fully completed on this earth until we reach heaven and join Christ around the throne. There is never an instance in Scripture where an idea of being purified after death is mentioned.

Once someone dies, they are present with the Lord, rejoicing and worshipping Him forever. There is never a time when they are being purified after death. Any purification that a believer receives is final upon their death. Death is final. There is not a time or place where people dwell to receive further purification, for they must already be seen as pure. Christ's righteousness has covered all who believe and the Spirit works in us throughout our lives to bring us closer to holiness, but upon our death we are glorified not sent to a holding place for further

purification.

986 By Christ's will, the Church possesses the power to forgive the sins of the baptized and exercises it through bishops and priests normally in the sacrament of Penance.

Again, I do not see any reference in Scripture to baptism being the thing that can save a person. We know that the church has no power over the forgiveness of sins, but that it is an act of God. God is the only one who can forgive sins and there is not a thing that we can do as humans to save ourselves or other people for that matter. The Holy Spirit works in human beings to bring about repentance. Bishops and priests have no power to do so.

And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead. To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name. - Acts 10:42-43

In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all

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wisdom and insight making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. - Ephesians 1:7-10

Here we see our forgiveness and sin taken away, not by the church, but by Christ's blood and His work on the cross. It is through the shedding of the Lamb's blood that we can find comfort and solace. His purposes are for the good of those who love Him and it is through His blood alone that our sins are removed.

1053 "We believe that the multitude of those gathered around Jesus and Mary in Paradise forms the Church of heaven, where in eternal blessedness they see God as he is and where they are also, to various degrees, associated with the holy angels in the divine governance exercised by Christ in glory, by interceding for us and helping our weakness by their fraternal concern" (Paul VI, CPG § 29).

After this I looked, and behold, a door standing open in heaven! And the first voice, which I had heard speaking to me like a trumpet, said, 'Come up here, and I will show you what must take place after this.'

At once I was in the Spirit, and behold, a throne stood in heaven, with one seated on the throne. And he who sat there had the appearance of jasper and carnelian, and around the throne was a rainbow that had the appearance of an emerald. Around the throne were twenty-four thrones, and seated on the thrones were twenty-four elders, clothed in white garments, with golden crowns on their heads. From the throne came flashes of lightning, and rumblings and peals of thunder, and before the throne were burning seven torches of fire, which are the seven spirits of God, and before the throne there was as it were a sea of glass, like crystal. And around the throne, on each side of the throne are four living creatures, full of eyes in front and behind: the first living creature like an ox, the third living creature with the face of a man, and the fourth living creature like an eagle in flight. And the four living creatures, each of them with six wings, are full of eyes all around and within, and day and night they never cease to say, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty, who was and is and is to come!' And whenever the living creatures give glory and honor and thanks to him who is seated on the throne, who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders fall down before him who is seated on the throne and

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worship him who lives forever and ever. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.' - Revelation 4

This passage is long and is not fully understood by many. However, there is no mention of Mary being at the center of this vision with Jesus. It is a picture of God's throne and everyone is bowing and praising Him, not Mary. Mary does not have any power over the salvation of souls and there is nothing in Scripture to suggest that she does. The Catholic Church comes so close to making Mary a part of the Godhead that it surely is blasphemy. If this statement were to be read by any person, who was not a Christian, they would surely come to that conclusion. This is unbearable, to see someone willingly trying to lead people astray and away from God.

1195 By keeping the memorials of the saints - first of all the holy Mother of God, then the apostles, the martyrs, and other saints - on fixed days of the liturgical year, the Church on earth shows that she is united with the liturgy of heaven. She gives glory to Christ for having accomplished his salvation in his glorified members; their example encourages her on

her way to the Father.

So, instead of looking to Christ every day of our lives and taking comfort in the knowledge that He is our High Priest and intercedes on our behalf to the Father, the Roman Catholic Church wants us to “keep memorials of the saints in order to be united with the liturgy of heaven.” This is blasphemous! We are not called to keep a memory of the saints. The only reason that we have a record of the saints and what they did/went through is to see the way that God kept them till the end and to be able to better glorify God with our lives. The example of the saints before us does bring us encouragement. Not in a way that makes us feel like we can make it to the end, but rather that Christ has promised that because He began a good work in us He will bring it to completion. It is through the work of Jesus that the saints who have gone before us pressed on towards the goal, and it is this fact, that the same Jesus that helped them to press on now does so for us as well that brings us comfort and joy.

And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ. It is right for me to feel this way about you all, because I hold you in my heart, for you are all partakers with me of grace, both in my



imprisonment and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel. For God is my witness, how I yearn for you all with the affection of Christ Jesus. And it is my prayer that your love may abound more and more, with knowledge and all discernment, so that you may approve what is excellent, and so be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. - Philippians 1:6-11, ESV

1531 The celebration of the Anointing of the Sick consists essentially in the anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick person (in the Roman Rite) or of other parts of the body (in the Eastern rite), the anointing being accompanied by the liturgical prayer of the celebrant asking for the special grace of this sacrament.

To pray over or to anoint someone for a purpose of healing or prayer is a wonderful and practiced method displayed many times throughout Scripture. However, the Roman Catholic Church would have one believe that it is a commanded sacrament, along with others such as the Lord's Supper or Baptism. However, it is never commanded within Scripture. Their definition of what "Anointing of the

Sick” is as follows:

The special grace of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects: the uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church; the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age; the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of penance; the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul; the preparation for passing over to eternal life (CCC 1532)

First, references such as James 5:14, Mark 6:13, Luke 7:38, and 2 Corinthians 1:21, among others, all speak of two things. Either it is Jesus talking about the way in which the Father has anointed Him and sent Him to earth to be the salvation of all people, or they speak about the ways in which Jesus anointed the apostles to preach and to heal those with whom they came in contact with. There are no longer any apostles alive, the last having died around two thousand years ago.

Second, this practice claims that it is able to administer

the forgiveness of sins upon the individual being anointed even without repentance, and even if there was no forgiveness during the act of penance. As Christians, how can this be? If we were able to merely go about anointing people thereby saving their souls, then why is this not prescribed in Scripture as the proper and best method for reaching the lost? What is prescribed in Scripture is that we should:

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. - Matthew 28:19-20

We are to go into the entire world, preaching the Gospel, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ and declaring His majesty to all. As it says in Romans:

How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching? And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good

news!" But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?" So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ. - Romans 10:14-17, ESV

1532 The special grace of the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects: - the uniting of the sick person to the passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church; - the strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age; - the forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance; - the restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul; - the preparation for passing over to eternal life.

This point ties directly into the previous section. We need to take comfort and joy in Jesus and His sacrifice that He has made for us upon the cross, and not in something that mere man can do for us. Is there any comfort in trusting in men rather than the almighty sovereign God?

I do believe that mere man can have a good and holy effect upon another individual, but not because he is special

or what he does is special in any way. Rather, that because of the grace of God working through the Holy Spirit in that individual he can be used as an instrument of God in order to providentially work out the will of God.

1592 The ministerial priesthood differs in essence from the common priesthood of the faithful because it confers a sacred power for the service of the faithful. The ordained ministers exercise their service for the People of God by teaching (*munus docendi*), divine worship (*munus liturgicum*) and pastoral governance (*munus regendi*).

The reason that I wanted to discuss what was written in this point stems from the Roman Catholic Church's desire to raise ministerial priests to a higher and more sacred level than other Christians. It would seem that this would be their attempt at trying to make some people more holy than others, and thereby following directly in the footsteps of the Pharisees. The author of Hebrews says:

Obey your leaders and submit to them, for they are keeping watch over your souls, as those who will have to give an account. Let them do this with joy and not with groaning, for that would be of no advantage to you. - Hebrews 13:17, ESV

The pastors of our churches have been called by God to lead us in learning and discerning what Scripture says. However, the higher calling on their lives to preach the Gospel does not make them a super Christian or anything of the like. Paul goes so far as to call himself the chief of sinners. There is never a time in a person's life where they should not feel called and enabled to share the Gospel with another person or to minister to their soul if they are so given the opportunity.

In fact Scripture says:

For the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would be the sense of hearing? If the whole body were an ear, where would be the sense of smell? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, yet one body.

The eye cannot say to the hand, "I have no need of you," nor again the head to the feet, "I have no need of you." On the contrary, the parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and on those parts of the body that we think less honorable we bestow the greater honor, and our unpresentable parts are treated with greater modesty, which our more presentable parts do not require. But God has so composed the body, giving greater honor to the part that lacked it, that there may be no division in the body, but that the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together. - 1 Corinthians 12:14-26, ESV

Are those that preach and teach on a consistent basis then not only parts of the body as a whole, and merely hold a different role than some other parts of the body? Or are they a "sacred" piece of the body that is somehow greater and more gifted than the rest? Those that preach and teach have a greater and higher calling on their lives, and yet that does not mean that it is a more sacred calling than the rest of the body has. They are a piece of the body of Christ and are not greater or above it, but they are called and led by God to teach and explain Scripture to the best of their ability to the rest of the body of Christ.

Without a congregation/audience, there is no one to teach and preach to, and in the same way; without those that teach and preach, there are no congregations. They would not survive. They would be fed milk as babies and then later die from lack of food. Therefore, each piece of the body needs the other. Through the growth of those that preach and teach, the congregation grows. And with the growth of a congregation a preacher/teacher grows, in order to continuously feed such a congregation and the cycle continues in order to see more and more clearly the grace of God in the depths of a sinner's unrighteousness.

1599 In the Latin Church the sacrament of Holy Orders for the presbyterate is normally conferred only on candidates who are ready to embrace celibacy freely and who publicly manifest their intention of staying celibate for the love of God's kingdom and the service of men.

Why would this be the case? Even though I completely disagree with their assertion that Peter was the first pope and therefore all who follow are in succession to him. Let us, for a moment, use their assertion. It is known that Peter had at least a wife if not also children:

Now Simon's mother-in-law lay ill with a fever, and



immediately they told him about her. And he came and took her by the hand and lifted her up, and the fever left her, and she began to serve them. - Mark 1:30-31, ESV

Do we not have the right to take along a believing wife, as do the other apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas? - 1 Corinthians 9:5, ESV

So, even if I held to their belief that Peter was the first pope, which I do not, and even if I believed that they are right in their assessment that candidates should embrace celibacy if they want to serve God's kingdom, which I do not, are not these two statements in great contradiction to one another? Let alone that their assertion that candidates should be willing to embrace celibacy would seem to completely contradict Scripture, which is a much greater reason to not believe their statement about this issue and to label it as a disturbing falsehood.

For, do we not also see this very thing in the next point in this discussion? If their next statement is true, should not those within the leadership of the church have spouses if they so desire in order to be able to display this great example of Christ and the church?

1661 The sacrament of Matrimony signifies the union

of Christ and the Church. It gives spouses the grace to love each other with the love with which Christ has loved his Church; the grace of the sacrament thus perfects the human love of the spouses, strengthens their indissoluble unity, and sanctifies them on the way to eternal life (cf. Council of Trent: DS 1799).

This can only be true with believers. If two non-believers or a believer and a non-believer are married, then it is impossible for both parties to love one another. Without the grace and mercy of God living through us, we cannot love anyone, let alone one with whom we see all of their flaws along with their strengths.

No sacrament can “perfect” human love. The only way that love can be perfected is to continuously, throughout one’s life, be sanctified by God for His glory.

1677 Sacramentals are sacred signs instituted by the Church. They prepare men to receive the fruit of the sacraments and sanctify different circumstances of life.

Here the Catholic Church claims that the sacraments have been instituted by the church. I would deeply disagree with this statement. Those sacraments which are found in

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Scripture, i.e., baptism and communion, were instituted by Jesus Christ. He instituted the Lord's Supper/Communion with all of His disciples, seen clearly in Scripture on the same night that He reveals that Judas is the one who will betray Him. He also instituted baptism through His commands and declaration to go to the entire world making disciples and baptizing those who hear and obey the voice of the Good Shepherd.¹²

¹² Matthew 28

The Pope

Chapter Seven

937 The Pope enjoys, by divine institution, "supreme, full, immediate, and universal power in the care of souls" (CD 2).

Therefore put away all filthiness and rampant wickedness and receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able to save your souls. – James 1:21, ESV

This says nothing and has nothing to do with the pope or what his rights are. In God alone do we see the forgiveness of a person's soul. Thankfully we know that the

pope does not have care of our soul. We can rest in knowing that Christ alone cares for us and upholds us by His word.

Though you have not seen him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory, obtaining the outcome of your faith, the salvation of your souls. - I Peter 1:8-9

It is seen here that it is through Christ that our souls are saved and there is nothing that the pope does to aid in that salvation. If we put our trust and hope in Christ, that is enough. This was one of the many mantras of the Protestant Reformation and led to Solus Christus (Christ alone) becoming one of the five solas of the Reformation.

There has never been anyone, man or woman, that has been given the ability to care for souls, except for God Himself. If we were to believe that their assertion were true, would not the statement that the pope has supreme and full care of souls imply and even state outright that the pope has more care over souls than our Lord and Savior, Jesus? We cannot agree to such a statement for fear of blaspheming our God.

The Roman Catholic Church wants people to believe that they are the way to God, that they care about people,

and that they understand Scripture better than anyone else. These statements are all false. They are not the way to God, Jesus is. They do not care about people, if they did would they hold their souls in such low regard as to entrust them to the power of a mere man? Jesus is the one who holds those of faith in the palm of His hand, and we do not need any man to try to care for us. They do not understand Scripture better than others, because they claim that the pope has control over souls and yet we know that Christ is the One who cares for us and upholds by his word.

1594 The bishop receives the fullness of the sacrament of Holy Orders, which integrates him into the episcopal college and makes him the visible head of the particular Church entrusted to him. As successors of the apostles and members of the college, the bishops share in the apostolic responsibility and mission of the whole Church under the authority of the Pope, successor of St. Peter.

Here I challenge anyone to find any place in Scripture that discusses how and who will become the successors of the apostles. The apostles did not have successors. They made disciples of the Lord, just as every Christian is called to do, but they did not have successors in their apostleship. There are certain qualities of an apostle that cannot be met



by any human being since the time of Christ. Namely, that in order to be an apostle one must have been a witness to Christ and His ministry.

The second piece of this statement, which is extremely unnerving, is that they claim that the whole church is under the authority of the pope. This is enough that anyone who reads Scripture for themselves should see to be a falsehood and heresy. If we believe that one man, no different than the rest of us, should be the supreme head and authority of the church, then who keeps that man accountable and true to what Scripture says?

He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things were created through him and for him. And he is before all things, and in him all things hold together. And he is the head of the body, the church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in everything he might be preeminent. For in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross. - Colossians 1:15-20, ESV

So, if the Roman Catholic Church claims that the pope is the head of the church, and has authority over all other aspects of the church, how does the church receive any strength and direction from God? Is God bound by the laws of men and pyramid schemes designed to create worldly authority and power? In no way at all! God can guide any one of His children through Scripture, nature, the words of a fellow believer, or by any number of ways that do not involve the authority of the pope.

2050 The Roman Pontiff and the bishops, as authentic teachers, preach to the People of God the faith which is to be believed and applied in moral life. It is also incumbent on them to pronounce on moral questions that fall within the natural law and reason.

What is this statement getting at? To say that someone is an authentic teacher would be to insinuate that there are those who are false or unauthentic teachers. While we can most definitely see in Scripture that there are false teachers, labeled as “wolves in sheep’s clothing”¹³, we can also see that the Church of Rome excludes all Protestants from being authentic teachers.

¹³ Matthew 7:15

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They are in fact saying that all those who teach and preach, but are not a part of the Church of Rome are false or un-authentic teachers. Are we really to believe that the only “church” in the whole world to hold the truth and right to share that truth with others to be the Church of Rome? Heaven forbid this be true. If this were true then not even the apostles were qualified to share the Gospel, these being the very same apostles that the Church of Rome would claim to hold some special lineage with.

We have seen over and over again the simple fact that Jesus gave the same commandment to all believers:

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age. - Matthew 28:18-20, ESV

We do not see that those who are spreading the truth and baptizing should go through the Church of Rome first, but rather they get their authority from God alone. Every Christian that lives on this earth has the power and ability to preach and teach others about the truth of the Gospel.

That is what Christ has done for us, what He strengthens us to be able to do each and every day. It is through His power that we are used by the Holy Spirit to lead others to the Father.

2051 The infallibility of the Magisterium of the Pastors extends to all the elements of doctrine, including moral doctrine, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, expounded, or observed.

This statement is complete heresy. There is nothing true to be found within it. To be infallible means that whatever you say is true. It means that you cannot in any way be wrong. It means that you cannot be questioned because, how could you be wrong in the first place to be questioned.

The only person that has ever walked this earth and has been infallible was Jesus Christ. If someone else were to be considered infallible and then say something that goes against Scripture, which we have examined many times within this work, who would be right? Can we truly believe that a mere man, because that is all the pope is along with his magisterium of pastors, can say something that is considered infallible, even if it goes directly against the

teachings of Jesus? As Christians, we can only believe that Scripture is infallible and that all people must be put to the test of Scripture to see if what they say is true or not. If they go against Scripture, then they have to be wrong and cannot be infallible.

The only thing that Protestants believe is infallible on this earth is Scripture. We believe that through the Holy Spirit men were guided to write the words that are contained within it and to lay out the truths that God wants us to see. Scripture is the guide that God has given to us to be able to discern if something is true or false.

The only way that the “saving truths of the faith” can be preserved, are through Scripture. Men have limitations and are mistaken in their thoughts and deeds. Men teach things that are not true. Men lean too heavily upon church practices and tradition. Men are fallible. God has seen fit to show us the things that are in Scripture and has deemed that it is enough for us to live on and by. We have seen the preservation of Scripture throughout all times, whereas the words of men have come and gone. The Bible is the only thing that God has preserved throughout the ages. To think that even all the translations of the Bible into so many languages, has not distorted the truth that can be found within it, that is truly a remarkable work of God.

Praise God that the Roman Catholic Church is not the

only way to salvation and that they are not infallible. If they were, then the Protestant Reformation would never have happened. The hundreds of men and women that gave their lives in order to sing the praises of their Savior would have been for naught. The Roman Catholic Church tried to stamp out the ideas that would lead to the Protestant Reformation for hundreds of years. They tried to keep the common people in darkness and refused to allow them to read the Scriptures for themselves. Yet, God continued to raise up men and women who sought to bring the Scriptures into the lives of those around them. God's Word cannot be contained, not even by a group of people that claim to be infallible holding the power over your soul.

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Heaven & Hell

Chapter Eight

1022 Each man receives his eternal retribution in his immortal soul at the very moment of his death, in a particular judgment that refers his life to Christ: either entrance into the blessedness of heaven--through a purification or immediately, -- or immediate and everlasting damnation. At the evening of life, we shall be judged on our love.

All human beings will receive either entrance into the throne room of God, or will spend eternity in hell receiving the due punishment for their sins. However, what the Roman Catholic Church fails to realize when discussing this point is the very manner by which anyone enters the throne room of God. They assert that everyone will be judged on the love that they have or have shown.

This is contrary to what is taught in Scripture. We are held accountable for our lives here on earth, but our love is not what we are judged by. We are judged according to whether or not we have been covered by the blood of Jesus and clothed in His righteousness. It is only through the imputation of His righteousness that we could ever enter into the presence of God.

For consider your calling, brothers: not many of you were wise according to worldly standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth. But God chose what is foolish in the world to shame the wise; God chose what is weak in the world to shame the strong; God chose what is low and despised in the world, even things that are not, to bring to nothing things that are, so that no human being might boast in the presence of God. And because of him you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God,

righteousness and sanctification and redemption, so that, as it is written, "Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord." - 1 Corinthians 1:26-31, ESV

This passage from I Corinthians demonstrates that the Apostle Paul understood the imputed righteousness of Christ. It is not by our own merit and attempts to love that we can enter into God's presence. For, we know from 1 John that God is love and apart from Him we cannot love.¹⁴ Our love and deeds are as filthy rags before God. The only thing that can tip the scales in our favor is the imputed righteousness of Jesus.

As far as the reference to a purification needed by some to enter into heaven, there is no purification needed for the believer after death. Either they are under the blood of Christ and are declared righteous because of Him, or they are not. If they are not, then they are not a believer and have not faith.

1030 All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary

¹⁴ I John 4

to enter the joy of heaven.

We do not need any purification after death, for Jesus has already paid for the entirety of our sins if we are in Him. Therefore, we have no condemnation or need of further purification.¹⁵ Jesus suffered the wrath of God so that we do not have to. Our purification took place once and for every sin that we have or will ever commit.

When we die, we are, as Paul stated, present with the Lord. We are not held somewhere for extra treatment and examination. Our sins have been paid for, all of them once by Jesus. It is through this false idea of the need for purification that the Roman Catholic Church strives to wring monetary gifts from those who are in grief at the thought of the death of a loved one. Instead of understanding that those who have died in faith are worshipping their God forever, they would claim that they need to receive a little extra something in order to reach that destination. They claim that the only way that they can receive that extra something is for those who remain on earth, after or during the death of a loved one, to pay for the left-over sins that need to be purified.

¹⁵ Romans 8:1

1031 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 Councils of Florence and Trent. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire: As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come.

The Roman Catholic Church places an extra place of existence that is not found within Scripture upon the Gospel. Purgatory was, as was previously mentioned, brought into existence in order to help institute a way to incorporate indulgences into the church. It is not something that can be found anywhere in Scripture and yet the Roman Catholic Church continues to place a high value upon its existence.

Leading up to the Protestant Reformation, the Roman Catholic Church began to lean upon the sorrowful hearts

of those who had loved ones die without repentance and faith. They charged these unlearned people exorbitant amounts of money in order to raise money for their buildings, more specifically St. Peter's Basilica in Rome. The Roman Catholic Church crushed the common people in order to build a ridiculously exorbitant building in the name of "Christianity".

At the time of the Protestant Reformation the only Bible that the Church had was in the Latin Vulgate. Therefore, the only people that could read the Scriptures were those who were scholars or those who were in the clergy within the Roman Catholic Church. The Bible was not something that people could read for themselves and because of this, the Roman Catholic Church manipulated and played upon the emotions of the people. They created purgatory in order to create a way to raise more money than people were merely willing to give on their own.

This is the very definition of what a wolf in sheep's clothing looks like. It is the very thing that brought about the Protestant Reformation. There were many who had attempted to stand against the use of indulgences in the past, but no one stood more vehemently against their use than Martin Luther. While his actions in nailing his 95 *Theses* to the door in Wittenberg surely began the Reformation, it was not the end.

Purgatory is a man-made attempt to give false hope to those who wish that their loved ones were Christians and a deception against the very work and nature of Christ. If He paid once for the sins of those who are to be redeemed, then what is there that needs to be purified in purgatory? There is nothing that God has not forgiven in His redeemed people. Charles Spurgeon said this on the topic of purgatory:

When the thief died on the cross, he had but just believed, and had never done a single good work. But where did he go? He ought to have gone to purgatory by rights if ever anybody did. But instead of that the Saviour said to him, "Today shalt thou be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Why? Because the ground of the man's admission into Paradise was perfect. – C. H. Spurgeon, MTP Vol 12 pg. 562.

How can God's people go to purgatory? For if they go there at all, they go there for sins which God does not remember, and so he cannot give a reason for sending them there. Does God forgive and forget and yet punish? When you die you shall either go to heaven or to hell, and that immediately. Your state in either case will be fixed eternally without the possibility of change. This doctrine is the cornerstone

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of PROTESTANTISM. – C. H. Spurgeon, MTP Vol 28
pg. 585.

1037 God predestines no one to go to hell; for this, a willful turning away from God (a mortal sin) is necessary, and persistence in it until the end. In the Eucharistic liturgy and in the daily prayers of her faithful, the Church implores the mercy of God, who does not want "any to perish, but all to come to repentance": Father, accept this offering from your whole family. Grant us your peace in this life, save us from final damnation, and count us among those you have chosen.

The simple answer to this point lies in the story of Jacob and Esau. God loved one and hated the other.¹⁶ This is a statement of wrath and righteous anger towards someone who is not covered by the blood of Christ. If God truly wished for all to come to repentance as the Roman Catholic Church wants you to believe then why would God hate Esau before he was even born? He had done nothing in this life, and yet he was already condemned by God. If that is not predestining someone to go to hell I do not know

¹⁶ Romans 9:13

what would be.

Paul follows up his discussion of Jacob and Esau by stating:

What shall we say then? Is there injustice on God's part? By no means! For he says to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I have compassion." So then it depends not on human will or exertion, but on God, who has mercy. For the Scripture says to Pharaoh, "For this very purpose I have raised you up, that I might show my power in you, and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth." So then he has mercy on whomever he wills, and he hardens whomever he wills. - Romans 9:14-18, ESV

He clearly is not trying to say that God's hatred of Esau was something that would ever be remedied. It was due to Esau's sin (the very nature of his being that was passed on to him due to the sin of Adam) and God's sovereign choice to let him live in that sin that God hated him. He knew that He had not chosen Esau to amongst His people, and therefore He had every right to hate him.

There is nothing that we can do as humans that can bring us into the presence of God to enjoy His affections.



As Paul demonstrates through his reference to Pharaoh, there are people that God uses for His praise and glory that are merely there to be destroyed and to demonstrate the wickedness of men. The Roman Catholic Church wants people to believe that they have some power to be able to save themselves without God choosing them. This is not true to what Scripture teaches. Scripture teaches that we need the Holy Spirit to draw us unto God. This passage from Romans clearly says that God shows mercy to certain people but also hardens others.

If we are in Christ, there is no sin that we can commit that can separate us from His love. His love is unending and flows to and through us because of God the Father's love for His Son Jesus. His name and glory are of the utmost importance. God has every right to do whatever He wants in order to proclaim His name to the nations. That includes predestining people for hell (or damnation) and predestining people to be His elect (or chosen). If you cannot affirm this, then you do not believe that God is sovereign over all things.

1057 Hell's principal punishment consists of eternal separation from God in whom alone man can have the life and happiness for which he was created and for which he longs.

We do know that hell will be eternal punishment. However, if it was merely a separation from God, would that not bring joy to so many people that have rejected and persecuted Him? Hell's principal punishment is GOD. His wrath is the punishment received. Without God being there, there can be no wrath. So, instead of being separated from God, the very sight of God's glory and righteousness will be their greatest punishment.

And another angel, a third, followed them, saying with a loud voice, "If anyone worships the beast and its image and receives a mark on his forehead or on his hand, he also will drink the wine of God's wrath, poured full strength into the cup of his anger, and he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb. And the smoke of their torment goes up forever and ever, and they have no rest, day or night, these worshipers of the beast and its image, and whoever receives the mark of its name. - Revelation 14:9-11, ESV

These verses from Revelation are talking about eternal punishment, and yet there is a clear mention to the fact that "he will be tormented with fire and sulfur in the presence of the holy angels and in the presence of the Lamb." This is

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the complete opposite of what the Catholic Church states above.

Instead of teaching that God is sovereign over all things, they have chosen to present a place of existence that does not contain the presence of God. This should not only frighten us, but also cause us to see that the god that they are representing is not the God of the universe. The God of the universe has conquered death and the grave through His work on the cross and therefore has power over everything that He has created, even hell.

We must believe that hell is controlled by God, or otherwise we would have to commit to the idea that its rules and principles are governed by another. If we were to do this, then we would have to say that someone else decides who goes to hell and who does not. This not only would affect God's sovereignty over hell, but it would also affect the work of salvation that He has done for those whom He loves.

Therefore, God must be declared as sovereign over everything, including hell and all of its eternal punishments. If He is not, then we do not serve a sovereign God. If God is not sovereign, then He is not God. Therefore, we must hold true to the simple and yet profound fact that God is sovereign and ruler over all things.

Idols

Chapter Nine

1192 Sacred images in our churches and homes are intended to awaken and nourish our faith in the mystery of Christ. Through the icon of Christ and his works of salvation, it is he whom we adore. Through sacred images of the holy Mother of God, of the angels and of the saints, we venerate the persons represented.

The definition of venerate is as follows: *“To regard with reverential respect or with admiring deference. To honor with a ritual act of devotion.”*

When you look at synonyms for the word venerate you

see a very interesting thing. Some of the examples of synonyms for this word include; deify, worship, glorify, and adore. When you merely look at the definition for the word venerate it does not appear to be all that harmful. However, to use it means that you are putting the same connotation upon it that falls upon such words as I have previously listed. We cannot worship, adore, glorify, or deify any of the saints, angels, or Mary. This goes against one of the most clear and explained commands that God has put forth to us.

You shall have no other gods before me. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. - Exodus 20:3-6, ESV

It is very clear in the book of Exodus that we are not to put anyone or anything in the place of Christ. Yet, the Roman Catholic Church calls its people to venerate all the

saints, angels, and Mary. This is contrary to what Scripture teaches and is a blatant attempt to lead people astray from the word of God and His saving grace.

Not only does the Church of Rome call people to worship fellow saints, they also claim continuously that Mary is the mother of God in such a way that in no way subscribes to what is said throughout the pages of Scripture. (See the chapter on Mary for further clarification on this topic.)

God is extremely jealous. Not in the manner that we become jealous as human beings. We respond to the affections shown to or by others with disdain and envy. This is what jealous means to us and in our lives. We think that other people should show us the same affections that they show to everyone and consider ourselves worthy of those affections. However, we do not deserve to receive the affections of anyone. The only person that ever walked the earth that deserves to receive the affections of every single person is Jesus Christ.

It is because of the fact that God is holy, righteous and perfect that He is jealous. He not only deserves to be revered and worshipped, but He also commands us to do so. He is our Creator and therefore reserves the right to command us to do what He wills. Since there are many who reject this commandment and refuse to acknowledge God

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as their Creator, they will be consumed by His wrath, either in this life or in the next. No one who rejects God can escape His judgement and wrath.

God alone is to be worshiped and venerated. If we claim that other people are to be considered in such a way, we condemn ourselves. God's righteousness must be seen as sufficient in our lives. We cannot claim that there are those who have gone before us that deserve the praise that is reserved for God alone.

2141 The veneration of sacred images is based on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is not contrary to the first commandment.

When someone says something is not what it looks like, it usually is that thing. To say that one is venerating sacred images is to say that you are worshiping or bowing before those images. To venerate means to worship or adore someone or something. How is this not contrary to the first commandment:

Observe what I command you this day. Behold, I will drive out before you the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. Take care, lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land to which you go, lest it

become a snare in your midst. You shall tear down their altars and break their pillars and cut down their Asherim (for you shall worship no other god, for the LORD, whose name is Jealous, is a jealous God), lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and when they whore after their gods and sacrifice to their gods and you are invited, you eat of his sacrifice, and you take of their daughters for your sons, and their daughters whore after their gods and make your sons whore after their gods. "You shall not make for yourself any gods of cast metal. - Exodus 34:11-17, ESV

And God spoke all these words, saying, "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery. "You shall have no other gods before me. "You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or serve them, for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers on the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, but showing steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. - Exodus 20:1-

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This passage is very clear. Scripture lays out the way in which we are to approach such things, and makes it very clear that there is nothing on earth or in heaven above that we should make into a carved image. The only thing that we should ever venerate is God Himself. We are not to venerate mere human beings, for how do they differ from us? Instead, we are called to worship God in all His glory, and no one else.

The veneration of saints that the Roman Catholic Church claims is based upon the mystery of the Incarnation is ludicrous. To claim that one should venerate the saints that have gone before us because God became flesh does not make sense. There is no correlation between God, who became flesh in the form of man in the person of Jesus the Son, and those who have believed in Him by faith in regards to how they are to be observed. The mystery of the Incarnation is that God, who cannot be contained and is everywhere, came to earth to dwell amongst His creation. The mystery is not that this creation should be worshiped. Human beings are not included in the mystery of Jesus's Incarnation, except to partake of the forgiveness that His work on the cross brings to those whom He has called unto His side.

The Roman Catholic Church attempts to claim that the veneration of saints does not go against the first commandment given to Moses. However, they fail to realize that when they say something that goes against what the entirety of Scripture teaches that they are the ones that are wrong. They are not infallible, for there is only One who is, namely God. They refuse to acknowledge God as the author and finisher of saving faith because they are blinded by their own selfish desires to one day become someone that deserves to be worshipped. The very reason that they claim that the veneration of saints is in line with Scripture is for the very reason that most humans desire to receive the same affection as those around them. They are jealous of their Creator. Instead of giving all praise and honor to Him, they attempt to create a method by which they may obtain the same praise that should only be reserved for God.

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I would like to thank the many individuals who have poured their time and efforts into my life in order to teach and train me in the ways of the Lord. Without the guiding of the Lord this work would not have been possible. Without the help and strength provided through dear brothers and sisters I would not have pressed on towards the completion of this work.

I would like to thank Zac Calkins for his help in beginning this project. He joined with me in many a wonderful conversation about the beginning stages of this work and helped to lay some of the foundational arguments for refuting some of the points contained within.

I would like to thank my wife Bethany and the rest of my family for always encouraging me to press on towards

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this work's completion, even when there were droughts in my desire to write. My family has truly been blessed by God. We have been blessed not only in the ways that the world sees blessings, but also in the ways of the Lord.

Last, I would like to give all glory and honor for anything that is good or true within this work to my Creator and Savior, the Maker of all things, Jesus. Without His work on the cross and in my heart I would never have seen the truths that I have seen. Without His work to remove the scales from my eyes I would still be blinded by my own selfish desires and pride.

About the Author

There are several things that I would claim to be in this world. I am a father, a husband, a son, a brother, and an author. Most importantly, I am a child of the King of kings and Lord of lords. It is through His mercy that I live and breathe and all praise and glory must always go to Him.

I live just south of Boston, MA with my wife Bethany and two children (another one is on the way). Quilan is two and a half years old and Aisling is nine months old. The Lord has been extremely gracious in allowing me to experience life with children and I cannot thank Him enough for that blessing.

If not for Jesus I would be lost in my sin with no hope at all. Thankfully, the Lord chose me and saved me from myself. Before the foundation of the world my name was written in the book of life and there is nothing that I can do to fall away from Him that He has not already paid for on

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the cross. It is because of His sacrifice that I write and attempt to relay His glories to others.

I come from a long and cherished tradition amongst protestant Christianity and desire to share my thoughts about the God we worship with all those who wish to hear. I deeply enjoy learning from those who have gone before us in faith. Without their guiding and teachings I would not know my Lord in the way that I do.

I pray that this book was and will continue to be a blessing to your life and hope that you will engage others in discussion about it as well. I would love to hear any feedback that you might have after reading this work. You can get in touch with me through email at stephen.lukens@gmail.com.

Closing Statements

Thank you for joining me in exploring the Scriptures in their relation to the Roman Catholic Catechism. I hope that this work has opened your eyes to some of the heresies and lies of the Church of Rome. I pray that you will be able to use this work as a tool to minister to your friends, loved ones, and to strangers that you may encounter.

The greatest reason for writing this work has been to open individual's eyes to the truth of Scripture. If something does not measure up to Scripture then we should examine it to the best of our abilities that God has given to us. Take what is written within these pages and search the Scriptures to see if they are true. No man's words should be taken as truth without so doing. Scripture is the ultimate authority that we have on this earth to see whether something is true or false. Therefore, use Scripture

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to the glory of God for the preaching of the Word unto salvation.

I pray that you will begin to explore the Bible more thoroughly and to seek to become immersed within the truths of God. I pray that you will begin to seek out an understanding of the unique and wonderful heritage that gave birth to the Protestant Reformation. I pray that Jesus will always be set before your eyes and that you will always strive to seek Him first.

Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible. - Ephesians 6:23-24, ESV

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