

Bible Truths for Catholic Friends

“Adoring God, praying to him, offering him the worship that belongs to him . . . are acts of the virtue of religion which fall under obedience to the first commandment” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church* section 2135, 1994 ed., *Imprimi Potest* Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, now Pope Benedict XVI). Certainly true religion is about worshipping God. Since learning how you may worship and serve Him now in this life, and then forever in heaven, are goals infinitely greater than all perishable earthly things, if this little pamphlet helps you to truly obey God, it will do you more good than would ten times its weight in gold. Can you, then, do less than read and study it carefully with an open mind and heart?

We may learn the nature of proper worship from the Bible, the error-free Word of God, and the only authority for Christian faith and practice. Scripture shows us that sin makes one unable to worship God (Prov 15:8; 28:9). You sinned in the first man, Adam, for “by [his] disobedience many were made sinners” (Ro 5:19). Furthermore, you were born with a totally depraved sinful nature, with a “heart [that] is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked” (Jer 17:9). In fact, your nature, will, desires, and all else are so corrupted by sin that God views you as utterly unrighteous; apart from a supernatural work of God’s Spirit, you will never even seek after God: “There is none righteous, no, not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one” (Ro 3:10-12). You have also committed innumerable of the vilest sins. You have broken the greatest commandment ever given, to “love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind” (Mt 22:37-38). The Lord Jesus Christ said all unjust anger is murder, so you are a murderer (Mt 5:21-22). He said a lustful thought is adultery, so you are an adulterer (Mt 5:27-28). You have lied, but “all liars shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone” (Rev 21:8). The Bible commands, “Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect” (Mt 5:48), yet you have never obeyed this command in your life. You have been proud (Pr 6:16-19), bitter (Ro 3:14), unthankful (2 Tim 3:2), covetous (2 Tim 3:2), hypocritical (Is 33:14), and have committed countless other sins,

every one of which is written down in God's books (Rev 20:11-15), crying for your damnation before the inflexible justice of the holy Judge. Even one sin of any kind is enough to condemn you—there are no “little” sins that God will overlook, “for whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all” (Jam 2:10) and “as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them” (Gal 3:10). In fact, until you are born again, nothing you do or are pleases God (Rom 8:8)—you have never pleased Him in your life, but are “defiled . . . [with] nothing pure . . . even [your] mind and conscience is defiled . . . [you are] abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate” (Tit 1:15-16). Your “damnation is just” (Rom 3:8), and your sins will compel you to “drink of the wine of the wrath of God, which is poured out without mixture into the cup of his indignation; and [you] shall be tormented with fire and brimstone in the presence of the holy angels, and in the presence of the Lamb: and the smoke of [your] torment ascendeth up for ever and ever: and [you will] have no rest day nor night” (Rev 14:10-11).

However, Jesus Christ, the second Person of the one true Triune God, equal to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit (1 Jn 5:7), became a Man, died and shed His blood on the cross, and rose again, to save you from your sin! “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (Jn 3:16). When Jesus died, “[God the Father] made [Christ] to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him” (2 Cor 5:21). All the sins of the world were placed on the Lord Jesus, who suffered and paid in full the legal penalty demanded. He endured this to forgive all the sins, past, present, and future, of those whom He “washe[s] . . . from [their] sins in his own blood” (Rev 1:5). Christ having suffered and died to pay for their sins as their substitute, God accounts to them the righteousness of His Son; He views them as if they had no sin debt to pay, no sin nature, had lived a sinless life as Christ did, and were as spotless and holy as the Son of God Himself, for “Christ Jesus . . . is made unto [them] . . . righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption” (1 Cor 1:30); they can say, “the LORD [is] our righteousness” (Jer 33:16; 23:6). They are “justified freely by [God's] grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus” (Rom 3:24). To be “justified” is to be “declared

righteous”—it is a judicial act where God pardons the sins of, and accounts and accepts as righteous, all believers, not because of anything worked in them, or done by them, but for Christ’s sake alone, by crediting to them His righteousness. Those who are now “justified by his blood” can have full confidence that they “shall be saved from wrath through him” (Rom 5:9).

The sole condition for receipt of the benefit of Christ’s death is repentant faith in Him—the Bible commands, “Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Ac 3:19), and the Lord Jesus promised, “He that believeth on me hath everlasting life” (Jn 6:47). One repents or turns from his sins to believe or trust in Christ as Lord and Savior, and has his sins washed away and Christ’s righteousness put to his account, at a particular moment in time—it is not a process. Just as one is either physically dead or alive, so before you are born again (Jn 3:3) you are “dead in trespasses and sins,” and “of your father the devil” (Jn 8:44), but at the moment of faith, you are “quickened [made alive] together with Christ” (Eph 2:1-7) and become a child of God (Jn 1:12; Gal 3:26). God says that “by grace [undeserved, unmerited favor] are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Eph 2:8-9), so no good deeds, such as baptism, communion, attempts to keep the ten commandments, confession of sin, acts of penitence, or any other act of ours either saves or helps to save. If salvation is “by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work” (Rom 11:6). Furthermore, once one has received the gift of eternal life simply by faith, he can never be lost—once saved, always saved. The Lord Jesus said, “I give unto [my people] eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father’s hand.” (Jn 10:28-29). This is why, when born again, one can know without a doubt he has eternal life (1 Jn 5:13)—Christ truly “save[s] them to the uttermost that come unto God by him” (Heb 7:25)! Indeed, you must rest upon the merit of this perfect Savior alone, or you will never have pardon—saving faith is not mere intellectual acknowledgment of facts about Christ and His death and resurrection, but trust or dependence upon Him alone to save. The justified can say, “I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that

which I have committed unto him against that day” (2 Tim 1:12). It is “to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness” (Rom 4:5). One who makes works or sacraments necessary for salvation may know facts about the Bible and God, as even the devils do (Jam 2:19), but he does not have that justifying “faith” which gives “glory to God,” for he is not “fully persuaded that, what [God] ha[s] promised, he [is] able also to perform” (Rom 4:20-5:1), since he rejects God’s many promises to save all those who simply trust in His Son. You cannot worship God now, and you will not enter heaven to worship Him there, unless, in repentance, you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ alone for salvation, and receive His perfect pardon. He will then make you “a new creature: old things are [then] passed away; behold, all things are become new” (2 Cor 5:17). Then, “being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye [will] have your fruit unto holiness” (Rom 6:22)—God will radically change you so that you will love Him and His holy ways. He promises, “A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them” (Eze 36:26-27). Having been “saved through faith . . . not of works,” you are then “created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them” (Eph 2:8-10).

Consequently, once you are saved, you will intensely desire to worship God both as an individual, and together with other believers. God commands you to assemble with His church (Heb 10:25)—we therefore should consider what He has said about it, so that we may attend the one He has ordained, not one man has invented. Consider the following truths:

1.) *The true church* teaches that “by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in [God’s] sight . . . a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law . . . God imputeth [credits] righteousness without works . . . being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Rom 3:20, 28; 4:6; 5:1).

Catholicism teaches that: "If anyone says that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in divine mercy, which remits sins for Christ's sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema [condemned to hell] (Council of Trent, 6th Session, Canon 12).

2.) *The true church* teaches that those who “believe on the name of the Son of God . . . may know that [they] have eternal life” (1 Jn 5:13).

Catholicism teaches that “that no one can know with a certainty of faith . . . that he has obtained the grace of God” (*Ibid*, Chapter 9).

3.) *The true church* teaches that all who have ever been justified by faith will certainly live with God forever—God will never reverse His declaration that they are righteous and cause them to eternally perish, for “whom [God] did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified [they will enter the glory of heaven]. . . . Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God’s elect [His chosen people]? It is God that justifieth. . . . [N]either death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate [God’s people] from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom 8:38-39).

Catholicism teaches that “it is to be maintained, that the received grace of Justification is lost, not only by infidelity whereby even faith itself is lost, but also by any other mortal sin whatever. (*Ibid*, Chapter 15).

4.) *The true church* teaches that “thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the LORD thy God am a jealous God” (Ex 20:4-5). “Neither shalt thou set thee up any image; which the LORD thy God hateth” (Deut 16:22) “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Tim 2:5).

Catholicism teaches that “all bishops and others who hold the office of teaching . . . instruct the faithful diligently in matters relating to the intercession and invocation of saints, and the veneration of relics, and the legitimate use of images . . . it is good and useful suppliantly to invoke [the dead saints] and to have recourse to their prayers, aid, and help . . . they think impiously who assert . . . that our invocation of them . . . is idolatry. . . . Also, that the holy bodies of martyrs . . . are to be venerated by the faithful; through which bodies many benefits are bestowed by God on men . . . they who affirm that veneration and honor are not due to the relics . . . are wholly to be condemned . . . images of Christ, and of the Virgin Mother of God, and of the other saints, are to be had and retained particularly in temples, and that due honor and veneration are to be given them . . . the images we kiss, and before which we uncover the head, and prostrate ourselves . . . if any one shall teach, or entertain sentiments, contrary to these decrees; let him be anathema.” (*Ibid*, 25th Session).

5.) *The true church* teaches that baptism is being “planted together in the likeness of [Christ’s] death . . . and also in the likeness of his resurrection” (Rom 6:1-6), so it is by immersion, by going down “into the water” (Ac 8:38) and coming up “out of the water” (Mat 3:16), picturing through a burial in and rising out of water the Lord Jesus’ death and resurrection. The one who “believeth” is “baptized” (Ac 2:41; 8:12, 36-38; 18:8), not infants, and one is saved by faith (Jn 3:18, 36) before baptism, so the water does not take away sin.

Catholicism teaches that “If any one saith, that baptism is . . . not necessary for salvation; let him be anathema. . . . If anyone says that children, because they have not the act of believing, are not after having received baptism to be numbered among the faithful, and that for this reason are to be rebaptized when they have reached the years of discretion; or

that it is better that the baptism of such be omitted than that, while not believing by their own act, they should be baptized in the faith of the Church alone, let him be anathema” (*Ibid*, 7th Session, Canon 5, 13). “Parents would deny a child the priceless grace of becoming a child of God were they not to confer Baptism shortly after birth . . . baptism . . . erases original sin . . . justification is conveyed in baptism” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 450, 1250, 1992).

6.) *The true church* teaches that the Lord’s supper or communion is done “in remembrance of” Christ (1 Cor 11:24-25), and it does not save or help save. The bread and the fruit of the vine do not change in any way. Scripture plainly states that people “eat . . . bread” (1 Cor 11:26-27) and “drink . . . the fruit of the vine” (Mr 14:25) in the Supper. The bread looks, feels, smells, and tastes like bread, because it is bread, not human flesh. The whole church both eats the bread and takes the cup (1 Cor 11:26-27); the cup is not for the pastor alone. A priest cannot transform food into the Lord Jesus’ literal flesh and blood for people to eat, nor can he take the Son of God away from the Father’s right hand (Ac 2:32-33) to re-sacrifice Him on earth, because “as it is appointed unto men once to die . . . so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many. [The] offering of the body of Jesus Christ [was] once for all . . . this man . . . offered one sacrifice for sins for ever . . . by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified” (Hebrews 9:27-28; 10:10-14).

Catholicism teaches “If anyone denies that in the sacrament of the most Holy Eucharist are contained truly, really and substantially the body and blood together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and consequently the whole Christ, but says that He is in it only as in a sign, or figure or force, let him be anathema” (*Trent*, 13th Session, Canon 1). “If anyone says that in the mass a true and real sacrifice is not offered to God; or that to be offered is nothing else than that Christ is given to us to eat, let him be anathema” (*Ibid*, 22nd Session, Canon 1). “If anyone says that there is not in the New Testament a visible and external priesthood, or that there is no power of consecrating and offering the true body and blood of the Lord and of forgiving and retaining sins . . . let him be anathema” (*Ibid*, 23rd Session, Canon 1).

7.) *The true church* teaches that one goes to heaven or hell immediately upon death; he who believes on the Lord Jesus alone for salvation already “hath [present tense] everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life” (John 5:24), and so, instantaneously possessing perfect and eternal forgiveness upon believing, “there is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus” (Rom 8:1). The lost, immediately upon their death, are “in hell . . . being in torments . . . between [them] and [the saved] there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from [heaven] to [hell] cannot; neither can they pass to [heaven] . . . that would come from thence” (Lu 16:23, 26). No verse in the Bible contains even a hint of an intermediate state of purgatory where God tortures His children, and after they are there long enough, or other people with extra good works or money (Acts 8:20) pay off the sins of the dead, He finally stops tormenting them and their souls escape to heaven. Rather, such an idea is condemned by multitudes of verses, for it denies that “the blood of Jesus Christ [God’s] Son cleanseth us from all sin” (1 Jn 1:7) to affirm that human sufferings, actions, and money take care of sin instead, and it rejects the promises of the God of love to completely save all who simply trust in His Son.

Catholicism teaches “If any one saith, that, after the grace of Justification has been received, to every penitent sinner the guilt is remitted, and the debt of eternal punishment is blotted out in such wise, that there remains not any debt of temporal punishment to be discharged either in this world, or in the next in Purgatory, before the entrance to the kingdom of heaven can be opened to him; let him be anathema” (*Trent*, Session 6, Canon 30). “the Catholic Church . . . [teaches] that there is a Purgatory and that the souls there detained are helped by . . . the sacrifices of masses, prayers, alms, and other works of piety, which have been wont to be performed by the faithful for the other faithful departed” (*Ibid*, Session 25).

8.) *The true church* teaches that the 66 books of the Bible were all “given by inspiration of God” and are able to make the believer “perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works” (2 Tim 3:16-17) without any other authority, such as unwritten tradition. The Word of God did not “become” Scripture because of some church council hundreds of years after it was written; Bible writers knew they wrote by inspiration (Jer 36:2; Rev 1:11), and believers received the Word as inspired as soon as it was written (Jn 17:8)—the books of the New Testament were recognized as Scripture equal to the Old Testament immediately after they were composed (1 Tim 5:18; cf. Lu 10:7; Deut 25:4; 2 Pet 3:15-16; Rev 1:2, 11), just as the Old Testament books were immediately recognized and received as Scripture (Ex 24:3-4; Josh 1:8-9; Deut 31:26; Josh 24:26; 1 Sam 10:25; Dan 9:2). Furthermore, God has preserved the Bible uncorrupted for us today (Mat 5:18; 24:35). We are, therefore, to live “by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God” (Mat 4:4), and not “add unto the word . . . neither . . . diminish ought from it” (Deut 4:2; 12:32). The Lord Jesus spoke of those who “made the commandment of God of none effect by [their] tradition” (Mt 15:6). The last chapter of the last book of the Bible warns “every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book” (Rev 22:18-19).

Catholicism adds the Apocrypha (1 + 2 Esdras, Tobit, Judith, Wisdom, Ecclesiasticus, Baruch, Letter of Jeremiah, Prayer of Azariah, Susanna, Bel and the Dragon, Prayer of Manasseh, 1 + 2 Maccabees, additions to Esther), a group of books nearly as large as the New Testament, to the Bible, despite the fact that the Apocryphal books are never quoted or referred to in Scripture, they contain clear factual, chronological, and historical errors, they were always rejected by the true church, and Catholicism itself did not even add them to God’s Word until the 16th century. Apocryphal books even teach that they are not inspired (1 Macc 9:27)! It also makes its unwritten traditions equal to God’s Word, affirming today that its “unwritten traditions . . . the Holy Ghost dictating, have come down even unto us, transmitted as it were from hand to hand . . . [Catholicism] receives and venerates with an equal affection of piety, and reverence, all the books both of the Old and of the New Testament . . . as also the said traditions, as well those appertaining to faith as to morals, as having been dictated . . . by the Holy Ghost, and preserved in the Catholic Church by a continuous succession . . . if any one receive not, as sacred and canonical, the [Apocryphal] books entire with all their parts, as they have been used to be read in the Catholic Church, and as they are contained in the old Latin vulgate edition;

and knowingly and deliberately contemn the traditions aforesaid; let him be anathema” (Trent, 4th Session, *Decree Concerning the Canonical Scriptures*).

9.) *The true church* teaches that Mary was a very godly woman (Lu 1:48), although John the Baptist was greater than she (Mt 11:11). Mary needed to have Christ as her “Saviour” (Lu 1:47) because she was a sinner like every other descendent of Adam (Ro 3:10, 23; 5:12, 19). The gospels record her bringing a sin offering for her uncleanness (Lu 2:21-24; Lev 12:1-8). Jesus was her “firstborn” son (Mt 1:25; Lu 2:7), after which God blessed her marriage to Joseph with many other children (Matthew 13:55-56; John 7:5 + Psalm 69:8; Ac 1:14; 1 Cor 9:5; Gal 1:19). She does not have special access to the Lord Jesus (Mt 12:46-50; Lu 11:27-28) and praying to her, saying she is the queen of heaven, making her a mediator between God and man, and all other additions to Biblical teaching about her are abominable idolatry (Deut 12:32; 1 Ti 2:5; Is 48:11).

Catholicism teaches that Mary “was preserved from all stain of original sin and by a special grace of God committed no sin of any kind during her whole earthly life . . . the Church [confesses] Mary’s real and perpetual virginity . . . The Church rightly honors the Blessed Virgin with special devotion . . . the Immaculate Virgin . . . when the course of her earthly life was finished, was taken up body and soul into heavenly glory, and exalted by the Lord as Queen over all things . . . her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation . . . Therefore the Blessed Virgin is invoked in the Church under the titles of Advocate, Helper, Benefactress, and Mediatrix” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 411, 498, 971, 966, 969).

10.) *The true church* teaches that all believers are “a royal priesthood” (1 Pet 2:9) and “kings and priests unto God” (Rev 1:6; 5:10). Christ is the great High Priest (Heb 4:14), and there is no special sacrificial priesthood in the New Testament. The only two church offices are pastors/bishops/elders (different names for the same position) and deacons (Php 1:1; 1 Pet 5:1-2; Ac 20:17, 28; Tit 1:5-7). Bishops/pastors are often married with children (1 Tim 3:1-5), just as the apostle Peter and other apostles ministered with their wives (1 Cor 9:5; Mt 8:14; Mr 1:30), for “marriage is honourable in all, and the bed undefiled” (Heb 13:4). On the other hand, “the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils . . . forbidding to marry” (1 Tim 4:1-3). Christ also forbade the use of “Father” for a spiritual office (Mt 23:9), the Bible only calls God “reverend” (Ps 111:9), and Peter, who did not start the church at Rome (Rom 1:7; 16:1-16) and certainly had no successors there as a pope, was by no means infallible (Mt 16:22-23; Gal 2:11-14). The Bible predicted the coming of “that man of sin [the Antichrist, 1 Jo 2:18, 22; 4:3] . . . the son of perdition, who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God” (2 Th 2:3-4), the leader of a religion “full of names of blasphemy” (Rev 17:3). The Lord says to every such Satanically energized man who affirms, “I am a God, I sit in the seat of God,” that “thou art a man, and not God, though thou set thine heart as the heart of God . . . because thou hast set thine heart as the heart of God . . . they shall bring thee down to the pit” (Eze 28:2, 6, 8).

Catholicism has priests, archbishops, monks, cardinals, friars, primates, abbots, rectors, and other “reverend Fathers” not found anywhere in the Bible, who are forbidden to marry, and states that “And if any one affirm, that all Christians indiscriminately are priests of the New Testament, or that they are all mutually endowed with an equal

spiritual power, he clearly does nothing but confound the ecclesiastical hierarchy . . . If any one saith, that, in the Catholic Church there is not a hierarchy by divine ordination . . . let him be anathema” (*Trent*, 23rd Session, chapter 4; canon 6). “When the Roman pontiff [pope] speaks *ex cathedra* . . . he possesses, by the divine assistance promised to him in blessed Peter . . . infallibility . . . should anyone . . . have the temerity to reject this . . . let him be anathema” (*Decrees of the First Vatican Council* (1870), Chapter 4:4). Catholicism says to the pope, “thou art our shepherd, thou art our physician, thou art our governor, thou art our husbandman, thou art finally another God on earth” (Address of the Fifth Lateran Council, Session IV, to the pope), and the pope declares, “We hold upon this earth the place of God Almighty” (*Encyclical Letter of Pope Leo XIII on the Reunion of Christendom*, June 20, 1894). The “chief Pontiffs [are] the vicars on earth of Christ” (*Bull for the Resumption of the Council of Trent, Under the Sovereign Pontiff, Julius III*). The word *vicar* signifies in Latin one “in the place of” another, corresponding in meaning to the Greek preposition *anti* (cf. Lev 24:18, Latin *Vulgate* “vicarium,” Greek LXX *anti*). When the pope calls himself “vicar of Christ,” he claims to be “anti-christ.”

11.) *The true church* teaches that the Greek word “church” means “assembly,” a way it is translated in the Bible (Ac 19:32, 37). A church is a local, visible congregation of saved and scripturally baptized saints (a term for all God’s people, including those alive on earth, 1 Cor 1:2; Col 1:2). One must be justified by faith before he can join the church by baptism, so church membership cannot be essential to salvation. The Bible never speaks about Christ’s church as a “universal church.” While churches may choose to work together, each congregation is independent and self-governing, without any hierarchy (Mt 18:15-18; 1 Cor 5). The only world-wide “church” entity is the universal religious system centered in Rome prophesied about in Revelation 17-18, where it is called “MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH” (Rev 17:5).

Catholicism teaches that it is the one “universal” church, since “the word ‘catholic’ means ‘universal’” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 830). It says that “the Church . . . is necessary for salvation . . . they could not be saved who . . . refuse either to enter it or to remain in it . . . the faithful everywhere, must necessarily be in accord . . . [with] the Church of Rome” (*Ibid*, 846, 834). Only those already dead who are “canonized” are proclaimed saints (*Ibid*, 828).

12.) *The true church* has existed since the first century (Mt 16:18; Eph 3:21) founded on Christ, who the apostles (including Peter) acknowledged was her Rock (1 Cor 10:4; 1 Pet 2:4-7). She has preserved pure worship and practices, based only on the Bible (2 Tim 3:16-17; Deut 12:32), since Christ founded her, and although she has always been a “little flock” (Lu 12:32) and will remain a small minority until Christ returns (Mt 7:14), her Savior will preserve her until He comes again (1 Cor 11:26, Mt 28:18-20). Known under different names through the centuries, martyred, tortured, and persecuted by Catholicism and other pagan religions, she has gone under different names through the centuries, such as Waldenses, Donatists, Cathari, and Anabaptists. Today true churches are found among those called “Baptists.” Catholic leaders and other non-Baptist historians have admitted that the Baptists far predate the Reformation: Cardinal Hosius (Catholic, appointed president of the Council of Trent, A. D. 1560): “If the truth of religion were to be judged by the readiness and boldness of which a man of any sect shows in suffering, then the opinion and persuasion of no sect can be truer and surer than that of the Anabaptists since

there have been none for these twelve hundred years past, that have been more generally punished.” This Catholic cardinal, living at the time of the Reformation, admitted that the Baptists had been around since A. D. 360. Allowing them an origin any earlier would make his position very uncomfortable. Mosheim (Lutheran): “The true origin of that sect which acquired the name of Anabaptists, by their administering anew the rite of baptism to those who came over to their communion . . . is hid in the remote depths of antiquity, and is consequently extremely difficult to be ascertained.” Dr. J. J. Durmont & Dr. Ypeig (Reformed): “[The Baptists] descended from the tolerably pure evangelical Waldenses. . . . They were, therefore, in existence long before the Reformed Church . . . We have seen that the Baptists, who were formerly called Anabaptists . . . were the original Waldenses; and who have long in the history of the Church, received the honor of that origin. On this account the Baptists may be considered the only Christian community which has stood since the Apostles; and as a Christian society which has preserved pure the doctrine of the gospel through all ages.”

Catholicism is a corruption of Biblical Christianity and the true church that falsely claims to be founded on Peter (*Catechism*, 442). It has often joined hands with the State to make itself the universal religion in countries (Rev 17:2), is “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus” (Rev 17:6), having murdered millions of them through its Inquisitions, and continues to descend into ever greater corruption of the truth. Consider when the following unbiblical Catholic teachings were established (some dates approximate): Prayers for the dead instituted, A. D. 300/ General introduction of infant “baptism,” A. D. 400/ Priests began to wear special clothing, A. D. 500/ Prayers offered to Mary, dead saints, and angels, A. D. 600/ Bishop of Rome assumed the title of Pope, A. D. 607/ Power of Popes over civil government, A. D. 750/ Worship of the cross, images, and relics, A. D. 788/ Marriage of Priests forbidden, A. D. 1079/ Rosary beads invented, A. D. 1090/ Sale of Indulgences, A. D. 1190/ Sacrifice of Mass, A. D. 1215/ Auricular confession of sins to a priest, A. D. 1215/ Worship of the bread used in the Mass, A. D. 1220/ Purgatory proclaimed, A. D. 1439/ Tradition held equal to Bible, A. D. 1545/ Apocryphal books added to the Bible, A. D. 1546/ Immaculate conception of Mary, A. D. 1854/ Infallibility of the Pope, A. D. 1870/ Bodily assumption of Mary to heaven, A. D. 1950/ Mary proclaimed the “Mother of the Church,” A. D. 1965.

If you wish to worship God, you must first be born again. Repent and believe the gospel today—tomorrow may be too late (Prov 27:1). Then separate from the anti-Christian religion of Catholicism and join a true church of Christ. God says of the Catholic religion (and other systems that add to and change the Bible), “in vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men” (Mt 15:9). The list of corruptions given above, each of which cries out for God’s wrath, is far from comprehensive. If you will repent of your sin and your false religion and believe in Jesus Christ alone for salvation, you will truly love and wish to follow and worship God. He commands you to immediately separate from the hellish apostasy and the spirit of Antichrist pervading Roman Catholicism. “Wherefore come out from among them, and

be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty” (2 Cor 6:17-18). “Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them” (Eph 5:11). “I heard another voice from heaven, saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues” (Rev 18:4).

If you have further questions about Catholicism and Christianity, or other questions from the Bible, please contact:

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A free Bible study, which explains more about salvation and other Biblical teachings, is available either in person or by mail. Call, write, or visit services to request it, or ask for it through your Internet connection.