

The Roman Catholic Church does in fact teach a number of truthful biblical doctrines such as the Trinity, the Virgin Birth, the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus.

Tragically, they have clouded the gospel message and introduced doctrines and teachings contrary to the Scriptures. These are not minor issues but apply directly to how we are saved and live our lives as Christians.

The authority of the Pope and ecumenical councils are considered infallible and must not be questioned. To question their authority is to question God. Therefore most Catholics will simply submit.

The Bible stresses that ultimately what matters is what is the truth?

Jesus said this about the truth:

“and you will know the truth, and the truth will make you free.” John 8:32

Scripture commands us to “test” all that we believe:

“Prove all things; hold fast that which is good.” I Thessalonians 5:21

The Bible is filled with warnings about those who will come (even within the church), and distort the truth and mislead many. With that in mind, please honestly and carefully consider the following eight questions.

1. Is tradition of equal authority with the Bible?

Catholics are taught that the Bible in and of itself is not complete. We need the the interpretations and traditions of the Catholic Church to properly understand what Christians should believe. Traditions decreed by the Pope and ecumenical councils are seen with equal footing as the Bible.

Although there can be value in traditions, none are inspired or infallible, and all are subject to the written Word.

The origin and nature of Scripture is divine, infallible and “God breathed.” Scripture alone contains all we need for salvation and godliness and does not change. No other revelation is needed. Scripture is clear that it is the very breath of God and sufficient rule of faith:

“and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.” II Timothy 3:15-17

Jesus strongly endorsed the Scriptures:

“... thy word is truth.” John 17:17

“Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.” Matt. 4:4

“You search the Scriptures, for in them you think you have eternal life; and these are they which testify of Me.” John 5:39

Scripture even warns of being deceived by traditions:

“See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition...” Colossians 2:8

The Bereans were complimented for testing from the Scriptures what the Apostle Paul had to say:

“... they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.” Acts 17:11

The Christian Church looks exclusively to the Scriptures as the only infallible and sufficient rule of faith.

2. Are we saved by God’s grace and works?

Catholics are taught that by the grace of God and man’s good works we may be justified. Besides faith, a person must be baptized, partake in the Mass, go to confession, do penance, avoid mortal sins, do good works, believe all the Roman Catholic church teaches, and still not know if you’d merited eternal life. You may yet have to suffer in purgatory.

Catholics are told that God’s grace and faith is required but NOT sufficient. We MUST supplement our faith with various works in order to “merit” eternal life.

Contrary to this, the Bible presents a simple gospel, “good news” by which we are saved. It is summed up in I Corinthians 15:1-4 as the “death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.” This salvation by which we are justified is entirely of God’s grace and is a gift. Romans 6:23 says “the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

Ephesians 2:8,9 summarizes:

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast. ”

Here is a beautiful summary of the Gospel:

“He made Him who knew no sin to be sin in our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.” II Corinthians 5:21

3. Should I pray to the Virgin Mary?

Catholics are taught that Mary is a perpetual virgin,

without sin, and we should pray to her. These traditions are NOT found in the Bible anywhere and go contrary to the Scriptures. Matthew 1:25 says Mary would not have marital relations “until she gave birth to a Son; and he called His name Jesus.” The Bible even names His half brothers in Matthew 13:55 as James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas.

Christians are commanded to pray for one another which is certainly biblical. But never does the Bible say we should pray to Mary or to reach out to the dead to intercede in our behalf.

The Bible says Jesus is our only mediator and the Holy Spirit intercedes in our behalf, not Mary:

“For there is one God, and ONE mediator also between God and men, the man Christ Jesus.” I Timothy 2:5

“because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.” Romans 8:27

Our prayers are only to be directed to the Lord who is very near to “all them that call upon him, to all that call upon him in truth.” Psalm 145:18.

4. What’s wrong with the Mass?

Catholic tradition claims the wine and bread used in the Mass are not merely symbols but are miraculously changed to the literal body and blood of Jesus, called transubstantiation. This sacrifice offered by the priest to God atones for the sins of the living and dead.

The Catholic interpretation of this Sacrament undermines the very gospel itself. Not only can we do nothing to assist the dead, but the bread and wine are “symbols” of the body and blood of Jesus just as Jesus had used symbols when referring to Himself as the door, bread, vine and shepherd.

Offering additional sacrifices to Christ’s finished work corrupts the gospel. The cross was sufficient.

Previous sacrifices in the Old Testament were repeated. The final sacrifice of Jesus would be done *once* since it would complete all that was necessary for our salvation.

“we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ ONCE for all... this priest had offered for all time ONE sacrifice for sins.” Hebrews 10:10,12

5. Can a priest forgive our sins?

The Levitical priests bore the responsibility of offering sacrifices required by the Mosaic Law. Now that the final sacrifice has come, this priesthood is done away with. There is no New Testament office of priest.

Jesus is now our only high priest. In our union with Christ all Christians share in that priesthood now called a "royal priesthood." This holy priesthood includes both men and women.

I Peter 2:9 says "You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood."

We confess directly to God through our mediator Jesus. We need not the man-made Catholic office of priest.

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." I John 1:9

6. Is there a purgatory?

In order to enter heaven, Rome requires a punishment imposed by God to purify His people which has not been accomplished by Christ on the cross. This suffering must be done by the individual in a place called purgatory.

One would search in vain to find purgatory in the Bible. This human invention opposes the very heart of the gospel message which is the sufficiency of the blood of Christ to cleanse sinners.

"When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high." Hebrews 1:3

Our sin debt is paid having been nailed to the cross:

"...having forgiven us all our wrongdoings, having canceled the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross." Colossians 2:13,14

Rome has poisoned the gospel with purgatory.

7. Do we need a Pope?

Catholics are taught that the current Pope is "Our Most Holy Father," infallible, and "Vicar of Christ" on earth. The Pope must not be married, and Peter was the first Pope.

The Bible not only does not support any of these claims but rather refutes them. First of all Peter was married (Mark 1:30). He was never called a Pope. He was not the spiritual head of the Apostles. Nothing is said about his apostolic authority being passed down to rule the church. The church of Rome reads these teachings INTO Scripture and that all Christians are subject to Catholic authority.

When Jesus returned to heaven, it would be the "Holy Spirit" that Jesus would send to teach Christians and guide them into truth. In Catholicism, the Holy Spirit's role is taken over by the Pope and hierarchy of the Church.

A Pope is NOT needed. "Christ is the head of the church" (Ephesians 5:23). He speaks through the Scriptures and the

witness of the Holy Spirit.

8. Does the Catholic Church have the truth?

The only honest conclusion is that the Bible refutes many fundamental, core traditions of the Roman Catholic Church.

Furthermore, if we would embrace these serious errors of the Catholic Church, our eternal destiny, as well as those we guide is in serious jeopardy.

The Bible warns about those who preach "another gospel" (Galatians 1:8,9); they will distort the truth and "shall deceive many" (Matthew 24:11).

The Apostle Paul challenged young Timothy:

"preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with great patience and instruction. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine." II Timothy 4:2,3

Please believe, this tract was written out of a heart of compassion and concern for the Catholic people who have been misled by the traditions of men.

Our desire is that Catholics would trust in Jesus alone for salvation, which is only in the finished work accomplished at the cross. His blood "cleanses us from all sin" I John 1:7.

The Lord Jesus Christ "was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification" Romans 4:25.

By faith, believe and trust in Jesus as Savior and Lord. And because He has saved you from wrath. Love Him. Serve Him. Follow Him. Proclaim Him. Delight in Him.

Our mission to the world:

"To open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light..." Acts 26:18

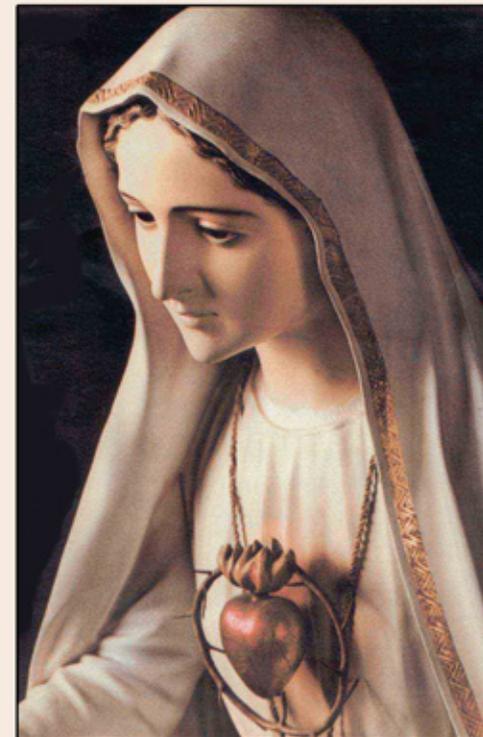
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**8 Questions
Every Catholic
Should Ask**