

Roman Catholicism vs. Biblical Christianity

by Richard Beaulac

Can you believe everything that the Roman Catholic Church tells you? I was once a Roman Catholic, for 19 years. Yet I had many questions about the Catholic Church. Once I began reading the Bible, many of those questions were answered. If Rome says one thing, and God in the Bible says the opposite, whom do you believe—God or Rome?

The Catholic Church teaches many doctrines that are contrary to the Bible, and were unknown to the early church. This is the reason I am exposing 27 major differences between Catholicism and Christianity. Indeed, who are we going to believe: the Pope of Rome, or the God of the Bible?

1. Priests Want to be Called “Father”

Jesus warns us: “Also, do not call *anyone* on the earth your Father; for one is your Father, Who *is* in heaven” (Matthew 23:9).

2. Prayers to Mary

For example: “Hail Mary, full of grace.” But Jesus commands us “to pray after this manner: ‘Our Father Who *is* in heaven’ ” (Matthew 6:9). Rome presents Christ as harsh and Mary as merciful, but here is the reality:

- Jesus invites us: “Come to Me, all you who labor and are *overly* burdened, and I will give you rest” (Matthew 11:28).
- Jesus assures us of His welcome acceptance: “The one who comes to Me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37).
- Jesus is our “merciful and faithful High Priest” and is “able to help those who are being tempted” (Hebrews 2:17, 18).

3. Priests and Nuns are Forbidden to Marry

- Paul insists that “the overseer [bishop] be blameless, *the* husband of one wife” (I Timothy 3:2).
- Peter was married, because Jesus healed his mother-in-law (Matthew 8:14; Luke 4:38).
- “Do we not have a right to take with us a sister, a wife, as also the other apostles?” (I Corinthians 9:5). God says, “*It is* not good that the man should be alone” (Genesis 2:18).
- “To avoid sexual immorality, let each man have his own wife, and let each woman have her own husband” (I Corinthians 7:2).
- “Now the Spirit tells *us* explicitly that in *the* latter times some shall apostatize from the faith ... peaking lies in hypocrisy ... forbidding to marry...” (I Timothy 4:1-3). This is God’s description of Catholic celibacy. Celibacy is permissible if one so chooses; but it must not be commanded.

4. Never Sure of Going to Heaven

Catholics, since childhood, have been taught that, to get into heaven, one must keep the sacraments and the mass and do good works. Yet even then, they can never know for sure that they will go to heaven. What a worry! Death, to the Catholic, is fear of entering the fires of purgatory with no certainty of ever seeing their loved ones again. The priests tell them that no one can ever be sure of going to heaven. For the people who trust their good works or religion to save them, this is true, because they never know if they have done enough good works to get into

heaven. Not even the Pope knows for sure, so how can he help Catholics to be sure?

God's way to salvation is the opposite of Rome's way of good works. God says not to trust in your good works, but to trust in Jesus Christ's death on the cross as the full payment for your sins. We can be 100% sure of salvation because God says: "The one who has the Son has *eternal* life; the one who does not have the Son of God does not have *eternal* life" (I John 5:12). "And this is the promise that He has promised us: eternal life" (1 John 2:25). "For everyone who calls on the name of *the* Lord shall be saved" (Romans 10:13).

Question: Will you call on Jesus to save you from your sins, or will you try to work out your salvation through Catholic sacraments?

5. Peter as the Rock

"Then Simon Peter answered *and* said, 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.' And Jesus answered *and* said to him, 'Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jona, for flesh and blood did not reveal *it* to you, but My Father, Who *is* in heaven. And I say also to you, that you are **Peter** [*petros*, a pebble or small stone]; but upon **this Rock** [*petra*, a boulder or large rock—Christ] I will build My church, and *the* gates of the grave shall not prevail against it. And I will give to you the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatever you may bind on the earth will have already been bound in heaven; and whatever you may loose on the earth will have already been loosed in heaven' " (Matthew 16:16-19).

From the above passage we may conclude:

1) Jesus was referring to *Himself* (**this Rock, Christ**) upon which He would build His church, *not on Peter*. The disciples, familiar with the Old Testament, knew *Rock* to be a name of God.

a) "**The LORD is my Rock**, and my fortress" (Psalms 18:2). "*He is the Rock*" (Deuteronomy 32:4). "Who is a Rock except our God?" (Psalms 18:31). We see here that there is *no other rock* but God—not even Peter.

b) Christ is the foundation Rock on which the church is built, not Peter. Jesus referred to Himself when He said: "*The Stone that the builders rejected, this has become the head of the corner*" (Matthew 21:42). Paul wrote of "*the spiritual Rock that followed them*"—saying that "that Rock was Christ" (I Corinthians 10:4). Peter referred to Jesus as a "living Stone," "*the Cornerstone*," a "Stone of stumbling," and a "Rock of offence" (I Peter 2:4-8).

c) When Peter tried to stop Jesus from going to the cross, Jesus rebuked him, saying: "Get behind Me, Satan!" (Matthew 16:23). Jesus wouldn't build His church on Satan.

d) In Mark 9:33-35, the disciples argued about *who was the greatest among them*. If Jesus had given Peter the rank of Pope, then He would have referred to Peter as the greatest, but He didn't. Thus, Jesus *gave no special papal leadership to Peter*. Nor should we.

2) Peter was given the *keys* of the kingdom, but only in the sense that it was Peter who opened the door to preaching the Gospel to Israel on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38-42) and to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:34-46). Still, everyone enters the kingdom through *Christ*, not Peter.

3) Priests do not have the power to bind, loose, forgive, or not forgive sins—because only God has this power.

6. Was Peter the First Pope? No, because:

1) Peter was married (Matthew 8:14, 15; I Corinthians 9:5). Popes cannot be married.

2) Peter wore no crown, as the pope does.

3) Peter had no wealth (Acts 3:6), as the pope has.

4) Peter rejected the “traditions” of the fathers (I Peter 1:18), yet Catholic teachings are based on human traditions.

5) Peter would not allow men to bow down to him (Acts 10:25-26), as the pope does.

6) Peter never took the title “PONTIFIX MASIMUS” or “PONTIFF,” as all popes do. This was the title of pagan Roman emperors, meaning “chief bridge-builder between earth and heaven.” Only Jesus can claim this title (John 1:51). For a pope to take this title is blasphemy against Christ. Peter never spoke like a pope, never acted like a pope, never dressed like a pope, and people never approached him as a pope.

7. Papal Infallibility (Declared in 1870)

When a pope is speaking in his official position on any issue of faith or morals, he is speaking infallibly, without error. But the apostles never regarded any man (except Jesus) to be infallible. Only the Word of God is without error. Paul rebuked Peter for being deceived by Judaizers (Galatians 2:11-14). Papal infallibility is seen to be false, as these events reveal:

1) Five popes—Innocent III, Gregory XI, Clement IV, Hadrian VI, and Paul IV—all disagreed with papal infallibility.

2) Pope Eugene IV (1431) had Joan of Arc burned alive as a witch, but later Pope Benedict (1919) declared her to be a saint.

3) Pope Stephen VI (896) had the dead Pope Formosus (891-896) dug up, tried, questioned, fingers hacked off, dragged through the streets of Rome, and thrown into the Tiber River.

4) Pope Hadrian II (867) declared civil marriage to be valid, but Pope Pius VII (1800-1823) declared it to be invalid.

5) The pope and the Vatican advised the German Catholic Party to vote for Nazi candidates. In 1933, the Vatican and Hitler signed a Concordat where the Catholic Church swore allegiance to the Nazi government. Later on, when Hitler was losing World War II, Pope Pius XI condemned him. Surely, these errors of judgment and contradictions between popes disproves papal infallibility to any honest, open-minded person.

8. Confessing Sins to a Priest—to obtain absolution of sins.

Catholic Canon Law (870-888) states that a priest has the power to forgive sins, and that confession to a priest at least once a year is necessary for salvation. The Bible gives these examples of confessing sins *to God only*:

1) When Simon of Samaria sinned after being baptized, Peter told him to *pray to God for forgiveness* (Acts 8:22). Peter did not hear his confession.

2) **The apostles never heard confessions.** Peter, speaking about Jesus, said: “Everyone who believes in Him receives remission of sins through His name” (Acts 10:43). Peter did not forgive the sins of Cornelius, or anybody else.

3) Paul did not forgive the sins of the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:30-34).

4) **Only God and Jesus can forgive sins** (Mark 2:5-11).

5) When Peter denied Christ, he confessed it to God and was forgiven. But when Judas betrayed Jesus, he confessed it to the priests and then committed suicide (Matthew 27:3-5).

Catholics’ auricular confession to a priest is evil because:

1) It *gives power to the priesthood*—to suppose they can absolve sins.

2) It *pollutes the mind* by holding impure thoughts in the mind long enough to make confession.

3) It gives a priest *power over a female* by claiming that God requires all sins crossing her mind to be disclosed to him. The very things a would-be seducer would like to know are the thoughts

of his intended victim. Virtue would be safe nowhere.

4) It requires the priest to make *improper and disgusting suggestions* to elicit possible sins not yet confessed.

This practice of confession has greatly corrupted community morals, as seen by many Catholic priests being sued for sexual abuse of women and children. God says: “For there *is* one God, and **one Mediator between God and men**—*the* man Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 2:5). Hence, priests, Mary, and saints are *not mediators* between God and man. Only Jesus is. By pointing people to priests, to Mary, and to saints, Rome is turning people *away* from Christ.

9. Priests as Mediators Between God and Men

All believers are “priests” with direct access to God through Christ. “But you *are* a chosen stock, a royal priesthood” (I Peter 2:9). Priests as mediators increase the priests’ control over people. This turns people away from Christ. “For there *is* one God, and **one Mediator between God and men**—*the* man Christ Jesus” (I Timothy 2:5).

10. Purgatory

Purgatory is an imaginary half-way place between heaven and hell, where un-forgiven sins are allegedly purged away. But God says believers go to the *grave* at death, where they “sleep” until the resurrection (I Corinthians 15). The following verses show purgatory to be false: Christ **purged** all of our sins (Hebrews 1:3); and, there is now **no condemnation** to those in Christ (Romans 8:1). The purgatory teaching is a great evil, because it is:

1) A terrifying prospect of entering a place of unspeakable torture, with no way to avoid it. Catholics live in fear of spending an unknown number of years in purgatory, never knowing when they’ll get out.

2) A great money raiser. Suffering in purgatory, Catholics say, may be shortened by gifts of money, masses, and prayers by the priest. So it is a fraud and a colossal racket, because it deprives the poor of their last pennies and exhorts large funds from the rich in exchange for nothing! If the pope or priest really has the power to shorten or stop the suffering of souls in purgatory, why does he not, if he is a good man, render that service freely and willingly?

3) Represents God as a “respector of persons.” A rich man passes more speedily through purgatory and into heaven than the poor man. But the Bible teaches that eternal life is a free gift (Romans 6:23), equally available to everyone.

11. Idols and Images for Worship

The Catholic *Council of Trent* states: “It is lawful to have images in the church and to give honor and worship to them.... Images are put in churches that they may be worshipped.” But what does God say about images?

1) “You shall not make for yourselves any graven image.... You shall not bow yourself down to them, nor serve them” (Exodus 20:4-5; also Leviticus 26:1; Deuteronomy 16:22).

2) “Lest you act corruptly and make for yourselves a graven image, the likeness of any figure, the likeness of male or female” (Deuteronomy 4:16). This forbids statues of Mary, Jesus, etc.

3) “Cursed *is* the man that makes any graven or molten image, an abomination to the LORD” (Deuteronomy 27:15).

4) The early Christians “**turned from idols** to God” (I Thessalonians 1:9).

12. Church Tradition

Catholics prefer *tradition* over the Bible and use tradition as their authority for doctrine.

1) Peter rebukes those holding to human tradition in I Peter 1:18—“Your futile way of living, inherited *by tradition* from *your* forefathers.”

2) Jesus rebukes human tradition: “Why do you also transgress the commandment of God for the sake of your **tradition**?... [You] have made void the commandment of God for the sake of your **tradition**.... ‘For they worship Me in vain, teaching *for* doctrine *the commandments of men*’ ” (Matthew 15:3, 6, 9).

We should reject every human religious tradition not found in the Bible. We must obey *God* rather than men (Acts 5:29).

13. Infant “Baptism” (Instituted in AD 370.)

Catholic infant “baptism” is not Bible baptism, because:

1) No baby was ever sprinkled with water in the Bible. Check it for yourself.

2) A condition for baptism is to believe that Jesus is the Son of God (Acts 8:36, 37), yet no baby can satisfy this condition.

3) Baptism in New Testament Greek means to *immerse*, but “sprinkle” is a different Greek word altogether (*rantizo*).

4) Seeking baptism should be a well-thought-out personal decision. When you are sprinkled as an infant, that was your parents’ decision. Being baptized as an adult is your decision.

14. Confirmation

Catholic *confirmation* is supposed to confer the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands. But like baptism, the *laying on of hands* is not for children, but for adults. Nowhere in the Bible is a child given the Holy Spirit by the laying on of hands.

15. Mary Veneration

Mother and child worship began at the Tower of Babel in 2000 BC, when *Queen Semiramis* commanded her people to worship herself and *Tammuz*, her son. She claimed he fulfilled the prophecy of Genesis 3:15, allegedly being the virgin-born savior promised to Adam and Eve after the Fall. Later, when people scattered all over the world, they took this “Mother and Child” worship with them:

- In Canaan, it became known as Ashtoreth and Baal worship
- Ancient Egypt worshipped Isis and Horus
- Ancient India worshipped Devaki and Krishna
- Ancient Rome worshipped Venus and Jupiter

When Constantine in AD 320 commanded pagans to become Christians, the pagans just changed the name of “mother and child worship” from Venus and Jupiter to *Mary* and *Jesus*. This tradition has continued in the Catholic Church to today, even though the Bible *never mentions Mary veneration*. And the wise men brought their gifts to Jesus, not to Mary.

Other aspects of Mary veneration include:

1) *Perpetual Virginity*: The claim is that Mary remained a virgin all her life, having no other children.’ The following verses disprove this error: Matthew 13:55-56; John 7:5.

2) *Immaculate Conception of Mary*: The claim is that Mary was born sinless and led a sinless life. Pope Pius IX made this assertion in 1854 and declared Mary to be infallible. Furthermore, he said: “There is no salvation to those who do not believe this dogma.” The Bible, however,

denies this: All have sinned (Romans 3:23), and no one is truly righteous (Romans 3:10).

3) *Assumption of Mary*: The idea is that Mary ascended into heaven in bodily form. This was made official and infallible by Pope Pius XII in 1951. However, the Bible plainly says that *no man* has ascended up to heaven (John 3:13).

4) *Prayers to Mary*: We pray to God, not Mary, as per Jesus' instructions in Luke 11:2, etc.

16. Anti-Bible Attitude

1) From 1382 to 1500 AD, many Christian martyrs were burned to death with *Wycliffe's Bible* tied around their necks. *Tyndale* published thousands of New Testaments in English, and smuggled them into England where they were rapidly distributed. The Catholic Church seized and burned many copies of Tyndale's New Testament as well as burning Tyndale himself at the stake in 1536.

2) Catholicism today permits Catholics to read the Bible, but teaches that it is sinful to put any interpretation on the Bible that is contrary to Catholic beliefs.

3) Anti-Roman Catholic verses are ignored, saying: "*That's just your interpretation.*" This transfers authority away from the Bible to Rome.

17. Names of Blasphemy

Catholic officials take names for themselves reserved solely for God, such as:

1) *Pontiff* (or Pontifex Maximus) which is a papal title meaning "chief bridge builder between earth and heaven." Only Jesus has this role.

2) *Holy Father* is the title the popes claim for themselves, yet Jesus addressed His heavenly father in this way in His Gethsemane prayer before His crucifixion: "Holy Father, keep them in Your name, those whom You have given Me" (John 17:11).

3) *Father* is a title Catholic priests claim, yet Jesus said to *call no man Father* (Matthew 23:9).

4) *Monsignor* means "my Lord," and this title belongs to God.

5) *Reverend* is a title Catholic priests and Protestant ministers claim—but belongs to God alone (Psalms 111:9).

6) Mary as *Queen of Heaven*. The "Queen of Heaven" is a pagan goddess. Jeremiah rebuked the Israelites when burned incense to the queen of heaven (Jeremiah 7:18; 44:17-19).

18. Transubstantiation (Instituted in AD 1215)

Definition: "The whole substance of the bread and wine is converted into the *actual* and *real*, *entire body* and *blood* of Christ." Radbertus first suggested this idea in the 9th century. Catholicism supports this by a *literal* view of Matthew 26:26-29. The bread and wine, however, were only *symbols* of Christ's body and blood—partaken of as an act of *remembrance* (Luke 22:19). There is *no* "conversion" of the bread into literal flesh, nor of the wine into blood. Note:

1) Jesus, after saying "this is My blood" in verse 28, added: "I will not drink at all of this **fruit of the vine...**" (verse 29)—showing that it was *still* wine and had not changed into blood.

2) Jesus often *described Himself in symbols*, yet no one takes these literally:

- John 10:7 "I am the *door*"—Did Jesus mean He was literally wooden? No.
- John 14:6 "I am the *way*"—Did Jesus mean He was literally a road? No.
- John 15:5 "I am the *vine*"—Did Jesus mean He was a literally a vine? No.
- John 8:12 "I am the *light*"—Did Jesus mean He was literally a light? No.
- John 6:48 "I am the *bread* of life"—Did Jesus mean He was literally a loaf of bread? No.
- John 6:63 indicates that Jesus was speaking *figuratively*, spiritually—not literally.

3) The bread and wine did not become Christ's body and blood because God forbids the drinking of blood (Deuteronomy 12:16; Acts 15:20, 29).

4) We take Christ as our Savior *once*. Passover is to be a recurring *memorial* and, therefore, has no saving merit of itself. Catholics are commanded to believe in transubstantiation because the teaching was decreed at the Council of Trent (1551) as essential for salvation. The Council pronounced a *curse* on anyone who would deny it. Paul, on the other hand, pronounced a *double curse* in Galatians 1:6-9 on anyone who preached a different Gospel—one that denied Christ's death and resurrection as being fully sufficient for salvation.

5) Before Jesus ascended into heaven, He promised to *come to us* via the Holy Spirit—not through some mysterious “sacrifice of the mass.” “[God] shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: *even* the Spirit of the truth, which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be within you. I will not leave you orphans; **I will come to you**” (John 14:16-18).

How then do we “eat Christ's flesh and drink Christ's blood”? By taking in the *words of God* when we call on Christ to save us: “The words that I speak to you, *they* are spirit and *they* are life” (John 6:63). Peter got the message: “You have the words of eternal life” (verse 68). The scribes, who heard Jesus' words, understood the Hebraic idea of *receiving God's words into one's inner being*: “Your words were found, and I ate them” (Jeremiah 15:16); “I will put My law in their inward parts” (Jeremiah 31:34).

If the transubstantiation doctrine was formulated in the 9th century and is necessary for salvation, what happened to all those living before that time, before transubstantiation was thought of? Did they all go to hell?

19. The Mass (Instituted in AD 394)

Definition: “At every mass, Christ is sacrificed again.” Catholicism says: “In the mass, no less than on Calvary, Jesus really offers His life to His Father.”

But must Jesus be *continually sacrificed*—or was His *one-time* death sufficient to pay for sin forever? Christ's one-time sacrifice *is* sufficient; here's why:

1) Jesus, as He died, said: “It is finished” (John 19:30)—the whole work of salvation, for which He came into the world, was accomplished on the cross. Nothing more can be added to it. The mass insults Christ's death on the cross as being not good enough to pay fully for all of our sins.

2) When Jesus died, the *veil* in the Jews' Temple as *torn* from top to bottom (Matthew 27:51), showing that the way into God's presence was open to all believers in Christ's work on the cross. No other sacrifice or priesthood was needed, just Jesus' High Priesthood.

3) The New Covenant states that: “Now where remission of these *is*, *it is* no longer *necessary to offer* sacrifices for sin” (Hebrews 10:18). The Catholic *mass* contradicts this clear statement.

4) In the book of Hebrews, Christ's sacrifice is said to be accomplished “*once*” for all—never to be repeated: Hebrews 7:27; Hebrews 9:25, 26, 28; and Hebrews 10: 10, 12, 14, 18. Peter adds that “Christ indeed **once** suffered for sins” (I Peter 3:18).

20. Penance

Definition: “Penance is performing outward acts, such as repeating prayers like the Hail Mary or Rosary, as a payment for sin, and to satisfy God.”

Rome bases its *penance* teaching on incorrectly translating “repentance” (“to change one's mind,” as in Ezekiel 18:30, Luke 13:5, Acts 2:28, etc.) as “penance.” Catholicism believes that a priest has the power to *forgive* or *retain* sins and to *impose penance* as a means of testing

the genuineness of one's confession—and of “satisfying” God concerning one's sin.

But sinners can only be forgiven, accepted, and justified on the ground of Christ's sacrifice. It is this alone that satisfies the justice and wrath of God against us. “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and you shall be saved” (Acts 16:31). We must confess our sins to God: “If we confess our own sins, He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I John 1:9).

21. Black Robes Worn by Priests and Nuns

Why would priests and nuns, who are supposed to represent God and cheer people with the joy and certainty of salvation, spend all their lives dressed in long, morbid, black robes? Black is the color of death. Jesus, the apostles, and early Christians never wore long black robes. The practice came from pagan priests wearing black robes before AD 320.

22. Extreme Unction or Last Rites

Catholicism teaches that *on one's deathbed* sin can be totally undone and one prepared for salvation. This idea is found nowhere in the Bible. Rather, a person's only hope is to receive Christ as Savior, trusting in His sacrifice as full payment for sin. Keeping such sacraments traps Catholics into believing that they will gain salvation by good works. The sacrament system enslaves a person's mind to the Catholic Church from the cradle to the grave.

23. Low Moral Standards

The Protestant moral code comes directly from the Bible. For example: “Don't steal” means *don't steal*. But the Catholic moral code is based mainly on canon law, and secondarily on the Bible. “Don't steal” to Catholics means, “Stealing is all right provided that the value of the thing stolen is not excessive” (Liguori). What matters to the Catholic is the authority of the Catholic Church, as interpreted by the priest.

Catholicism doesn't seek to stir the conscience to decide between right and wrong, but to allow the *priests* to decide what is right and wrong. Drinking and gambling, considered vices by Protestants, are not counted as evil in Catholicism, except when indulged to excess. Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, states: “If anything shall appear white to our eyes, which the *church* has defined as black, we likewise must declare it to be black.” This means, *Don't think for yourself*—just accept whatever Rome tells you. Here's what's going on in Catholicism:

- 1) Sexual Abuse—Every year we hear of priests being jailed (or simply transferred to another Parrish) for sexually abusing women or children. But if the Catholic Church is the mother of holiness, how can these things be?
- 2) Alcohol Abuse—Catholic theologian Liguori states: “It is not a mortal sin to get drunk, unless one loses completely the use of his mental faculties for over one hour.”
- 3) Gambling—Catholic *bingo* familiarizes young people with gambling, and gives gambling the church's stamp of approval.

24. Catholic Persecution of Protestants

The Catholic Church has a long history of persecution against non-Catholics. When noble people left Catholicism in protest—looking to Jesus alone for salvation, and to the Bible for truth while rejecting the false claims of the popes—Rome called them heretics. They were bitterly opposed, tortured, and killed. Documents reveal that various Catholic leaders murdered around 68 million “protesters” from 1100-1800 AD. The following are a few notable cases:

- 1) 100,000 Albigenses (Protestants) were massacred in one day in 1211, then burned in heaps.
- 2) 10,000 Huguenots (French Protestants) were killed in Paris on St. Bartholomew's Day, and 75,000 the week after. The Huguenot Wars killed 200,000 Protestants.
- 3) The "Thirty Years War" in Germany saw the population drop from 15 million to 5 million due to Catholic invading armies killing 900,000 Protestants.
- 4) The Spanish Armada was sent to conquer Protestant England by the Catholic King Philip of Spain. Fortunately, *bad weather* destroyed the fleet off the coast of England.

Truly, the Roman Catholic Church is "drunk with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus" (Revelation 17:6).

25. The Roman Catholic Church is the Whore of Revelation 17

Who or what is the whore/woman of Revelation 17? Here are 13 points indicating that the "whore" is the Roman Catholic Church.

- 1) "And the woman whom you saw is **the great city** that has royal power over the kings of the earth" (Revelation 17:18). What *city* reigned over the kings of the earth in the first century? *Rome*. Roman emperors (and popes) were called "Pontifex Maximus."
- 2) She is called the "*great whore*" in Revelation 17:1. A whore is unfaithful to her husband by having relationships with many suitors. So is the Catholic Church—unfaithful to God's Word, as seen by her adopting numerous unbiblical doctrines—and by *seeking political alliances* with dictators and governments of the world.
- 3) "[With] whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication" (17:2). The Roman Church has always sought to further her purposes by controlling politicians, kings, and governments. She is the "state church" in many countries—Spain, Portugal, Italy, Poland, Ireland, and throughout South America. She seeks to control the government in every country. In Revelation 17:3, she is sitting on a beast, as a rider sits on a horse, *controlling* it. The early church remained separate from the State, because its task was to win people to Christ, baptize, and teach God's Word. This close association of the Catholic Church with world governments is forbidden by God. Hence, God calls the relationship "*fornication*" with the kings of the earth.
- 4) She "sits upon many waters" (17:1). Verse 15 tells us that the waters are "peoples and multitudes and nations and languages." The Roman Catholic Church has considerable influence in many nations in the world—particularly those of Europe.
- 5) She is "full of names of blasphemy" (17:3). Rome claims titles and attributes which *belong only to God or Christ*—such as *Holy Father, Father, Monsignor* (lord), *Pontifex Maximus, Reverend, His Holiness, Fili Vicarii Dei* (in the place of the Son of God).
- 6) The whore sits on *seven mountains* (17:9). It is well known that Rome is built on seven hills.
- 7) She is arrayed in *purple* and *scarlet* (17:4). Popes, cardinals, and priests dress in scarlet on numerous festival occasions.
- 8) She is "adorned with gold and pearls and precious stones" (17:4). The Catholic Church has great wealth.
- 9) She is full of *abominations* and *filthiness* (17:4). Sexual immorality is rampant among the leadership and priests—such as fornication, homosexuality, child molestation, etc.
- 10) "Mystery" is a prominent feature of Catholicism (17:5). Much *mystery* exists in her services. For example, services are conducted in Latin; the claim to convert bread into the actual flesh of Christ; the deceased's unknown time spent in purgatory; etc.
- 11) She is called "Babylon the Great" (17:5). Roman Catholic "mother and child worship" was adopted from similar aspects of the ancient mystery religion of Babylon. There is abundant proof

that Catholicism's practices and beliefs came from pagan Babylon, not from the Bible.

12) She is the “mother of harlots” (17:5). Rome has given rise to many daughter religions with practices similar to her own—including *Protestantism itself*.

13) She is “drunk” with the *blood of saints and martyrs* (17:6). The Roman Catholic Church has endlessly persecuted, tortured, and killed those who disagree with papal control—such as John Huss, Savonarolla, Tyndale, Wycliffe, Latimer, etc.

26. Catholicism Turns People Away From Christ

The Roman Catholic Church *counterfeits* almost every work Christ does for Christians—thus turning people's attention *from* Jesus to something or someone else.

1) They point people to *church sacraments*, turning them away from trusting in Christ alone.

2) They emphasize *church tradition* as the guide to life, turning them away from the Bible.

3) They direct people to the *priest as mediator*, thus turning them away from Christ as mediator.

4) They teach people to *pray to saints*, thus turning them away from praying to God.

5) They urge people to *pray to Mary*, as merciful, thus turning them away from praying to God, claiming Him to be harsh, unwelcoming, and unapproachable.

6) They point to *Peter as the Rock* on which the church is based, thus turning them away from Christ as the true Rock.

7) They direct people to *popes as Pontiffs* (bridge builders), thus turning people away from Christ as the only hope of salvation.

8) They teach people to do *works of penance* to gain God's favor, instead of accepting Christ's promises of forgiveness.

9) They require people to believe in *Catholic doctrine* and *papal infallibility* as their authority, thus rejecting the voice of God speaking to their conscience.

27. Catholicism Teaches Salvation by Sacraments and Good Works

The Catholic Church promotes a false Gospel of “good works for salvation,” denying the sufficiency of Christ's work on the cross. Catholics are taught that to have salvation they must *keep the sacraments*, the *mass*, and *do good works*. This is different from the Bible's definition of the Gospel: “Now I am declaring to you, brethren, the *same* gospel that I proclaimed to you ... that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He was raised the third day, according to the Scriptures” (I Corinthians 15:1-4).

We are saved by faith in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. There are numerous biblical passages teaching that our works will do *not* save us. For example: “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this *especially* is not of your own selves; *it is* the gift of God, **not of works**, so that no one may boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Where, then, do “good works” come in? Good works come *after* conversion—because we are *learning* to love and give to others as we develop Christ's mind. “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto *the* good works that God ordained beforehand in order that we might walk in them” (Ephesians 2:10).

In conclusion: John writes, “And you shall know the truth, and **the truth shall set you free**” (John 8:32). This is freedom from sin, bondage, and all the curses of this life—and freedom from the deceptive oppression of *false religion!*