

Contrast Between Catholic Teaching and The Bible

Sources: The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Bible

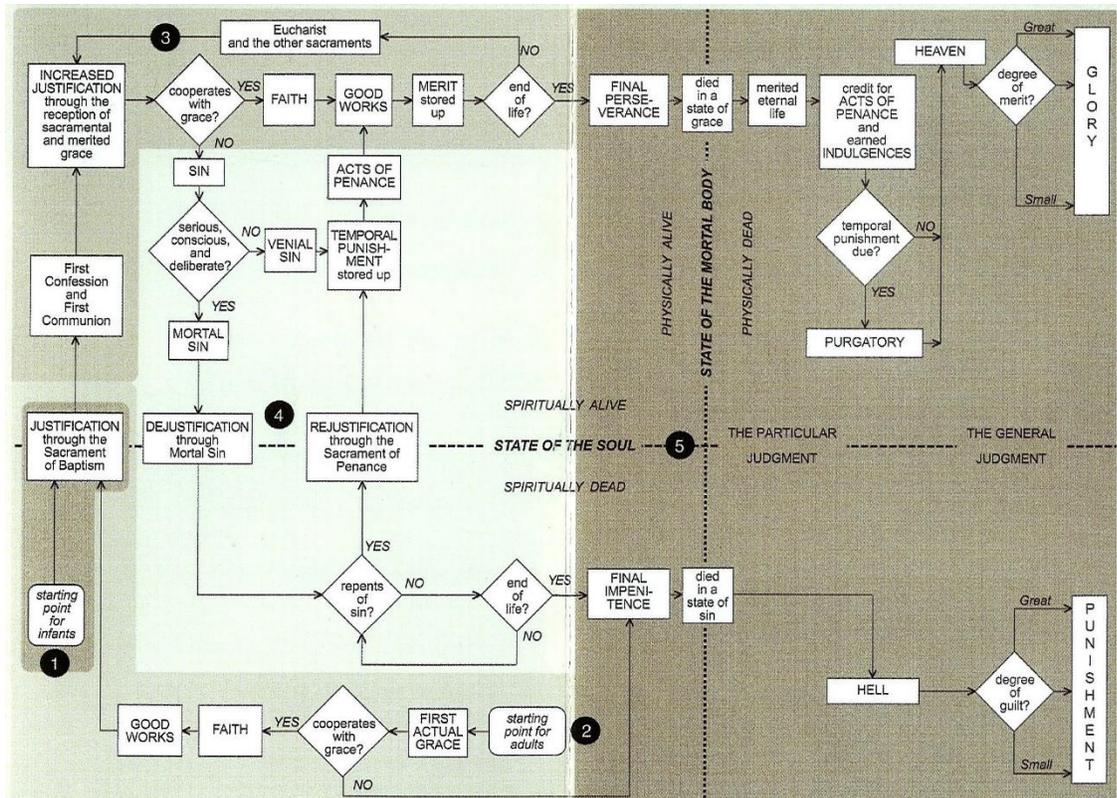
Topic: Salvation

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
1. Justification is a transformation of the soul in which original sin is removed and sanctifying grace is infused [1987-1995]	Justification is the act of God in which He declares a sinner to be judicially righteous in His sight on the basis of the FINISHED work of Christ, having fully forgiven him of all his sins and their penalty since his sentence of judgment was fully paid for by the shed blood of Jesus Christ and having imputed to the sinner God's own perfect righteousness. Romans 3:21-4:8
2. Initial justification is by means of baptism. [1262-1274]	There is no such thing as initial justification. Justification (being declared judicially righteous in the sight of a holy God as a result of the sacrifice of Christ Himself) occurs once and is by faith alone. Romans 3:28
3. Adults must prepare for justification through faith and good works [1247-1249]	God alone justifies ungodly sinners who believe the glorious news of the gospel (Romans 4:5). We must be clear on this the Bible teaches that good works are the result of salvation, not its cause. (Ephesians 2:8-10)
4. The justified are in themselves beautiful and holy in God's sight [1992, 1999-2000, 2024]	The justified are in Christ holy and blameless before God (Ephesians 1:1-14).
5. Justification is furthered by sacraments and good works [1212, 1392, 2010].	Justification is the imputation of the perfect righteousness of God (II Corinthians 5:21). In Christ the believer has been made complete and has a perfect standing (Colossians 2:10).
6. Justification is lost through mortal sin [1033, 1855, 1874].	Justification cannot be lost. Those whom God justifies are already saved from the wrath of God (Romans 5:8-9).
7. Catholics guilty of mortal sin are justified again through the sacrament of penance [980, 1446].	There is no such thing as a second justification. Those whom God justifies, He also glorifies (Romans 8:30).

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
8. Salvation from the eternal consequences of sin is a lifelong process [161-162, 1254-1255].	Salvation from the eternal consequences of sin is an instantaneous and secure act of God occurring at the moment of justification (Romans 5:9).
9. Salvation is attained by cooperating with grace through faith, good works, and participation in the sacraments [183, 1129, 1815, 2002].	Salvation is attained by grace through faith apart from works (Ephesians 2:8-9). Good works are the result, not the cause, of salvation (Ephesians 2:10).
10. Faith is belief in God and a firm acceptance of all the church proposes for belief [181-182, 1814].	Saving faith is entrusting oneself to Christ as Lord and Savior (Romans 10:8-17).
11. Sanctifying grace is the quality of the soul, a supernatural disposition that perfects the soul [1999-2000].	Grace is the undeserved favor of God (Ephesians 1:7-8).
12. The sacraments are necessary channels for the continual infusion of grace. They bestow grace in virtue of the rite performed [1127-1129].	The child of God is the constant object of God's grace because of a relationship with God as loving Father through Jesus Christ which does not depend on rituals or the performance of activities (Romans 5:1-2).
13. Grace is merited by good works [2010, 2027].	Grace is the totally free gift of God apart from human works (Romans 11:16, Ephesians 2:8-9).
14. Venial sins do not incur eternal punishment [1855, 1863].	God does not classify sin as venial or mortal. All sin is high treason against the holiness of God and is thus punishable by eternal death (Romans 6:23).
15. Serious sins must be confessed to a priest [1456-1457].	All sin is to be confessed directly to God (Ezra 10:11; I John 1:9).
16. The priest forgives sin as a judge [1442, 1461].	No one can forgive sins but God alone (Mark 2:7). Since all sin is ultimately against God, it is to God we must go to restore fellowship (see Psalm 51 and I John 1:9).
17. When the guilt of sin is forgiven, temporal punishment remains [1472-1473].	When God forgives sin He completely forgives and remembers it no more against us forever (Colossians 2:13; Isaiah 43:25).
18. Acts of penance make satisfaction for the temporal punishment of sin [1434, 1459-1460].	The Lord Jesus Christ made a perfect sacrifice that took away all of our sins forever and satisfied both the holiness and wrath of God. (I John 2:1-2; Hebrews 9:11-28 Hebrews 10:1-18).
19. Indulgences dispensed by the Church for acts of piety release sinners from temporal punishment [1471-1473].	The Lord Jesus Christ releases believers from their sins by His blood (Revelation 1:5).

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
20. Purgatory is necessary to atone for sin and to cleanse the soul [1030-1031].	Purgatory only exists in Roman Catholic theology books. The Lord Jesus Christ offers a perfect purification from sin on the basis of His finished work on the cross. (Hebrews 1:3)
21. Poor souls suffering in purgatory can be helped by those who are alive on earth offering up prayers, good works, and the sacrifice of the Mass [1032, 1371, 1479].	Those who are asleep in Christ (dead) need no help. The Bible makes it clear that to be absent from the body is to be at home with the Lord (II Corinthians 5:8).
22. No one can know if he will attain eternal life [1036, 2005].	The believer can know that he has eternal life by the word of God (I John 5:13).
23. Eternal life is a merited reward [1821, 2010].	Eternal life is the free gift of God, totally without works or human merit based on the grace of Christ and His atoning sacrifice alone. (Romans 6: 23)
24. The Roman Catholic Church is necessary for salvation [846].	There is salvation in no one other than the Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 4:12).

The Roman Catholic Church teaches a complex and convoluted system that makes no guarantee that its followers will ever see heaven. The Roman Catholic Church directly contradicts God's plan



of salvation in 24 major areas. It is another gospel Those who follow it will not escape the consequences which Paul warned of in Galatians 1:8-9.

Sadly, there is more departure from the truth of the Bible yet to come as we move to a central heresy of this old cult – the **MASS**.

Topic: The Mass

The word “mass” comes from the Latin word which means “a meal.” Another word associated with this service is Eucharist from the Greek word which means to give thanks. The mass is central to Roman Catholicism for they believe their priests have the power to transform the bread and wine into the actual body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ who is once again sacrificed for the sins of the people. As such we need to very carefully contrast the what the Bible teaches about the simple symbolism Christ created out the final Passover supper He ate with His disciples in the Upper Room.

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
1. The Last Supper was a real sacrifice in which Christ's blood was poured out for our sins in the cup [610-611, 621, 1339].	The Last Supper was a Passover meal. Christ's blood was poured out for our sins at the cross (I Peter 2:24).
2. The unleavened bread and wine became the real body and blood of Jesus Christ [1337-1377].	The bread and fruit of the vine were symbols of the body and blood of Christ (I Corinthians 11:23-25).
3. Christ's body and blood exist wholly and entirely in every fragment of the consecrated bread and wine in every Roman Catholic Church around the world [1374, 1377].	The Lord Jesus Christ is bodily present in heaven at the right hand of the Father right now to appear as our intercessor (Hebrews 10:12-13).
4. The consecrated bread and wine are heavenly food which help one to attain eternal life [1392, 1405, 1419].	The bread and the fruit of the vine are symbols which help one to remember the awful sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ and His promise to fellowship with us upon His return in His Father's kingdom. (Luke 22:19; I Corinthians 11:23ff).
5. God desires that the consecrated bread and wine be worshiped as divine [1378-1381].	God expressly forbids the worship of any object-even those intended to represent Him under any circumstance whatever (Exodus 20:4-5; Isaiah 42:8)
6. Christ has ordained certain men to a ministerial priesthood to perpetuate the sacrifice of the cross [1142, 1547, 1577].	The Lord Jesus Christ has ordained every believer to a holy and royal priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices, the praise of their lips, and lives yielded unto God (I Peter 2:5-10; Hebrews 13:15; Romans 12:1).
7. The Sacrifice of the Mass is the sacrifice of the cross [1085, 1365-1367, 1367]. Only the manner in which it is offered is different [1367].	The sacrifice of Christ on the cross is a one-time historical event. In truth, it occurred only once, approximately 2000 years ago, outside Jerusalem and will never be repeated again (Mark 15:21-41; Hebrews 9:24-28; Hebrews 10:3-12).

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
8. The sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated in the Sacrifice of the Mass [1323, 1382].	The sacrifice of the cross is finished forever and will never be repeated again (John 19:30).
9. The mass makes Christ present in His death and victimhood [1353, 1362, 1364, 1367, 1409].	The Lord Jesus Christ cannot be made present in His death and victimhood, "for He is risen and is alive forevermore" (Revelation 1:17-18; Romans 6:9-10).
10. At each mass, the priest re-presents to the Father the sacrifice of Christ [1354, 1357].	Christ presented the sacrifice of Himself to the Father "once at the consummation of the ages" (Hebrews 9:24-28).
11. The Mass is an un-bloody sacrifice which atones for the sins of the living and the dead [1367, 1371, 1414].	The mass is contrary to the Scripture which makes it very clear that without the shedding of blood there is no remission or forgiveness of sins (Leviticus 17:11; Hebrews 9:22).
12. Each Sacrifice of the Mass appeases God's wrath against sin [1371, 1414].	God's just and righteous wrath and fury against sin was satisfied by the once-for-all sacrifice of His dear Son upon the cross for our sins (Hebrews 10:12-18).
13. The faithful receive the benefits of the cross in the fullest measure through the Sacrifice of the Mass [1366, 1407].	Believers receive the benefits of the cross in the fullest measure by their union to Christ through faith alone (Ephesians 1:3-14).
14. The sacrificial work of redemption is continually carried out through the Sacrifice of the Mass [1364, 1405, 1846].	The sacrificial work of redemption was finished when Christ gave His life for us upon the cross of Calvary (Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 1:3).
15. The Church is to continue the sacrifice of Christ through the Mass for the salvation of the World [1323, 1382, 1405, 1407].	The church is to proclaim the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection for the salvation of the world (I Corinthians 11:26; Matthew 28:19-20).

Topic: Mary

Over the years, the Roman Catholic Church has given Mary, the Mother of Jesus, an increasingly important role in their theology and tradition. The Scriptural Mary was an incredibly knowledgeable person in the Scriptures of the Old Testament and very godly young woman. She would, however, be horrified to discover the prominence and exaltation the Church of Rome has imposed upon her.

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
1. Mary was preserved from all stain of original sin from the first instant of her conception (the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception) [490-492].	Mary, a descendant of Adam, was born in sin (Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:12).

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
2. Mary, "the All-Holy," lived a perfectly sinless life [411,493].	Mary was a sinner; God alone is holy (Luke 18:19; Romans 3:23; Revelation 15:4).
3. Mary was a virgin before, during, and after the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ [496-511].	Mary was a virgin until the birth of the Lord Jesus Christ (Matthew 1:25) Later she had other children (Matthew 13:55-56; Psalm 69:8). James (Jacob), Jude (Judah), Joses (Joseph Jr.) and at least two sisters of the Lord Jesus Christ. James and Jude had a big role in the early Church.
4. Mary is the Mother of God [963, 971, 2677]	Mary is the earthly mother of the humanity of the Lord Jesus Christ (John 2:1). Nothing of His divine nature comes from Mary.
5. Mary is the Mother of the Church [963, 975].	Mary is a member of the church (Acts 1:14; I Corinthians 12:13, 27).
6. Mary is the co-redeemer, for she participated with Christ in the painful act of redemption [618, 964, 968, 970].	Christ alone is the Redeemer, for He alone suffered and died for the sin of all mankind (I Peter 1:18-19).
7. At the end of her life, Mary was assumed body and soul into heaven (the doctrine of the Assumption) [966, 974].	Upon her death (like all other human beings except for Enoch and Elijah) Mary's body returned to the dust to await the Rapture and the glory of our gathering together with Christ and her soul, absent from her body is present with her Lord (I Thessalonians 4:13-18; II Corinthians 5:1-8).
8. Mary is the co-mediator to whom we can entrust all our cares and petitions [968-970, 2677].	Christ Jesus is the ONE Mediator between God and Man to Whom we can entrust all our cares and petitions (I Timothy 2:5; John 14:13-14; I Peter 5:7).
9. We should entrust ourselves to Mary, surrendering "'hour of our death' wholly to her care" [2677].	We should totally entrust ourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, surrendering the hour of our death wholly to His care (Romans 10:13; Acts 4:12).
10. God has exalted Mary in heavenly glory as a Queen of Heaven and Earth [966]. She is to be praised with special devotion [971].	The name of the Lord Jesus Christ is to be praised, for He alone is exalted above the heaven and earth (Psalm 148:13). God commands, "Thou shalt have no other gods before Me." (Exodus 20:3).

Topic: Authority

Why is the gospel according to Rome so very different from the gospel as taught in the Bible? Why did the Roman Catholics focus on the apostle Peter whom they claim to be

the first pope and is it true that they can trace the papal lineage all the way back to him? What is it that determines what Roman Catholics believe? In this section of our study we will contrast the sources of Roman Catholic authority with those clearly taught in the Word of God. The most important part of any building is its foundation and if the foundation is not strong, the building however beautiful is in danger of collapse. Roman Catholicism is not built upon the sure foundation of the word of God and therefore many souls are placed in danger because they believe in something other than what God says.

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
1. Peter was the head of the Apostles [552, 765, 880].	Christ was the head of the Apostles (John 13:13).
2. The bishops are the successors of the apostles [861-862, 938].	The apostles had no successors, for to succeed them one needed to be a witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ (Acts 1:21-22).
3. The Pope, as the bishop of Rome, is the successor of Peter [882, 936].	Peter had no successor. This is a unbiblical doctrine. In a sense we still have the Apostles – the writings of the New Testament (Ephesians 4:7-16).
4. The bishops, with the Pope as their head, rule the Universal Church [883, 894-896].	The Lord Jesus Christ, the head of the Body which is His Church, rules the Universal Church, made of the Church Militant (Living Saints) and the Church Triumphant (those who have died in the Lord and are now present with Him in Heaven) (Colossians 1:18).
5. God has entrusted revelation to the Roman Catholic Bishops [81, 86].	God has entrusted revelation to the saints [saved people] (Jude 3) through the written and preserved Word of the Living God (Hebrews 2:1-4; 4:12-13).
6. The Magisterium is the authoritative teacher of the Church [85-87]. The word magisterium comes from the Latin word which means master or teacher. It is the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church that only the bishops of the church have the right to judge the true meaning of Revelation and to teach it with authority.	The Holy Spirit is the authoritative teacher of the church (John 14:26; 16:13; 1 John 2:27).
7. The Magisterium is the infallible interpreter of the Church [890-891, 2034-2035].	Scripture is the only infallible interpreter of Scripture (Acts 17:11).
8. The Pope is infallible in his authoritative teaching [891].	God alone is infallible (Numbers 23:19).
9. The Magisterium alone has the ability and the right to interpret Scripture [85, 100, 939].	Every Christian, aided by the Holy Spirit, has the ability and the right to interpret Scripture (Acts 17:11; 1 Corinthians 2:12-16).

The Roman Catholic Church Teaches:	The Bible Teaches:
10. Scripture is to be interpreted in the sense in which it has been defined by the Magisterium [113, 119].	Scripture must be interpreted in the original sense intended by the Holy Spirit (II Peter 3:14-16).
11. The Magisterium has the right to define truth found only obscurely or implicitly in revelation [66,88, 2035, 2051].	No one has the right to go beyond what is written in Scripture (I Corinthians 4:6; Proverbs 30:6).
12. Scripture and Tradition together are the Word of God [81, 85, 97, 182].	Scripture is the Word of God (John 10:35; II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1:20-21). Tradition is the word of men (Mark 7:1-13).
13. Scripture and Tradition together are the Church's supreme rule of faith [80, 82].	Scripture is the church's rule of faith (Mark 7:7-13; II Timothy 3:16-17).

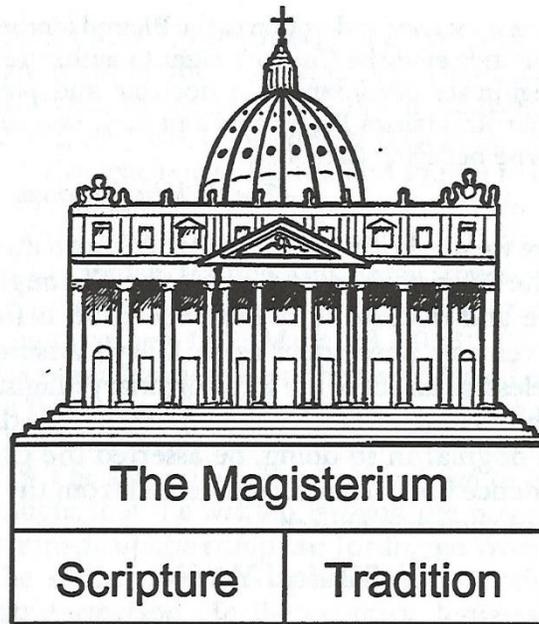


Figure 12:2

The Full Foundation of the Gospel According to Rome

According to the Second Vatican Council, "... sacred Tradition, sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church are so connected and associated that one of them cannot stand without the others. Working together, each in its own way under the action of the one Holy Spirit, they all contribute effectively to the salvation of souls"⁵³³ [95].

Tips and Suggestions for Reaching Catholics for the Lord Jesus Christ

1. **Pray for Roman Catholics:** II Corinthians 4:3-4 reminds us: "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: 4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who

is the image of God, should shine unto them.” We need to pray that God would open the eyes of Roman Catholics just as we pray for all lost people to be saved. What should our prayer consist of? Well there’s an excellent model found in II Timothy 2:25-26 “...if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; 26 And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

2. **Seek to develop relationships with Roman Catholics:** Roman Catholicism tends to run deep in certain ethnic and family circumstances, and as a result there are many Roman Catholics who do not have a single non-Catholic friend. As a result very few of them have ever heard the gospel clearly presented. To befriend Roman Catholic means that you will have to step outside your comfort zone, because sadly like the Roman Catholics we independent, fundamental, Bible believing Christians tend not to have friends outside our faith! We need to ask God to give us a burden for Roman Catholics and as a result seek out opportunities to nurture friendships with them. If history is any judge, you will find that your greatest opportunity to share your faith with Roman Catholics will come early and new relationships. This is crucial, and we must not let these opportunities pass. The American Roman Catholic is far more open to the gospel than most people would realize. Many of them have found the ceremonies and rituals of the church are meaningless and thousands of them are turning to Christ every year. It is also very important to try to reach out to Roman Catholic priests and nuns. Many of these folks are very lonely, confused, and open to the gospel.
3. **Help Roman Catholics see their need:** In America, most Roman Catholics are more dutiful than they are devout. It is interesting to observe, as I have during my years of pastoring in Indiana, that Roman Catholics do not ask much of their church. And Roman Catholicism does not ask much of its members. As long as one goes to confession and mass the family obligation seems to be fulfilled. But there is no deep passion for God in most Roman Catholic church members. In fact, many of them have no concept of a personal relationship with God. Therefore, it is very important to get them thinking about their spiritual condition. One powerful approach is to offer them Christian literature that squarely touches on the question of what will happen to his soul after death. The average Roman Catholic has little or no concept of the idea of the assurance of salvation. This is a great way to start a conversation. And don’t be concerned if it first they become angry when you attempt to expose the errors of the Roman Catholic Church. It is better to anger them temporarily than to allow them to die and go to hell because you did not want to hurt their feelings!
4. **Encourage Bible study:** Ignorance of what the Bible actually teaches is endemic among Roman Catholics. They are trusting that the church will care for their soul and they are willing to trust that the church will tell them what to believe concerning God and salvation. But it is important that every person come to realize that he is a sinner before God and that the wages of sin is death. Every human being must confront the question of his eternal destiny. One major way to encourage Roman

Catholics to start the process of thinking for themselves is to get them reading the Bible. Give them a Bible that is comfortable for them to read and not some oversized family addition. Show them how the Bible is structured and how they can find Bible passages. They do not know these things suggest a good place for them to begin reading like the gospel of John. Invite your friends to a Bible study like BIOMA. Once a person seeking God discovers that he can learn directly from the Scriptures it will be amazing to see what the spirit of God can do.

5. **Deal with the real problem:** Any sinner's greatest problem is not his background or his religion. The main problem with everyone is sin. In dealing with the Roman Catholic do not let Roman Catholicism become the issue. Most Catholics have a very deficient understanding of the seriousness of sin and its consequences. They think that because they been baptized and are living a relatively moral life that everything is just fine. Help them see how offensive sin is to God and show them what the Bible teaches about sin and God's hatred of it. Explain the way of salvation carefully and clearly. Make sure you do it directly from the Scriptures. This will let your Roman Catholic friend understand that what you are saying does not rest upon your authority but upon the authority of the word of God. A good way to reinforce their understanding is to ask them to repeat it back to you after you've taught them the truth.
6. **Be patient:** Because the average Roman Catholic in America has been brought up in the church and knows nothing else, you will need to be very clear and very careful in your presentation of the gospel. The use of clichés and trite sayings and theological jargon is not helpful in dealing with the Roman Catholic. For example, you should never ask a Roman Catholic to receive Christ. Not only is this approach nonbiblical, but it will confuse your Roman Catholic friend who believes that he receives Christ each time he takes communion. Don't attempt to prematurely lead your friend in a prayer to accept Christ. Roman Catholicism is an endless series of prayers and rights. They would have no problem with praying some prayer with you since they mostly believe that the more prayer the better. Your friend may simply believe that praying "the sinners prayer" is simply another ritual and they will be most willing to include it in their regular ritual of prayer. We need to be careful and to wait until the person is truly convicted of their sin and truly converted to Christ before getting them to pray a prayer of acknowledgment for the salvation God has granted through Christ.
7. **Encourage a clean break:** God, through the Lord Jesus Christ commissioned us to make disciples baptizing them in the name of the father son and Holy Spirit and to thoroughly instruct them in the Christian faith (Matthew 28:19-20). The work of evangelism is not completed until your Roman Catholic friend has assurance of salvation, is baptized and incorporated in a sound, Bible believing church. As these Roman Catholics have passed from death unto life and from a dead religion into a living faith it is important that the convert makes a clean break with the Roman Catholic Church. In the words of ex-Catholic James McCarthy: "a thorough housecleaning may also be in order. Explain the value of disposing of everything

associated with the unbiblical beliefs and practices: statues, rosaries, scapulars, miraculous metals, holy cards, holy water etc. (Acts of the Apostles 19:17-20; Jude 23) Do not underestimate how ingrained Roman Catholicism can be even in lapsed Catholics. If a newly saved Catholic is having trouble leaving the Roman Catholic Church, try explaining more fully what Roman Catholicism teaches and why it is unbiblical. Start with the Mass. If the person is truly saved, he should soon realize that he should no longer participate in the continuing sacrifice of Christ or to worship the bread and wine. If devotion to Mary is the problem, emphasize the glories of the Lord Jesus Christ in his sufficiency. As when coaxing an infant to release a harmful object clutched in his hand, the best method is to offer something better and exchange.”

8. **Anticipate opposition:** In American Roman Catholicism, family ties and connections run very deep. Often new converts find deep family opposition especially when the new convert openly is baptized. It is important to counsel your Roman Catholic friend who has trusted Christ to avoid arguments with family members and the attempt to force his newfound faith upon his family. Remind him that the best way to witness is to live the life of Christ before others. Patient humility along with loving adherence to the Bible draws more converts than argumentation.
9. **Learn all you can:** If you are serious about reaching Catholics for Christ take the time required to truly understand the Bible and to understand Roman Catholicism. The only way to truly help those who are lost in sin is to know the truth of the gospel and be able to present it clearly to all sorts of people.
10. **Oppose Ecumenism:** Here I would like to quote from the Gospel According to Rome by James McCarthy in its entirety: “One of the principal objectives of the second Vatican Council was the promotion of ecumenism, the restoration of unity among Christian churches of every kind. The Council set for three principles to guide the church’s ecumenical movement. First, Catholics were to be aware that Christ established the Roman Catholic Church and gave it the Eucharist, the Holy Spirit, and bishops with the Pope as their head to rule, so that the church might be unified. Second, it taught that non-Catholic Christians who have been justified by baptism are to be considered as *separated brethren*. They have a valid means of salvation, said the church, but not in its fullness as the Roman Catholic Church. Third, the Council stated that all Catholics should promote ecumenism by avoiding unfair criticism of other Christians. To promote understanding and cooperation, competent experts word to engage in dialogue. The Council stated that the goal of the church’s ecumenical strategy was the unity of all Christian churches through common communion with the Roman Catholic Church... Though Rome has yet to achieve its ultimate purpose, it has succeeded in undermining the commitment of many Christians to evangelization of Catholics... Such ecumenical compromise must be opposed. There is no room and biblical Christianity for unity or cooperation with Roman and false gospel, it’s continuing sacrifice, and its idolatrous devotion to Mary. As long as the Roman Catholic Church continues “to regard the

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Scriptures, taken together with sacred tradition, as the supreme rule of her faith,"
there is not even a common basis for dialogue."

Adapted from **The Gospel According to Rome: Comparing Catholic Tradition and the Word of God**