Roman Catholicism Compared To Biblical Chrsitianity   
written and compiled by Barbara Wilhelm, 9/01

*The following contain excerpts and/or references from Roman Catholicism: Scripture vs. Tradition by Mike Gendron, head of "Proclaiming the Gospel”; James G. McCarthy, author of The Gospel According to Romeand the tract What You Need To Know About Roman Catholicism; and T. A. McMahon of The Berean Call. Mr. Gendron, Mr. McCarthy and Mr. McMahon are former Catholics and present born-again Christians with ministries to Catholics. The author of the following position paper, a former Catholic of 35 years and a born-again Christian of 23 years, has, in recent years, taken a course from the Catholic Church itself dealing with their current beliefs. Annotated references to Catholic doctrine were obtained from the official Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Austin Flannery edition of Vatican Council II: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents.*

*\*There is also a section entitled Catholic Doctrinal Guide with definitions of various Catholic terminology. The source book for the Guide was a Catholic family Bible which carries the “imprimatur” (official authorization) of the Roman Catholic Church.*

**INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS**

*“It is important to realize that most of the clergy and lay people that teach Roman Catholic doctrine are not deceiving people with malicious intent.  They are simply passing on what has been passed on to them, sincerely believing that they have the truth.  Catholics must believe ALL dogmas of their church or be anathema (eternally condemned and accursed) by their church.  Prayer, love, compassion and understanding are needed along with the power of the Word of God to penetrate their hearts. Patience is needed to untangle Roman Catholics from the dogmatic web in which they are held captive”* (Roman Catholicism: Scripture vs. Tradition  by Mike Gendron).

It must also be remembered that there are those in the Catholic Church who love the Lord and have had a genuine born-again   
experience yet remain in that church out of ignorance of her doctrines.

In 2 Cor 11: 2-4 Paul states:  “For I am zealous for you with a godly jealousy, for I have betrothed you to one Husband, to   
present you a chaste virgin to Christ.  But now I am fearful lest even as the serpent beguiled Eve by his cunning, so your minds   
may be seduced from the *simplicity of Jesus.*  For you seem readily to endure it if a man comes and preaches another Jesus   
than the One we preached, or if you receive a different spirit from the Spirit you once received, or a different gospel from the   
one you received and welcomed.”

In what is called the “unity chapter”, John 17, Jesus Himself states that doctrinal truth is to be the primary unifying factor   
between believers and the basis for sanctification: v.17 “Sanctify them by Thy truth; Thy Word is truth.”

**A CLARIFICATION OF TERMS**

Before we can even start a meaningful discussion of the differences between Catholicism and Biblical Christianity, it is   
imperative to clarify what different words and terms mean when viewed from each perspective.  Some of the following words   
may sound the same to Bible-believing Christians as they do to Catholics – but their meanings will differ sharply.  In addition,   
there will be terms totally unfamiliar to Christians but which must be discussed because they play such an integral part in Roman   
Catholic theology.

**CATHOLIC DOCTRINAL GUIDE**

**Preface:** We Catholics  maintain that the Bible is not the sole source of Christ’s teaching, but that we have a double rule of   
faith, namely, Bible and Tradition.  Tradition is the sum of revealed doctrine which has *not* been put down in Sacred Scripture   
but has been handed down through legitimate pastors of the Church from age to age.

**Baptism:**the sacrament of spiritual cleansing and *rebirth*, instituted by Jesus Christ.  In baptism a human being is *born again*   
*spiritually* and made capable of receiving the other sacraments.

**Church Legislation:**(Canons 1391, 1399 1400) the faithful are not permitted to read vernacular translations of the Bible   
which do not have the approval of the Holy See (Pope) and are not published under the vigilance of the bishops.  For the   
Catholic, the private interpretation of the individual is regarded as worthless, and *only the authoritative verdict of the*   
*infallible (Catholic) Church, exercising in this sphere its divine commission to teach, is valid.* “If anyone believes any   
scriptures beyond those which the Catholic Church has received are to be regarded as authoritative or held in esteem, *let him*   
*be anathema.”*

**Confession to and Absolution by a priest:** (Confession is) the clear avowal of all sins committed after Baptism, made to a   
priest who has the power to absolve (those sins). The priest imposes upon the penitent sinner acts of penance to make   
reparation for his sins.  These acts of penance may include saying specified amounts of “Hail Marys” and “Our Fathers”,   
self-denial, or performing good works. The priest’s role in this sacrament is as representative of Christ.

**Council:**The assembly of the bishops (including the Bishop of Rome, the Pope) convoked to define questions of faith, morals   
and discipline. (Throughout history) there have been numerous councils: Nicea (325), Trent (1545-1563), Vatican I (1869) and   
Vatican II (present-day).

**Dogma:**When this word is applied to Catholic teaching, it refers to a formal statement of doctrine, as contained in divine   
revelation, concerning faith or morals, made by the Pope as universal teacher, or by an ecumenical council in union with him.

**Eucharist:** From the Greek word meaning to*thank*, a sacrament of the New Law in which, under the appearances of bread   
and wine, the Body and Blood of Christ are truly, really and substantially present, as the grace-producing food of the soul. The   
priest, who alone has the power given him by God to prepare the ingredients for this sacrament, by pronouncing the words of   
consecration, changes the substance of bread and wine into Christ’s Body and Blood. The Holy Eucharist is the living   
(emphasis in original) Christ: the wafer containing the body, blood, soul and divinity of Jesus Christ (1374) that is to be   
worshipped, consumed and sacrificed (1378).

**Expiation:** The work of expiation continues through the unbloody sacrifice of the Mass for all time. Hence, for us (Catholics),   
the greatest work of expiation is through the sacrifice of the Mass by which God is placated.

**Grace:** Grace is lost through mortal sin; it is preserved and increased through prayer and works done under the influence of   
God, and by means of the sacraments duly received.

**Indulgence:** The means of remission of the temporal punishment for sins of which the guilt has been forgiven, either in the   
sacrament of Penance or because of an act of perfect contrition, granted by the competent ecclesiastical authority from the   
Treasury of the Church to the living by way of absolution, to the dead by way of others prayers for them. When the guilt of a sin   
is removed from the soul there always remains temporal punishment due to sin and this temporal punishment must be removed   
before a soul can enter heaven. An indulgence is received by good works and penances and can be applied to the sins of the   
living and the dead (1471-79).

The Council of Trent stated – “Since the power of conferring indulgences has been granted by Christ to His Church, this Holy   
Synod teaches and orders that the use of indulgences is to be retained in the Church. It also condemns under anathema those   
who say they are useless or who maintain that the Church has not the power to confer them.”

**Infallibility:** The belief that the pope and bishops are said to be incapable of error when proclaiming definite doctrines   
involving faith and morals.

Vatican Council I stated – “It is divinely revealed dogma that the Roman Pontiff, when he speaks *ex cathedra* (that is, when   
acting as shepherd and teacher of all Christians, he, by his supreme apostolic authority, defines a doctrine touching faith or   
morals, which is to be held by the whole Church) said definitions are of themselves irreformable (infallible).  If anyone shall   
presume to contradict this our definition, let him be anathema”.

**Mortal Sin:**A grave sin committed with full knowledge and consent (1857 from the Catholic Catechism).  Those who die in   
this state descend into hell (1035).

**Penance** (Also known now as the Sacrament of Reconciliation) The sacrament of confessing sins after baptism to a priest and   
asking for his forgiveness so that you are reconciled back to God (1456)

**Pope:**this word comes a Greek term for*father*.  As bishop of Rome, the pope is St. Peter’s successor and is therefore the   
visible head of the Church on earth.

**Purgatory:**The place and state in which souls suffer for a time after death and are cleansed of their sins, before entering into   
Heaven. Here, *venial sins*, which have never in this life been remitted by an act of repentance or love or by good deeds, are   
removed. The debt of temporal punishment due to *grave (mortal)* sins, the guilt of which with its eternal punishment has indeed   
been remitted by God in the Sacrament of Penance must also be removed here. It is of faith that the souls in Purgatory can be   
helped by the prayers and sacrifices of the Faithful on earth and especially by the Mass.

**Rosary:** an expression of devotion to Mary which uses beads to count 53 repetitious prayers to Mary, six to God the Father   
and six to the Trinity.

**Sacraments:** The Catholic Church teaches that there are seven sacraments and each of them contain grace.  The seven   
sacraments are: baptism, penance, eucharist, confirmation (to receive Holy Spirit), matrimony, holy orders (vows taken by   
priests and nuns) and anointing of the sick. These are the primary means by which God bestows grace upon people in the   
RCC. Church teaching is that the sacraments themselves are necessary for salvation [1129 –Catholic Catechism].

**Venial Sin:** a sin that merits only temporal punishment and does not deprive the sinner of grace or friendship with God.  Venial   
sins can be atoned for with acts of penance and good works.

**Vicar of Christ:** one of many titles claimed by the Pope.  This one means representative of Christ on Earth. (end of  Catholic   
Doctrinal Guide section).

**ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS -  FROM CHRISTIAN SOURCES**

**Apocrypha:**12 writings were declared inspired by the RCC and were added to the Catholic Canon in 1546.  Many of the   
teachings in the apocrypha contradict the Bible – indulgences, paid masses for the dead, magic performed by Jesus as a child,   
etc.

**Magesterium:**comes from Latin for “Master” and refers to bishops who are the teaching authority of the RCC. The   
magesterium consists of all the bishops including the Bishop of Rome, the Pope.  They are the ones who pass judgment on   
doctrine, state what interpretation a Catholic may give to a scripture verse, and they are the ones who dole out grace in partial   
payments depending on the amount of good works that are done.

**Treasury of the Church:** (From The Gospel According to Rome by James G.  McCarthy: “Another way in which the living   
can help the dead is by acquiring special credits, called indulgences, that cancel out temporal punishment [1032.1471] Roman   
Catholicism teaches that the Church has the power to dispense indulgences from a vast reservoir of merit called the *treasury of*   
*the Church*[1476-1477]…The “treasury of the Church” is the infinite value, which can never be exhausted, which Christ’s   
merits have before God…This treasury includes as well the prayers and good works of the Blessed Virgin Mary and…the   
prayers and good works of all the saints.)

**Vatican II:** The conference was held 1962-65 and from it came the New Catholic Canon of Laws. After Vatican II there was   
a strong ecumenical outreach to other churches, culminating in the un-Biblical agreement called “Evangelicals and Catholics   
Together.”

**CATHOLICS AND CHRISTIANS:ESSENTIAL DOCTRINAL DIFFERENCES**

The Roman Catholic Church (much like the Judaizers in the book of Galatians) upholds four fundamental tenets of the Christian   
faith: the deity of Christ, the Trinity, the virgin birth, and the bodily resurrection of Jesus. *However*, it denies that Christ’s work   
of redemption is finished and that His atonement is sufficient.

*In addition*, Catholic teaching opposes the doctrine most essential to the Christian faith – *the doctrine of justification* by   
*faith alone*. The RCC not only denies this doctrine, but also condemns anyone who believes it. The Catholic Church may say   
that it believes in salvation by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone, but the doctrines of that church deny these words.

The Roman Catholic Church says it believes in salvation by grace alone. However, their “grace” is not the free gift of   
Christianity but can only be received by the individual in partial installments dispensed through the “magesterium” of the RCC \*   
(see Catholic Doctrinal Guide for definition). The RCC says it believes in salvation through faith alone - but adds works to that.   
It says it believes in salvation through Christ alone - but adds, among other things, membership in the Catholic Church, a belief   
that water baptism, even of infants, is what constitutes being born-again, and unbiblical beliefs about Mary.  If doctrine is not   
discussed, then Christians will never realize that the doctrines of the Bible are different from the doctrines the RCC adheres to,   
no matter what they say to the contrary. More importantly, if we do not delineate the differences in doctrine between the   
Christian Church and the Catholic Church, we do an incredible disservice to those Catholics who believe they are born-again   
yet still continue in the church of Rome. If we evade doctrinal issues, we are not giving Catholics the chance to escape from a   
deception that will condemn them to eternal death. If a man believes a false gospel, he is not saved and cannot be discipled.   
The discussion of doctrinal differences is truly a life – or - death matter.

**HOLY SCRIPTURE**

Bible:  “Every Scripture is God-breathed – given by His inspiration – and profitable for instruction, for reproof, for correction of   
error, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be complete, well-fitted and thoroughly equipped for every   
good work” (2 Ti 3: 16-17). See also 2 Pe 1: 3-10 and 1 Cor 2:13.

Deut 4:2; Prov 30:5,6; Rev 22: 19 are just some of the warnings in the Bible dealing with adding to or subtracting from God's   
Holy Word. The RCC, however, does not seem to heed these warnings. As just one example, the Catholic Church does not   
profess the simple Ten Commandments, eliminating the second commandment to have no idols before God and to create no   
graven images.  The RCC then takes the Biblical tenth Commandment and makes it into two instead of one. Hence, the RCC   
Ten Commandments are not the Biblical Ten Commandments. The Roman Catholic Church believes that there are more than   
the 66 canonical books of the Bible, adding what they call the Apocrypha\*.  The Apocrypha contains descriptions of Jesus   
performing magic as a child, and the Catholic beliefs in praying for the dead and purgatory. “Purgatory is the place of suffering a   
Catholic enters after death when he may need to make additional reparation for his sins. There he pays for the temporal   
punishment of sins not previously atoned for by acts of penance\* or canceled by indulgences\*, special credits obtained from the   
RCC by performing religious acts” (J. McCarthy: What You Need To Know About Roman Catholicism).

The Catholic Church also adds tradition and papal infallibility\* to the teachings of the Bible, thereby placing both above the   
inerrancy of the Bible.  (Mt 15:6 states: “So for the sake of your tradition, you have set aside the Word of God and made it null   
and void.”)

(following is excerpted from Roman Catholicism: Scripture vs. Tradition  by Mike Gendron):

**DOCTRINE OF JESUS**

JESUS, THE SAVIOR:

Bible: "He saved us not because of any righteous deeds we had done, but because of His mercy" (Titus 3:5)

Roman Catholic Church teaches that "by His death and resurrection, Jesus Christ has 'opened' heaven to us" (1026 -references   
are from 1994 Catholic catechism). Each person attains his own salvation by grace and good works (1477).

JESUS, THE SINLESS REDEEMER:

Bible: "For you know it was not with perishable things...that you are redeemed...but with the precious blood of Christ" (1 Pe   
1:17-18).

RCC teaches that *Mary* is the sinless co-Redeemer.  "Without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person   
and work of her son; she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with Him...being obedient, *she* became the cause   
of salvation for herself and for the whole human race"  (494)

JESUS, OUR ADVOCATE AND ONLY MEDIATOR:

Bible: "God is one, one also is the mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus" (1 Ti 2:5, 1 Jn 2:1)

RCC teaches that Mary "did not lay aside her saving office but by her manifold intercession continues to bring us the gifts of eternal salvation. *She is Advocate…and Mediatrix*” (969)

JESUS, HEAD OF THE CHURCH:

Bible: "He has put all things under Christ's feet and made Him, thus exalted, head of the Church"  (Eph 1: 22,23).

RCC teaches that the Pope, "by reason of his office as Vicar of Christ, and as pastor of the entire church has full, supreme and   
universal power over the whole church, a power which he can always exercise unhindered" (882).  He exercises infallibility   
when "he proclaims by a definitive act a doctrine pertaining to faith or morals" (891)

JESUS, THE SOON-COMING  KING:

Bible: "This same Jesus, who has been taken away from you into heaven will come back in the same way you have seen Him go   
unto heaven"  (Acts 1:11).

RCC denies this by teaching that Jesus returns daily to the altars of Catholic churches to worshipped:  "The body and   
blood...soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ...is truly, really and substantially contained" in the Eucharist\* (1374-78).

**CHRIST’S WORK**

JESUS EXPIATES OUR SIN:

Bible: "Through His blood, God made Him the means of expiation for all who believe"  (Ro 3:25)

RCC teaches that sins are expiated in purgatory through a "cleansing fire" and that we "must strive to accept this temporal   
punishment of sin as a grace" (1030,31; 1472-75).

(It is also noteworthy that the Word of God consistently affirms that sins are expiated by blood and not by fire. Biblically, the   
“fires of purgatory” cannot purge or atone for sin.)

JESUS FINISHED THE WORK OF REDEMPTION:

Bible: "By one offering He has forever perfected those who are being sanctified" (Heb 10:14).  "Unlike the other high priests,   
He does not need to offer daily sacrifices" (Heb 7:27,28).

RCC denies that Jesus' work on the cross is finished.  "The sacrifice of Christ and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single   
sacrifice...the same Christ who offered Himself once in a bloody manner on the altar of the cross is contained and offered in an   
unbloody manner in the Eucharist"(1367).  "Every time this mystery is celebrated the work of our redemption is carried on"   
(1405). The sacrifice "is offered in reparation for the sins of the living and the dead" (1414). Over and over again in Roman   
Catholicism, Jesus dies on the cross as the eternal victim.

HIS LIFE, DEATH AND RESURRECTION PROVIDED THE ONLY WAY TO BE SAVED:

Bible: "There is no salvation in anyone else, for there is no other name in the whole world given to men by which we are to be   
saved" (Acts 4:12).

RCC denies this by claiming the Catholic Church "is necessary for salvation" (846).

HIS SHED BLOOD IS THE ONLY REMISSION FOR SIN:

Bible: "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness for sin" (Heb 9:22). "Since these sins have been forgiven, there is   
no further offering for sin" (Heb 10:18).

RCC teaches that "an indulgence is a remission before God of the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been   
forgiven which...may be applied to the living or the dead" (1471)

This is absolutely contrary to Scripture because it undermines the*total*cleansing of Jesus' blood.  By stating that indulgences   
are needed to *further* cleanse the sinner, indulgences make man's actions of higher worth than Jesus' blood.

JESUS CLEANSES US FROM SIN:

Bible: “When He [Jesus] had cleansed us from our sins, He took His seat at the right hand of the Majesty in heaven” (Heb   
1:3).  “Christ…presents you to God holy, free of reproach and blame” (Col 1:22)

RCC teaches that “all who die in God’s grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified…undergo purification, so as to   
achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven” (1030)

**DOCTRINE OF SALVATION**

SALVATION IS PROCLAIMED IN THE GOSPEL OF JESUS CHRIST:

Bible: "It is the power of God leading everyone who believes in it to salvation" (Ro 1:16). It relates Jesus' life, death and   
resurrection according to the Scriptures (1 Cor 15: 1-4).

RCC preaches a different gospel by demanding additional requirements for salvation including:  the sacraments (1129),   
meritorious masses (1405), church membership (846), purgatory (1030), indulgences \*(1498), and baptism (1256).

SALVATION IS OF GOD, NOT MAN:

Bible: “When you heard the glad tidings of salvation, the word of truth, and believed in it, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit   
(Eph 1:13). Those “who believe in His name were begotten not by…man’s willing it, but by God” (Jn 1:13).

RCC teaches “Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration…without which no one can enter the kingdom of God” (1213, 1215).

SALVATION IS THROUGH FAITH, NOT WORKS:

Bible: "Salvation is yours through faith. This is not of your own doing, it is God's gift, neither is it a reward for anything you have   
accomplished, so let no one pride himself on it"  (Eph 2: 8,9).  "Yet in no way can a man redeem himself, nor pay his own   
ransom to God.  Too high is the price to redeem one's life; he would never have enough" (Ps 49: 7,8).

RCC teaches salvation through faith plus works. They say people can obtain their own salvation and at the same time   
cooperate in saving their brothers through good works and indulgences (1477, 1479).

(The Lindsell Bible Commentary’s introduction to the book of Galatians states: “ When you mix faith with works, the error is of   
such magnitude that it will result in the loss of the true gospel.”)

SALVATION IS BY GRACE, NOT MERIT:

Bible: "All men are now undeservedly justified by the gift of God" (Ro 3:24).  "…But if it is by grace it is no longer conditioned   
on works or anything men have done.  Otherwise, grace would no longer be grace – it would be meaningless.”(Ro 11:6).

RCC denies justifying grace is undeserved.  "We can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal   
life" (2027).

(RCC source used is Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1994.)   
(excerpt ended)

**NONE OF THESE ARE SECONDARY ISSUES. ON THE CONTRARY,THEY ARE THE PRIMARY**   
**DOCTRINES OF OUR FAITH.**

While there are a great many other topics that can be discussed in relation to the Catholic faith, only three others will be   
attempted at this time.  The first topic is the difference between Christian Communion and the Catholic Eucharist; the next, the   
difference between the Biblical Mary and the Catholic Mary.  The last topic is the mistaken belief that Vatican II significantly   
changed the tenets of Catholicism.

**CHRISTIAN COMMUNION AS OPPOSED TO CATHOLIC EUCHARIST**

There is a very real difference between the Communion and the Lord's Supper as observed by born-again believers as   
opposed to the Eucharist and the Mass\* as observed by Catholics.  Born-again believers contend that the bread and wine are   
the elements and that Communion and the Lord's Supper are done in remembrance of Jesus' "once for all" sacrifice.  Catholics,   
on the other hand, believe that the Eucharist offered at the Mass is the *actual* flesh and blood of Jesus.  This, they state, is   
done by means of transubstantiation, the Catholic doctrine wherein the bread and wine actually *become* the *real body* and   
blood of Jesus.

The Council of Trent, 13th Session, Canon I stated: “(the Eucharist) is truly, really and substantially the body and blood   
together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Catholic Mass is the “unbloody sacrifice” of Jesus repeated over   
and over. Yet the Bible repeatedly states that “without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin.” The word for the   
wafer that is offered at Catholic Mass is “hostia” which means victim.  Hence, Jesus as the eternal victim is repeatedly being   
sacrificed at each Catholic Mass.

Of the Mass, the Council of Trent also stated (Session 22, Chap.2): “In this divine sacrifice the same Christ is present and   
immolated (sacrificed) in an unbloody manner on the *altar* of the Cross…only the manner of offering is different.” Heb 9: 22   
and 10:10-17 totally contradict these Catholic doctrines. Therefore, how can Biblical Communion be equated with the Catholic   
Eucharist and Mass?

Also, instead of centering worship around the *Person* of the Lord Jesus and His redeeming work on the cross, it is the Catholic   
Church that makes the *wafer* of bread – the Eucharist – the “centerpiece of worship” and actually says, in its catechism, that   
their communion is the “*sacrament of redemption*” (1994 Catechism of the Catholic Church section 1846) and the place   
where “ the work of our redemption is accomplished” (Vatican II Austin Flannery p.1).  When the priest holds the wafer and   
presents it to the congregation saying “Behold the Lamb of God”, he truly means that that *wafer* is the real Lamb of God, Jesus   
Christ. The Catholic Church emphasizes this adoration of the wafer – not the Person of Jesus – during the feast called Corpus   
Christi, a Latin term meaning “body of Christ.”  On that day a procession of Catholics follow the priest in adoration of the   
Communion wafer which is carried in a vessel called a “monstrance.”

In simple terms that means that Roman Catholicism believes that redemption comes through ingesting the Eucharist –the wafer   
which they say is Jesus – not through Jesus’ work on the cross. Hence, Catholic Communion is not Biblical Communion: they   
may use the same words, but the meaning is totally different.

**MARY OF THE BIBLE AND THE MARY OF CATHOLICISM**

(the following information is excerpted from T.A. McMahon’s article entitled Mary Who?):

“…The only trustworthy account of Mary is found in the Scriptures where information is presented by those who knew her   
personally and, more importantly, whose writings were under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.  Fewer than 90 Bible verses   
address the life of Mary.  In them we find a wonderful humble servant of the Lord who rejoices in Him as her Savior (Lk 1:   
47)… Mary’s ministry was simply the birth and nurturing of the child Jesus. Once He reached adulthood, she played no   
influential part in His earthly service.  It’s at the wedding feast of Cana, which began the public ministry of Jesus, that her last   
words are recorded.  Fittingly, she tells the servants, ‘ Whatsoever He saith unto you, do it’ (Jn 2:5)… Mary then fades into the   
background.

Search the Scriptures as you will and you will find no leadership role for Mary among the Apostles.  She taught no doctrine.   
We never hear of the Apostles seeking her out for counsel.  Other than the gospels, Mary is mentioned only once in the New   
Testament, where the Book of Acts tells us of her simple participation in a prayer meeting along with her sons.  The teaching   
that Mary was a perpetual virgin is contradicted by many verses (Mt 12:46; Mk 6:3; Jn 7: 3,5; 1Cor 9:5; Gal 1:19; Ps   
69:8,etc.)…The Apostle Peter, a contemporary of Mary and regarded by Catholics as the first pope, wrote nothing about her.   
The Apostle Paul…made no mention of the alleged importance of devotions or reparations to Mary…The Apostle John, who   
wrote the last book of the Bible and was given the care of Mary by Jesus Himself, says nothing about venerating her…Although   
mankind is being drawn into every kind of spiritual deception in the last days before the return of Jesus, it is especially sad that   
the real mother of Jesus, the remarkable ‘handmaiden of the Lord’ (Lk 1:38) is so terribly misrepresented, thereby drawing   
millions away from her Son…

(Conversely), the Mary of Catholicism was immaculately conceived, the Mother of God, a perpetual virgin, Mediatrix between   
God and man, and the Queen of Heaven…The ‘Mary’ who spoke to Father Gobbi, the founder of the Marian Movement of   
more than 100,000 priests, declared, ‘Each of my statues is a sign of a presence of mine and reminds you of your heavenly   
Mother.  Therefore it must be honored and put in places of greater veneration…’

Consider Our Lady of Fatima: (she said) ‘Say the Rosary every day to obtain peace for the world…God wishes to establish in   
the world the devotion to My immaculate heart.  If people do what I tell you, many souls will be saved and there will be peace.’

This is not the humble and submissive Mary of the Bible.  The rosary invokes prayers to Mary ten times for every one for the   
Lord; Jesus is the Prince of Peace; only Christ’s once-for-all sacrifice saves souls from hell; neither is Mary’s heart immaculate,   
nor are we to be spiritually devoted to anyone other than our Lord and Savior” (excerpts ended).

The Catholic doctrine of the Immaculate Conception is NOT the Christian doctrine which states that Jesus was born without   
sin. Rather, it states that Mary was born free of any sin: “O, Mary, conceived without sin, pray for us who have recourse to   
thee.” The prayer specifically presents her as intercessor. In addition, Catholics believe that as a special privilege Mary was   
preserved from all sin, even venial sin\*. Catholics also hold to the doctrine that Mary, after her death, was “assumpted” bodily   
into heaven and, therefore, never saw corruption.. Both the Feast of the Assumption and the Immaculate Conception are   
“holydays of obligation” in the Catholic Church and require Catholics to attend a Mass on those days under penalty of   
“mortal”\* sin.

One of the titles the Catholic Church gives Mary is “Queen of Heaven.” In chapters 7:18 and 44:19 Jeremiah actually speaks of   
the people of Israel making offerings to a “queen of heaven.” Yet a simple reading of the chapters shows that God was   
exceedingly angry because of this heathen worship.

There is also a mixing of what is Biblical and what is Catholic in the “Hail Mary,” the prayer used repeatedly in the rosary. It   
states:  “Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art thou among women…” This is actually found in Luke 1:28.   
However, the rest of the prayer is not Biblical.  It states “…Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for  us sinners, now and at the   
hour of our death. Amen.”  Mary is “holy” only as she is holy in Jesus.  She was not the mother of God, but of the child Jesus  -   
stating it as the Catholic Church does confers upon her a title that denotes her superiority over Jesus.  She cannot pray for us   
sinners because she herself was a sinner, and because only Jesus “ever liveth to make intercession for us” (Heb 7:25).

**WHAT DID VATICAN II REALLY CHANGE?**

In the 1960’s after Vatican II was convened, the Roman Catholic Church made some sweeping reforms that attempted to   
bridge the gap between Catholicism and Protestantism.  The Sacrifice of the Mass could now be offered in the local language   
instead of in Latin.  Catholics were no longer forbidden to read a Protestant Bible or attend a Protestant church service. The   
priest now faced the congregation at an altar instead of having his back to them. There were no longer just old Catholic hymns   
and responses sung. Now up-beat folk songs were allowed.

*But notice what****did not****change.* There is still the mandatory priest who stands at a mandatory altar, still offering Jesus up as   
an eternal victim at the Sacrifice of the Mass. The crucifix with Christ still on the Cross is ever-present. Yes, Catholics can now   
read a Protestant Bible *but* no private interpretation is allowed and *only* the magesterium’s interpretation is permitted. There   
are still novenas(nine-day prayer vigils) and rosaries offered to Mary, who is still co-Redeemer, co-Mediatrix, Queen of   
Heaven. The Pope is still considered to be infallible, even when his encyclicals contradict the Bible. Tradition is still given equal   
ranking with Scripture. The adoration of the wafer – not of Jesus – still continues at Catholic Communion, as does the priest’s   
ability by means of transubstantiation to transform the bread and wine into the living Body and Blood of Jesus. Some things   
changed, *but not one fundamental doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church changed at all.*

Vatican II is thought by most Catholics and non-Catholics to have changed centuries-old doctrines of the Catholic Church,   
especially those that evangelical Christians were troubled by.  As has been seen, however, this is not the case.

“It fact it reaffirmed the canons and decrees of previous key councils: ‘This sacred council accepts loyally the venerable faith of   
our ancestors…and it proposes again the decrees of the Second Council of Nicea, of the Council of Florence (purgatory) and   
of the Council of Trent (masses said for the dead , papal infallibility, Catholic sacraments necessary for salvation)’ (Austin   
Flannery, Vol. 1, p.412). The Council of Trent denounced the Reformation and damned evangelicals’ beliefs with more than   
100 anathemas. All of these condemnations of the gospel of God’s grace are endorsed and reaffirmed by Vatican II” (Dave   
Hunt: A Woman Rides the Beast).

(excerpt follows from T.A.McMahon’s tract Why It Matters, Part I):

“The following citations are from the Council of Trent, which met over a nineteen-year period primarily to denounce the   
teachings of the Protestant Reformation. Although the Council met in the sixteenth century, its decrees were reaffirmed by both   
Vatican I & II. Consider Catholicism’s position on what evangelicals uphold as the gospel (that is, salvation is by grace through   
faith alone in Christ alone who, through His sacrificial death on the cross, paid the full penalty for all the sins of humanity):

6th Session, Canon 9: If anyone says that the sinner is justified by faith alone, meaning that nothing else is required to cooperate   
in order to obtain the grace of justification…let him be anathema (accursed, eternally condemned).

6th Session, Canon 12: If anyone shall say that justifying faith is nothing else than confidence in the divine mercy, which remits   
sins for Christ’s sake, or that it is this confidence alone that justifies us, let him be anathema.

6th Session, Canon 30: If anyone says that after the reception of the grace of justification the guilt is so remitted and the debt of   
eternal punishment so blotted out to every repentant sinner, that no debt of temporal punishment remains to be discharged either   
in this world or in purgatory before the gates of heaven can be opened, let him be anathema.

7th Session, Canon 4: If anyone says that the sacraments of the New Law [canons and decrees of the Church] are not   
necessary for salvation but…without them…men obtain from God alone through faith alone the grace of justification, let him be   
anathema.

As the above decrees demand, Roman Catholicism requires more than faith in Christ for salvation…The clear denunciation of   
the Biblical gospel by the Council of Trent, with its more than 100 anathemas, and reaffirmations by the Second Vatican   
Council of the 1960’s, comes from the highest Roman Catholic authority (College of Cardinals and the Pope)…Few lay   
Catholics are familiar with the Code of Canon Law, containing more than 1,750 laws which dictate Church rules and practice.   
(*Yet these rules and practices must be obeyed in order for a Catholic to be considered a Catholic by that Church*).

(Since Vatican II) Rome has donned evangelical apparel and added some biblical accessories (although her unbiblical salvation   
remains the same). (Seemingly), her goal has been to seduce evangelical Christians into believing that Roman Catholicism is   
proclaiming the same gospel and the same Jesus…

(Yet it might be asked) Haven’t the modifications instituted by Vatican II, the ecumenical dialogues with evangelical   
denominations and the ‘Evangelicals and Catholics Together’ accord at least demonstrated that the Roman Catholic Church is   
indeed changing and becoming more biblical? Augustin Cardinal Bea, president at the time of the Vatican Secretariat for   
Promoting Christian Unity, makes clear Rome’s intentions:

‘The Roman Catholic Church would be *gravely misunderstood*if it should be concluded that her present ecumenical   
adventuresomeness and openness meant that she was prepared to reexamine any of her *fixed dogmatic positions*. What the   
Church is prepared to do is take…a more imaginative and contemporary *presentation* of these fixed positions’” (excerpt   
ended).

**OUR RESPONSIBILITY**

Our greatest responsibility is to pray and to do so with deep compassion and love. When we share these truths with Catholics,   
we must do so with a tenderness of spirit for unless the truth is told with love they will not be able to receive it. We do not need   
to come to them with “lofty words of eloquence or persuasiveness of human wisdom…(we need only share) Jesus Christ, the   
Messiah, and Him crucified “ (1Cor 2: 1-4).

If we, or any organization, continue to call Catholics Christians, the true gospel of salvation through Jesus Christ alone will never   
be presented to those deceived Catholics, nor will born-again Catholics ever know the truth of Catholicism. They will perish. In   
Christian love must we not draw the line between what is true Christianity and what is not?  To continue to accept Catholics as   
Christians is not the love of God Who wishes all to be saved and come unto a knowledge of the truth (1 Ti 2:4).

The purpose of this paper was simply to make the truth known. The love that will be needed to share it can come only from   
prayerful time with the Lord. He has a deep burden for those caught in the web of the Catholic Church. As we pray He will   
share that burden with us that we may share His love and truth with them.