

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Gospels that Damn—Roman Catholicism, Pt 1

Selected Scriptures

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PowerPoint Presentation included: Alternate Gospels that Damn--Roman Catholicism pt 1.pptx

SermonAudio Blurb: In this brief series we consider key religions that claim to give a true way of salvation and forgiveness of sin, but actually are false gospels and false hopes. When considering a false gospel one must put at the very top of the list the Roman Catholic Church. A massive religion, it is built upon a false understanding of sin which leads to a false understanding of the solution to that sin and a false command in response to their solution. In this first of two sermons we focus on the problem of mankind, which is sin. And we see how the Roman Catholic Church gives an utterly hopeless, Christ-less answer to that problem.

I. Introduction.

- A. We invested 4 weeks teaching the basics of what salvation is and why we need to be saved..
 - 1. As the apostle Peter said it so simply over 2,000 years ago, “And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12).
 - 2. But what do we do with those who come and claim that there is another way or a clearer way to be saved? This small series is designed to show you how four major groups teach a gospel that actually damns the soul and offers no real hope for life now and after you die.
 - 3. These four groups are the Roman Catholic Church, Islam, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, and the Jehovah Witnesses.
- B. Our plan.
 - 1. We will simply take the four points we taught through on why we need to be saved and lay them over the beliefs and practices of these four groups and examine them.
 - 2. What you will see is that every one of these ultimately fail in one or more of the categories. The most important being the problem and solution. Either mankind is not that sinful or salvation is not found only in and through Jesus Christ by grace or salvation is not received through turning to God in faith in the good new of Jesus Christ. And then, usually, the

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blessings attached to their idea of salvation become skewed and twisted as well.

3. Today and next week we will consider what is likely the most challenging one for where we are today—the Roman Catholic Church.

C. What I want to show you today and next week is what the Roman Catholic Church teaches and believes regarding the problem of sin, the solution to that sin and the way we become saved.

1. Today we deal with sin and a little bit with the solution.

2. Next week I hope to fully address how the solution the Roman Catholic Church offers is not merely weak, it is false and incompatible with the biblical witness.

II. We believe the problem and solution.

A. The Problem:

1. According to the Bible:

a. When dealing with sin from the bible it is very straightforward. All are under sin.

b. Therefore, there is NOTHING that a person can do to contribute in the slightest in being forgiven or saved. You must look for One who stands outside of sin and death who can both forgive sin and in some way make you righteous before God.

2. According to Roman Catholic Church.

a. Original Sin.

(1) This speaks both of Adam's first sin in Genesis 3 as well as the effect it has upon all of humanity. In this they are correct.

(2) Therefore, they would say that there is a natural goodness still in humanity there is not a supernatural goodness and therefore mankind needs someone to redeem them from this sin. This is because Adam, and therefore the human

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race which came from Him, lost original justice/righteousness and what is called “sanctifying grace.”

b. Actual Sin.

(1) Actual sin is any willful thought, desire, word, action, or omission forbidden by the law of God.

(a) The key word in that statement is any “willful” thought.

(b) So this makes accidental, impulsive actions that are against God’s law to be something other than actual sin.

(c) This is quite different from a biblical definition such as “Any personal lack of conformity to the *moral* character or *desire* of God.”

3. Actual sin defined and enlarged:

a. They see sin as divided in two different categories—material and formal.

(1) So when you talk about sin in the Catholic church the first question is, “Is this a material sin or a formal sin?”

(2) Material sin is something that is contrary to the divine law which includes the 10 commandments but includes other things as well. You commit a material sin when you break one of the commandments but you didn’t know it.

(3) A formal sin is when you break a commandment and you know it.

b. For the Catholic, sin works in one of two ways—Mortal or Venial.

(1) As we talk about actual, formal sin, in the eyes of the Roman Catholic Church, we are NOT talking about unbelievers. We are talking about supposed Christians, or practicing Catholics.

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- (2) Mortal sin is a specific type of sin that destroys the saving grace given **by baptism**. When you commit a mortal sin the soul is no longer in a state of grace and is now dead in sin again.
 - (a) If you commit a mortal sin dies at that point, you go to hell. You are under God's condemnation. You are a child of wrath and dead in your sins again. So, the Catholic church actually teaches that there are countless children of God who are in hell.
 - (b) Three conditions are required to make it mortal:
 - i) It is an act of grave matter and . . .
 - ii) it is done with full knowledge and . . .
 - iii) it is done deliberately.
 - (c) So you are heading to hell! How do you fix this? The Roman Catholic Church says you must make penance as directed by a priest. Baptism is the correct act to get you justified the first time. Penance will re-justify you from that point onward.
 - i) Keep that term, "justify," in mind so that next week you can see how terrible the idea of being "re-justified" really is.
 - ii) But also remember that for the Catholic, if they don't go to a priest for confession and penance, then they are no longer saved. They are now ungodly and under God's wrath.

Grave matter is specified by the Ten Commandments, corresponding to the answer of Jesus to the rich young man: "Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother." The gravity of sins is more

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or less great: murder is graver than theft. One must also take into account who is wronged: violence against parents is in itself graver than violence against a stranger.

Mortal sin requires full knowledge and complete consent. It presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God's law. It also implies a consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin.

Unintentional ignorance can diminish or even remove the imputability of a grave offense. But no one is deemed to be ignorant of the principles of the moral law, which are written in the conscience of every man. The promptings of feelings and passions can also diminish the voluntary and free character of the offense, as can external pressures or pathological disorders. Sin committed through malice, by deliberate choice of evil, is the gravest. – CCC 1858-1860

- (3) Venial sin is any actions and thoughts of a lessor sort.
 - (a) A Catholic might commit what normally would be a mortal sin but without fully understanding this or without the intent to commit it. This sort of sin does not kill your soul again but it does weaken your spiritual strength.
 - (b) Do enough of them and a mortal sin is going to happen. So you have to take care of these sins so they don't end up leading you to commit a mortal sin.

“One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.” – CCC 1862

- c. How are venial sins resolved and forgiven? Well now it becomes even more complex of a process.

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- (1) The great Catholic theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas, tells us that a venial sin does not require a new “infusion of fresh grace” to forgive it.
- (2) Instead you deal with venial sins through three different ways:
 - (a) Any act that confers the infusion of grace will forgive venial sins:
 - i) Receiving the Eucharist.
 - ii) The Seven Sacraments.
 - (b) Or, any act done in detestation of sin will forgive venial sins:
 - i) Recital of the Confiteor which is a penitential prayer.

I confess to almighty God, and to you, my brothers [and sisters], that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers [and sisters], to pray for me to the Lord our God. (From the Roman Missal)

- ii) An act of contrition
 - iii) Beating of the Breast
 - iv) Saying the Lord’s Prayer
 - (c) or, any act including a movement towards the reverence of God will conduce the remission of venial sins:
 - i) A bishop’s blessing
 - ii) Sprinkling oneself with Holy Water
 - iii) Any sacramental anointing
 - iv) Prayer in a dedicated Church

B. Some key thoughts on what we have learned:

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1. This is evil clothed in fancy, pretty garments. This is no different than the many rules and laws of the Pharisees who Jesus called “white-washed graves.”
2. What makes this so evil is that there is never a time where a Catholic can rightly say that they are saved from eternal death and into eternal life. Not with absolute certainty. The best they can say is that they hope that they will end up saved at some point.
3. By doing this the Roman Catholic Church makes you a slave to the institution rather than a slave to Jesus Christ.
4. The salvation you seek for is not found in and through Jesus Christ alone but in and through the Catholic Church.
5. The entire system of the Roman Catholic Church is one that traps a person in an endless cycle of personal efforts assigned to them by the Church. These are designed to keep adding to your justification until you die
 - a. However, the Catholic is warned about what is called “scrupulosity,” which means to be unusually concerned over every sin that you may have committed.
 - b. Listen to how the catholic who is burdened by the possibility of committing a mortal sin is counseled: “Many materially mortal sins are formally venial. Although we have the capacity to control our passions, the fact is that even a highly responsible person is not fully free when under the sway of his passions. A material mortal sin is formally mortal only if there is sufficient freedom (CCC 1860). Your past may be littered with materially mortal sins that are not formally mortal. One cannot deny the damage that such acts caused, but it is a tremendous relief for the scrupulous person to know that they are not “going to hell” for them.” (<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/scrupulosity-the-occupational-hazard-of-the-catholic-moral-life>)

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- C. So, though the Roman Catholic Church acknowledges the problem to be sin, in reality they stumble on how sin destroys and rules the heart of mankind.
1. For the Catholic, “sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. . . . It has been defined as ‘an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law’” (1849).
 2. But it also is said that sin “wounds the nature of man” (1849).
 3. Behind all of this is the thought that the will of mankind is free (1853).
- D. The bible is clear with regard to sin that it is defined in two ways:
1. It is a power that rules the hearts of mankind and stains all aspects of the person.
 - a. Ephesians 2:1-3, “And you were dead **in** your transgressions and sins, **in which** you formerly walked **according to** the course of this world, **according to** the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit that is now **working in** the sons of disobedience, among whom we all also formerly conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, **doing the desires** of the flesh and of the mind, and were **by nature** children of wrath, even as the rest.”
 - b. So the bible describes all of humanity as “under sin” and as a result the second aspect comes into play.
 2. As a result of this power, humanity commits acts of sin
 3. The bible makes it clear that as individuals we are enslaved to sin. And there are very real consequences to this fact.
 - a. A key one, in contradiction, to the Catechism is that the nature of a person is not merely wounded, but it is killed by sin. Sin dominates the person. It coats all that he does or desires. Look again at Ephesians 2 and see how expansive this statement is.
 - b. Another key contradiction is that the Catechism focuses more upon acts of sin rather than the heart of sin from which these sins flow. Hear the words of Jesus, “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, slanders” (Matthew 15:19).
 - c. Finally, the desire by the Roman Catholic Church to divide the sins into two groups fails when examined by Scripture.

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- (1) Romans 1:18-32 give a listing of sins, all of which bring about the wrath of God. The wrath of God is the same as the condemnation of God and an eternal judgment in hell.
 - (a) But this list is quite expansive. It goes from suppressing truth to an unthankful heart to sexual sins of homosexuality.
 - (b) But then it also adds greed and envy, deceit and boasting and even being disobedience to parents.
 - (c) Finally it condemns those who give approval to others who practice any such sin, even if they themselves do not do so. We call that a tolerant and open mind in today's society.
- E. So, to summarize, the Roman Catholic Church does acknowledge the problem that mankind faces—sin.
 1. But it is weakened and categorized in a way that does not fit well the description that the bible gives of the utter corruption and enslaving power of sin upon the whole of creation and especially upon each person.
 2. But though the description of sin is weak, it is present. However, in presenting the problem of sin, it is the solution to the presence and power of sin that is where the Roman Catholic Church teaches a false gospel with a false hope.

III. Conclusion.

- A. But the hope of the gospel is that through the person and work of Jesus Christ ALONE there is life, forgiveness of sin for all time.
- B. The bible states that through Christ's one act of sacrificial death on the cross that all sin is resolved in the life of the believer—forever.
- C. No person can ever add one tiny bit to his salvation. It begins and ends in Jesus Christ.
- D. It is this solution that we will look at carefully next Sunday if the Lord wills.

Benediction

May our gracious Father in heaven cause us to be found in Christ, clothed on in His righteousness which comes through faith from the hand of God. May we know Christ and the power of His resurrection and the fellowship of His sufferings as we become conformed to His death. Amen.