

Biblical Support for Catholic Doctrines

from the most widely-used Fundamentalist and Evangelical Protestant translations of the Bible:
the **King James Version** and the **New International Version**.

SALVATION

Are we saved by faith alone, or
by faith and good works?

Jesus: "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father" (Matt 7:21 – NIV).

Jesus: "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" (Luke 6:46 – NIV).

Jesus: "If ye love me, keep my commandments" (John 14:15 – KJV).

"[God] will render to every man according to his deeds" (Romans 2:6 – KJV).

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling" (Phil 2:12 – KJV).

"A person is justified by what he does and not by faith alone" (James 2:24 – NIV).

"Faith without works is dead" (James 2:26 – KJV).

"The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love" (Galatians 5:6 – NIV).

The Catholic position: Our salvation, our justification, is a free gift by the grace of God (CCC #1996). Saving faith, and the good works it produces, are inseparable, and *both* are present during the life-long journey of salvation.

AUTHORITY

Is our authority the Bible alone, or
the Bible and Sacred Tradition?

"Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle" (2 Thes 2:15 – KJV).

"I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you" (1 Cor 11:2 – NIV). (Footnote for the word "teachings": "Or *traditions*.")

"...withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us" (2 Thes 3:6 – KJV).

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Tim 3:16 – KJV). (*All* scripture, not *only* scripture.)

"...God's household, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Tim 3:15 – NIV). (According to the Bible, the *Church* is the pillar and foundation of truth.)

The Catholic position: The Bible is the inspired word of God and without error (CCC #107). However, the doctrine of "Scripture alone" is found nowhere in Scripture. The Holy Spirit guides the Church in teaching the truth about faith and morals. The Scriptures *plus* Sacred Tradition constitute the complete "deposit of faith."

THE EUCHARIST

Are the bread and wine symbolic, or does Christ's
body and blood really become present at Mass?

Jesus: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (John 6:53 – KJV).

Jesus: "Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life. For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink." (John 6:54-55 – NIV).

"Is not the cup...a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ?" (1 Cor 10:16 – NIV).

"Whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord" (1 Cor 11:27 – NIV).

"For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1 Cor 11:29 – NIV).

St. Ignatius: "[heretics] abstain from Eucharist and from prayer, because they do not confess that the Eucharist is the Flesh of our Savior Jesus Christ..." (*Letter to the Smyrnaeans*, written in the year 110 AD).

The Catholic position: Jesus is truly present—body, blood, soul, and divinity—in the Eucharist (CCC #1374). Jesus himself clearly taught this; St. Paul reiterated it in his first letter to the Corinthians; and St. Ignatius' letter from the early 2nd century shows that the Real Presence was not invented by the Vatican in the Middle Ages, as some claim.

MARY / THE COMMUNION OF SAINTS

Is it proper to pray to saints, especially Mary?

Mary: "Behold, from henceforth all generations shall call me blessed" (Luke 1:48 – KJV).

Jesus: "Have ye not read in the book of Moses, how in the bush God spake unto him, saying, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob? He is not the God of the dead, but the God of the living: ye therefore do greatly err" (Mark 12:26-27 – KJV).

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses..." (Hebrews 12:1 – NIV, immediately following a list of many of the saints in Heaven).

"Pray for us" (Colossians 4:3; 1 Thes 5:25; 2 Thes 3:1 – NIV).

"The twenty-four elders fell down before the Lamb. Each one had a harp and they were holding golden bowls full of incense, which are the prayers of the saints" (Rev 5:8 – NIV).

The Catholic position: Catholics do NOT worship Mary; that would be idolatry (CCC #971). Mary's special position as Mother of our Lord, however, makes her deserving of honor and devotion, but not worship. Since we are commanded to pray for one another, Catholics include the saints in Heaven—who are among the *living* (Mark 12:27)—in our "prayer chains." Who better to ask for intercessory prayer than those who are continually in the Lord's presence?

Abbreviations: KJV = King James Version; NIV = New International Version;
CCC = Catechism of the Catholic Church

PURGATORY

Is there a place of purification after death?

"Nothing impure will ever enter [Heaven]" (Rev 21:27 – NIV).

"...without holiness no one will see the Lord" (Heb 12:14 – NIV).

Jesus: "...anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or the age to come" (Matt 12:32 – NIV). (Implies that some sins can be forgiven in the next world.)

"If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire" (1 Cor 3:15 – KJV).

"[Jesus] went and preached to the spirits in prison who disobeyed long ago" (1 Peter 3:19-20 – NIV).

"[Jesus] descended to the dead. On the third day He rose again." (Apostles Creed).

The Catholic position: "Those who die in God's grace and friendship imperfectly purified, although they are assured of their eternal salvation, undergo a purification after death, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of God" (CCC #1054).

ASSURANCE

Once saved, always saved?

Jesus: "But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved" (Matt 24:13 – KJV).

"Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness to you, provided that you continue in his kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off" (Romans 11:22 – NIV).

St. Paul: "I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize" (1 Cor 9:27 – NIV).

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift...And have tasted the good word of God...If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance" (Heb 6:4-6 – KJV).

The Catholic position: Since salvation is a life-long journey and not a one-time event, it is possible for someone to stop persevering in the faith and lose God's sanctifying grace. If St. Paul knew that he could be "disqualified," we must not presume that our salvation is absolutely assured (CCC #2092).

APOSTOLIC AUTHORITY

Are the Pope and the bishops really the shepherds of the Church today?

Jesus: "I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter (Rock), and upon this rock I will build my church....And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven" (Matt 16:18-19 – KJV).

Jesus to apostles: "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven" (John 20:22-23 – NIV).

Jesus to Peter: "Feed my lambs....Take care of my sheep....Feed my sheep" (John 21:15-17 – NIV).

"...ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Eph 2:19-20 – KJV).

St. Irenaeus: "...the succession of the bishops of the greatest and most ancient Church known to all, founded and organized at Rome....with this Church...all the churches must agree...it is in her that the faithful everywhere have maintained the Apostolic tradition" (*Against Heresies*, c. 190 AD).

The Catholic position: Jesus built His Church on the foundation of St. Peter and the apostles. Their successors down through the centuries, the bishops, continue in this mission of shepherding the Church, guided by the Holy Spirit (CCC #857, #861).

CALLING PRIESTS 'FATHER'

Are Catholics violating Jesus' command to "call no man on earth father"? (Matt 23:9)

Jesus: "Honour thy father and mother" (Matt 15:4 – KJV). (Was Jesus violating His own command?)

"Brothers and fathers, listen to me!" (Acts 7:2 – NIV). (Was St. Stephen violating Jesus' command?)

"I write unto you, fathers, because ye have known him..." (1 John 2:13 – KJV). (Was St. John violating Jesus' command?)

"In Christ Jesus I became your father through the gospel" (1 Cor 4:15 – NIV). (Was St. Paul violating Jesus' command?)

The Catholic position: In Matthew, chapter 23, Jesus spoke figuratively in criticizing the Pharisees for being obsessed with titles and honors. (See Matthew 5:29-30 for additional figurative language.) Just as St. Paul called himself the spiritual "father" of the Corinthians, Catholic priests are called "father" because they nurture the spiritual life of the flock by preaching the gospel and administering the sacraments (CCC #1549).

Additional resources:

Catholic Answers – www.catholic.com
Envoy Magazine – www.envoymagazine.com
St. Joseph's Covenant Keepers – www.dads.org
Dr. Scott Hahn – www.scotthahn.com
St. Joseph Communications – www.saintjoe.com

Compiled by Bill Dunn - www.boomertrek.com

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