

# What are the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church that distinguish it from other Christian churches?

Whole books have been written on this subject, but a sampling of the doctrines will be outlined here.

**Roman Catholicism**
The bishops, with the Pope as their head, rule the universal Church.
**Biblical Teaching**
Christ, the head of the body, rules the universal church. (Colossians 1:18)
**Roman Catholicism**
God has entrusted the Bible to the bishops.
**Biblical Teaching**
God has entrusted the Bible to Christians. (Jude 3)
**Roman Catholicism**
The Pope is infallible in his teaching.
**Biblical Teaching**
God alone is infallible. (Numbers 23:19; Acts 17:11)
**Roman Catholicism**
Scripture and Tradition together are the Word of God.
**Biblical Teaching**
Scripture alone is the Word of God. (John 10:35; 2 Timothy 3:16,17; 2 Peter 1:20,21; Mark 7:1-13)

**Roman Catholicism**
Mary is the co-redeemer, for she participated with Christ in the painful act of redemption.
**Biblical Teaching**
Christ alone is the Redeemer, for He alone suffered and died for sin (1 Peter 1:18,19).
**Roman Catholicism**
Mary is the co-mediator, to whom we can entrust all our cares and petitions.
**Biblical Teaching**
Christ Jesus is the one mediator to whom we can entrust all our cares and petitions. (1 Timothy 2:5; John 14:13,14; 1 Peter 5:7)
**Roman Catholicism**
Initial justification is by means of baptism.
**Biblical Teaching**
Justification is by faith alone. (Romans 3:28)
**Roman Catholicism**
Adults must prepare for justification through faith and good works.
**Biblical Teaching**
God justifies ungodly sinners who believe (Romans 4:5). Good works are the result of salvation, not the cause.
**Roman Catholicism**
Grace is merited by good works.
**Biblical Teaching**
Grace is a free gift. (Romans 11:6)
**Roman Catholicism**
Salvation is attained by cooperating with grace through faith, good works, and participation in the sacraments.

**Biblical Teaching**
Salvation is attained by grace through faith apart from works. (Ephesians 2:10)
**Roman Catholicism**
No one can know if he will attain eternal life.
**Biblical Teaching**
The believer can know that he has eternal life by the Word of God and the testimony of the Holy Spirit who indwells believers. (1 John 5:13; Romans 8:16)
**Roman Catholicism**
The Roman Catholic Church is necessary for salvation.
**Biblical Teaching**
There is salvation in no one but the Lord Jesus Christ, “for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men by which we must be saved”. (Acts 4:12)
**Roman Catholicism**
Christ's body and blood exist wholly and entirely in every fragment of consecrated bread and wine in every Roman Catholic church around the world.
**Biblical Teaching**
The bread and wine are symbols of the body and blood of Christ, and He is bodily present in heaven. (1 Corinthians 11:23-25; Hebrews 10:12,13)
**Roman Catholicism**
The sacrifice of the cross is perpetuated in the Sacrifice of the Mass.

**Biblical Teaching**

The sacrifice of the cross is finished.
(John 19:30)

**Roman Catholicism**

Each sacrifice of the Mass appeases God's wrath against sin.

**Biblical Teaching**

The once-for-all sacrifice of the cross fully appeased God's wrath against sin.
(Hebrews 10:12-18)

**Roman Catholicism**

The sacrificial work of redemption is continually carried out through the sacrifice of the Mass.

**Biblical Teaching**

The sacrificial work of redemption was finished when Christ gave His life for us on the cross.
(Ephesians 1:7; Hebrews 1:3)

These doctrines don't date back all the way to Constantine, except for perhaps in seed form, but were slowly adopted over many years as various popes issued decrees. In many cases, the doctrines are not even based on Scripture, but on a document of the church. Most Roman Catholics consider themselves to be Christians and are unaware of the differences between their beliefs and the Bible. Sadly, the Roman Catholic Church has fostered that ignorance by discouraging the personal study of the Bible and making the people reliant on the priests for their understanding of the Bible.

www.gotquestions.org/Roman-Catholicism.html#ixzz2MWNiYmUV

**For further in-depth consideration of How The Roman Catholic Church and Biblical Christianity are different please review these materials:**

### Are Catholic beliefs and practices biblical?

www.gotquestions.org/Catholic-Biblical.html

### What is the Catholic sacrament of Holy Eucharist?

www.gotquestions.org/Holy-Eucharist.html

### Are the seven Catholic sacraments biblical?

www.gotquestions.org/seven-Catholic-sacraments.html

### What is extreme unction / last rites?

www.gotquestions.org/extreme-unction.html

### What does the Bible say about confession of sin to a priest?

www.gotquestions.org/confession-sin-priest.html

### What is the cause of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church?

www.gotquestions.org/Catholic-abuse.html

### I am a Catholic. Why should I consider becoming a Christian?

www.gotquestions.org/Catholic-Christian.html

### Catholic Questions ?

**www.gotquestions.org/Catholic-questions.html**

GotQuestions.org is not a Catholic ministry. We strongly believe that the Bible is to be our guide for faith and practice. While we recognize the value of church traditions, we refuse to accept any tradition that is not clearly supported by the Word of God. Our "conflict" with Catholicism is in regards to the proper interpretation of the Bible.

***For God so loved the world that he gave his only and unique Son, so that everyone who trusts in him may have eternal life, instead of being utterly destroyed.***

**John 3:16**

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